

## STORY MODE CRIT PATH WRITING SAMPLE by Domini Gee

This is an excerpt from the game script. Most has been maintained as faithfully as possible while reordering other parts to reflect level progression.

'Crit path' refers to the necessary progression path in the game. This is the path the player must play through to complete the level. For optional path related dialogue, please see the story mode optional script sample.

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### STORY MODE CRIT PATH- DESIGN NOTES (smc-i)

#### Crit Path Must:

- Be within 1500-2500 words (including coding)
- Introduce the three principal characters (Essie, Giselle, and Artisan)
- Introduce the setting (Awyr Isles, a series of floating islands with a classist society that wears masks or 'Faces' according to their societal rank)
- Introduce premise (a series of serial killings that have occurred over forty years and foreshadowing of how the twins get involved).
- Introduce dialogue selection to familiarize players with asking characters for information. Should include three/four dialogue options. One option should unlock after the player selects an unlocking dialogue and another should end the dialogue entirely. Once the dialogue selection ends, the next scene should proceed.
- Two to three scenes. One outside the bistro to introduce context, one inside the bistro for Essie and Giselle's conversation and expository dialogue, and a short narration to provide closure to the section.

#### Necessary Levels:

- Two areas, one outside bistro and one inside. Outside bistro is an explorable area while inside is an extended dialogue scene.

#### Necessary flags:

- \$ work\_asked = False
  - When set to 'true', phlogiston dialogue option unlocks.

#### Necessary objects:

- iMask = Item("Blue Mask", "essiemask3.png", "My Face, proof of my citizenship and Face rank.")
  - Default item. Always in inventory.
  - Object is not useable but it gives players something constant to interact with in the inventory. Object description also provides more setting information.

#### Necessary images:

- Three to four character art images for Essie and Giselle. Should be varied enough to match different moods and contexts.
- Two environment backgrounds, one for inside the bistro and one outside.
- One event-image for newspaper clipping.
- Inventory image for iMask.

#### Necessary sounds:

- SFX for: door, plates, and newspaper.
- Music for: Awyr Isles-Daytime and Artisan dialogue scene.

### STORY MODE CRIT PATH - MAIN SCRIPT (smc-ii)

#### **STORY MODE CRIT PATH - PRE-DIALOGUE SELECTION (smc-ii-a)**

```
label storymode_start:
    oe "For the Artisan, it began over forty years ago."
    nvl clear
    oe "The Artisan had accumulated twenty-five known victims. Motives and exact details of modus of operandi remain debated."
    nvl clear
    oe "For them, it started five years ago."
    nvl clear
```

show essie neutral at left with dissolve  
oe "Essie still worked in a phlogiston refinement factory, only mildly disliked automatons, and lacked the sunken eyes and insomnia."

nvl clear

show giselle neutral at right with dissolve

oe "Giselle worked in the hat shop, still occasionally removed her Face, and lacked the chronic tremors and insomnia."

nvl clear

oe "What happened to them remains something they never talk about, least of all with each other."

nvl clear

label heavenlyhost\_front:

scene hhost\_exterior\_bg

show essie neutral at left

show giselle neutral at right

play music "Cattails (Kevin MacLeod).mp3"

g "Don't forget, we need our Faces."

e "It's not too late to go to Cat's Eye."

g "But I got a raise! I can afford to buy us a decent lunch for once."

show essie serious at left

e "Giselle, I still need time to get back to work. Boss already has me staying late for taking time off."

g "It'll be fine. They run like clockwork here. We'll be in and out with plenty of time to get you back."

e "I think they'd be quick to get rid of us for other reasons."

show giselle nose pinch at right

g "Well, it's still faster for us to eat here than go to another place. Shall we?"

#When player chooses to leave first area

label heavenlyhost\_interior:

hide screen inventory\_button

hide screen inventory\_screen

hide screen inventory\_description

g "Faces on."

e "Yeah, yeah..."

"Essie pulled her mask around, lifting it off her back and over her face."

play sound "sfx\_storebell.mp3"

scene black

"Upon entry, their faces were immediately scanned by the Concierge. Its glass eyes lit up blue and it tipped its hat."

c "Welcome to Heavenly Host! Please proceed towards the Blue Room on the right. Please keep your Face on until the server has verified you are in the correct seating area."

e "Because it'd be sooo inconvenient if a Blue were seen with Purples or Reds..." #potentially cut this line

g "Behave." #potentially cut this line

scene hhost\_interior\_bg

"The server noted their Faces and led them to a room in the back, away from the main dining areas. It was late in the afternoon so they had the room to themselves."

"Once they were seated and the server had their order, they took off their masks."

show essie serious at left# with dissolve

show giselle neutral at right #with dissolve

e "At least Cat's Eye doesn't scan you."

g "We can't always go to the coffee shop."

e "I'm just saying. What's the point of talking about things like equality, solidarity, and fundamental freedoms if we're not practicing it where we should?"

g "Where we should won't get us the best meat pies in the city if we don't compromise."

g "They're good beliefs but there's a time and a place. Most places still aren't as accommodating as a classroom or a hole-in-the-wall cafe. Our discussion group's not big enough for that yet."

e "That doesn't stop mantras like, 'out of the classroom, out of the coffee shop, and onto the streets' from feeling pointless if we aren't going to practice it."

show giselle nose pinch at right

g "\*sigh\*"

show essie side\_glance at left

e "..."

show essie blood smile at left

e "Moving on...Are the pies really good enough to be called the best in the city?"

show giselle coy at right

g "Absolutely."

g "We got some time to catch up before our order arrives. Is there anything you wanted to talk about?"

### STORY MODE CRIT PATH - DIALOGUE SELECTION (smc-iib)

label heavenlyhost\_interior\_questions:

if work\_asked:

menu:

"Phlogiston":

call heavenlyhost\_questions\_phlogiston

show giselle concerned at right with dissolve

g "I get worried about you sometimes. I know phlogiston's the best way of releasing heat and energy but it sounds dangerous to work with. One mistake and instant combustion occurs, if not worse."

g "Hasn't your management thought of making changes? I read that some factories are trying substitute methods that use aether instead."

show essie serious at left

e "There's been some talk but it'd never stick."

e "They could use automatons to handle the stuff that, ya know, might actually kill us..."

e "Except it costs more to pay for maintenance and upkeep than replacement workers."

e "They could start using aether, which'd be convenient since the Isles are pretty much made up of aether deposits anyway..."

e "Except groups keep complaining that if we keep mining aether we're going to be the 'Slightly Hovering Isles' instead of the 'Floating Isles'."

e "They could always just close up shop entirely rather than risk the lives and safety of their workers..."

e "Except that's stupid. Other companies would just keep refining phlogiston, we'd just end up having to go somewhere else, and management'd probably end up just as copperless as the rest of us."

e "And honestly? I'd rather be screwed by the slight possibility of something blowing me up later than the immediate lack of money."

g "I just thought I'd ask."

jump heavenlyhost\_interior\_questions

"Work":

call heavenlyhost\_questions\_work

show giselle neutral at right with dissolve

g "How's Becher? You said there was an accident but you never gave me the details."

show essie neutral at left

e "Still out. Some brainless fuc-...idiot, screwed up the pressurization of the crystal she was handling and it went 'WHOOSH'."

e "It was only a small lighting crystal so there wasn't much phlogiston to release but a little more would have lit the workshop on fire instead of just her."

g "Have they disciplined the idiot?"

e "Nope. How about you? Still camping out in the shop?"

g "...Some nights..."

show essie serious at left

e "Dammit, Giselle. It's not like *you* can't get off work before curfew."

g "Yes, but I want to keep ahead of the rest of the staff. The missus tells me that my hats sell the fastest. If I want a chance of moving up I need to keep my hats in stock."

e "So this has nothing to do with your roommates?"

show giselle coy at right

g "Well, not having to share a bathroom with them every morning helps."

\$ work\_asked = True

jump heavenlyhost\_interior\_questions

"Discussion Group":

call heavenlyhost\_questions\_discussion

show essie neutral at left with dissolve

e "By the way, you might want to make sure Tommy gets you his part of your group assignment ASAP."

e "He finally got a job."

show giselle coy at right

g "Really!? Where?"

e "He joined a tour in the Lower Lands. He's going to be traveling around for a year with Nigel and Florence to bring enlightenment, trade, and pitches of the Awyr dream to Low Landers."

g "Well, that's still good for him. Our discussion group is going to feel emptier, though."

e "Yeah. Not that surprising. It's not easy to get to classes in the first place and we all got more important priorities."

e "If it wasn't for the chance to get out and socialize, I probably would have stopped going a long time ago."

show giselle neutral at right

g "You don't care about completing the certificate?"

show essie serious at left

e "It's not like I'll be able to use it for much. Don't get me wrong, it's actually one of the better perks for our Face rank."

e "You can join the work force as early as thirteen and still get an education, attend what classes and discussions you can, and finish whenever you want at whatever age."

e "For some people, that's perfect. You'll probably get a lot of mileage out of it too, wherever you move

up."  
 show essie side\_glance at left  
 e "For me, though? I'm not likely to get out of the factories so what I've learnt isn't going to do me much good."  
 e "Even Ma never got out of the job she had when she was our age."  
 g "Essie..."  
 e "Sorry. Let's talk about something else."  
 jump heavenlyhost\_interior\_questions  
 "Not really":  
 e "Nothing in particular."  
 jump heavenlyhost\_interior\_artisan  
 else:  
 menu:  
 "Work":  
 call heavenlyhost\_questions\_work  
 #see above for script  
 "Discussion Group":  
 call heavenlyhost\_questions\_discussion  
 #see above for script  
 "Not really":  
 show essie neutral at left with dissolve  
 e "Nothing in particular."  
 show giselle neutral at right  
 g "Okay then, how about..."  
 jump heavenlyhost\_interior\_artisan

#### STORY MODE CRIT PATH - POST-DIALOGUE SELECTION (smc-iic)

label heavenlyhost\_interior\_artisan:  
 hide essie  
 hide giselle  
 "The talked about this and that until their orders arrived."  
 play sound "sfx\_platescape.mp3"  
 "The pies really were the best in the city, though."  
 show giselle coy at right with dissolve  
 g "I told you!"  
 show essie blood smile at left with dissolve  
 e "I dunno. 'Best' is still a pretty big word."  
 g "Really. I see you've gone through yours faster than I have."  
 e "Really."  
 "Essie pushed her mostly finished plate away."  
 e "Anyway, I won't get off till after curfew but Cat's Eye should still be open a little past that. Wanna go there after? We might be able to score some discounted spiced cider."  
 stop music fadeout 1.0 #stop Awyr Casual Music  
 show giselle concerned at right  
 "Giselle stopped eating."  
 show essie serious at left  
 e "Giselle?"  
 g "I've been thinking. Maybe tonight we should stay in."  
 g "My landlady has no problem with female guests and my roommates have been wanting to meet my dashing sister."  
 e "Okay, sure...but, first, what's up?"  
 g "It's nothing. I'll seem silly."  
 e "C'mon, Giselle. If it's just you being silly, I'll be the first to laugh and move on."  
 g "Did you see today's paper?"  
 e "Nah. I was in a hurry out the door."  
 play sound "sfx\_newspaper rustling.mp3"  
 "Giselle pulled copy of the Copperman Times and passed it to Essie."  
 scene hhost\_newspaper  
 play music "Evening of Chaos ( Kevin MacLeod) - Movement 3.mp3"  
 "The sketch caught Essie's attention before she read the headline or article."  
 "A woman without a mask lay prostrate on her back, a cape draped over her, and (on a closer look) flowers woven into her hair."  
 "She appeared to be sleeping but Essie knew better."  
 "She knew the woman's eyes would be open, unseeing, and empty."  
 scene hhost\_interior\_bg  
 show essie side\_glance at left with dissolve  
 e "... "

show giselle concerned at right with dissolve  
g "..."  
g "What do you think?"  
e "I'm amazed the constables let the papers run the story with so little facts."  
g "What else?"  
e "It's horrible?"  
g "And?"  
show essie serious at left  
e "Giselle, I don't know what you want."  
e "It's disgusting. It's frustrating the constables won't hurry up and catch the guy-this has been going on since we were *{i}kids{/i}*."  
e "Shit, I dunno...Do you want me to say yeah, 'course you're right, let's play careful?"  
show giselle nose pinch at right  
g "That's part of it."  
g "Don't you get worried? How people disappear and then turn up like this?"  
g "Ma used to scare us with stories of the Artisan but when they keep happening don't you get scared?"  
g "And last year, there was Andrea..."  
show essie side\_glance at left  
"Essie felt a cold spike in her stomach."  
"Andrea had been the brightest in their discussion group, probably even the brightest at the workers college. She had shimmering red hair, a grin that reached her eyes, and soft hands."  
"Andrea had been the one to suggest taking their beliefs out of the classroom and into the real world. She'd been the first in their group to stop wearing her Face."  
"She was the Artisan's twenty-first victim."  
e "Maybe we shouldn't meet up."  
g "We don't need to go that far. I just think we need to be a little more paranoid. Ma isn't around to do that for us."  
show essie blood smile at left  
e "Hah! If she saw us now, she'd drag us out and solder our Faces on. 'Girl's don't forget your Faces', 'the smog will burn your eyes', 'remember, one, two-"  
show giselle coy at right  
g "'The bell tolls late'. 'Three, four, don't forget your face!..."  
show giselle neutral at right  
g "Honestly, the last part still scares me. 'Nine, ten-"  
"*{i}*Never wake again{/i>."  
show essie neutral at left  
e "It's just a song. Someone just based it off the Artisan but slapped lessons to it like 'don't stay out late', 'don't talk with strangers', and 'don't forget your Faces' to scare kids into behaving."  
g "You're probably right."  
stop music fadeout 1.0  
e "So, we good to meet up after I get off?"  
show giselle coy at right  
g "Sure. Just because we should be a little more paranoid doesn't mean we should let our routine be completely disrupted."  
g "Let's talk about something else while we still have time, okay?"  
"They continued to talk until Essie went back to work. Neither finished their pie."

label story\_end:

scene black  
nvl clear  
oe "Essie would later discover that while the papers never said it outright, most of the Artisan victims were Faceless - citizens who hadn't lived in the city long enough to receive a mask or those stripped of their Face rank."  
nvl clear  
oe "Other victims, usually of low Face rank, were found without their mask."  
nvl clear  
oe "Essie should have known better."  
nvl clear  
"∴ Story Mode End"

LEGAL (smc-iii)

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