

NOTHING TO DO WITHOUT YOU

by

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DIALOGUE SAMPLE

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CHARACTERS

The play requires two actors, a man and a woman, anywhere from 20s to 40s. They each play two roles:

MAN

Scene 1: DREY

Scenes 2-3: RICK

WOMAN

Scene 1: ETHA

Scenes 2-3: KATHLEEN

SETTING

Although there are three separate locations in the play, the designer should only suggest these with light, sound, and the few items described in the stage directions. The production team should not create a full set for each locale.

Scene 1: A room in an internet game-world.

Scene 2: A table in a hotel restaurant.

Scene 3: In Hell.

Scene 1

(A room. Two exits, one a door leading outside, the other into another room. Sparse furnishing, all dark pieces, except for three things: A vase of flowers sitting on a table; and a yellow and a red chair sitting in the corner.)

DREY sits at the table, reading a book. He wears all black. His long coat fits over him almost like a robe.

A knock at the door. The knocker, ETHA, enters without waiting for a reply, but she stops when she sees DREY. Behind her, we hear strange noises, beeps, whirrs, and carnival music, and see flashes of colorful lights. ETHA looks like she stepped out of a Rossetti painting: billowy dress, red lips. She carries full shopping bags.)

ETHA
Am I early?

DREY
No, come on in.

ETHA
Is this the...?

DREY
What're you looking for?

ETHA
The...

DREY
Yeah?

ETHA
I think I got the wrong room.

DREY
No no. This's the room.

ETHA

No I -

(She looks around the room.)

ETHA *(cont'd)*

I think I must've mixed up the address.

DREY

No, you're just early. I know the place doesn't look like much. *(Beat.)* I mean, you are here for my thing right? I mean, how'd you find me?

ETHA

There was a public banner.

DREY

Right.

ETHA

On the blue board.

DREY

Right. The blue board. That was me.

ETHA

I don't think -- I don't think this was it. I should go.

DREY

No no no no, I appreciate you -- frankly, I expected to be alone tonight. I wasn't sure if anybody would log in.

ETHA

Oh.

DREY

I thought I'd post on the blue board, you know, hope someone logs in to my little room. I figured, what the heck, can't spend every night on the dune buggy track.

ETHA

Oh yeah, I did that.

DREY

It's all right, the first fifty times.

ETHA

I know. I did the flight chasm for a month, now I'm sick of it.

DREY

Yeah. I wasn't sure if I could compete with the others in the game. I know it's not exactly the most exciting room format.

ETHA

Well, it's...it's...that's a very cute sign on the door. "Come on in." It just -- your banner said this was an object swap, and I don't see hardly any -

DREY

An object swap, heh. You know, maybe I exaggerated, jazzed up the banner bit, to try to get somebody nice to come. Don't worry, I've got some objects for swap. I don't know. I'm new to the game. I just wanted...

ETHA

Well, maybe you'll find a way to make it up, newbie.
(*beat.*) You can start by asking me to sit down.

DREY

Sorry. Manners. Please sit down.

(He offers his chair. ETHA sets her bags down, sits.)

DREY (*cont'd*)

Your ID says Etha? As in ee-thuh?

ETHA

That's right...

(She peers into the air, as if reading his name off an invisible sign.)

ETHA (*cont'd*)

...hold on, your font's hard to read...Drey.

DREY

Right.

(re: the bags:)

DREY (*cont'd*)

Quite a haul.

ETHA

This? Some of it's for swap, some is new bits from the intra-market. My acquisition rating's a little lower than I like.

DREY

What'd you get?

ETHA

Oh you know, music files, clothing templates, new skin tone.

DREY

You wearing it now?

ETHA

You like?

DREY

"Wow," is all I can say. How about some wine? Cost thirty Canovas, ups your pleasure rating by point four.

ETHA

If that's what you've got.

(DREY exits.)

ETHA *(cont'd)*

Ever heard of emerald chocolates?

DREY *(off:)*

No, I'm just a newbie.

ETHA

They up your pleasure rating by ten.

DREY *(off:)*

Wow, ten? How many game-days does it last?

ETHA

I haven't had them. I eBayed a box in the R.W. once. Can you believe I paid a hundred and twenty dollars for it? And when I logged in to the room that the box was supposed to be in, there was just a note, "Ha ha?" Some people don't get what the game's about, right?

DREY *(off:)*

Right, right. I could never do something like that.

ETHA

Yeah. So your handle's Drey, is that short for...?

DREY *(off:)*

The D's for Dartmouth, and the Rey's for Razorbacks. Arkansas Razorbacks. That's a football team.

ETHA

Right. I get it.

DREY (*off:*)

What about Etha?

ETHA

I just thought it sounded pretty.

DREY (*off:*)

Well your avatar matches the name. I mean the skin tone, hair color. It says Etha.

ETHA

Thanks, you know, I worked hard on it, did the clothing template myself, the wire-frame myself. Most people -

DREY (*off:*)

I'm sorry to -- actually would you mind shutting the door? The wind's a little cold.

(ETHA closes the door.)

ETHA

Sure. Anyway, most people just throw on the punky blue hair over a default body, and think that's okay, but if you do that, I mean really, you're missing half the... wait. What wind?

DREY (*off:*)

What?

ETHA

What wind? There's no wind.

(DREY enters, with two glasses of wine.)

DREY

You don't read that on your comfort bar?

ETHA

No. There's no wind here. Why would they put in wind?

DREY

Wait, what version are you running?

ETHA

Five point one.

DREY

There you go. There's a point two patch.

ETHA

When was that released?

DREY

Today.

ETHA

Oh. I haven't been by the upgrade depot this week.

DREY

You should definitely upgrade. It gives you wind, chills...goosebumps. A whole bundle for the comfort bar. Changes the game, in a way.

(ETHA goes to the door.)

ETHA

I didn't read about any upgrade on the blue board.

DREY

See the vase of flowers?

ETHA

Yeah.

DRY

They're a new sort, and the wire-frame is much more organic in five point two. And of course, they up your beauty rating,

ETHA

They're lovely.

DREY

Want one? Free. No swap.

ETHA

Are you sure?

DREY

Yeah. What does a pixilated Quasimodo like me need with flowers?

ETHA

Thanks.

(MORE)

(She takes one.)

ETHA *(cont'd)*

And the rating goes up.

(DREY offers the glass of wine.)

DREY

We should toast, or is that too R.W. for you?

ETHA

Here's to our swap for two.

(They clink and drink.)

ETHA *(cont'd)*

So what've you got for me tonight?

DREY

Wines for the pleasure rating, magic potions for the imagination rating, hair dyes for the style rating -

ETHA

No offense, but I'm really looking for some customized objects. I've been through all the standard.

DREY

Had it with the dragonslaying and flight chasms?

ETHA

I bore easily, I guess.

DREY

Well...I wasn't going to show it, but...do you see that red chair?

ETHA

Yeah.

DREY

Try it out.

(ETHA sits in the chair, immediately stands back up.)

ETHA

Whoa!

DREY

Nice, right?

ETHA

No, my comfort rating just dropped a point.

DREY

Oh sorry, that's -- wrong chair. The yellow chair. That's the one.

ETHA

You sure?

DREY

Yeah.

(ETHA sits in the yellow chair. She experiences a nice sensation.)

ETHA

Oh wow.

DREY

Yeah.

ETHA

My happiness rating just went up six.

(DREY exits again.)

ETHA *(cont'd)*

No eight -- ten -- ohmyGod twelve? Wow. Wow, is all I can say.

(We hear a loud click.)

ETHA *(cont'd)*

What was that?

DREY

The door. It's got an autolock.

ETHA

Um...I can't move.

DREY

Yeah?

ETHA

I mean I'm stuck in this chair. I think something's wrong with my connection. Maybe I should login again.

DREY

Nothing's wrong with your connection. I coded that chair myself, paralysis, but I needed my IT friend to slip the code past the filters.

ETHA

I want to move now.

(DREY laughs.)

ETHA *(cont'd)*

You're gonna get kicked off the server.

DREY

I don't think so. We're not actually on their main server. This is a nice quiet patch with some leftover demo material that the company never took off. Not nearly so much restrictive code here. It's amazing what the developers originally had in mind for this world, before the suits got involved.

ETHA

I'm emailing support right now.

DREY

You know how many ways I'm proxied? You think Drey is really my ID? Don't be a shithead. See? Language filters are off.

I didn't put up a banner on the blue board. Too much attention. Figured I'd just hang a sign on the door, someone would wander in. And you're so nice.

(DREY pulls a large knife from his coat.)

DREY *(cont'd)*

I'm really sick of riding dune buggies, storming castles, endless beaches with white sand and purple skies. I think this is gonna be a great little feature. Anyway. I think I'll start with your legs.

(Blackout. Interlude of music.)

Scene 2

(A hotel restaurant. Two exits, one to the hotel, one to the bar. A hotel phone hangs on the wall.)

KATHLEEN sits at a small table for two. She eats a salad. An empty martini glass sits next to the plate. KATHLEEN is dressed for success: dark blue office jacket and skirt, black pumps, hair pulled back. She's collected.

RICK enters. He's wearing a suit as well, a green one, and he carries a manila folder. He's eager.

KATHLEEN and RICK are played by the same actors who played ETHA and DREY in Scene 1.)

RICK

Ms. Leone? I saw you speak today -

KATHLEEN

Hi.

RICK

Hi -- in the Hartford Room. Rick Whitetell, I work at Rivercrest Solutions. I have to tell you, I was really really impressed with what you had to say about the future of polymorphic binomials.

KATHLEEN

You're the only one, apparently.

RICK

Yeah, you know, everybody at this con talks data compression, but when you bring up polymorphic binomials, people get this look in their eye. You'd think a hotel full of maths and ITs wouldn't be such neo-luddites about it. But your speech about isolated propagation of polymorphic binomials, man, it got me going, really excited, really really pumped.

KATHLEEN

Mm. I'm glad I was able to do something with my life.

(She goes back to eating her salad.)