

## **DIALOGUE WRITING SAMPLE – MURDER MYSTERY**

Sample extracted from a cancelled murder mystery hidden object game.

In this particular scene, we play as Julia (an investigative journalist) as she tries to find the truth about Miranda's murder – by interviewing the victim's boyfriend, Dylan. The player doesn't know this, but the boyfriend himself was the murderer, and in the following excerpt he's trying to look as cooperative as possible to avoid suspicion, at the same time as he's trying to get away from you as quickly as he can.

### **DIALOGUE (AUTO)**

#### **INT. DYLAN'S SUITE – BRIGHT DAY**

(DYLAN stands at the forefront of the room on the left side, with his arms crossed, facing forward. He is wearing his CLOTHING SET #1 and is looking serious.)

DYLAN

Well, lookie here. Glad to see you're back in one piece.

JULIA

Thanks, Dylan. It's good to be back.

Even better that I ran into you. I wanted to ask a few questions about Miranda.

DYLAN

Might as well save your breath, 'cause I already told George everything I know not too long ago.

I was just 'bout to head out to do another search myself.

So, unless you found something earth-shattering in these past few minutes, not sure how I can help.

JULIA

Actually, we sort of did. We found Miranda's blood in the front yard. Someone tried to hide it under a rock.

DYLAN

And are you... Are you sure that's her blood?

JULIA

We just confirmed it. It's hers.

DYLAN

Well, then I guess I know where to search next. Nice talkin' to ya.

JULIA

(branching dialogue)

**A) Are you trying to run away?**

JULIA: Dylan, if I didn't know any better, I'd say you're trying to run away from here.

DYLAN: Jesus Christ!

DYLAN: First it was Matt, then George, now you... What do y'all want from me?

JULIA: We want the truth, Dylan.

**B) Please, I need your help.**

JULIA: Please, Dylan. I know this is hard, but if we want to find Miranda, I really need you to cooperate with me.

DYLAN: ...

DYLAN: Fine. What can I do?

JULIA

We know that you and Miranda had a big fight in the terrace last night. What happened?

DYLAN

There was nothing to it. Just another spat with Miranda. Same ol' song and dance.

JULIA

Really? Because from what I heard, that spat sounded a lot worse than usual.

DYLAN

Is that right? And what else have you heard from your oh-so-reliable sources?

JULIA

I heard she was so angry, she kept cursing your name even after you left.

DYLAN

At least they got that part right.

Look, it all started with Miranda ranting 'bout trust...

Then she goes accusing me of two-timing her with Lily.

JULIA

(branching dialogue)

**A) And were you?**

JULIA: And is it true? Are you seeing Lily behind Miranda's back?

DYLAN: Hell no! Lily and I go way back, but not like that.

**B) Why would she think that?**

JULIA: Why would Miranda think you're cheating on her?

DYLAN: She kinda got the wrong idea after seeing me and Lily talking. I mean, we go way back, but not like that.

DYLAN

We used to be this sort of tight-knit group, me, Clara, and Lily.

And I guess losing Clara sorta got us into reminiscing 'bout the past and all. We spent a good chunk of time talking yesterday.

But then Miranda... she walks towards us just as Lily was leaving and somehow got it into her head that I was cheatin'.  
So, there it is. The "big secret". You happy now?

JULIA

It's not about being happy. It's about knowing everything we can if we want to understand why Miranda was hurt.

DYLAN

What do you want me to say?

As much as I care for her, ain't no sugarcoating it: that gal's got a knack for ruffling feathers.

She speaks what's on her mind, doesn't mince words, and she suffers no fools. While we're trapped here with a murderer.

JULIA

So, you think she crossed the culprit somehow?

DYLAN

That's the only explanation I can think of.

That she said or did something without thinking and got under the wrong person's skin.

And now she's gone and got herself hurt, and I... I just can't stop until I find her.

Because, despite it all, I think... I think I might actually be in love with her. Crazy, ain't it?

JULIA

(branching dialogue)

**A) Love is crazy.**

JULIA: I honestly wouldn't have expected that from the two of you. But love is crazy, I guess.

JULIA: And it takes us on some pretty wild journeys.

DYLAN: You can say that again.

**B) I don't think that's love.**

JULIA: Are you sure this is love? I mean... all I ever see are the two of you at each other's throats.

DYLAN: Well, maybe I like the conflict. Maybe I like the crazy. Maybe that's what keeps things interesting.

JULIA: That's a lot of maybes...

DYLAN: The thing is, you only ever seen her at her worst. But you ain't ever seen her like I have. At her best, she's something else.

DYLAN

Now, anything else before I head off?

JULIA

I was hoping I could take a look at Miranda's things? I think they might offer a clue we're missing.

DYLAN

I don't see no one 'round here who can stop you.

Now, if you don't mind... I've got my lady to find.

(DYLAN FADES OUT)

**JULIA (monologue)**

Let's see... Where does Miranda keep her stuff?  
I'd better check her luggage, there could be something useful in there.

**GAMEPLAY**

**CLOSE UP: DYLAN'S SUITE: MIRANDA'S LUGGAGE 1**

(CLOSE UP opens when the PLAYER taps on the LUGGAGE. The LUGGAGE is LOCKED, and the PLAYER will not be able to open it until they get a LUGGAGE KEY.

**JULIA (monologue)**

It's locked. I need to find the key.

CLOSE-UP closes).

**GAMEPLAY**

**HIDDEN OBJECT: DYLAN'S SUITE: LUGGAGE KEY**

(PLAYER finds LUGGAGE KEY.)

ITEM RECEIVED: LUGGAGE KEY

**GAMEPLAY**

**CLOSE UP: DYLAN'S SUITE: MIRANDA'S LUGGAGE 2**

(CLOSE UP automatically begins when the PLAYER taps on the LUGGAGE. The PLAYER uses the LUGGAGE KEY to open the LUGGAGE.

The inside of Miranda's luggage is full of personal items (clothes, shoes, underwear), including a DESIGNER WALLET. The PLAYER will be able to tap on the items to investigate the LUGGAGE. Once the PLAYER taps on the DESIGNER WALLET, the below MONOLOGUE will be triggered.

**JULIA (monologue)**

Miranda's wallet... maybe it can reveal something about her.

COMIC AUTOMATICALLY STARTS FOLLOWING THE MONOLOGUE.)

**COMIC (AUTO) START**

DYLAN'S SUITE- SUNNY DAY

**PANEL 1**

(OVER THE SHOULDER shot of JULIA holding open the WALLET. We don't see what's inside the WALLET but JULIA is looking down at it and its contents.)

JULIA (SURPRISED, THINKING)

Wait, what's this?

**PANEL 2**

(A CLOSE UP of JULIA pulling out one of the CARDS in the WALLET. The CARD will clearly be LILY'S IDENTIFICATION CARD. It should have her full name and a PHOTO of her on it. There should also be a thick bunch of cash inside the wallet.)

JULIA (SURPRISED, THINKING)  
This isn't Miranda's wallet. It's Lily's!  
And look at all this cash...

**PANEL 3**

(A MEDIUM shot of JULIA looking down at the LILY'S WALLET. It is obvious that she is confused by finding the WALLET. We see the FRONT of her and the BACKSIDE of the WALLET.

JULIA (SUSPICIOUS, THINKING)  
How did the wallet get here? Did Miranda... steal it?

**PANEL 4**

(FINAL SHOT of JULIA's hands closing the wallet.)

**COMIC END**