

BRANCHING STORY AND DIALOGUE SAMPLE

Characters: Leon, Ariandne (called Aria)

Location: In the Marigold town square.

Context: Leon is the town guard-in-training for Marigold. He's been tasked to investigate the brutal murder of his friend and mentor, Gertrude. In his search for witnesses and suspects, he speaks to Aria. Aria is a well-known singer with an artistic temperament and a shrouded past.

Progress: Story branch occurs after the prologue ends. After Leon learns Aria's alibi, this event unlocks further dialogue branches with Aria and with other characters. The Player discovers information that builds Aria's motive, means, opportunity, and alibi as a suspect.

Story Start

ARIANDE (ARIA)

Leon! It's been a while. What's new?

LEON

Aria, I'm here on serious business. Can you tell me where you were three nights ago?

ARIA

Oh Leon, being serious is overrated. I was the same place I always am, finding musical inspiration in the Marigold Commons. Did you know that nightingales' songs change with the moon?

LEON

[Thought] She's a kind woman but it's hard to get her to focus.

I'm afraid I have some bad news - Gertrude was murdered three nights ago.

ARIA

By the Saints. Poor woman...

Choice A: AriaAlibi

Choice B: AriaAndGertrude

IF Choice A: AriaAlibi

LEON

Can anyone verify you were in the Commons all night?

ARIA

I wasn't with anyone that night. Sometimes the vocal arts require alone time. You know, for inspiration.

THEN Choice C: WhatAriaSaw

IF Choice B: AriaAndGertrude

LEON

Were you and Gertrude close?

ARIA

Well, not very. Most of my friends are other singers, you see. Gertrude was more of a brainiac. Loved her research more than anything else.

THEN Choice A: AriaAlibi

Choice C: WhatAriaSaw

IF Choice C: WhatAriaSaw

LEON

See anything strange that night?

ARIA

The clouds were thick like paste. Two owlcats fought in the bushes. I wrote a song about it. Well, I was trying to at least...

THEN Choice D: Interruption?

Choice E: Song

Choice D: Interruption?

LEON

What interrupted you?

ARIA

Negative energy, you could say. I was hanging around Marigold Potions. I heard Sara and Gertrude in a horrible spat.

LEON

What were they arguing about?

[Thought] So, Gertrude may have had some trouble with the other residents. Never took her for the type to seek drama. Always seemed too wrapped up in her work.

ARIA

Oh - I couldn't tell you. I ran away. I wanted to finish my composition.

LEON

Did anybody see you leave?

ARIA

I don't think so. I work alone!

LEON

That's all for now.

*[Thought] It worries me that no one can vouch
for her alibi...*

IF Choice E: Song

LEON

Tell me more about this song.

ARIA

You know how rainstorms sound off the cliffs of
East Reinlass - splick splick splick? That kind
of rhythm. But just when it was getting good in
my head...

THEN Choice D: Interruption?

BRANCH END.

BARKS SAMPLE

Character: Syla (the Player)

Context: The warrior Syla searches the game area for her missing daughter Vivian. She becomes aware that a force has emerged on the island, bringing new danger. She is increasingly distraught at Vivian's disappearance.

<u>Character - Syla</u>	<u>Use</u>	<u>Barks</u>
If Player tries to leave area before discovering important Point of Interest.	Exploration	There's something I'm not seeing. I feel it.
	Exploration	I'll search some more around here.
If Player is stuck in one area.	Exploration	She's not here. Better move on.
	Exploration	I should hurry.
Victory	In combat	Defeat isn't an option.
	In combat	My latest conquest.
Boss battle	In combat	No match for my chaos.
	In combat	It ends at last.
NPC battle	Enemy defeated	Got you!
	Enemy defeated	Not this time.
	Enemy defeated	Stay down.
	Enemy defeated	That was new and strange.
Health low	In distress	I need to find a crystal.
	In distress	Can't let my guard down.
	In distress	Gods, help me focus.
	In distress	I'll never surrender.

BRANCHING QUEST SAMPLE

Character: Syla

NPCs: The wounded creature, elementals.

Location: Mount Morgaine (game area).

Context: **The warrior** Syla searches the game area for her missing daughter Vivian. She becomes aware that a force has emerged on the island, bringing new danger. She is increasingly distraught at Vivian's disappearance.

Reward: Player gains pages of the Wizard's Diary and learns about Vivian's whereabouts. Player gains world affinity points.

OBJECTIVE: Search for your daughter Vivian.

PLAYER (as SYLA) decides to explore the Cottage Cliffs.

SYLA

Bet Vivian's collecting feathers on the cliffs again. She better not be annoying the eagles again.

When PLAYER crosses the cliffs, a deep rumble breaks a portion of the cliffs apart. This is a foreshadowing of the chaos to come.

CHALLENGE TRIGGERED: PLAYER must find a path across the cliff face to a giant eagle's nest. Like a small vertical maze.

PLAYER arrives at the large nest. It is empty but for feathers and eggshells. However, there are pieces of paper stuffed into the nest.

SYLA

She's not here. I thought she might be collecting feathers. That girl loves her freedom. (pause) Wonder where she gets it from...

ITEM FOUND: Pages of the Wizard's diary. +20 affinity points.

SYLA

So, someone's watching us. (Pause) Viv, I'm coming!

QUEST END.

PLAYER OPTIONS:

- 1.1 Enter the Cottage Plains
- 1.2 Enter the Cottage Island
- 1.3 Enter the Moaning Trees

1.1 - **PLAYER** decides to explore the Cottage Plains.

SYLA

Perhaps Vivian is playing in her fort on the other side of the plains.
(Beat, tenderly)
The one she doesn't think I know about.

CHALLENGE TRIGGERED: **PLAYER** must search plains for three arrows that lead them to Vivian's playfort.

SYLA

Viv marks the path with her arrows.

CHALLENGE TRIGGERED: While roaming this area, the **PLAYER** is vulnerable to random attacks by **ELEMENTALS**.

LOCATION DISCOVERED: **PLAYER** arrives at the **PLAYFORT**. The fort is a makeshift tent under a stand of trees, barely holding together but made with care and creativity. Vivian's belongings litter the inside. The fort is empty.]

SYLA

Viv? No one here.

ITEM FOUND: Pages of the Wizard's diary. +20 affinity points.

SYLA (URGENTLY)

Who's written this, and why?

QUEST END.

PLAYER OPTIONS:

1.2 Enter the Cottage Island

1.3 Enter the Moaning Trees

1.2 - PLAYER decides to explore Cottage Island.

SYLA

Vivian might be climbing the rocks. She's usually on the far side, by the Cottage Cliffs.

A large creature from the forest intercepts the PLAYER. It is moving erratically, almost as if rabid. Its roars echo across the rocky island.

SYLA

What magic is this? But it looks... hurt.

CHALLENGE TRIGGERED: PLAYER must follow the creature through the rocks on Cottage Island. The creature will not leave the quest area. The chase will only be a few minutes.

LOCATION DISCOVERED: When PLAYER follows the creature to the ROCK BRIDGE area, the creature collapses from exhaustion.

SYLA

What made it sick? I'll have to ask Vivian. She knows these beasts.

ITEM FOUND: Pages of the Wizard's diary found tangled in the creature's hair. +20 affinity points.

SYLA

Something's not right. Better move on, quick.

QUEST END.

PLAYER OPTIONS:

1.1 Enter the Cottage Cliffs

1.3 Enter the Moaning Trees

1.3 PLAYER decides to explore the Moaning Trees forest area.

SYLA heads deeper into the forest via trails. As she walks, the surrounding trees emit a strange moaning. Then with a cascade of cracks some trees collapse around her, blocking her movement.

SYLA

This new force isn't native to the island. I must escape. I should climb upward and over the fallen trees.

CHALLENGE TRIGGERED: PLAYER must find and follow a path climbing upward over the fallen trees. At several points along the path, large chunks of foliage or tree trunks block SYLA's path. PLAYER must cut or push their way through obstacles.

Once obstacles are cleared, the PLAYER can continue on the forest path.

QUEST END.

PLAYER OPTIONS:

1.1 Enter the Cottage Cliffs

1.2 Enter the Cottage Island