

WRITING EXAMPLE DELIVER US MARS - Opening Cinematic

LENGTH 2 pages

DELIVERY Cinematic

GENRE Sci-fi, drama

SUMMARY

This scene sets the stage for our main character and her family. Early signs of Kathy's personality are shown through her room's description, her actions during the scene, and her interaction with her father.

SHOWCASED ELEMENTS

Linear cinematic writing, character exposition, dialogue.

CODE: 00101_CIN

DATE/DRAFT: 01FEB2022 - V5

INT. JOHANSON HOUSE / KATHY'S ROOM - DAY

A ceiling plastered with plastic glow in the dark stars. Next to it hangs a globe shaped lamp, coloured red-orange and detailed to look like Mars.

A child makes thruster noises, and a toy rocket slowly drifts past. *We are witnessing the world through the eyes of this little girl.* Guided by hand, she flies the little space ship across the fake stars and planet.

MISSION CONTROL (O.S.)
Moonbear 1, this is ground control.
Mission is a go. Do you copy? Earth
to Kathy, come in.

Mission Control's voice blends into a man's voice. A hand waves into our vision.

ISAAC (O.S.)
Hello? Earth to Kathy?

We look down from the ceiling; straight into the loving and warm eyes of ISAAC JOHANSON (40yo, classic dad-figure with his cardigan and glasses). He's holding something behind his back as a surprise.

As he reaches out to our vision, we CUT TO:

KATHY JOHANSON, she's a 6-7 years old, with bright mischievous eyes - *loveable trouble in a small sized package.* Isaac lifts a full-vision scuba mask off of her face.

ISAAC (CONT'D)
Hey, little explorer.

YOUNG KATHY
Hey.

ISAAC
It wasn't easy but I finally got you a new one. But before I give it to you, you have to promise you'll take care of him. Alright?

YOUNG KATHY
Okay.

ISAAC
Better than the ones you destroyed.
Promise?

YOUNG KATHY

I promise!

With a hint in his smile that shows he doesn't believe a word she's saying, he hands her Moonbear; a *stuffed animal toy with a space helmet*.

Kathy DROPS the rocket in her hands and takes the bear.

ISAAC

A Moonbear for my moonbear.

Father and daughter share a look, filled with love, when CLAIRE JOHANSON (in this instance 18yo, with a certain dry but warm 'matter of fact'-ness in her eyes) rushes to Kathy's door.

CLAIRE

(to Kathy)

Almost ready, sis! Give me five minutes to get into my wetsuit.

She runs back to her own room on the opposite side of the hallway. Isaac walks over as she rummages through her room like a tornado (off-screen).

ISAAC

Don't overdo it, honey. School and work never stops, so please pace yourself.

CLAIRE

I know, I know, I just lost track of time. Plus, the subject matter was just really fascinating.

Isaac chuckles, giving an understanding nod.

ISAAC

(to himself)

Like father, like daughter, I guess...

He looks at Kathy.

ISAAC (CONT'D)

So, moonbear? Are you going to take good care of this one?

YOUNG KATHY

Yes.

Isaac gauges her mischievous smile before he walks off as Kathy delightedly inspects the new Moonbear.

Kathy leaves her room.

WRITING EXAMPLE DELIVER US MARS - Act 1 Cinematic

LENGTH 3 pages

DELIVERY Cinematic

GENRE Sci-fi, drama

SUMMARY

An action scene, showing a core incident in the story's main conflict. The separation of our main character and her father serves as a main plot goal for the entire game, and is set up here.

SHOWCASED ELEMENTS

Linear cinematic writing, dramatic writing

CODE: 00215_CIN

DATE/DRAFT: 01FEB2022 - V4

INT. MOON BASE / OUTWARD LAUNCH SITE / LAUNCH SILO - NIGHT

Young Kathy falls halfway across the walkway.

She fumbles to the ground, still weak from the cryosleep.
Isaac's face turns to dread.

ISAAC

No!!!

Isaac immediately runs up to Kathy but halts when he sees...
Claire has reached the walkway from the other side; she's
racing towards Kathy as fast as she can.

Kathy tries to get up but immediately falls back down as PINS
and NEEDLES jolt through her legs.

Isaac rushes to Kathy, as fast as he can. She sees her father
running towards her.

YOUNG KATHY

Dad!

ISAAC

I'm coming, moonbear!

Claire is rushing towards her little sister.

ISAAC (CONT'D)

Claire! Stop!

But then... Kathy gets picked up by Claire.

ISAAC (CONT'D)

No!

Claire starts carrying Kathy as she kicks and screams and
tries to break free.

YOUNG KATHY

Let me go!

Isaac starts to chase Claire until he sees...

In slow-motion: The other WSA astronauts have now also made
it to the walkway. They're running towards him as they pass
Claire and Kathy.

Isaac's bravery dissipates, his feet weighing like stones as
he looks at Claire.

Claire looks back at him; there is anger in her eyes - a
resolute resentment.

Kathy tries to break free from her sister's clutches, reaching out to Isaac, who is so far away from her.

Isaac doesn't know what to do... The WSA astronauts get closer and closer.

Back to normal speed: a JOLT goes through Isaac's body as the walkway splits in the middle and starts auto-retracting.

SYSTEM VOICE

Alert - launch sequence initiated.
All personnel clear the blast chamber.

The WSA astronauts halt as the gap between the two walkways grows.

Paralyzed, Isaac stands at the edge of the walkway and looks at Kathy - completely crushed.

Kathy realizes what's happening and it sinks in...

YOUNG KATHY

Dad!

Claire's eyes glisten with pain as she looks at Isaac. Kathy is still trying to break free from her grasp.

SYSTEM VOICE

Alert - launch sequence initiated.
All personnel clear the blast chamber.

Isaac starts running back to the ARK, with ACE by his side.

Kathy is crying her eyes out as she looks at her father inside the ARK.

He steps into the ARK and turns to look back at her. And for a moment it's silent as the two look deep into each other's eyes.

The door of the ARK closes.

Kathy cries as loud as she can for her father.

The dome above the rocket begins to open up.

Claire calls out to the WSA Astronauts.

CLAIRE

Back to the control room!

The WSA astronauts and Claire, with Kathy held tight, run to the end of the bridge.

INT. MOON BASE / OUTWARD LAUNCH SITE / CONTROL ROOM - NIGHT

They rush back inside, including AYLA.

The thrusters from the rocket FIRE OFF, shaking the entire facility.

Claire falls with Kathy still in her hands. They hit the ground as Claire protects Kathy from the impact.

Kathy looks at the window with a view on the rocket...

SMOKE billows up from all around the ARK and the ROAR of the engines drowns out everything else.

Slowly, the massive vessel moves upwards into the starry night sky.

The ARK leaves the moon until there is only a starry sky left...

DELIVER US MARS appears on the screen - the camera floats gently into the starry night, slowly following the ARK. Until the entire screen is filled with blackness and stars.

DISSOLVE TO:

NEXT SCENE: **01101_CIN**

WRITING EXAMPLE DELIVER US MARS - En route to the rocket

LENGTH 3 pages

DELIVERY Gameplay sequence (V.O. and sequenced animation)

GENRE Sci-fi, drama

SUMMARY

A scene written to be experienced during gameplay in a restricted fashion.

SHOWCASED ELEMENTS

Dramatic writing, plot expository dialogue, character dialogue

CODE: 01307_GAM

DATE/DRAFT: 01FEB2022 - V5

EXT. ROBERTSSON SPACE CENTER / ASTROVAN - DAWN

Kathy and the rest of the team gets seated, Kathy sitting across from Claire inside the van. Ryan and Sarah sit together on the far side.

KATHY
(nervous)
Here we go...

CLAIRE
(not picking that up)
No turning back.

KATHY
Nope...

They pass along big security fences where the refugee town is built right up to its edge. The walls are plastered with signs and cries for help.

Kathy looks at them.

KATHY (CONT'D)
You know what I still think about?

CLAIRE
What?

KATHY
How come we get to live in better conditions than the people in the shanty town? How is that possible?

CLAIRE
Pure probability. Geographically and demographically we were born in the right place at the right time. They weren't so lucky.

KATHY
Right...

Kathy sees more and more protestors gathered at the fences. Hatred and anger spews from their mouths and eyes as they loudly protest the passing vehicle and its passengers.

KATHY (CONT'D)
They really don't seem to want us to go.

CLAIRE
No. But considering the amount of--

A brick loudly HITS AND CRACKS the window pane behind Claire as she ducks away from the impact.

SARAH

Woah! Are you okay?

Claire sits back up and inspects the damage - the safety glass took the hit; she's fine.

CLAIRE

Yes, only a bit startled.

The crew all look outside as the protestors loudly celebrate the impact, as the crowd is riling up even more.

The bus enters an underpass right on time as protestors start pelting more objects at the vehicle.

KATHY

Are they insane? They're not helping anyone by trying to hurt us! Why don't they understand that we're doing this to save them?

SARAH

These people will still be on the MPT waiting list until the day they die. If you saw the WSA using so many resources to send four people to space, you'd be angry too.

Kathy looks down, embarrassed. Claire tries to soften the blow.

CLAIRE

They don't understand. But when we bring the ARKs back, they will.

RYAN

Or they won't.

Claire looks disappointed at Ryan.

RYAN (CONT'D)

I mean, they might, and I hope they do. But you are promising something that might not happen, even *if* we return with the ARKs.

CLAIRE

(to Kathy)

"Hope springs eternal in the human breast". That's the way I choose to view it.

RYAN

Alexander Pope. "The soul, uneasy
and confined from home, dreams of a
life to come."

KATHY

Look at you, knowing your poetry.

Ryan taps against his temple with his index finger.

RYAN

Not just a pretty face.

Claire and Kathy smile. Sarah smiles as well, but her mind
wanders. Ryan notices, subtly caressing her arm.

CLAIRE

You might want to check out this
view.

The crew turns to the view from the front-facing window.

WRITING EXAMPLE DELIVER US MARS - Kathy's first E.V.A.

LENGTH 2 pages

DELIVERY Gameplay sequence (V.O. and sequenced animation)

GENRE Sci-fi, drama

SUMMARY

A scene that sets up the next player goal: our main character wants to take on the next extra-vehicular activity and fix the damage to the vessel.

SHOWCASED ELEMENTS

Researched writing: character's expertise in science and aerospace has been translated to dialogue and narrative/gameplay goals

CODE: 02205_GAM

DATE/DRAFT: 03FEB2022 - V5

INT. ZEPHYR-III / COCKPIT - NIGHT

Kathy arrives at the cockpit doors and opens them.

Claire is on comms through the cockpit's terminal with Maria.

MARIA (ON COMMS)

We're trying to see why the A.C.A.
didn't spot the debris. It
should've.

CLAIRE

I need eyes-on to determine the
damage. I'll perform an EVA and let
you know, GC.

MARIA (ON COMMS)

Copy.

Maria hangs up.

KATHY

Did the thruster get hit?

CLAIRE

Probably. Could you keep an eye on
the diagnostics, I'll get ready and--
-

KATHY

Wait...let me do it.

Claire halts and looks hesitantly at her.

KATHY (CONT'D)

Look, I need real-life experience
out there. Of all the EVA's we
could have, this one is *pretty*
safe, right?

Claire sees the logic in this argument but is having a hard
time letting her sister go into the vacuum of space.

KATHY (CONT'D)

I mean, I could just casually
mention my *stellar* Extra Vehicular
Activities training score...

CLAIRE

No, it's fine, I--

KATHY
Ninety. *Four.*

CLAIRE
Mine was 95.

KATHY
See? You're so much better with numbers! Best you monitor the diagnostics.

Claire SIGHS and smiles, even if her over-protective feeling hasn't completely subsided yet.

CLAIRE
Fine. Just...be very careful. We're still in orbit, so watch out for debris.

KATHY
Got it.

CLAIRE
Get prepped at the airlock and I'll guide you on comms.

Kathy heads out to the airlock.

WRITING EXAMPLE DELIVER US MARS - The Thruster Repair

LENGTH 2 pages

DELIVERY Gameplay sequence (Sequenced V.O. triggers)

GENRE Sci-fi, drama

SUMMARY

During a gameplay sequence where our character fixes the thruster of the spaceship, our character communicates her progress to her sister, whilst the two also fill the time bantering about their love life.

SHOWCASED ELEMENTS

Non-linear writing, branching trigger writing, romantic/loving writing

CLAIRE

Okay, turn the power off and begin
the debris removal.

Kathy gets on with the activity.

TRIGGER: 02208_GAM_G

Kathy presses the power button in the hatch.

*If Kathy doesn't turn the power off and moves too far away
from the hatch or starts cutting:*

CLAIRE (ON COMMS) (CONT'D)

The power, Kat! I can see it's
still on!

Kathy turns the power off.

TRIGGER: 02208_GAM_H

Kathy is cutting the debris.

KATHY

Hey, remember that sunken space
station in the bay behind our
house?

CLAIRE (ON COMMS)

Yes... why?

KATHY

Was just thinking about it earlier.
Did dad ever take you swimming
there when you were young?

A beat.

CLAIRE (ON COMMS)

He did, but not when I was that
young.

KATHY

What do you mean?

Claire SIGHS.

CLAIRE (ON COMMS)

Well... Never mind.

An awkward beat.

CLAIRE (ON COMMS) (CONT'D)
So... anybody you... fancy back
home?

KATHY
Wait, what?

CLAIRE (ON COMMS)
(playfully)
Or... maybe even on this ship?

Kathy SCOFFS in disbelief.

KATHY
What? Ryan?

CLAIRE (ON COMMS)
Or Sarah, I don't care.

KATHY
Apparently not. Least of all that
they're married.

CLAIRE (ON COMMS)
You can still have feelings for
someone despite the circumstances,
Kat. I don't know, with everything
that's going on with the world we
never really talk about this kind
of stuff? Do you ever think about
something like love?

KATHY
Do you?

CLAIRE
Good point. I'm going to shut up
now.

KATHY
I love you. Does that count?

CLAIRE (ON COMMS)
...no.

Kathy chuckles as you keeps cutting.

TRIGGER: 02208_GAM_I

Kathy finishes cutting the debris from the thruster.

KATHY
Right, it's done.

WRITING EXAMPLE DELIVER US MARS - A Clumsy Love Story

LENGTH 2 pages

DELIVERY Gameplay sequence (V.O. trigger, walk and talk)

GENRE Sci-fi, drama

SUMMARY

During a gameplay sequence where our character walks to the next gameplay area with her family, we use the time for characterization and deepen our character's background.

SHOWCASED ELEMENTS

(Non-)linear writing, wholesome/love/romantic writing

CODE: 02503_GAM

DATE/DRAFT: 06FEB2022 - V5

EXT. JOHANSON HOUSE / MOUNTAINSIDE - DAY

Young Kathy follows Claire and Isaac along the mountain trail as they get near the climbing area.

A heavy silence lingers around the three as they walk along the path.

YOUNG KATHY

Dad? Are you still going to finish your story?

ISAAC

Right! Where was I?

(remembers)

Ah! So mum was visiting one of her friends at a frat party that night.

YOUNG KATHY

What's a frat party?

ISAAC

Ehm, well it's like a birthday party, but instead of presents, people just... drink. A lot.

YOUNG KATHY

That sounds stupid.

ISAAC

It was. I never liked going to those either, But I'm glad I did go to this one... Your mum saw me staring at her so much that she finally came up to ask me why I wasn't dancing.

YOUNG KATHY

Why not?

ISAAC

Well, you've seen me dance. I told her that getting me to dance was a bad idea. And, well... I was proven right.

CLAIRE

(can't help but engage a bit)

What happened?

ISAAC

I hit her drink out of her hands as
I was flailing about like a
lunatic. Then, a bit of the broken
glass got lodged in her leg. Then,
there was blood everywhere. And
then, we had to go the emergency
room.

Claire CHUCKLES.

CLAIRE

Jesus, dad!

ISAAC

Needless to say, I didn't dance
again until our wedding day.

YOUNG KATHY

But dad, why did mommy fall in love
with you then?

ISAAC

(chuckles)

I really have no idea either,
darling.

They near a training area.

TRIGGER: 02501-3_GAM_A

If Kathy doesn't stay close:

ISAAC (CONT'D)

Moonbear, you coming?

ALT:

CLAIRE

Don't stray too far, Kat.

Kathy follows them

WRITING EXAMPLE DELIVER US MARS - A Tense Goodbye

LENGTH 3 pages

DELIVERY Cinematic

GENRE Sci-fi, drama

SUMMARY

A cinematic centered around the family drama of failed parenthood and abandonment.

SHOWCASED ELEMENTS

Linear writing, dramatic writing, dramatic dialogue

CODE: 04412_CIN

DATE/DRAFT: 01FEB2022 - V2

INT. JOHANSON HOUSE / GARAGE - DAY

Kathy enters the garage.

The sound of the storm simmers down inside. Kathy sees more holograms inside. It's her father and Claire.

Kathy slowly 'takes her place' behind Claire as they both look at Isaac rummaging through some work equipment, scattered inside the ravaged garage.

ISAAC
(impatient)
I really have to go...

CLAIRE
Then by all means, go.

Isaac finds what he's looking for. He pulls out some papers and hands them to Claire.

ISAAC
Just hand this over to the judge
after you get it notarized and
we'll be set.

CLAIRE
Fine.

ISAAC
It's only temporary guardianship,
honey. I'll be back.

CLAIRE
Sure.

ISAAC
I don't want to leave either--

CLAIRE
Then don't.

ISAAC
--but I have to. The project is
almost done. After that we'll never
be separated again. I promise.

Claire remains quiet.

ISAAC (CONT'D)
Darling, I'm really trying to do
what's best for you two.

CLAIRE

By being away all the time? By
leaving us on our own?

She gestures to where Kathy is actually standing.

ISAAC

You're not a kid anymore, Claire.

CLAIRE

And you're not a dad anymore, but
somehow I've become a mom.

ISAAC

Temporarily.

CLAIRE

(frustrated)

That's not the point...

Isaac doesn't know what to say, but tries.

ISAAC

I'll be back for you. You have to
trust me. What I'm doing is for
your future.

A painful silence hangs in the air...

CLAIRE

You have to make your flight if you
want to be at Fesekov on time.

Isaac feels hurt but tries to keep his chin up as he walks
over to Kathy.

Kathy sees the hologram come nearer to her and 'look' her in
the eyes.

ISAAC

I will see you soon, moonbear.
Okay?

Kathy nods to him, with her eyes glistening - she's having a
hard time not to get wrapped up in the memory.

Isaac leaves the garage.

Kathy looks at Claire and is completely absorbed in the
memory.

KATHY

Will you please stay with me? I
don't want to lose you.

The garage starts trembling. RUMBLING noises of a spacecraft
that's breaking creep back into the memory. Red lights slowly
start glowing through the room.

Claire turns to Kathy.

CLAIRE

Don't worry, sis. I won't ever
leave you. I promise.

As Kathy looks around her, realizing which memory is trying
to push through, fear overtakes her again.

SYSTEM VOICE

Pod 2 deployment commencing in 3...
2... 1...

The RUSH of the pod dropping grows LOUDER, evolving into LOUD
STATIC.

CUT TO:

NEXT SCENE IN HERSCHEL QUARRY / ARES ROVER: **05101_CIN.**

WRITING EXAMPLE DELIVER US MARS - Plan B

LENGTH 3 pages

DELIVERY Gameplay (V.O. and sequenced animation)

GENRE Sci-fi, drama

SUMMARY

Our character is eavesdropping (and needs to actively stay close) to a conversation containing secretive information.

SHOWCASED ELEMENTS

(Non-)linear writing, dramatic writing, dramatic dialogue

CODE: 05318_GAM

DATE/DRAFT: 01FEB2022 - V9

INT. ARK HABITAS / MEDICAL WING / STORAGE ROOM - NIGHT

Kathy has flown AYL A to a vantage point where she can listen in on the conversation. As she gets a good view she sees and hears...

TRIGGER: 05318_GAM_A*If Kathy doesn't immediately get into earshot with AYL A:*

KATHY

Get over there, AYL A, quick. We need to hear what they're talking about!

SARAH

(hushed; entire scene)
...You're not listening to me.

RYAN

(hushed; entire scene)
I'm not sure I want to.

SARAH

We had to have a strategy.

RYAN

Well, it would've been nice to know in advance that *this* was going to be it!

Ryan points at the opened case in the middle of the room. It's a crate we've seen a few times and recognize at this point. Finally Kathy sees what's inside... *she sees weapons. Pistols that have been brought along the journey.*

KATHY (ON COMMS)

(to herself)
Are those, guns?

SARAH

No one knew about it except me and Maria. We didn't want to alarm anyone.

RYAN

So when would I find out? As soon as you'd want me to shoot someone's face off?

SARAH

I was going to tell you. I just had to make sure Kathy wouldn't find out.

(beat)

Imzadi, please--

RYAN

This is not an '*imzadi*'-moment.

SARAH

Do you really think that if we find any of the Lunar Council members alive that they'll come along peacefully?

RYAN

But that's the whole reason Maria wanted Kathy here, isn't it? To at least get Isaac to come peacefully?

KATHY (ON COMMS)

(to herself)

...what?

SARAH

Yeah, that's plan A. This (points at guns) is plan B.

Ryan sighs; he's not on board with any of this. Sarah tries to get close to him.

SARAH (CONT'D)

I'm sorry I didn't tell you and I know it's a drastic plan B, but please don't tell Kathy. Please?

She tries to hold Ryan close to her; trying to find his confirmation and comfort in an embrace. And for a second Ryan allows it, until he breaks loose and closes the weapon crate.

RYAN

You should get some rest.

Sarah nods, leaving Ryan with the crate. She heads for the door - and for Kathy's room.

TRIGGER: 05318_GAM_B

KATHY (ON COMMS)

Oh no! AYL A, get back here quick!

Kathy jolts into action to race back to her bed before they find her awake...

WRITING EXAMPLE DELIVER US MARS - Don't Give a Damn about Earth

LENGTH 3 pages

DELIVERY Gameplay (V.O. and sequenced animation)

GENRE Sci-fi, drama

SUMMARY

Our character relives a memory from when she was young, where the tense conflict between two of her guardians erupts to a climax.

SHOWCASED ELEMENTS

Linear writing, dramatic writing, dramatic dialogue

CODE: 06306_GAM

DATE/DRAFT: 01FEB2022 - V6

INT. JOHANSON HOUSE / LIVING ROOM - DAY (FLASHBACK)

As Kathy opens up the airlock door in Odum, she is suddenly back in her old house.

Outside a thunder storm is loudly raging on. Kathy is back in the upstairs hallway of her house.

KATHY

(to herself)

I remember when he said that before.

It's completely ravaged. As she walks down the stairs she notices scuba gear lying around the living room and she sees...

Herself as a young kid standing in the room, looking at Claire and Isaac that are pitted against each other. *None of them notice Kathy as she can watch the scene unfold like a silent spectator.*

CLAIRE

Just-- Please tell me what the hell you were thinking? You don't take a child to that sunken death trap in the bay! They could've taught her all that training at the WSA.

Isaac is kneeling down, putting away the equipment.

ISAAC

I wanted to teach her myself, you know I don't trust them to--

CLAIRE

Well, I don't trust you, but I guess my opinion has no value anymore, right? I've lost custody so I've lost a say in the matter. You simply appear back on Earth to take her and that's that.

ISAAC

I'm her father, Claire.

CLAIRE

Oh, I know, don't worry. The state also made damn sure that I acknowledge that fact. Even though *her father* thinks it's perfectly okay for a little girl to live on the moon.

YOUNG KATHY
(to Isaac)
Can we go back home, please?

ISAAC
Yes, we're leaving, moonbear.
(back to Claire)
I'm sorry you don't understand, but
that's what's going to happen.

CLAIRE
And you are being a selfish and
terrible father, acting only out of
your own fears and pain.

ISAAC
You have no idea what you are
talking about.

CLAIRE
We both know full well you are
choosing to be on the moon for some
inconceivable reason. Instead of
focussing your talent and efforts
here on Earth, so--

ISAAC
(erupts)
I don't give a damn about Earth,
all I care about is her!

Isaac points to young Kathy, who almost recoils at his anger.
And for a moment, it remains silent inside as the thunderous
clouds outside roar softly.

CLAIRE
And what about me, dad?

Isaac stands speechless; realizing his words.

ISAAC
O-of course, you are also-- But you
know that I love you, right?

Claire holds back her sadness as she looks at young Kathy.

CLAIRE
Bye, Kat. Ill see you again
someday. I promise.

Young Kathy is softly crying and follows Claire with her gaze
as her big sister walks out of the room.

ISAAC
Please don't leave. Please--

A flash of lightning lights up the dreary room and as the light returns to normal, Kathy is completely alone again. Her younger self, Isaac and Claire have all dissipated.

WRITING EXAMPLE DELIVER US MARS - Crafting a Plan

LENGTH 2 pages

DELIVERY Gameplay (V.O. triggers)

GENRE Sci-fi, drama

SUMMARY

Our character devises a gameplan on how to approach the next gameplay area. Based on exploration/investigative gameplay, our story progresses.

SHOWCASED ELEMENTS

(Non-)linear writing, action/plot writing

CODE: 09214_GAM

DATE/DRAFT: 18JAN2022 - V2

INT. UNISON - DAY

Kathy and Sarah reach a vantage point to the entrance of ARK Vita's facility.

SARAH
(panting)
Okay, just... give me one second...

Sarah takes cover next to a window. She's in a lot of pain.

SARAH (CONT'D)
Think that facility leads to the
ARK?

KATHY
Looks like it, yeah.

SARAH
How's our chances of just walking
in without any hassle?

TRIGGER: 09214_GAM_A

Kathy looks at the colonists just outside the facility. A coming and going of people that report in or head out to another area to survey - always blocking the direct path.

KATHY
Not... good.

SARAH
I was afraid of that.

KATHY
Maybe there's another way in...

TRIGGER: 09214_GAM_B

Kathy looks around and sees a maintenance tunnel entrance, more off the main road.

KATHY (CONT'D)
There's a maintenance shaft that
might get us there with a bit of a
detour.

SARAH
(groans in pain)
Not sure I can handle more detours.

KATHY
Maybe I can do something to create
a diversion. But how, and where...

TRIGGER: 09214_GAM_C

Kathy looks around and sees an enormous oxygen regulator facility.

KATHY (CONT'D)
That's their pump regulator that
controls the incoming oxygen from
ARK Habitas.

SARAH
You're right. Why?

KATHY
Look. No one is wearing a
pressurized suit. If I temporarily
turn it off, everyone will be
forced to suit up or get to safety.
We could use that distraction to
get you in that facility.

Kathy gets up.

KATHY (CONT'D)
I can use the maintenance tunnel to
get to the facility unnoticed.

SARAH
(fearful)
Kathy, I-- I don't know about this.

KATHY
I will meet you at the entrance.

SARAH
(sincere)
Okay. Good luck.

Kathy heads out towards the maintenance tunnel.

WRITING EXAMPLE Dogbone (Excerpt)

LENGTH Excerpt, 3 pages (full script, 20 pages)

DELIVERY Short Film or Feature Film's first act

GENRE Crime, Heist, Comedy

SUMMARY

A heist/crime screenplay where the fight over one valuable suitcase is at the center and the classic 'heist switcheroo' trope, where the story has a twist and reveal regarding the heist, is elevated and subverted to extremity.

SHOWCASED ELEMENTS

Complex plot structure, genre-writing, comedic tone-of-voice

2

EXT. AMSTERDAM CANALS / HOTEL JAGES - CONTINUOUS

2

The Mule enters an inconspicuous and dilapidated building along the canals. Four letters on the facade try to spell 'HOTEL'.

3

INT. HOTEL GAJES / LOBBY - CONTINUOUS

3

A SLOW MOTION CLOSE UP OF THE SUITCASE SWINGING BACK AND FORTH WITH THE NEARING LOBBY DESK IN THE BACKGROUND.

The Mule looks around, taking in his surroundings. He spots:

- Behind the counter, the RECEPTIONIST (20yo man, acne-riddled face, and streams of dried up fear sweat on his forehead) who sees The Mule walking towards him.

- In the kitsch foyer area, including rundown antique sofa and salon table, he sees SPEEDY (28yo woman in tracksuit, shaved hair, and skittish movements suggesting caffeine is the predominant fluid running through her bloodstream). Her gaze stays tweaked and set on The Mule as he passes her.

ANONYMOUS VOICE (V.O.)

So now you have this little hole-in-the-wall hotel with a highly valuable briefcase inside it that everybody knows about.

- Leaning against the wall near the reception desk, is TRIGGER (27yo man, the quiet, focused and mysterious type). His eyes also firmly fixed on The Mule.

ANONYMOUS VOICE (V.O.)

And what do you think'll happen when all the gangs that matter, sends out one of his guys out to go get it?

Taking it all in, The Mule carefully puts the briefcase down next to him as he arrives at the counter. He plops down a wad of cash on the counter in front of the receptionist.

THE MULE

Room for one night, please.

He hears a moped arriving outside at the front of the hotel. Turning to the door, he sees BEEFCAKE (31yo male giant, with cauliflower ears and a nose that's been broken well over the double digits) park his scooter at the entrance. The enormous brass knuckle on his hand catches The Mule's eye immediately. And guess who Beefcake is staring at too?

ANONYMOUS VOICE (V.O.)
 You get a great recipe for a very
 bad time, right?

The Mule, trying to keep his cool, turns back to the receptionist as he is handed the key IN SLOW-MOTION.

In *The Good, The Bad and The Ugly*-esque fashion all parties make eye contact as the key slides across the desk towards The Mule.

ANONYMOUS VOICE (V.O.)
 And I want to advice you not to
 blink because otherwise you'll miss-

THE SLOW-MOTION ABRUPTLY ENDS.

RECEPTIONIST
 Here is your-

The *BANG!* of a bullet being fired interrupts the receptionist, the bullet hole appearing inches away from him on the wall behind him. The receptionist drops to the floor like a goat that got startled.

The Mule jumps up and turns to the lobby's insidious group of visitors, seeing the proverbial smoking gun in Trigger's hands aimed at him.

Equally as surprised by the premature starting shot, Beefcake and Speedy look from Trigger to The Mule.

THE MULE
 Already? I haven't even freaking-

No one gets to finish their sentences in this sequence, as The Mule sees Speedy already sprinting towards him.

QUE THE ACTION MUSIC.

The Mule picks up the briefcase of the floor as fast as he can and bolts further into the hotel.

Trigger aims his sights to gun The Mule down, but doesn't see the HAMMERING BLOW coming from behind from Beefcake.

Accidentally firing the gun in the process, Trigger HITS Speedy in his hand as he goes down to the ground.

As Speedy is almost able to reach for the briefcase, the bullet SHOTS THROUGH his extending hand. Crying in pain, Speedy DROPS to the floor.

Using this lucky twist of fate, The Mule heads towards the elevator as fast as he can.

He *TAP-TAP-TAP-TAPS* the button of the ragged, old elevator. It opens up immediately but slowly.

Meanwhile, The Mule looks behind him: Beefcake is walking towards him and passes Speedy, as she is scrambling herself together.

He gets into the elevator and anxiously *TAP-TAP-TAP-TAPS* the 'close door'-button a thousand times.

Beefcake jogs closer and closer.

The elevator doors close slowly.

Sweat dripping down his upper lip, The Mule looks with complete fear as Beefcake and Speedy rush towards him.

The doors are almost shut.

Beefcake is close but gets dead-legged by Speedy from behind.

The doors close down to an inch.

The Mule's heart is POUNDING OUTSIDE OF HIS CHEST.

[END OF EXCERPT]

WRITING EXAMPLE PROJECT LAIKA - Opening Cinematic

LENGTH 4 pages

DELIVERY Cinematic

GENRE Sci-fi, drama

SUMMARY

An opening sequence, designed to focus on introducing our main character and their traumatizing background. Told in first-person to effectively and instantly immerse ourselves and empathize with our main character.

SHOWCASED ELEMENTS

Character and story exposition, show-don't-tell

INT. A CHILDREN'S ROOM - DAY

A first-person point-of-view guides our view of a small children's room. Its pastel colored walls are decorated with decals of happy looking animals. In the corner is a toy chest filled to the brim with toys. It looks like the perfect kind of kid's room, something the choice of music seems to support with melancholic 'music box'-like music playing.

The small kid we inhabit as our POV walks up to a small plastic table set in a corner where the ground is littered with action figures and miniature cars all around him.

WITH LITTLE FADE-TO-BLACK DIPS WE EXPERIENCE SNIPPETS OF HIS ACTIVITIES.

He's playing with toy cars. Gently, he rolls a car across the mat that's a cheerful top down view of a village. He takes another car and BANGS them together in a sort of collision.

DIP TO BLACK:

He's drawing. The drawing is still in an early stage and looks nothing out of the ordinary. But the drawings already hung up on the wall are clearly too complex for a normal kid. The drawings range from abstract art to beautiful still life studies of objects found in his room.

DIP TO BLACK:

He's playing with wooden shapes. Carefully, he grabs a wooden block from the ground. He slowly positions it on top of a tower he's made. But this tower isn't simply a towering heap of blocks, *it's a construction that uses complex physics and balancing points to keep it from falling to the ground.* Again, it looks nearly impossible for a child to make...

BUZZZZZZZZ! Our eyes fixate on a big metal door we haven't seen before, in the corner of the room. *CLANG!* It unlocks.

This side of the room contains something else that catches our eyes: a big wall-wide see-through window. *This is no ordinary kid's room. This is a research facility.*

Behind the window, three men stare back at the small kid. Their glasses reflecting the fluorescent light which masks their eyes. In sharp contrast with the kid's room, the area they're standing in looks bleak and gray, filled with medical and technical equipment.

One of the scientists walks through the opened door towards us, under vigilant attention of his colleagues. The kid's POV is getting jittery and stressed;

He starts shaking, he alternates between looking at the scientist walking up to him and to the ones behind the glass. *He's clearly scared, something the threatening bass in the musical composition underscores.*

He tries to back away from the approaching man, but it's no use. The scientist takes his hand and pulls him along towards the metal door.

DIP TO BLACK:

INT. TESTING FACILITY - DAY

In a windowless room with gray and thick concrete walls, a makeshift fitness area has been set up with some gym equipment and a table area. This room also has a big see through window, with scientists behind it watching everything closely.

A BRIGHT LIGHT flashes in the kid's eyes. The scientist checks his pupils with a flashlight. And he checks more; *his teeth, his hearing, his reflexes.* It's methodical and it's stiff. *It's routine.*

The scientist gazes at his colleagues behind the glass.

SCIENTIST

Ready?

They nod. Above the glass, a RED LIGHT turns on next to a camera mounted up there. He looks back at the kid.

SCIENTIST (CONT'D)

This is day 3782, project's subject is codename Laika.

THE DIP-TO-BLACKS HAVE BEEN REPLACED FOR HARD CUTS TO BLACK BETWEEN MOMENTS - SOMETIMES EVEN BETWEEN SMALLER SUB-MOMENTS. THE CUTS ARE FASTER AND THE MOMENTS SHOWN, SHORTER.

The child is running on a treadmill as fast as he can. On a speed that already looks fast for the average adult. But the scientist looks unimpressed. He ups the speed. The kid reciprocates and starts running faster. He's having difficulty, but he's managing. The scientist cranks it up even more to *inhuman speed*. The kid once again seems to handle it, albeit with trouble.

CUT TO BLACK:

Math equations fill the empty wall it's beamed onto via projection. Underneath are multiple choice answers.

A big timer on screen COUNTS DOWN FROM FIVE as the kid makes his selection before the timer ends. In fast succession the kid hits the button corresponding with the correct answer. With a loud *DING!* he gets notified in a Pavlovian way that he's right. The equations get harder and harder, to the point where it almost seems like a foreign language to the untrained eye. *A Beautiful Mind's got nothing on these equations.* Yet, the kid is still answering them correctly in the allotted time.

The floor is covered with cushioned mats as the kid is standing opposite of an opponent dressed in judo attire. This is a full grown man and without any sign of hesitation, he tries to strike the kid. At first, the kid tries to dodge and run away from the man but after so many attempts of his opponent to grab him, he finally retaliates. He grabs his arm and launches him over his back. *Impossible for a small kid, yet somehow he's doing it.*

On the beamer a montage flies by of an assortment of archival footage. *Not unlike the way Leeloo in The Fifth Element learns about the world,* the kid watches hours of encyclopedic video's and images that learn him about the world. *All the good and the bad stuff.* When his attention seems to fail and he looks away for a second, the scientist readjusts his gaze back to the screen.

SEVERAL OF THESE RIGOROUS TESTS PASS BY, ALL OF THEM AIMED AT HIS INTELLIGENCE, HIS PHYSICAL ABILITIES AND TO EDUCATE HIM. HE EXCELS IN EVERYTHING.

CUT TO BLACK:

INT. CHILDREN'S ROOM - DAY

BUZZZZ! The loud buzzer rings again as the small kid gets escorted back into his 'pleasant' room.

DIP TO BLACK:

The kid's lying in bed whilst the scientist hooks him up to several machines to check his vitals. Behind him, his fellow scientist seem to wrap up the days testing and they're getting ready to leave. When all the wires are hooked up and they're set, the scientist leaves the room through the big metal door again. When all the scientists have left, the room's lighting design changes from the bright DAYLIGHT-mode to a soft MOONLIGHT/NIGHT-mode. Finally, all the commotion has died down. **It's completely quiet now.**

For a while, the kid just stares at the ceiling. *Just a moment to take all the heavy imagery and fast-paced information we just saw in...*

He looks at his wiring and to the machines he's hooked up to; *he doesn't really have a lot of freedom to move.* He looks at the TATTOO on his lower left arm which looks like a sort of symbol/code meant to identify/trace him.

And it's now, for the first time, that our POV gets up and looks at himself on the reflection of the see through mirror. *It's LAIKA - 8yo, buzzcut and big blue eyes that seem to excude a beautiful sort of vulnerability mixed with a lot of pain due to everything he's been through.*

We detach from his POV as we travel in to his reflection.

Laika brushes his hands through his hair. He looks in pain but desponded at the same time. *Years of this kind of treatment will do that to you.*

The camera even moves through the reflection to float to a profile close-up of Laika. A little camera-fun. There is a glimmer in his eyes that seems to push away the sadness we just witnessed. A sort of determination; a survival-mechanism.

He goes to lie down. His eyes are open wide as he stares off into space. **And as the camera floats above and away from him in a bird's eye view,** we see he's lying in the first bed in a row of five; *the other four are empty, even without a pillow or blanket.*

At the foot of the beds lies the answer: **as we pan from left to right past all the beds** we see they have small information charts, like the ones you find in hospitals. They include several data:

- Different codenames, like *DARWIN, FLEMING, ASIMOV, ELI* and of course *LAIKA*
- Date of birth, all of them the same day: 04-08-2016
- Current status. All four empty beds are marked by a cross and date of death; *none of the others have made it past their sixth birthday.*

Except for Laika. His current status reads: *STABLE.*

THE TITLECARD COMES IN: PROJECT LAIKA

And then... *a loud RUMBLING far away. And an alarm going off, a red flashing light turning on. Something's happening...*

WRITING EXAMPLE Puppet Rising (Excerpt)

LENGTH Excerpt, 3 pages (full script, 16 pages)

DELIVERY Short Film or Series Pilot

GENRE Dystopia, Absurd/Dark Comedy

SUMMARY

A story about human beings that are enslaved to a civilization of puppets, forced to puppet them and submit to their every need. Think *1984* meets *The Muppets*... yes, I know...

SHOWCASED ELEMENTS

Creativity, story structure, dark comedic tonality

INT. HOUSE RALPH/LIVING ROOM - NIGHT

Ralph the Puppet's living room is just like any other puppet's in this universe: *it looks and feels like a human living room, except everything has been elevated and put on improvised mounds so it's on the right height for the puppets. From mirrors to televisions and picture frames. Even couches, which have holes underneath the cushions for the humans to put the puppets through to place them 'on the couch'.*

On a prominent place in the room a framed picture hangs of a puppet, clearly of high social standing. *This will later be apparent to be PRESIDENT PUNCH - a puppet that has something equally cheerful and terrifying about his appearance.*

The television set is blaring while Ralph is trying on different haircut-pieces that he sticks on and removes off his head thanks to velcro. *Getting ready for the big date.*

PUPPET NEWS ANCHOR (O.S.)

Top story today is the brutal and cowardly attack on the recently built Creation Workshop by savage Puppet Runners earlier today.

His human slave and puppeteer, Luke, tries to look at the television from the corner of his eye. On the television he can see the news anchor, with a picture-in-picture of the scene of the crime.

INT/EXT. CREATION WORKSHOP - DAY (FULL-SCREEN NEWSREPORT)

A big factory hall that looks beautifully decorated like a kids show set piece, is now shown going up in flames. In the aftermath of the fire, shots are shown of hundreds of smoldering sewing machines with puppet police and puppet forensics scattered across the scene.

PUPPET NEWS ANCHOR (V.O.)

The Creation Workshop was the biggest and latest manufacturer of new puppet inhabitants. The attack was claimed by the terrorist group better known as The Puppetrunners.

A managerial puppet is shown, being interviewed.

MANAGERPUPPET

Oh, yes, most definitely. This will have a huge impact on our population increase numbers, I'm afraid. Definitely *not* a nice act to commit.

INT. BREEDING ROOM - DAY (FULL-SCREEN NEWSREPORT)

Two humans, one male and one female, both without puppets attached to them, are sitting in a small, sober room. It only has a bed in it and a wall that has a big window looking into the next room. Inside this other room there are two puppet scientists looking intently at the scared couple.

PUPPET NEWS ANCHOR (V.O.)

The center was even the first in our country to simultaneously create new puppets, as well as to breed new humans.

One of the puppet scientist knocks on the window as the other gets his clipboard ready in his hand.

PUPPET SCIENTIST

(shouts through the window)

You can start now!

The other scientist frantically nods affirmatively. The couple looks embarrassed and scared.

INT. HOUSE RALPH/LIVING ROOM - NIGHT

ON THE NEWS REPORT a final shot is shown of a human newborn getting fitted with a small hand puppet around his tiny hand.

PUPPET NEWS ANCHOR (V.O.)

After the break: male puppets connecting to female human slaves. Ethically okay or big no-no? Up next.

Luke is appalled by the report. Ralph however hasn't noticed any of it as he's still working on sticking on his eyebrows in a 'sexy setting'. He's already chosen his most suave haircut-piece as THE BELL RINGS. Ralph jolts up and rushes towards the hallway.

INT. HOUSE RALPH/HALLWAY - CONT.

Ralph walks up to the door and can't contain his excitement. However, the door doesn't open. When Ralph looks down at Luke, he sees Luke deep in thought. He SCRAPES his throat, which is enough for Luke to awaken and open the door as quickly as possible.

The door opens and Ralph can't believe his eyes. In front of him is the beautiful puppet *BELLA* - a cute looking puppet with a confident albeit little bit lowbrow appearance. She looks at Ralph the same way he does. *This is love at first sight, something the music not only confirms but thickly underlines, just like this text.*

What the two puppets don't seem to notice, however... is that on the human level Luke is also transfixed by ANNA - 29yo gentle and beautiful looking woman (that mismatches in skin color with the felt/skin color of her puppet master). Again, Anna also looks back at Luke with the same intent.