

This is an extract from Chapter 3 of my game Quinn & Flynn, set in quasi-Victorian England, with a focus on dialogue. Videotome syntax should be pretty human-readable; all choices can be clicked through and "time out" if enough new lines are reached (hitting a section end: ###).

You can check out the demo from Chapter one here:

<https://stanwixbuster.itch.io/quinn-flynn-the-complete-series>

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- ↪ Q! - I still don't believe...
- ↪ Quinn sighs deeply, a mixture of exhaustion and annoyance, and props himself upright on your bed.
- ↪ Q! - After all this, in some shack, with /you/.
- ↪ *BG\_FLYNNFLAT\_CURTAINS MUS\_FLAT* - The mid-afternoon sun streams through curtains that were never designed to block it. A line of light catches Quinn's right eye, and he squints a little.
- ↪ F! - Were you expecting a palace?
- ↪ Q! - Couldn't you have found a hiding spot that's a little less decrepit?
- ↪ F! - What's wrong with my flat?
- ↪ Q! - What's wrong is—
- ↪ He chokes on his next word.
- ↪ Q! - This is /your/ flat?
- ↪ F! - Of course it is.
- ↪ He looks around, taking in every corner of your bedroom, eyebrows creasing with increasing concern.
- ↪ F! - Does it offend you?
- ↪ Q! - I just didn't expect—
- ↪ F! - So it does?
- ↪ Q! - Flynn, please.
- ↪ Q! - I expected, you know...
- ↪ He looks again. Maybe he's trying to find something to compliment.
- ↪ Q! - With how much you make, something bigger? Better-kept?
- ↪ F! - What do you expect from a poet's salary?
- ↪ Q! - And a thief's.
- ↪ F! - Oh, yes! How could I forget?
- ↪ Q! - How could you ever.
- ↪ A silence. Outside, a bird chirps with a certain loneliness.
- ↪ Q! - How did we get here?
- ↪ F! - You fainted, and I got some friends to—
- ↪ Q! - I don't mean that. I don't care.
- ↪ Q! - You want to keep me around for some game. You find it funny. I don't care.
- ↪ Q! - I mean Elias getting roped into this, me saying some things I shouldn't have, and then—
- ↪ *CHOICE1:[Tell him]:Scene1p1* - He interrupts himself with a shudder, and a sharp inhale.
- ↪ You watch his face shift subtly between at least five different emotions. His mouth hangs open, bottom lip quivering.
- ↪ It's quite fun, imagining the thoughts that are battling inside his head.

- ↪ Q! - And then we...
- ↪ You wonder how long it's going to take him to say it.
- ↪ Q! - We've just...
- ↪ It takes at least another thirty seconds.
- ↪ Q! - We killed him, didn't we? We've killed him.
- ↪ It's actually faster than you expected.
- ↪ GOTO:Scene1p1 - You smile. You've let him languish for long enough.

###

### **Scene1p1**

- ↪ F! - Give over. He's fine.
- ↪ SFX\_BEDCREAK - Quinn jolts up.
- ↪ Q! - Are you serious?
- ↪ F! - Of course he is. He collapsed in one of the best-manned hospitals in the entire country.
- ↪ F! - And, I did hear a rumour, that an anonymous someone left a tip over what got him.
- ↪ SFX\_BLANKET - Quinn exhales thrice his lung capacity, deflating into the mattress.
- ↪ Q! - Thank you.
- ↪ F! - For poisoning him?
- ↪ Q! - For doing the right thing.
- ↪ F! - ...For poisoning him?
- ↪ CHOICE1:[Drop it]:Scene1p1c1 Q! - For helping him not die, Flynn. You don't need the act on all of the time.
- ↪ F! - Could've been anyone at all. I hear some poisons have very distinct symptoms.
- ↪ Q! - Flynn.
- ↪ F! - A vigilante toxicologist! Wouldn't that be a wonderful hero of a story?
- ↪ Q! - /Flynn/.
- ↪ F! - Shame we'll never know who did it, right?
- ↪ GOTO:Scene1p2 Q! - ...Right.

###

### **Scene1p1c1**

- ↪ Quinn's glare makes you start to feel something, and you roll your eyes.
- ↪ F! - Fine, fine. I told them.
- ↪ Q! - Thank you.
- ↪ He rubs his nose.
- ↪ Q! - I mean it.
- ↪ F! - It's more exciting to keep him alive. That's all.
- ↪ GOTO:Scene1p2 Q! - ...Right.

###

### **Scene1p2**

- ↪ Another silence. Nothing punctuates it.
- ↪ Q! - Why did we do that?
- ↪ F! - Why did you, you mean?
- ↪ Q! - /You're/ the one who poisoned him.
- ↪ F! - You're the one who asked.
- ↪ Q! - You're the one who pitched it!
- ↪ F! - You're the one who agreed.
- ↪ Q! - Well; well, I—

- ⇒ FI - "Oh, Flynn, he's annoyed me /so/ much, I'm so /helpless/, can't you /do/ something? I'd /love/ if you got rid of him for me, /honey/."
- ⇒ You smile at his silent fury.
- ⇒ FI - Paraphrasing, of course.
- ⇒ Q! - I said...
- ⇒ He scratches the back of his neck, and a shade of red leaves his face.
- ⇒ Q! - I thought he'd lost himself fully, you know? To the job. Everything else.
- ⇒ Q! - It was too far. I know that. I don't fully know what I was thinking. Maybe I thought it would be a mercy.
- ⇒ Q! - Then, well...
- ⇒ He rubs his face with both hands, pushing deeply into his eyes before continuing.
- ⇒ Q! - He was back to being EI again. He was the man I fell in love with.
- ⇒ Q! - Then this happened.
- ⇒ It's almost touching. A moment of anger, lashing out, and facing the full realisation of the consequences. That anger being what brought back something long lost.
- ⇒ Rage, regret, and reconciliation, all wrapped in some kind of love.
- ⇒ Then you laugh.
- ⇒ Q! - What's so funny?
- ⇒ FI - You're /really/ trying to absolve yourself?
- ⇒ FI - I have no idea what you actually think, but you want everyone else to think you're innocent, don't you?
- ⇒ He gasps.
- ⇒ Q! - I'm not—
- ⇒ FI - Who are you trying to convince? Maybe it's yourself. Not like you cared for anyone else.
- ⇒ FI - Certainly not me. I know you're an awful person. I was running along with it just to see what would happen.
- ⇒ FI - Was it Elias, perhaps? Maybe you /think/ you care for him. Maybe you actually do, given cops only care about cops.
- ⇒ FI - Not even mentioning the man himself. Sat there, moping about how everything's /different/, ready to start the cycle again next week.
- ⇒ FI - Oh, and you giving him that big lecture on his destructive tendencies, all while poison courses through his veins. You couldn't have set up better irony!
- ⇒ FI - Watching you two is hilarious. You're just as terrible as each other.
- ⇒ Quinn's breathing is rapid. His knuckles are white and fists filled with your sheets. You know how badly he wants to find an excuse to retort with.
- ⇒ He does, and manages to calm himself back to some form of sensibility.
- ⇒ Q! - Just us two? Like you didn't play any part in this?
- ⇒ FI - Your lovers' spat is all between you. I've merely been a spectator.
- ⇒ Q! - I asked you to do it, and you /did/ it. You have a hand in this whether you like it or not.
- ⇒ You lean back on the desk, flicking your hair to the side with a turn of the neck.
- ⇒ FI - That's assuming Elias convinces people I'm involved. I can wriggle out of this one, I think.
- ⇒ He was seeing you the night before, highly emotional, poison could have caused some form of hallucination...
- ⇒ FI - And that's not even mentioning, you wouldn't hand me over, would you?
- ⇒ Q! - What the hell are you talking about?

- ↪ FI - Would you, Quinn?
- ↪ He pauses, just like you hoped, and honestly knew he would.
- ↪ You readjust your fringe. The flick didn't do as much work as you wanted.
- ↪ FI - That's the funny thing about this. The funniest, to be more accurate.
- ↪ FI - We're the world's worst love triangle, aren't we?
- ↪ FI - The opposite of one, if you would. I tried to kill you. You tried to kill Elias. All that's left is for him to make an attempt on me.
- ↪ FI - And what /is/ the opposite of love, Quinn? Would you say hate?
- ↪ He stammers.
- ↪ Q! - I guess—
- ↪ FI - Oh, but we all don't /hate/ each other, do we? Hate each other enough to plunge the knife, but not enough to twist it.
- ↪ FI - We love the /idea/ of hating each other. To seethe and feel our emotions writhe at the thought of each other. A disgusting passion that we can't help but feed.
- ↪ FI - But, there's a temper to that hate. Like if we let it reach its climax, to burn everything down, suddenly we'll be left with nothing.
- ↪ FI - We couldn't imagine a life where we don't hate each other.
- ↪ FI - What a fascinating little bind we've made for ourselves.
- ↪
- ↪ Watching the expression on his face is a delight. There's much he wants to argue, and much he's still trying to fully understand, you can tell.
- ↪ He settles on a look that's oddly pleasant.
- ↪ Q! - That was a nice monologue.
- ↪ FI - The first of mine you've ever listened to?
- ↪ His lips tighten. There's at least a dozen insults he could spit, bitten back.
- ↪ Q! - You know what; yes. Sure. You win.
- ↪ FI - I've been winning since you fell for me.
- ↪ Q! - Then you're not winning anymore.
- ↪ You tilt your head.
- ↪ FI - You hate me, then?
- ↪ CHOICE1:[Yes]:Scene1p2c1 CHOICE2:[No]:Scene1p2c2  
CHOICE3:[Press]:Scene1p2c3 Q! - Do you?
- ↪ You didn't quite expect that response.
- ↪ Q! - Do /you/ hate me, Flynn?
- ↪ You can play into this, delaying your response.
- ↪ Your fingers drum on the desk. You lick your lips.
- ↪ Quinn shifts in the bed.
- ↪ Q! - Flynn?
- ↪ Maybe, if you wait long enough...
- ↪ GOTO:Scene1p3 SFX\_KNOCK\_THREE2 - Knocks from the front door, barely muffled one room away.
- ###
- Scene1p2c1**
- ↪ FI - Of course. I love to hate you.
- ↪ FI - You mustn't have understood a thing I was saying. That's a silly thing to ask after that.
- ↪ GOTO:Scene1p2i1 Q! - I understood well enough—
- ###

### **Scene1p2c2**

- ⇒ FI - Ah, you didn't listen to a thing I said.
- ⇒ FI - I don't /hate/ you. It's not hate. It's something deeper.
- ⇒ Q! - Which is?
- ⇒ That, actually, isn't something you've explored, for all the feelings it ignites in you.
- ⇒ GOTO:Scene1p2i1 Q! - What is it, then—

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### **Scene1p2c3**

- ⇒ FI - Don't try putting the question back on me. Do /you/?
- ⇒ Q! - Of course I hate myself.
- ⇒ FI - Nice try. Do you hate /me/?
- ⇒ He's right back where he's started, and you're sure, even angrier about it than before.
- ⇒ GOTO:Scene1p2i1 Q! - I—

###

### **Scene1p2i1**

- ⇒ GOTO:Scene1p3 - Knocks from the front door, barely muffled one room away.

###

### **Scene1p3**

- ⇒ Quinn whips his head around, tensing. You chuckle.
- ⇒ Q! - Do your roommates know about me?
- ⇒ FI - Roommates?
- ⇒ Q! - ...Yes. You said you lived with people.
- ⇒ FI - Did I?
- ⇒ You wonder what tale that was part of.
- ⇒ FI - Well, I lied.
- ⇒ Quinn blinks.
- ⇒ SFX\_KNOCK\_RAPID - A second rake of knocks, much more impatient than the last. You open the bedroom door partially before turning back.
- ⇒ SFX\_DOOR\_OPEN FI - You seemed fine on the way over, and nothing's started bleeding again. So, if anything goes sideways...
- ⇒ You twirl your hand, and shrug.
- ⇒ FI - Live with it, I guess.
- ⇒ Q! - Thank you, /doctor/.
- ⇒ FI - You're welcome.
- ⇒ GOTO:Scene2 CLEARSCREEN BG\_CLEAR MUS\_CLEAR SFX\_DOOR\_CLOSE -