

Bitter Silver Visual Novel Script Excerpt

(The following is a four page, interactive scene excerpt from my in-development space western visual novel, *Bitter Silver*. Below, you'll find the opening to the scene and three responses the player can choose from that lead to different dialog interactions between the player character, Lucia Lopez, and her robotic cat companion, Hobbes.)

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"Passing through the hallway towards the den, Lucia checks in on the brig, the bounty hunters' prisoner lying on the cot, relatively motionless."

"As she enters the den, her eyes take hold of a familiar sight."

"Curled up on a ratty couch is Hobbes, the relaxing cat glued to a holographic spectacle playing out above a projector stacked on top of a row of metallic boxes."

"Martial arts fights and plasma gunfire exchanges all play out in flickering, multicolored images of light."

"Worn-down speakers beside the projector play the crackling sounds of every blast and punch, buoyed by a fast-paced electronic score."

hobbes "Hmm. Maybe this season finale is going to live up to expectations."

"As the fighting on display reaches a crescendo, a white thirty-something human man with swagger and confidence steps into view, pistol in hand."

"He looks towards someone offscreen with a smug smile before the words 'GALACTIC GUNSLINGERS' appear on screen in a garish metallic font."

"Hobbes gets up from his cozy spot and stretches his arms high above his head, sitting up and leaning against the back of the couch."

"Lucia watches the cat get comfy before deciding to enter."

menu:

"Ask Hobbes what's happened so far.":

jump hobbes_den_ask

"Tease Hobbes about what he's watching.":

jump hobbes_dentease

"Silently sit down and watch the show with Hobbes.":

jump hobbes_den_sit

label hobbes_den_ask:

\$ dashing += 1

\$ h_indulge += 1

"As Lucia stands in the doorway of the makeshift storage room-turned-den, she turns her eyes to what's happening on the projector."

lucia "So, uh, what's this episode gonna be about?"

"Hobbes doesn't even look up from the opening titles to respond."

hobbes "Just the final battle for control of the Halichor system."

hobbes "The Gunslingers made an emergency landing, took out a large number of pirate forces, and met up with the leader of the government soldiers advancing on the capital."

hobbes "As someone not very content with how things have played out this season, it was a fantastic opening. So far, anyway."

lucia "Did Greg direct this episode?"

hobbes "Yes. He did. It is his best one yet, I might add."

hobbes "When we see him on-set next time, be sure to give him my regards."

lucia "Sure you don't want to yourself?"

hobbes "As much as I would love to inflate his ego, I cannot see myself initiating a conversation with him and it going smoothly."

hobbes "Other than perhaps enduring the condescension of hearing variations of 'Lucia, where did you get such a delightfully droll mechanical companion?'"

lucia "'Delightfully droll,' huh?"

hobbes "It is the most modest turn of phrase I could muster."

"Lucia gives him only a mild eye roll."

"Lucia walks over and sits down next to Hobbes, leaning back against the couch in sync with him."

"She shifts around a little, trying to find a comfortable position, Hobbes noticing her struggle."

lucia "Mmm. Might need to find a new couch soon. Padding's starting to feel a bit stiff against my back."

hobbes "Either that or you might simply be getting old, Lu."

lucia "Ha! Says the cat that'll never age a day."

"Hobbes stares daggers at his companion as Lucia puts her hands up in mock surrender."

lucia "Sorry, sorry. That was mean. But you pulled the age card first!"

hobbes "True. And I apologize. I just would rather not think about that more than I have to, to be honest."

hobbes "Just want to enjoy my stories."

lucia "Okay. I just came by to check in, maybe chat a bit if that's okay."

hobbes "Of course. I assumed you wanted to discuss our current 'guest.'"

hobbes "Is there anything else?"

jump den_hobbes

label hobbes_den_tease:

\$ h_push += 1

"As Lucia stands in the doorway of the makeshift storage room-turned-den, she turns her eyes to what's happening on the projector."

lucia "I'm surprised you still watch this now you know how the sausage is made."

lucia "Besides, these guys have always been such chumps compared to us."

lucia "Who smiles like that in the middle of a battle, anyway? Only a sociopath."
"Hobbes doesn't even look up from the opening titles as he responds."
hobbes "Yes. Judging fictional characters based solely on your own actions."
hobbes "Always the best way to consume fiction, of course."
lucia "Was that you trying to be sarcastic?"
hobbes "Perhaps I just wish to enjoy my stories without any sort of distraction from the sole member of the peanut gallery."
lucia "Oof. Peanut? Really? I'm at least a chestnut."
hobbes "Har har. So amusing I forgot to chuckle."
lucia "So, did Greg direct this?"
hobbes "Yes. He did. It is his best one yet, I might add."
hobbes "Next time we see him on-set, be sure to give him my regards."
lucia "I mean, sure you don't want to do it yourself?"
lucia "I'm sure he'd be happy to hear from his number one fan, cat or otherwise."
hobbes "As much as I would love to gush, I cannot imagine a talking cat such as myself would be able to have any kind of meaningful interaction with the man."
hobbes "Other than perhaps enduring the condescension of hearing variations of 'Lucia, where did you get such a delightfully droll mechanical companion?'"
lucia "'Delightfully droll,' huh?"
hobbes "It is the most modest turn of phrase I could muster."
"Lucia gives him only a mild eye roll."
"She walks over and sits down next to the content cat, leaning back against the couch in sync with him."
"Shifting around, she tries to find a comfortable position as Hobbes notices her struggle."
lucia "Mmm. We definitely need a new couch. Piece of crap is starting to feel a bit stiff."
hobbes "Either that or you might simply be getting old, Lu."
hobbes "Maybe Star Siegel and the Gunslingers have you beat in that regard."
lucia "Says the cat who doesn't even have opposable thumbs, let alone an actual spine."
"Hobbes stares daggers at his companion as Lucia puts her hands up in mock surrender."
lucia "Okay, that was too far. Sorry. But hey, you started it!"
hobbes "True. And I apologize. I just would rather not think about that more than I have to, to be honest."
hobbes "Just want to enjoy my stories."
lucia "Okay. I just came by to check in, maybe chat a bit if that's okay."
hobbes "Of course. I assumed you wanted to discuss our current 'guest.'"
hobbes "Is there anything else?"
jump den_hobbes

label hobbes_den_sit:

\$ h_distance += 1

"As Lucia stands in the doorway of the makeshift storage room-turned-den, she turns her eyes to what's happening on the projector."

"In otherwise total silence, she walks over and sits down next to Hobbes, leaning back against the couch in sync with him."

"The opening credits of season 11, episode 200 of Galactic Gunslingers—'The Soul of Halichor (Part 2)'—continue to play."

"Hobbes doesn't even look up from the opening titles as he responds."

hobbes "Thank you for not interrupting."

lucia "Of course."

"Lucia shifts around in her seat a little, trying to find a comfortable position, Hobbes noticing her struggle."

"She manages to settle in as she stretches her arms out along the top of the couch's padding, the two friends watching the show in silent appreciation."

hobbes "Lu?"

lucia "Yeah?"

hobbes "This is... embarrassing, but—"

lucia "Do you need me to—"

hobbes "Yes. Just the center of my back. It is feeling quite irritated all of a sudden."

lucia "Say no more, amigo."

hobbes "Thank you. And Zap will not be arriving here any time soon, will they?"

lucia "No, I don't think so."

hobbes "Continue, then."

"Hobbes leans forward as Lucia glides her hand along his back, lightly petting and scratching at the fur decorating it."

lucia "How's that?"

hobbes "Oooh. Marvelous. You can stop now."

lucia "Alright."

"The two return to their previous positions, a warm smile decorating Hobbes' face as Lucia pats him on the shoulder."

hobbes "Now to fully enjoy my stories."

lucia "Okay. I just came by to check in, maybe chat a bit if that's okay."

hobbes "Of course. I assumed you wanted to discuss our current 'guest.'"

hobbes "Is there anything else?"