



# Leo Andrade's Writing Samples

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# Branching dialogue and character brief

I have a piece of **branching dialogue featuring this character that you can play in your browser right now** by clicking this link: <https://leonalf.fr.itch.io/sheriffmarja>.

This is a character from my original D&D 5e micro-setting Into the Brinereach. Here's its sales page: <https://makeaskillcheck.com/product/brinereach/>.



## Sheriff Marja

**Race and Alignment:** Lawful good half-orc.

**Appearance:** In her mid-thirties; athletic and lithe; smaller tusks than usual for a half-orc and short, curly hair. Her dark eyes always betray a certain level of sadness, though she is always very serious.

**Personality:** Incredibly selfless. Values community over most things and loves her boys to bits, but expects the same behavior from them. Can guard herself with an excessively professional front at times, reverting to this when she feels exposed or vulnerable.

**Ideal:** Service—Those willing and able to take up arms should protect others.

**Bond:** If push comes to shove, she will take care of her boys first.

**Flaw:** Too stern a judge of character, especially of her loved ones and herself. Her standards are hard to meet.

**Relationships:** Her sons Leyn and Tal. Her rival Paavo, head of the Hunter's Lodge.

**Backstory:** She is the chief of the small police force in Stiltgrove, generally called the town's guard. She's known as a fair, honest sheriff and a fierce fighter with a quarterstaff. Although she is from north of the mountains, folks in Stiltgrove have taken her in. Marja first arrived in her youth as part of an adventuring party that took down a bandit clan that was preying on outbound caravans. The previous sheriff—Halfdan—died fighting alongside them, and the then-mayor offered Marja the job. She had been wanting to settle down and took the offer, but her fellows decided to stick to the adventurer's path. The first signs of her pregnancy started a couple weeks after their departure. She decided to raise the twins Leyn and Tal on her own, rather than track down her former (adventuring and romantic) partner wherever he may roam. Leyn wants to follow in her footsteps; Tal is going through a rebellious phase and has just started his hunter's apprenticeship under Paavo.

# Combat Barks for a hypothetical ImSim

Barks for bandit NPCs in a hypothetical medieval **Immersive Sim** level.

The barks below are deployed if the player character is detected by them. You can look at the **full bark sheet with the mission briefing, other NPCs, and the stealth-awareness barks** by clicking this link:

<https://docs.google.com/spreadsheets/d/1ll1t5uuuRbqQ8CMbmRGQdqi9CZqfXhwQ/>.

This is based on a D&D 5e adventure I sell on the DM's Guild. You can see it here:

<https://www.dmsguild.com/product/345084/The-Yeast-Heist-Fiasco-Getaway>.

**Character notes:** Full of piss and vinegar. Overconfident.

NPC	Action	Line	NPC asset	Action asset	Line number	Asset ID	Wordcount
Bandit	Pursue	No escape!	BAN_	PRS_	1	BAN_PRS_1	10
Bandit	Pursue	I'm going to get you!	BAN_	PRS_	2	BAN_PRS_2	21
Bandit	Pursue	No running from this!	BAN_	PRS_	3	BAN_PRS_3	21
Bandit	Attack	Take that!	BAN_	ATK_	1	BAN_ATK_1	10
Bandit	Attack	How do you like that!?	BAN_	ATK_	2	BAN_ATK_2	22
Bandit	Attack	I'll gut you like a pig!	BAN_	ATK_	3	BAN_ATK_3	24
Bandit	Low Health	That hurt!	BAN_	LWH_	1	BAN_LWH_1	10
Bandit	Low Health	You'll pay for this!	BAN_	LWH_	2	BAN_LWH_2	20
Bandit	Low Health	That's my blood. Thats' my--	BAN_	LWH_	3	BAN_LWH_3	28
Bandit	Kill	Jackpot!	BAN_	KIL_	1	BAN_KIL_1	8
Bandit	Kill	Rest in pieces, jackass.	BAN_	KIL_	2	BAN_KIL_2	24
Bandit	Kill	You owe me five gold, Gunnar!	BAN_	KIL_	3	BAN_KIL_3	29
Bandit	Die	Avenge me. . .	BAN_	DIE_	1	BAN_DIE_1	15
Bandit	Die	What shit luck.	BAN_	DIE_	2	BAN_DIE_2	15
Bandit	Die	Gods, please, I had no choice.	BAN_	DIE_	3	BAN_DIE_3	30

# Item Descriptions in the voice of Disco Elysium

	<p><b>Dinosaur Beanie</b> Is that a little ridge of fabric scales running atop this green, vibrant beanie? Delightful. And it has teeth, too!</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>+1 Conceptualization: your inner child lives</li><li>+1 Inland Empire: the beanie growls happily</li><li>-1 Composure: made for a child, very tight</li><li>-1 Authority: what are you? Five?</li></ul>
	<p><b>Collar &amp; Lead</b> Warm leather and cold metal come together to tell the world what a good boy you are. Eager to please, glad to be led. By the neck. Because the goodest boys are freaks and everyone knows it.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>+1 Homo-Sexual Underground</li><li>+2 Drama: practiced roleplayer</li></ul>
	<p><b>Spiked bracers</b> These bracers reek of mosh-pit sweat. An indispensable component of standard metalhead attire, they scream your countercultural affiliation at the world. They also single you out as someone who's despised by fellow users of public transportation during rush hour.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>+1 Physical Instrument: improvised pain-compliance tool</li><li>-1 Authority: teenage posturing</li></ul>
	<p><b>Gottwaldian Party Hat</b> A narrow-brimmed felt hat from the Gottwaldian Alps, popularly worn by merrymakers worldwide at Gottwaldian-themed beer festivals. This one smells faintly of spilt beer and smoked pork.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>+1 Electrochemistry: hoppy is Gottwaldian for happy</li><li>-1 Savoir Faire: haunted by the ghosts of hangovers past</li></ul>

# Screenwriting, dialogue focus

INT. KING'S DUNGEON - UNICORN PRISON ANTECHAMBER

The LAST UNICORN lies unmoving at the PRINCESS' feet, a vaguely horse-shaped hulk with eight legs, one grayish horn projecting from its forehead, and hollow eye sockets. The cavernous hall echoes the DRIP-DRIP of its blood falling off her blade.

CLOSE UP: The Princess' expression is one of dour determination. All she hears is the BLOOD THUMPING IN HER EARS.

The SQUIRREL breaks her out of her reverie, emerging from behind the tangled roots that line the walls.

SQUIRREL

I'm sure they'll hear you out when you cross  
the gate covered in their kin's blood.

The Princess wipes her blade on the hem of her tunic as if she didn't notice she was spoken to, facing the enormous iron gate embedded in the cave wall beyond the LAST UNICORN.

BEAT.

PRINCESS

It was their jailer, a traitor, I just  
killed. A reward is only fair.

She steps over THE LAST UNICORN toward the gate.

SQUIRREL

Would you perhaps consider grieving like a  
well-adjusted young lady and leaving the  
chthonic delving to those with less to lose?

PRINCESS

Surely. After descending all thirteen layers  
of this hellhole I shall crawl back up and  
beg my father's forgiveness so I can go on  
living a life without her in it.

SQUIRREL

Sunk cost is absolute bogus if you ask me.

PRINCESS

I didn't.

The Princess unloops the large iron key from her belt, jams it into the gate, and twists it forcefully. She then heaves the gate open with all her weight and winces, wrinkling her nose at the smell that wafts out.

INT. KING'S DUNGEON - UNICORNS' GRAVE

She lifts her torch and its flickering light reveals a large chamber filled with death: bones poking out of papery skin, blackened broken horns, sunken orbits, mouths frozen in silent screaming.

SQUIRREL

(his voice cracking)

Oh gods.

The Princess takes off running the length of the room, frantically searching the space with her eyes, calling out with no reply.

PRINCESS

Hello? Is anyone there?

PRINCESS

What's going on?

SQUIRREL

You killed the last unicorn!

The Princess is devastated. Her hard resolve melts into horror on her face.

PRINCESS

Only because my father killed all the others!

She falls to her knees facing the wall opposite the iron gate. Violent sobbing shakes her frame. The Squirrel comes closer and silently hugs one of her knees.

Hooves hit the ground behind the Princess.

The Squirrel squeaks and cringes away. The princess turns to it with desperate speed and once again faces the Last Unicorn. It stands falteringly, a mass of tortured flesh with eight legs and no eyes, but still horned. Still bleeding. It speaks to her with a deep, rumbling monotone.

LAST UNICORN

You came to violate?

PRINCESS

No!

LAST UNICORN

You came to free?

The corpses of its kin crowd the room behind the Last Unicorn.

PRINCESS

I... I thought I did.

PRINCESS

(her hands balled into shaking fists)  
No. That's a lie. I came to ask something of them, a Rainbow Horn, the missing component I need to bring back my love. I thought they'd give me one if I freed them.

LAST UNICORN

Too late.

The Princess stands up to look the Last Unicorn in its eyelessness.

PRINCESS

I'm sorry. I'm so sorry. My father did this to you. I'm his heir and I didn't know. Because I never cared about the things he does "for the kingdom."

The Last Unicorn's many legs falter under its bloodied bulk and he falls again.

LAST UNICORN

I can give what you want.

The princess looks at its faded horn. She moves the torch to better light it, and it shows the ghosts of colors past. She inhales sharply with surprise.

LAST UNICORN

(blood bubbling in the mouth)  
I will give. If you grant my wish.

SQUIRREL

Princess, think carefully--

PRINCESS

Shut up!

The princess kneels beside the Last Unicorn and places a hand on its neck.

PRINCESS

Anything, guardian. Ask and it shall be done.

The Last Unicorn WHINNIES weakly in approval.

LAST UNICORN

Stab the horn into the king's heart. Tell him the unicorns wait in the Other World to do it again. Again. Again.

LAST UNICORN

His death will give my horn life. Life you  
can use.

The Princess has no reply. Even the Squirrel is quiet. The Last  
Unicorn lays its head upon a bent pair of its front legs.

LAST UNICORN

Swear to me. Swear while I have the breath  
to give it. Swear.



# Quest Design, RPG design: Current of Dread

This is the **introductory playable scenario** I wrote for the release of the [Death Sentence RPG](#). It was important to **fit everything a Narrator would need to run this scenario within a trifold A4 pamphlet with art**, which I did.

I was also the **developmental editor and translator** (Brazilian Portuguese to English) of the base game and acted as the **core rulebook's producer, writing art briefs** and helping our artist refine all visual aspects.

## **BACKSTORY**

The US Government built a secret compound in the Brazilian Amazon rainforest to experiment on locals—political prisoners and social minorities—as part of the MKULTRA program during the US-backed Brazilian Military dictatorship (1964-1985). Somewhere along the way, their explorers discovered a trio of dangerous eel-like humanoids close to the Colombian border. Compound personnel called them **Dagons** because one of the scientists was a Lovecraft fan.

No more Dagons were found, but they captured the trio for experimentation. Once the compound was abandoned in the 70s, the scientists had made no headway in forcing the Dagons to obey commands, and attempts at producing more language-prone ones were all duds. They took a pair of Dagons to the US, but not all of them. What was left in the compound was an **inbred Dagon population who had to resort to cannibalism to survive in the basement**.

## **SETUP**

In the present day, a group of foreign **influencers and their associates (crew, partners, etc) are going on an "Amazon adventure"** in Brazil, led by a guide—Miguel Hoffman, a white guy from São Paulo who does this seasonally and seems almost as foreign as the influencers—who is taking them on a week-long hike that ends in a Ribeirinho community where they'll have a "traditional feast" (very much a tourist trap).

Days before that, **an unexpected flood forces them to shelter in the compound** and the water's wrath releases the **two remaining Dagons, who are hungry** and aware that humans are the source of their misery.

**The influencer crew are the players. The Guide is an NPC. They must kill the Dagons** to survive the night.

## **THREAT**

Dagons are 2-meter-tall, eel-like, amphibious humanoids. They are inhumanly strong and they can **produce electrical bursts from their skin and regenerate from grievous injury at a frightening speed**.

## **MCGUFFIN**

Syringes with a serum that can **shut down Dagon regeneration** long enough for them to be killed. There are **3 in the basement**.

## **ACT 1: THE FLOOD**

It starts fine. **The PCs are having a good time**: they see some animals, take pictures, produce footage, fish and forage to supplement rations. The one issue is that there's no cellphone service and their SAT phones are malfunctioning.

Break this up into chronological scenes where **Relationships** can be established. Mention the position of the sun in the sky as time passes, and drop **hints of human activity**: an empty pack of 1970s US-brand cigarettes under a rock the guide lifts to show them a spider, bullet casings among river pebbles, etc.

**The Flood** - The sky darkens and a torrential rain catches them off-guard two hours before they hoped to camp for the night. The guide is terrified they'll be caught in a flood unless they find high ground quickly. **Present 2-3 environmental challenges that can injure but not kill, give out Panic points.**

Once the challenges—crossing rapid water at waist level, dodging falling tree branches—are surpassed, they **stumble upon the compound** in slightly elevated terrain and take shelter there climbing to the roof and entering from there, or forcing the front door.

The water keeps rising. **Their shelter is also a prison.**

**The Compound-** This was a research installation with utilitarian architecture and sparse comforts. Its roof is painted green to match the forest canopy

A steel stairwell connects the first and second floors. The first floor has a heavily reinforced, locked trapdoor leading to the basement and one entry door. Here are the compound's main sections:

- **Second floor.**
  - Living quarters: shared bedrooms with bunk beds for grunts, three private rooms for brass. Kitchen, pantry, and restrooms.
- **First Floor.**
  - Open floor with chemistry and biology labs, a computer room, research storage, chief researcher office (locked), 3 "patient" cells with one-way mirrors for observation.
- **Basement (locked at first, then half-flooded):**
  - Open floor with Dagon containment pools, operating tables, and operation equipment, cold storage fridges.

**Turning Point** - The crew can explore the space or lie down early to sleep it out. There's anti-communist propaganda on the walls, soggy research papers about MKULTRA experiments with Amazonian psychedelics and some notes on "**Dagon vivisection**" that paint a confusing picture. Why were they experimenting on... animals? And what's the deal with that metal trapdoor that looks like it could withstand doomsday?

Regardless of how the party acts, **one of the Dagons emerges from the locked basement** after a rumble announces that a section of the first floor collapsed under the water (yet the trapdoor remains intact).

Act two starts when this **Dagon stuns the guide with its electricity and starts eating him alive.** One Panic point for everyone present.

## **ACT 2: SURVIVAL OF THE FITTEST**

This is the bulk of the scenario. Once the Dagon is out, evading it or repelling it is the first order of business. **Trying to swim away from the compound is a death sentence** (hue hue), but being trapped with this thing is only a little better.

The compound's basement is flooding at a slower rate than the outside, but water keeps pouring in while a horrible stench wafts out. **Another Dagon lurks down there** among the putrid remains of its kin, but don't tell them the PCs that, only press into them the fact that going there is risky because they don't want to be in the water with the Dagon they do know about.

As they scramble to survive, let them find:

- **A soldier's diary** where he wrote about how the Dagon routinely hurt personnel, complaining that the scientists kept all findings close to their chest and that they made everyone else uneasy
- **A spare key to the chief researcher's office.**

**Achille's Heel-** In the chief researcher's office, the PCs can find information about the Dagon: their discovery and characteristics, what was done to them, and, more importantly, that the scientists here figured out a way to **shut down their rapid regeneration** because "it made extended operation unviable."

**The serum, these documents state, is kept in cold storage in the basement.** Each ampoule is one dose.

**Give the party a moment to catch their breath** in this room, maybe after forcing them to defend the entrance. Let them roleplay, process their feelings and strategize, but make it clear that if they dally too long, the Dagon might make another attempt.

### **ACT 3: FIGHTING BACK**

The PCs know how to kill the Dagon that has been hunting them, but now they need to **go into the half-flooded basement to get the remaining syringes of serum.** If they haven't gone there before, they don't know the second Dagon is down there.

If they've managed to hurt, trap, or otherwise hinder the first Dagon recently, they can get there unharried. If not, the way to the basement is a desperate chase.

Once there, the remaining Dagon lurks in the water and attacks an injured PC or whichever looks the weakest—as soon as the PCs enter if they're being pursued; right when they find the syringes if not.

**Panic points for everyone** when this happens and they realize it wasn't just the one Dagon.

Regardless of how exactly it starts, **the crowning moment of this scenario is a Dagon showdown** in the basement, either one at a time or both at once. Let the players know that this is it. **Time to spend all those Drama points.**

### **CONCLUSION**

It is entirely possible that all remaining PCs die in the showdown, but the serum gives them a fighting chance. **It's 3 syringes because they get to make 1 mistake that doesn't outright doom them.**

If the Dagon is killed, the surviving PCs wait for rescue for almost three days of heavy rain and rising water. A helicopter crew from the Brazilian Institute of The Environment (IBAMA) spots them while flying over and comes to the rescue.

All that water certainly isn't good for the rations, so these are hungry days. Let the players tell you if their PCs eat some Dagon or not.