

# Contract Game Writer Test

## Approach & Assumptions

I assumed that these scenes take place very early in the overarching narrative. I further assumed that they would be implemented as dialogue-only exchanges following key triggers in the early segments of Hafali and Nala's trek, and would need to parse effectively as brief conversations occurring simultaneously over ongoing gameplay. I suggested contextual triggers for each scene.

I approached this task intending to convey initial hints of underlying tensions and unspoken history between Nala and Hafali, and their difficulties communicating about their own personal feelings and needs without other topics/people as buffers. There is also intent to introduce the player to character and plot elements such as Nala's wife and the danger of the environment.

For the purposes of the task, I also assumed the hypothetical existence of a day/night environment cycle.

**Time Taken:** 2~ hours

EXT. DAY - TRIGGER 1

HAFALI and NALA have very recently struck out towards HAFALI's off-grid contact, TAMSIN.

NALA

If anyone asked me, I wouldn't have guessed you'd still be friends with Tamsin.

HAFALI

Mm. Big difference between 'a friend' and 'person you can pay for a favour'.

NALA

Is that what they're doing these days? Getting paid for favours?

HAFALI

Bit of that. They do a bit of lots of things.

A beat.

NALA

Do you come to them with "*things*" often? ...Is that why you know where they are now?

HAFALI

(Defensive.)

Doesn't matter either way, does it? Gets you what you want.

NALA

It matters if you're getting yourself into things I won't be in a position to get you out of.

HAFALI

I'm not the one asking for help right now.

NALA

I'm- ... Yeah. Okay.

INT. DAY OR NIGHT - TRIGGER 2

If HAFALI and NALA explore a DERELICT CABIN with obvious destruction caused by DANGEROUS CREATURES.

HAFALI

Lichen in the cracked wood. Old damage.

NALA

That doesn't mean they don't still circle through here. It could be a hunting trail, and that's why it even got torn up in the first place.

HAFALI

Uh-huh.

(A beat.)

I've been out here way longer than you, now. Still alive.

NALA

I'm only saying we should still be careful. Relying on blind certainty against unpredictability? Not a great idea.

HAFALI

(A wry, bitter-laced smile in his tone.)

Yeah, you and unpredictability never could get along. Big town living's easier, hey?

NALA

(A beat.)

It's different. Not easier. Do you think I'd be here now if it was that simple?

Their conversation has edged too close to open nerves & old hurts.

HAFALI

(Roughly.)

No.

HAFALI (CONT'D)

But you are. You are here.

NALA

(Softly.)

Yeah. I'm here.

EXT. DAY OR NIGHT - TRIGGER 3

AFTER a precarious RIVER TRAVERSAL gameplay beat.

NALA

Hafi.

A beat. He does not respond to the childhood nickname.

NALA (CONT'D)

Hafali. Are you-

HAFALI

Yeah. I'm okay.

Several beats.

HAFALI (CONT'D)

(He's trying; but also  
deflecting away from himself.)  
Firas's gotta be starting to swim soon,  
yeah?

NALA

Soon? We've had him in the tub since he was  
a few weeks old. I'd bet he's got better  
lungs on him than you do.

NALA (CONT'D)

(A subtle wobble to her voice.)  
You should see him. Absolutely unstoppable  
little man.

HAFALI

(Still deflecting.)  
How'd Moira take it? Dunking the kid before  
he could walk?

NALA

There *is* water in town. Moira gets why it  
makes sense.

HAFALI

'spose I wouldn't expect anything else from  
a woman who'd up and marry you.

NALA

(A short, sharp laugh.  
Underlying relief after the  
precarious moment.)  
I don't know if you're going for a  
compliment or an insult, and you know, I  
don't think I'm going to ask.