

WRITING SAMPLE: “GAME INTRODUCTION”

Game Information:

Hometown Massachusetts is a Lovecraft-inspired, third-person cosmic horror game set in the coastal region of New England, USA. Taking cues from games like Silent Hill and movies like The Void, players will have to use their keen investigative skills to solve crimes that cross the border into the supernatural, all while trying to keep their sanity intact.

Key Characters:

The player controls Howard Lovecraft, a young Crime Scene Investigator, as he returns to his hometown of Arkham after his parents mysteriously go missing. Howard takes a position within the Boston Police Department while he works to uncover the truth behind their disappearance.

Players will interact with a whole host of characters, each with their own unique personalities, motivations, and even deep dark secrets they wish to conceal. Two of these characters are the twins Katie and Julien Marsh, Howard’s childhood friends and the children of Innsmouth’s mayor.

Story:

While working a missing persons case in the town of Innsmouth, the same town where his parents vanished, Howard uncovers a sinister conspiracy surrounding a string of tourist disappearances. They all share similarities with that of his parents. Compelled to dig deeper and find the truth, he uncovers a connection to the family of his childhood friends Julian and Katie, the latter he has always harboured strong feelings for.

Themes:

The major theme of the game is “fear of the unknown”, invoking our imagination of things almost so incomprehensible that the human mind can barely process them without being driven to madness. This should keep the player in a state of paranoia, looking over their shoulders for things that may not even be there lurking in the shadows.

“Family” is also explored extensively in the game; with Howard’s obsessive search for the truth about his parents, Katie and Julian’s relationships with their family, and also that of other NPC characters that the player will interact with during their investigations.

Challenges and Rewards:

The main challenge of the game is solving the mystery behind Howard’s parent’s supposed deaths and unravelling the even greater mysteries tied to them which are unearthed along the way.

Players will solve mysterious ancient puzzles, hunt for potential clues at crime scenes, and directly come into contact with fearsome monsters that come straight out of nightmare. Doing so will allow players to obtain powerful new weapons, consumable items, and eldritch tomes of magic, which will in turn allow them to face greater threats.

The Scene:

Hometown Massachusetts, Episode 01 Introduction: "Welcome Home"

Written by Christopher Woodcock

SCENE 01 EXT. DRIVING INTO ARKHAM DAY

HOWARD LOVECRAFT

Howard Lovecraft returns to his hometown of Arkham five years following the supposed deaths of his parents, who went missing under mysterious circumstances.

ZOOM OUT FROM STEERING WHEEL:

HOWARD DRIVES TOWARDS ARKHAM ON A CLEAR SUNNY DAY, ONE HAND ON THE WHEEL, THE OTHER ARM RESTING ON THE OPEN WINDOW.

HOWARD (VO): Massachusetts. Home... I've not been back here since my parents died. (Small Pause) "Supposedly" died.

FLASHBACK TO THE FUNERAL WITH THE CASKETS BEING LOWERED INTO THE GROUND, HOWARD WATCHING, NOT CRYING.

HOWARD (VO): Their bodies were never found, and all we buried were empty caskets. Freak storm, they said. It was said their boat went down outside of Innsmouth, too far from shore to swim back, and the storm carried them out to sea so they couldn't be recovered. At least, that's the official story.

THE SCENE MOVES TO HOWARD THANKING OTHER MOURNERS AS THEY LEAVE THE CEMETERY, BEFORE IT CUTS BACK TO HOWARD IN HIS CAR.

HOWARD (VO): That was five years ago now. I never believed they were really gone, not for a second. They were too careful, too prepared... and I intend to find out what happened to them.

THE CAR CROSSES THE BORDER FROM COUNTRYSIDE INTO THE FOREBODING TOWN, PASSING THE "YOU ARE NOW ENTERING ARKHAM" SIGN. THE WEATHER SEAMLESSLY DARKENS, OMINOUS CLOUDS ROLL IN, A LIGHT RAIN STARTS TO PATTERN DOWN ONTO THE CAR.

HOWARD (VO): (Scoffs) Welcome to Arkham. One of the most dismal, dreary, and downright creepy places on Earth... I always used to wonder why we moved here. Though I was only a little kid at the time.

HOWARD DRIVES PAST THE UNIVERSITY CAMPUS, LOOKING AT IT AS HE PASSES PAST THE SIGN THAT READS "MISKATONIC UNIVERSITY, ESTABLISHED 1895".

HOWARD (VO): Good old M.U. My parents worked here as Professors while they were still around, and if they were here today, I'd probably have ended up following in their footsteps... but after the funeral I just couldn't stay, it was too painful.

HOWARD DRIVES THROUGH TOWN, PAST SHOPFRONTS, HOUSES, AND THE TOWN SQUARE, THE SKY OVERCAST WITH RAINCLOUDS. PEOPLE SEEM ABSORBED IN THEIR OWN THOUGHTS, OR JUST MISERABLE IN THE RAIN. SOME WATCH HOWARD'S CAR WITH BLANK OR DOUR FACES. HOWARD GIVES THEM A FRIENDLY SMILE AND WAVE.

HOWARD (VO): Welcoming folk, as always. When you get to know them, I'm sure.

HOWARD PULLS INTO THE PARKING LOT OF THE ARKHAM POLICE STATION, PARKING OUTSIDE THE FRONT ENTRANCE.

HOWARD (VO): And I'm going to get to know everyone round here real well now that I'm back. I'll find out what I can about my parents, and finally get some closure on the whole miserable situation.

HOWARD LOOKS INTO THE REAR-VIEW MIRROR AT THE BACK SEAT, WHERE A POLICE DUFFEL-BAG SITS, AND AN OFFICER'S JACKET RESTS ON IT WITH A BADGE READING "LOVECRAFT". HE THEN LOOKS DIRECTLY AT THE CAMERA.

HOWARD: Time to go to work

CUT TO BLACK:

Time: 1M+ (51 Seconds for the DIALOGUE ALONE, so considering the time for the scenery shots and flashback, it should total out to about 1 minute if you keep the shots short, but 2 to 3 if you want to spread it out, which for a narrative game may be best to do.)

Word Count: 500 (From "Hometown" to "BLACK".)