

Jake Shillan  
Game Writing Sample

Ancient Curse

## Summary:

- *This is the outline and final product of a 2-part story for a choose-your-own-adventure style pirate game. There is a light, supernatural layer in this setting as well.*
- *This story is written modularly to fit as a narrative for any of the 20+ characters that can become your ‘Lover’.*
- *Any instance of brackets (ie. [Lover], [Faction1Relic]) is filled in by a system of string text embedded in our named character entities.*
  - *Ex: [Lover] would print “Maximo” or “Helena” to the Player in-app. [LoverSubject] would print that character’s subject tense, such as “he/she/they”.*
- *Each part is broken up into an Intro and two possible outcomes, and each of these sections have to be under 80 words.*

## **Outline: Ancient Curse (Modular Lover Story)**

*Jake Shillan*

### **Chapter 1:**

[Lover] breaks an item in an apothecary's shop and is mortally cursed. The apothecary offers a cure if you pay them. We get the sense this was a set up.

**Threaten instead of paying.**

**Pay up.**

#### **1. Threaten**

- You threaten them with pirate violence. They give up the location of a hermit who can cure [Lover]. [Lover] steals from the shop out of spite.
- **Result:** Tavern deck item. Unlock Lover's next ability.

#### **2. Pay Up**

- You begrudgingly pay the apothecary for the info. They give you a small trinket and tell you of a hermit that can cure [Lover].
- **Result:** +1 Victory Point. [MediumGoldReward]. Unlock Lover's next ability.

### **Chapter 2:**

You find the hermit deep within an island jungle, just as [Lover] is on the brink of death. He recognizes the curse immediately as one that turns its host into a demon. It turns the host into a demon, and he moves to kill your [Lover] with impunity.

**<b>Fight the hermit for the cure [ChallengeHard]</b>**

**<b>Try to talk the hermit </b>**

#### **1. Fight! → Challenge**

##### **a. Success:**

- You disarm the hermit and tell him that your [Lover's] death isn't an option. He uses your blood to weaken the curse, and gives you a [Faction1Relic] in apology.
- **Result:** +1 Victory Point. [Faction1Relic]. Unlock Lover's next ability.

##### **b. Failure:**

- You fight and mortally wound the hermit. As he's dying, the curse exits [Lover] and enters him. Evil laughing, and the hermit disappears from his shack. You and Lover take the [Faction1Relic] he dropped.
- **Result:** [Faction1Relic]. Unlock Lover's next ability.

## 2. **Attack Hermit!**

- You attempt to talk rationally with the hermit, but he only pays attention after you've both wounded each other. He recognizes that the bond between you and [Lover] could work to weaken the curse. He performs a ritual, weakening you and your Lover, but saving their life.
- **Result:** +1 Victory Point. Gain a Wound Card. Unlock Lover's next ability.

## **Changes: Outline to Final**

***My producer reviewed the outline and asked me to iterate with these notes:***

- *The first chapter is nice (haven't been to an apothecary's shop yet!), but make sure players know that the apothecary was setting them up.*
- *The second chapter needs a pivot. The fight doesn't feel like it's earned.*
- *Also involve the Lover more in the ending nodes; this is a 'Lover' story, after all*
- *Find a way to give the players a FactionRelic in each ending.*

***Changes made in final story:***

- *I gave the apothecary's shop a 'Do Not Touch' sign to make the curse feel somewhat earned.*
- *I got rid of the choice to fight with the hermit, replacing it with a choice between getting a 'Wound Card' or discarding a relic you currently possess.*
- *I gave a little more spotlight to the Lover in each of the endings.*
- *I wrote a FactionRelic into each ending as well.*
- *Looped back to the apothecary in one of the choices.*

## Ancient Curse (Modular Lover Story)

*By Jake Shillan*

**Chapter 1:** At an apothecary's shop in [Location1], [Lover] picks up a strange idol to show you. As soon as [LoverSubj] does, [LoverSubj] screams out in pain and drops it. A dark mark quickly grows over [LoverPossessive] face.

The store owner points to a 'Do Not Touch' sign, "Shouldn't play around with powerful trinkets. I can tell you where to get that cured... for a price."

<b>Threaten the store owner with violence.</b>

<b>Bribe the store owner for the information. [GoldCostSmall]</b>

### **1. Threaten**

Without hesitation, you aim your flintlock. The owner yelps and ducks under the counter, "Fine! I'll tell you! A hermit lives in [Location1]! But you'll never make it before the curse kills [LoverObject], you damn pirates!"

Furious, [Lover] steals a few more trinkets before leaving. "I'm already cursed, how much worse could it get!?" (<--[NPC Lover Already Cursed])

<b>Result:</b> +1 Victory Point. [SmallGoldReward]. Unlock [LoverNamePossessive] next ability. Remove your Lover Token from the board.

### **2. Bribe**

You'd pay any price for [LoverNamePossessive] health, so you pull a few coins from your pouch.

The store owner smiles, "Big spender!" She trades you a trinket and tells you that the hermit lives in the jungles of [Location2]. Then she whispers carefully so [Lover] can't hear, "I would hurry if I were you. That dark magic don't play nice..."

<b>Result:</b> +1 Victory Point. Draw from the Tavern deck until you find an Item. Claim it immediately. Unlock [LoverNamePossessive] next ability. Remove your Lover Token from the board.

## Chapter 2:

As [LoverNamePossessive] curse mark spreads across [LoverPossessive] body, you both reach the hermit at a shack deep in the [Location2] jungle.

You tell him your woe and the hermit immediately recognizes the situation, “Oh, my... Aside from cutting you down here and now, I would need a new host. Or maybe a powerful relic to siphon the demon’s curse into.”

**<b>Sacrifice your own health for [Lover]</b>**

**<b>Sacrifice a precious relic for [Lover] (Discard 1 Relic)</b>**

### 1. Your Health

The hermit slices you and [LoverNamePossessive] palms and has you hold hands. “I will weaken the curse as it passes from one host to the next.” Your arms sears with pain as the hermit speaks incantations.

“My love... Thank you.” [Lover] whispers, fainting once the ritual ends. The hermit gives you a [Faction1Relic] to help endure the curse, “The bond you two share is strong indeed.”

**<b>Result:</b>** -1 Victory Point. Gain a [Faction1Relic] from the [Faction1Name] deck. Gain the [Faction1CurseItem] from the [Faction1Name] deck. Unlock [LoverNamePossessive] next ability. Remove your Lover Token from the board.

### 2. Your Relic

The hermit takes a bit of your partner’s blood and drips it onto the relic you’ve offered. It moans eerily, but the hermit locks it away in a box. “My love... Thank you.” [Lover] whispers, fainting from the strain of the ritual.

The hermit hands you a [Faction1Relic], “Accept this in trade for your own relic. I’ll send the cursed thing to an apothecary I know in [Location1]. They have much experience with items like this!”

**<b>Result:</b>** Discard 1 Relic. Gain a [Faction1Relic] from the [Faction1Name] deck. Unlock [LoverNamePossessive] next ability. Remove your Lover Token from the board.