

# ALEZIA

**The Shade  
of Bashora**



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**Zeja Pyle**



# **ALEZIA: The Shade of Bashora**

**Zeja Pyle**

**VirZ**  
PRODUCTIONS

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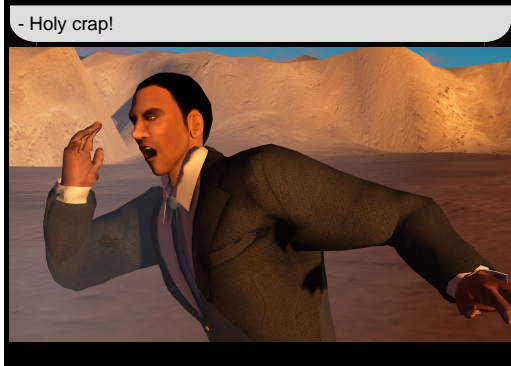
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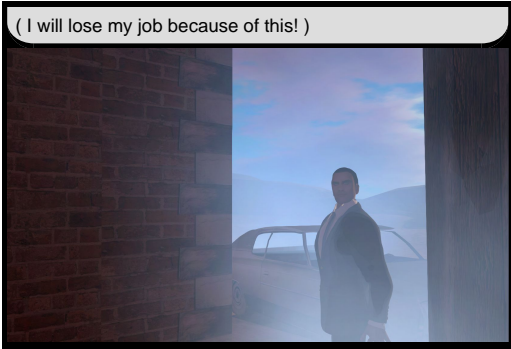
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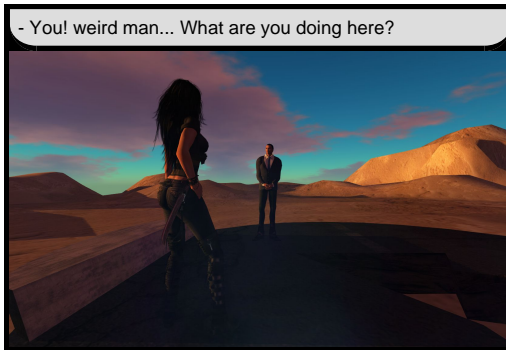
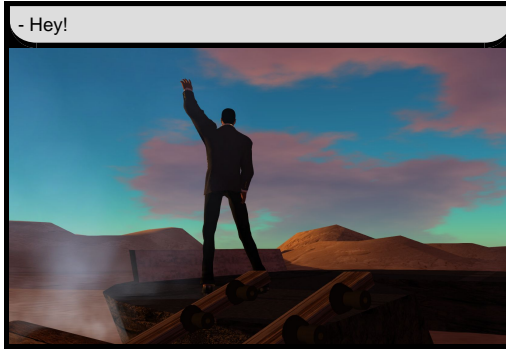
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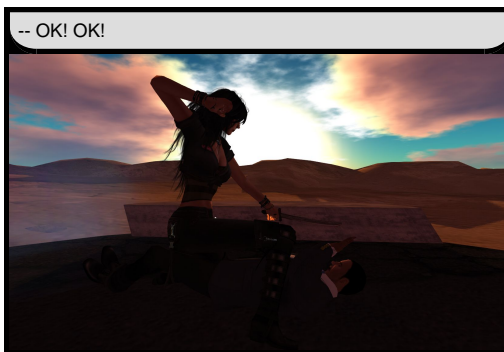




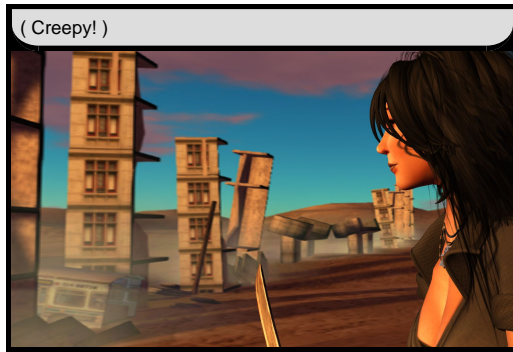
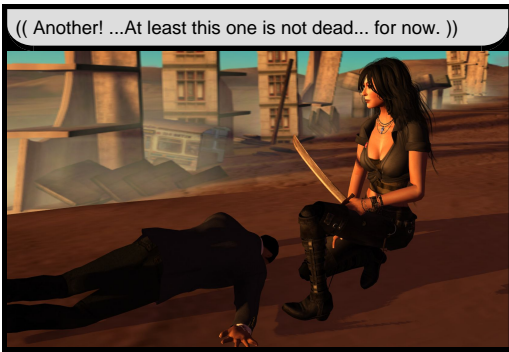


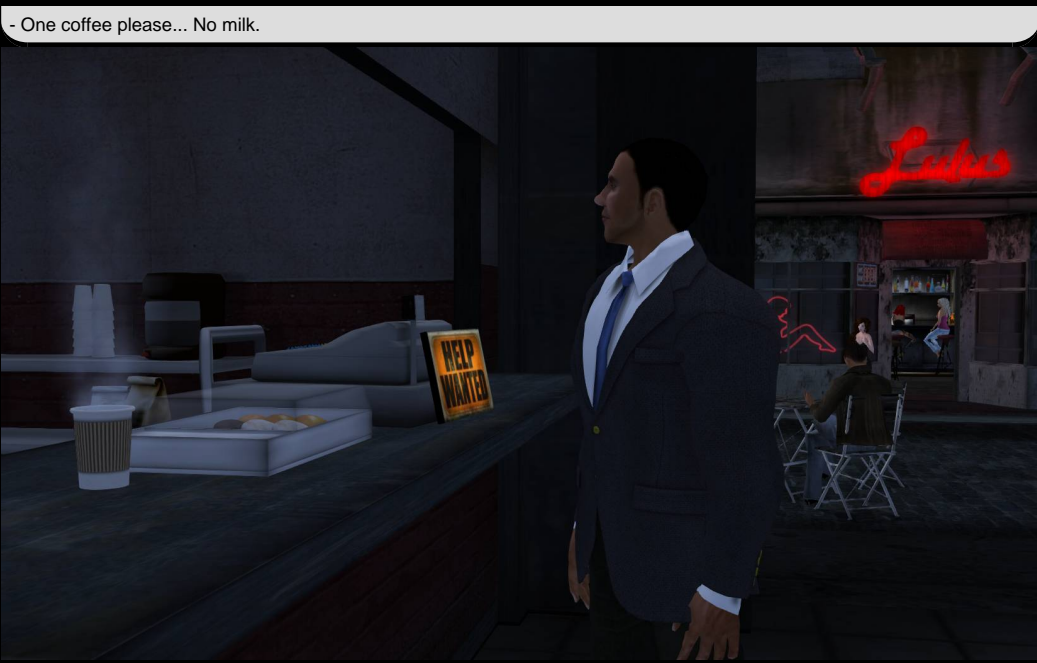


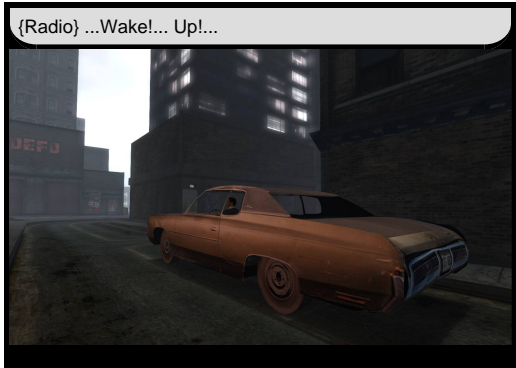
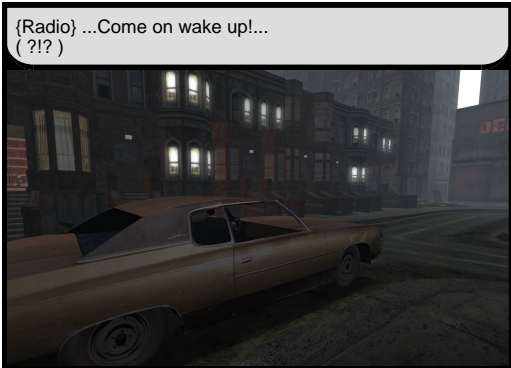
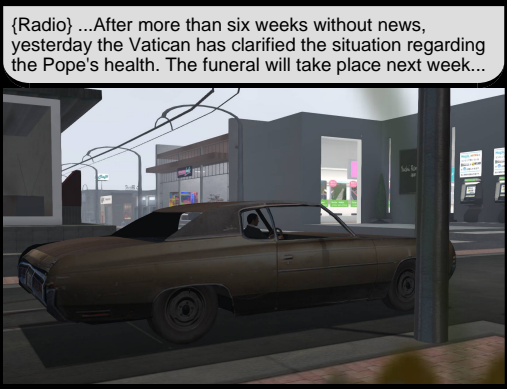


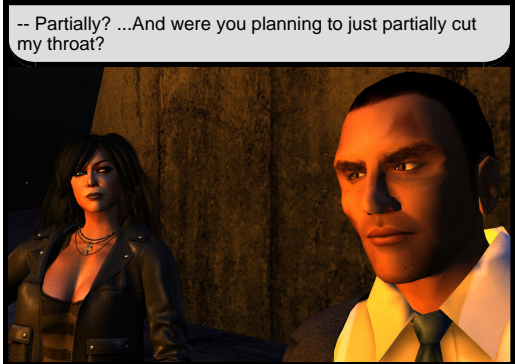
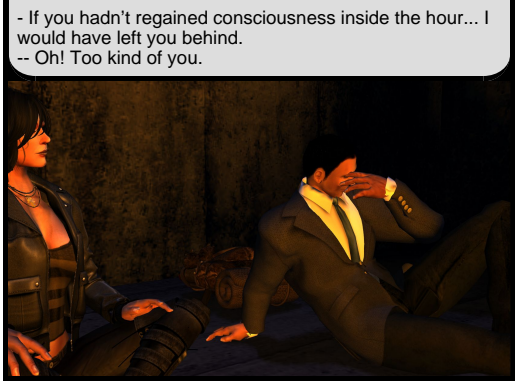












- I never make any plan before cutting a throat. But those like you that I have met today, were not very welcoming...



...Late last night, while I was trying to sleep...



...I was awakened by a sudden detonation. A very bright phenomenon filled the horizon...

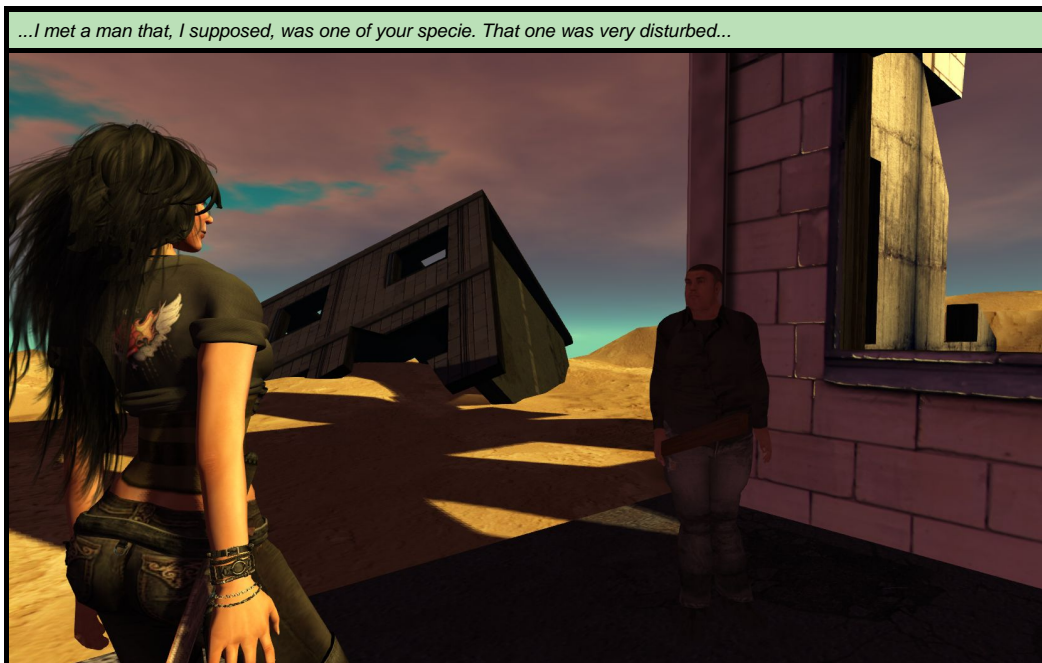
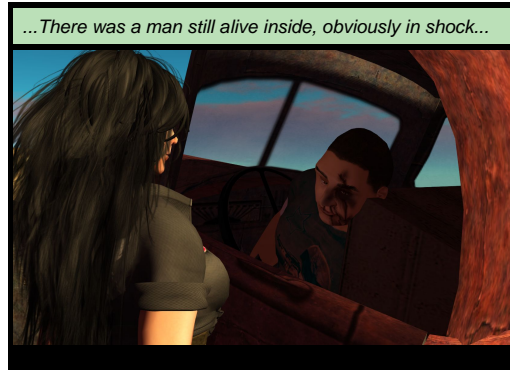


...I expected to find some very weird things around here. But in the morning, after one hour of walking, I found very strange remains...

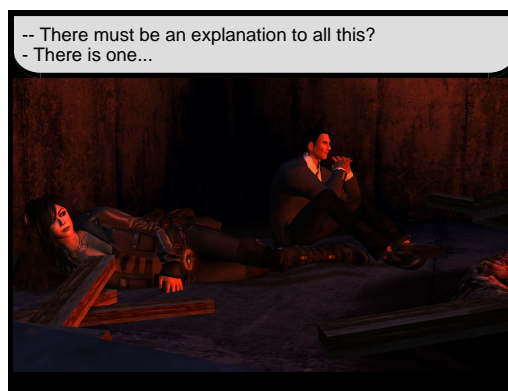


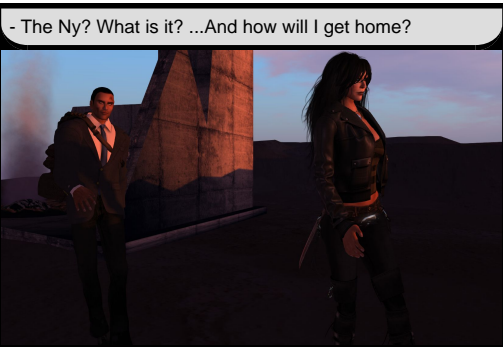
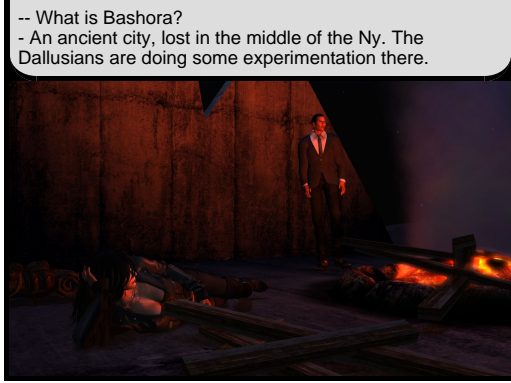
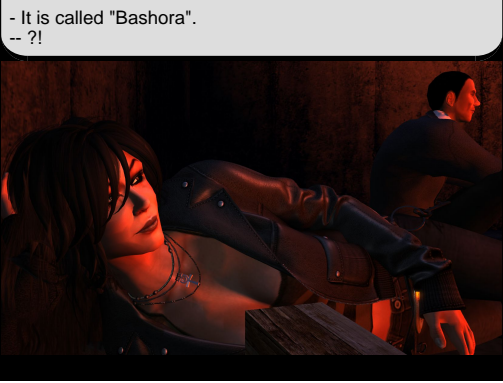
...Torn pieces of roadway, collapsed walls, patches of fresh grass... and even a human foot, too well cut...

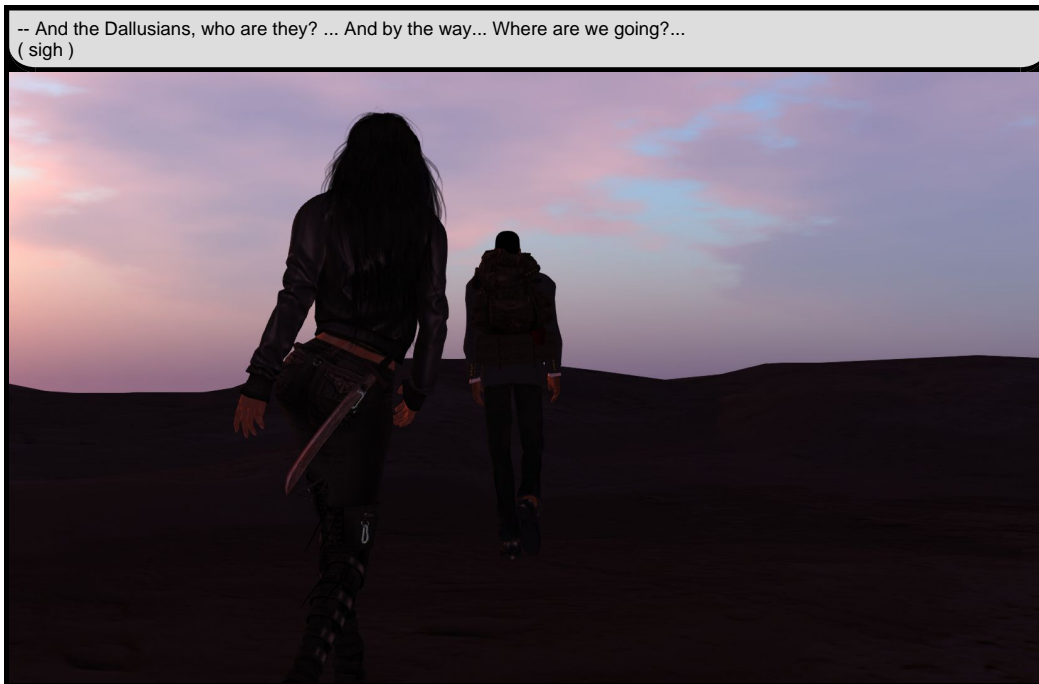
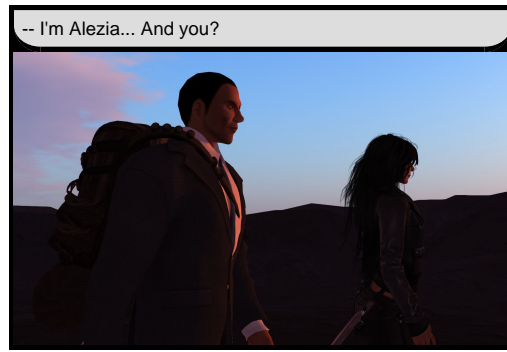












Later...



-- It's like being in an oven... I do hope that Bashora is not very far!  
- We are not going to Bashora...



-- Really!?  
- We are going to reach the mountains there.



- Bashora is in the middle of the desert. We need water for that... for two.



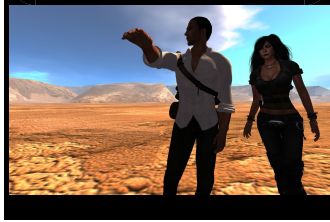
-- So there is some water in those mountains... Are they inhabited?



- That's what they say. But water is our priority... We have just enough for tomorrow.



- Those mountains seem pretty desartic... Oh! what is that?



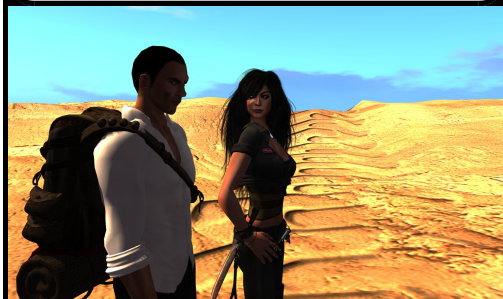
-- Vehicle tracks.  
- I had figured...



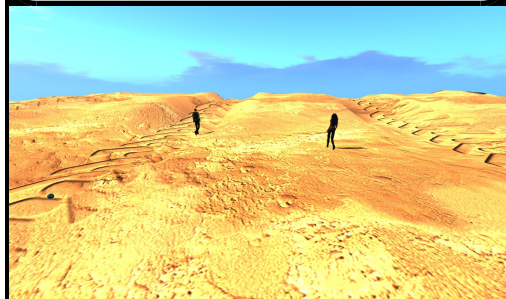
-- But did you ever see a vehicle this large before?



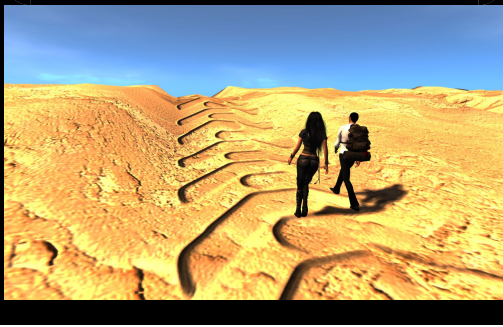
-- Yes, a Dallusian troop carrier. And it is not even the largest one they have.



- Troops? So, the Dallusians are military?  
-- Yes, they have the largest army on this planet.



-- I've never seen such a thing. There is at least 100 feet between the two tracks.



-- Is there a war?  
- Not anymore, but they are still in cold war with the North...



- ...And they have lots of scores to settle with me. ...Let's go this way.

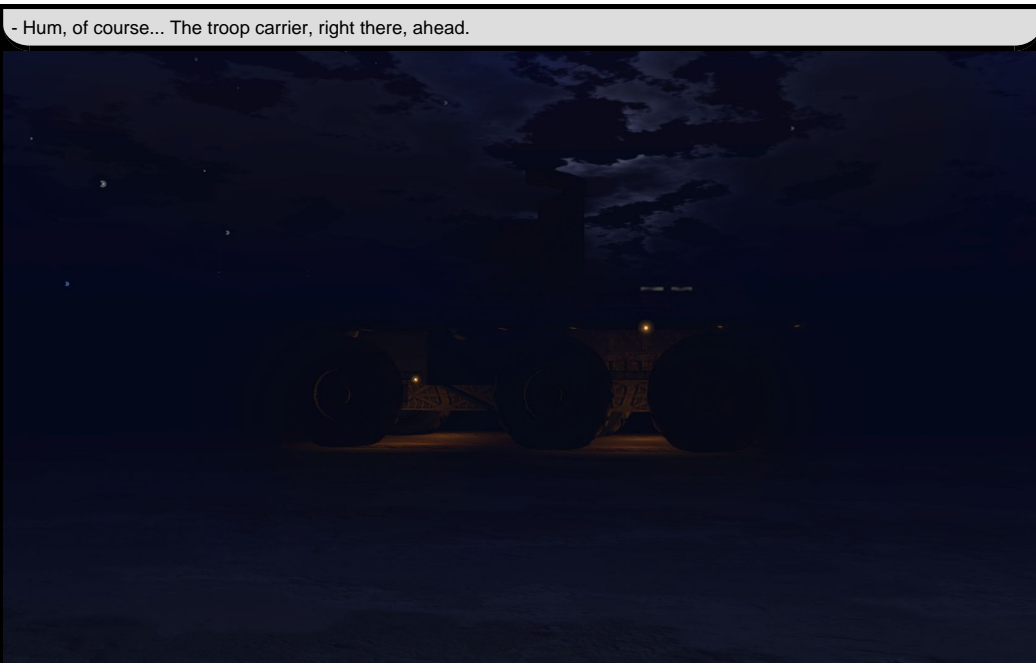
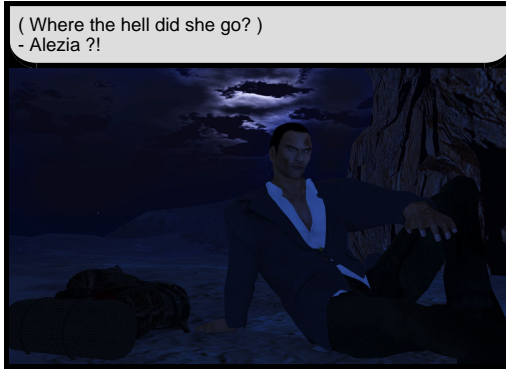
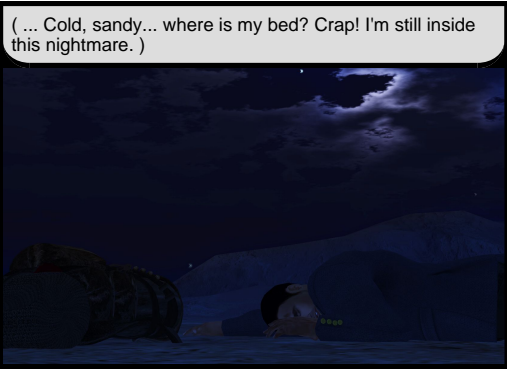


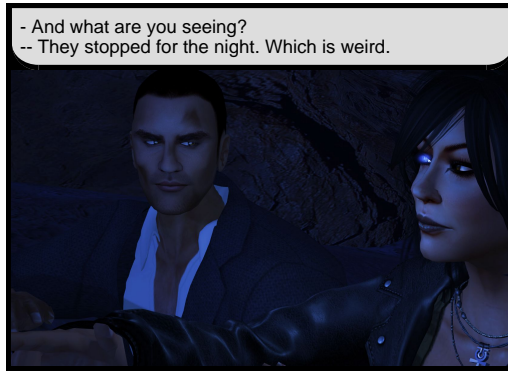
- We are going to camp here. It is a bit late to climb.

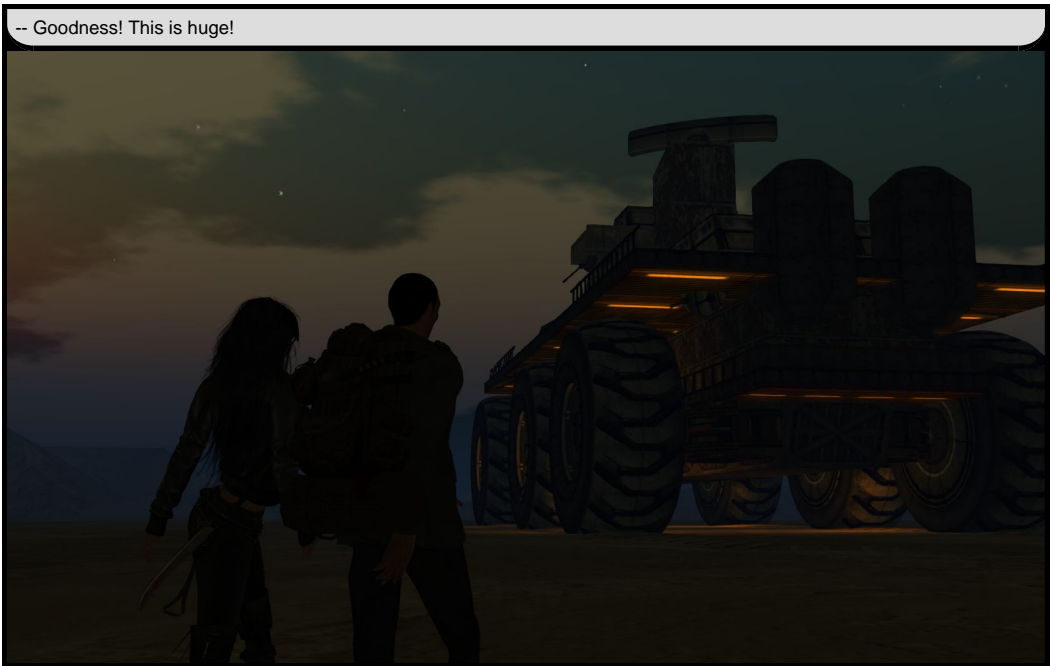
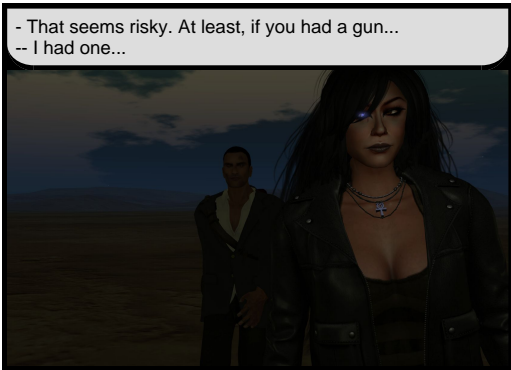
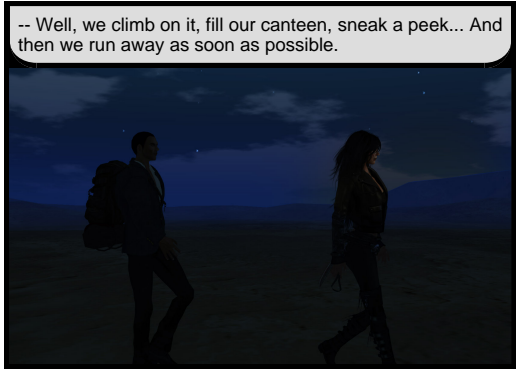
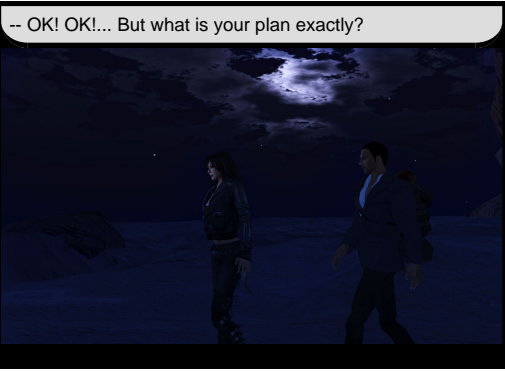


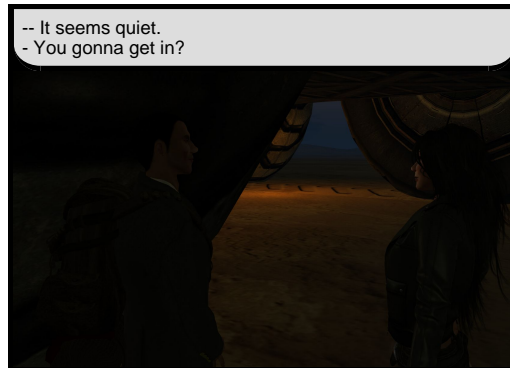
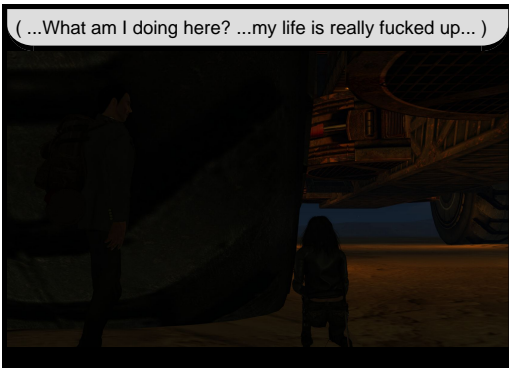
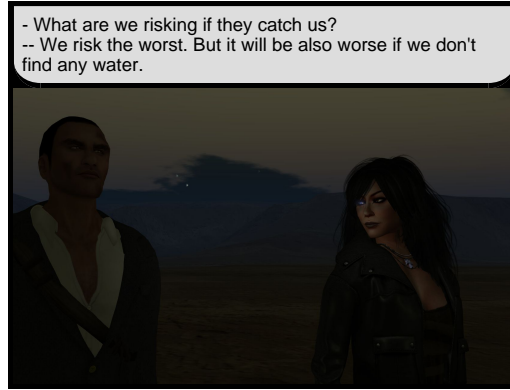
-- I'm exhausted anyway.  
- Let's eat something. Give me the bag.







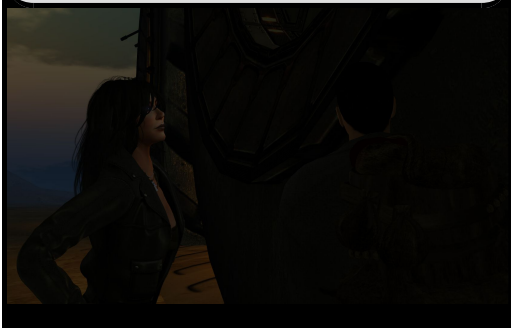




- No, the water is up there in those tanks. There is an outside tap.

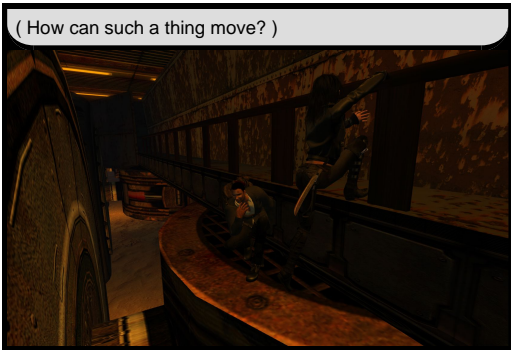
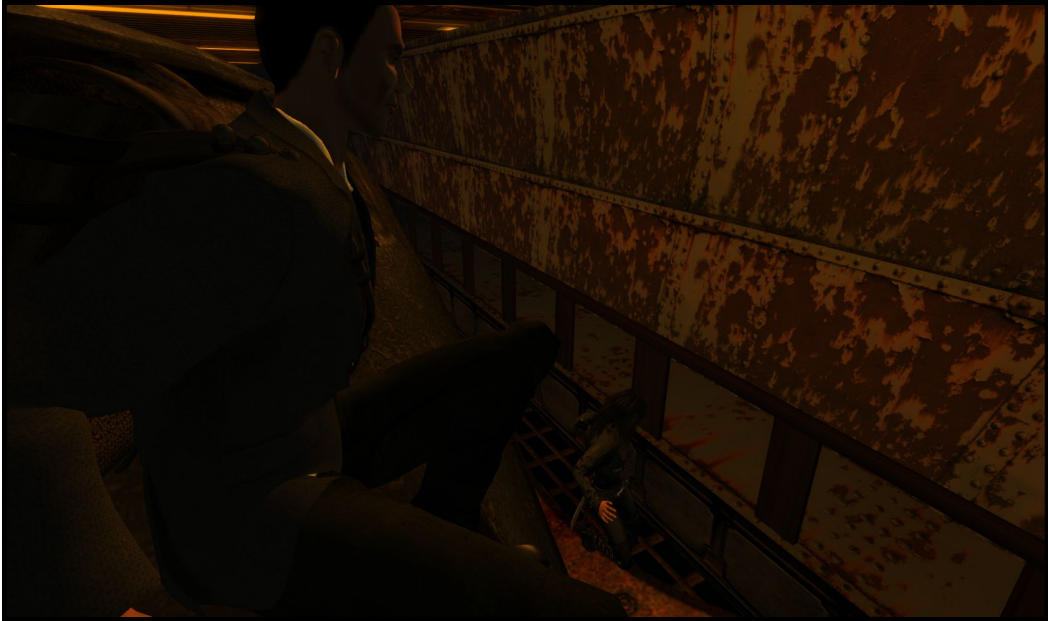


-- How can you know that?



-- I've once served on this kind of vehicle... Come on, let's not waste time.





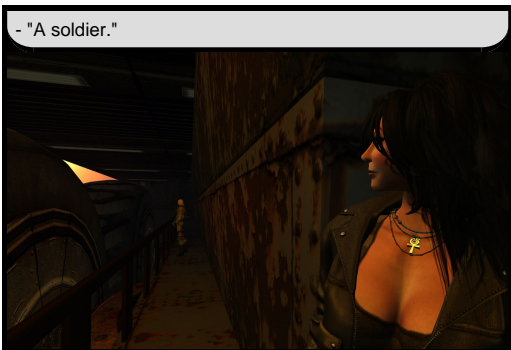
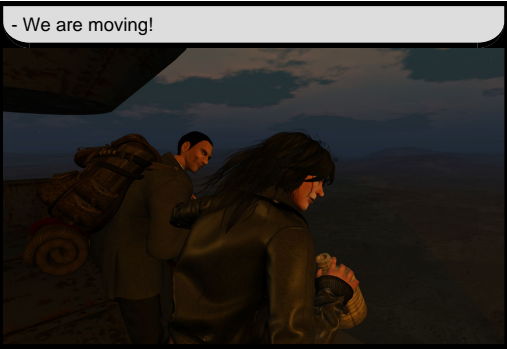


-- The sun is rising, we will have to do this fast.



- Here's the tap. Give me the canteen.







- He's gone. But we're already going too fast. Too late to get off. This is really not the place to break a leg.

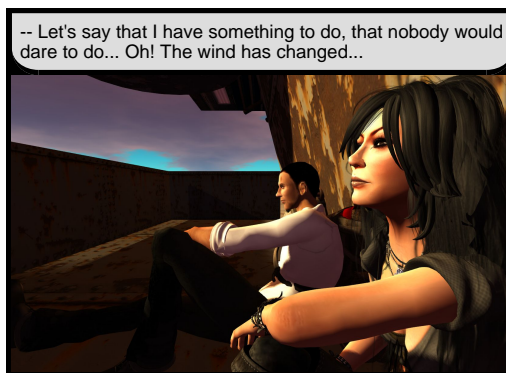
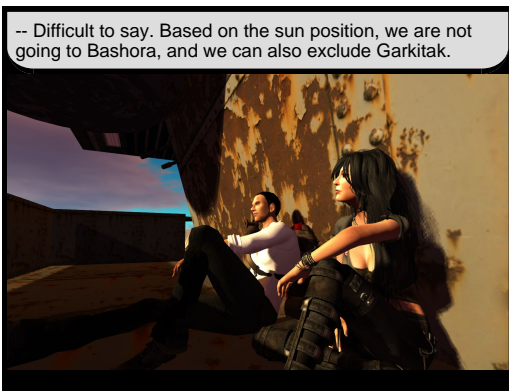


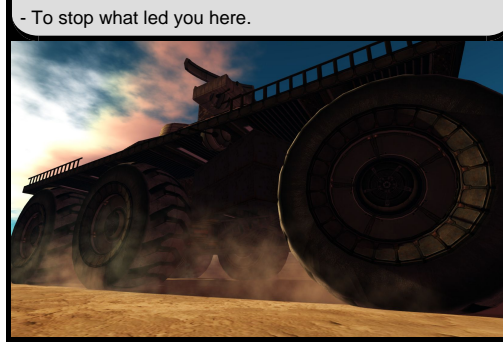
-- What are we doing then?  
- Nothing. Just wait for an opportunity.

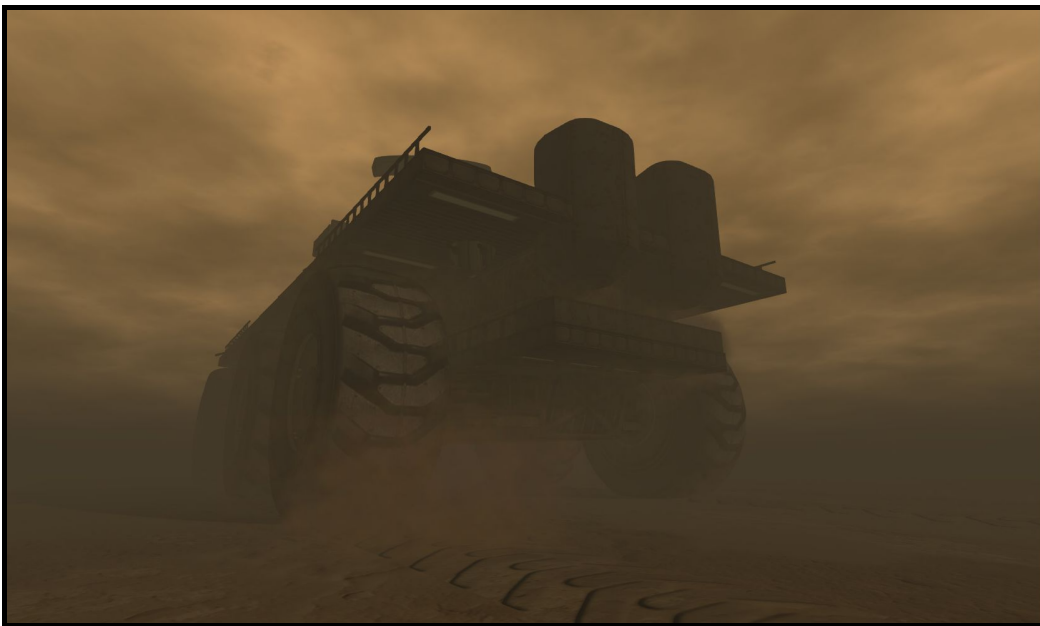
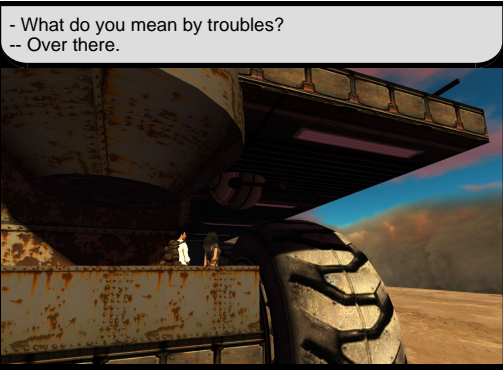


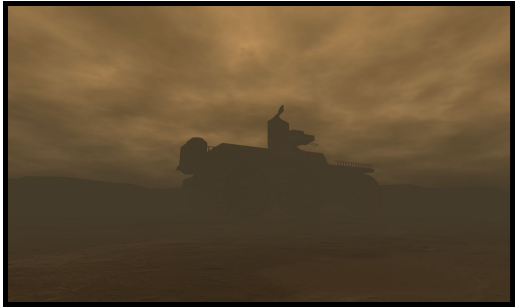
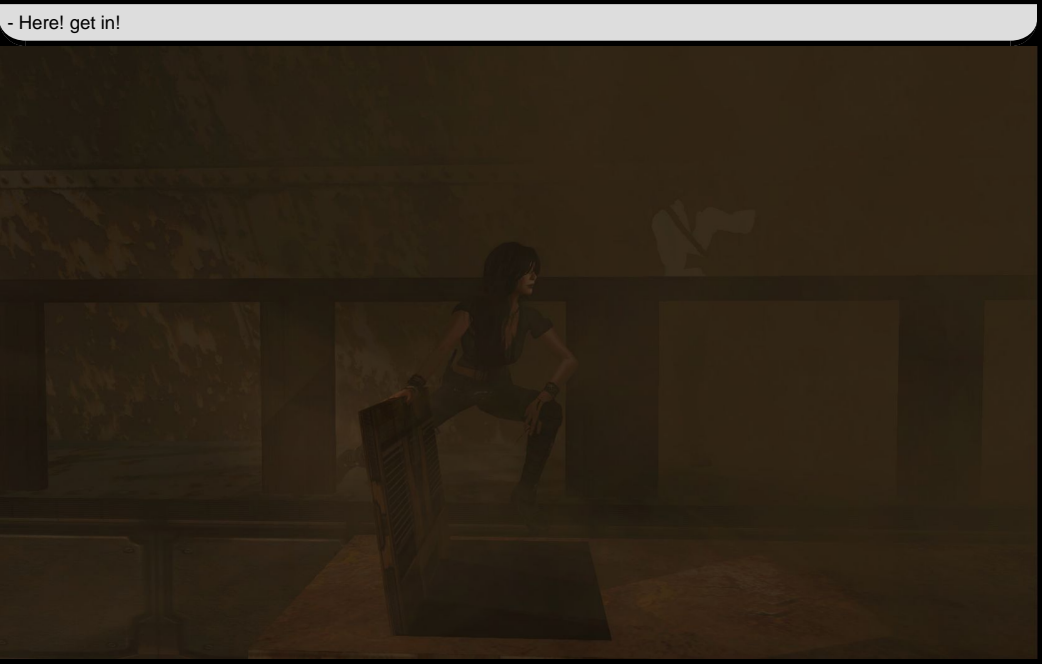
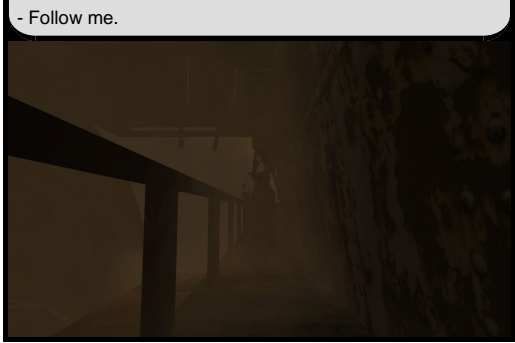
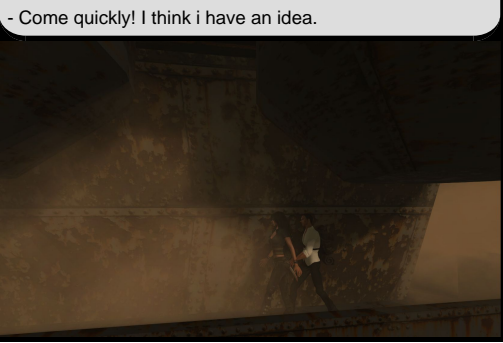
- ... And hope they have nothing to check here.

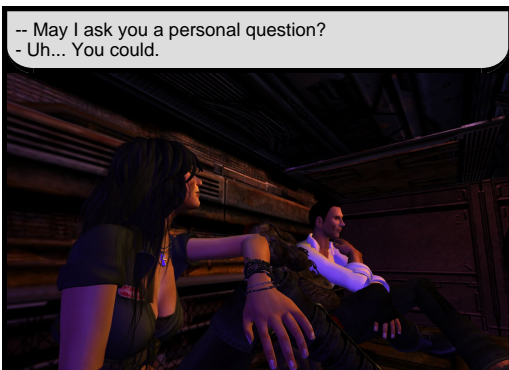
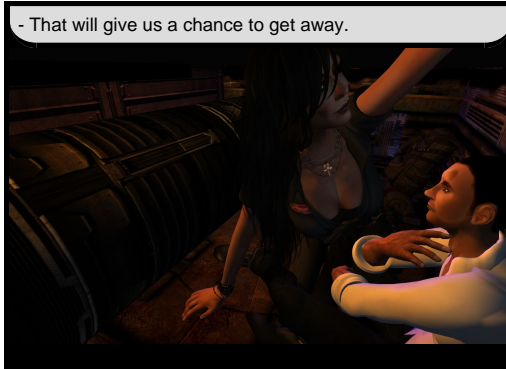
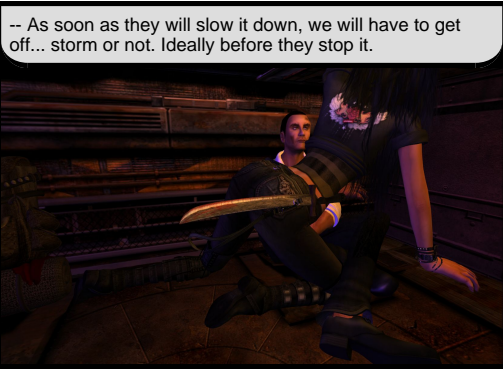


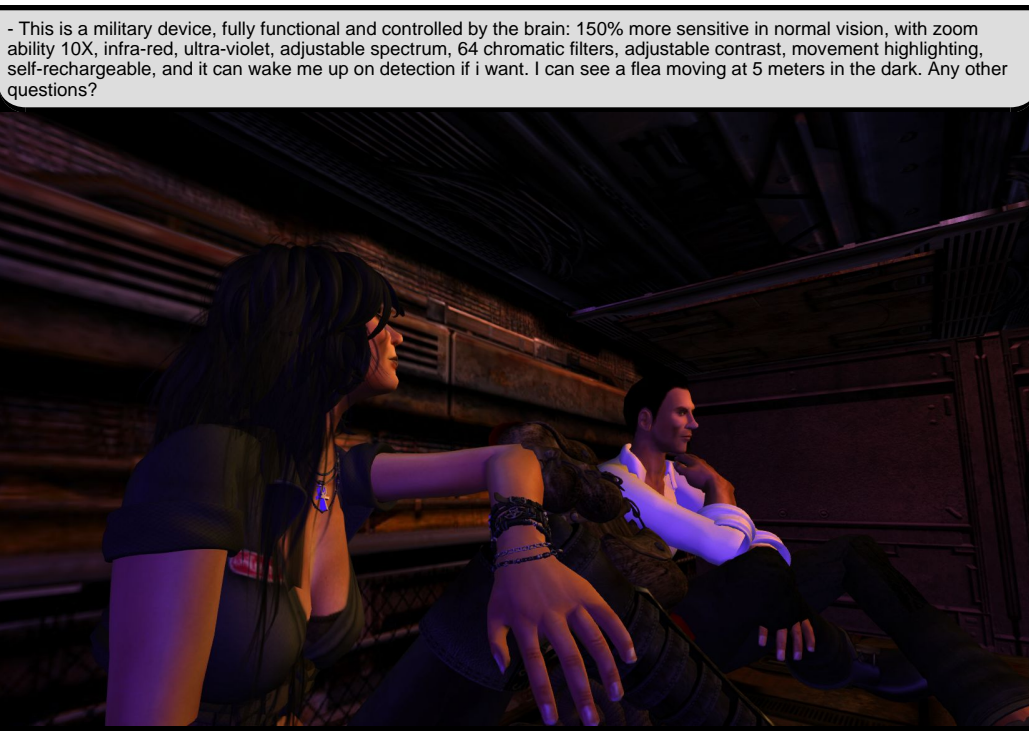
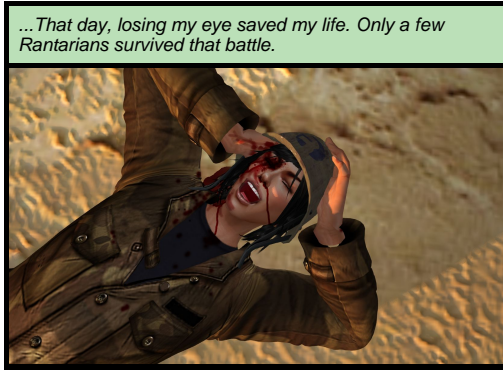


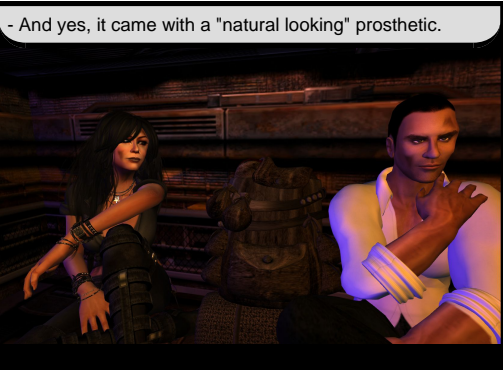


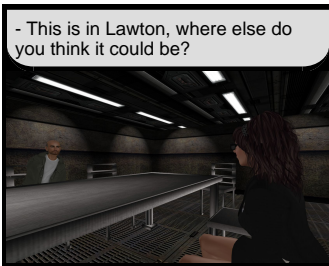
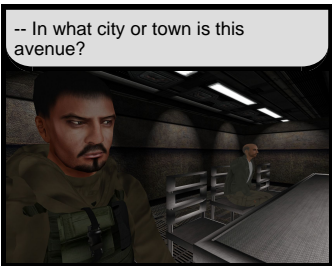
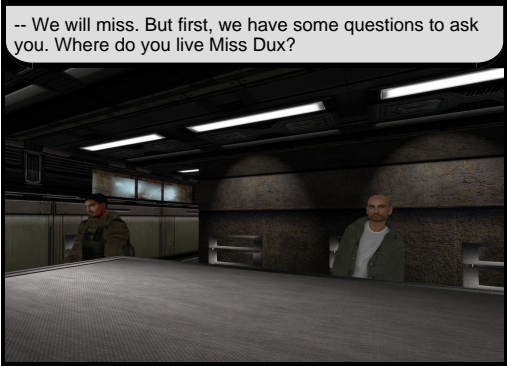
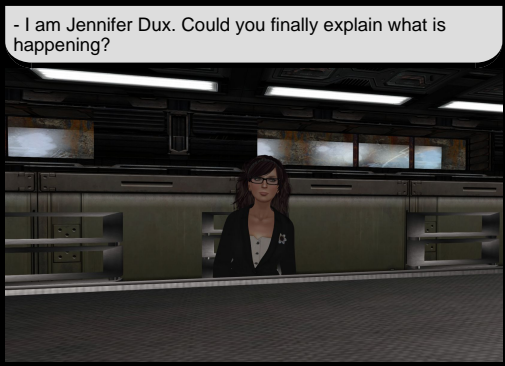


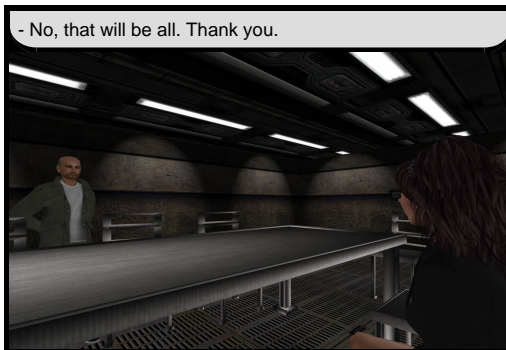
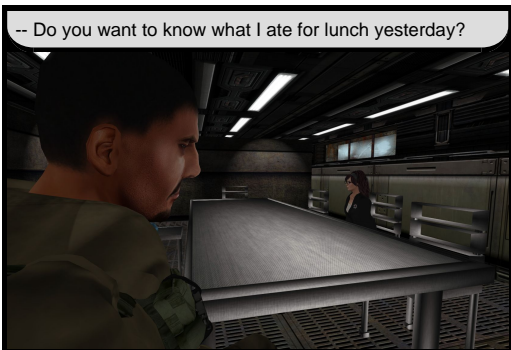
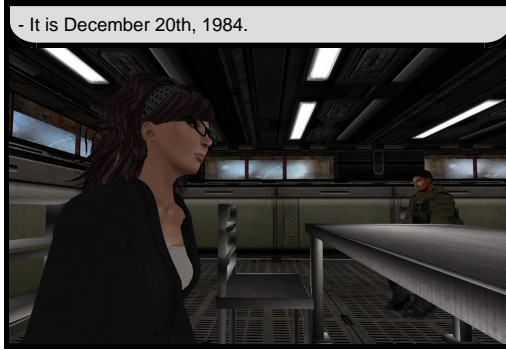
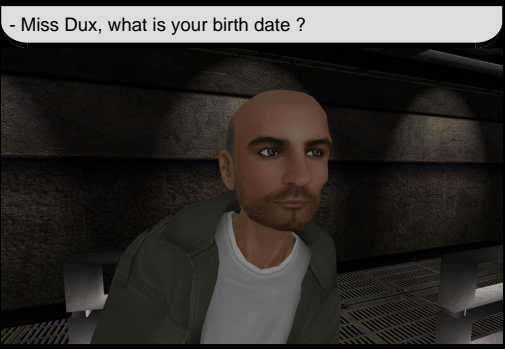


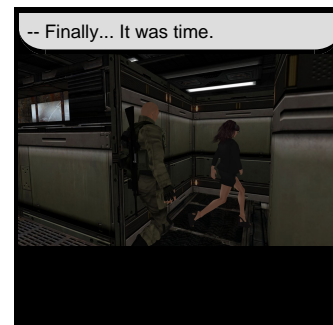
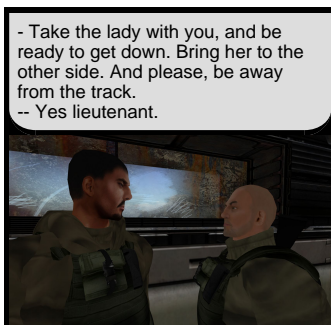
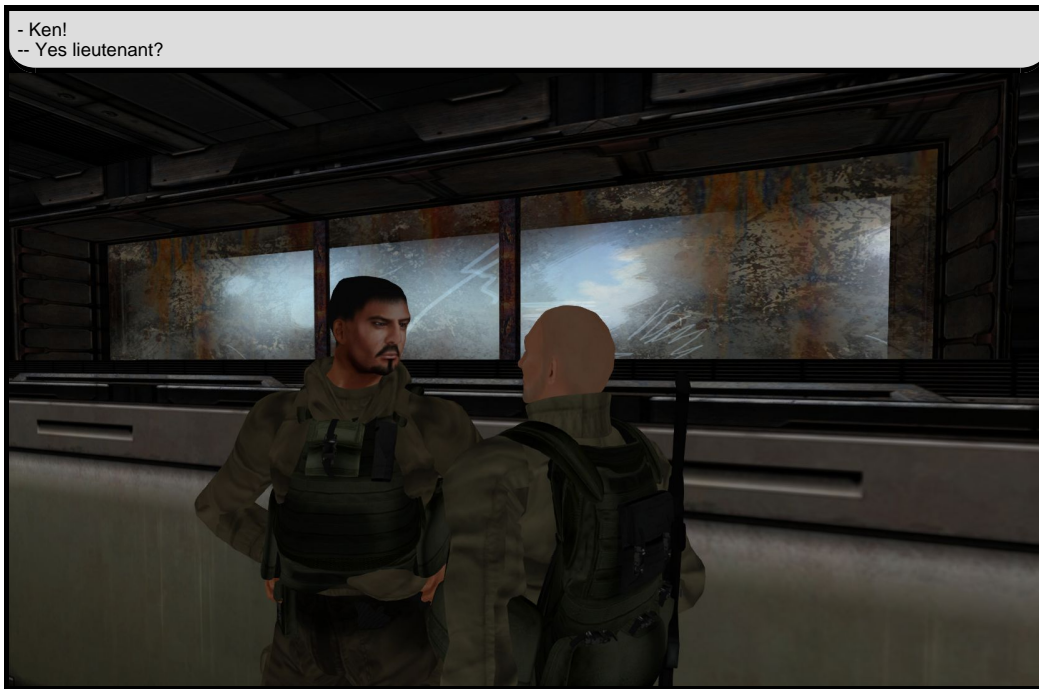
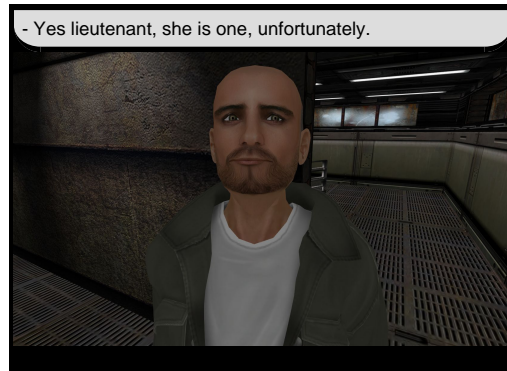


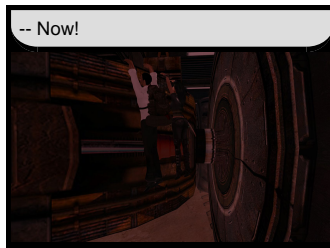
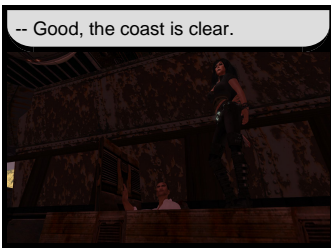








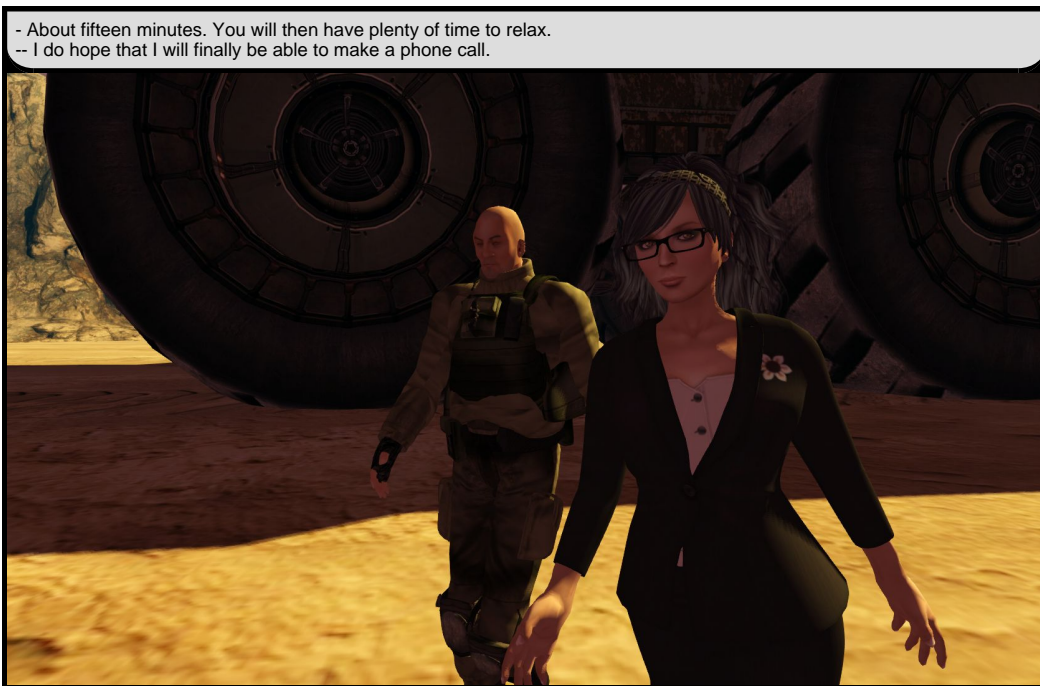
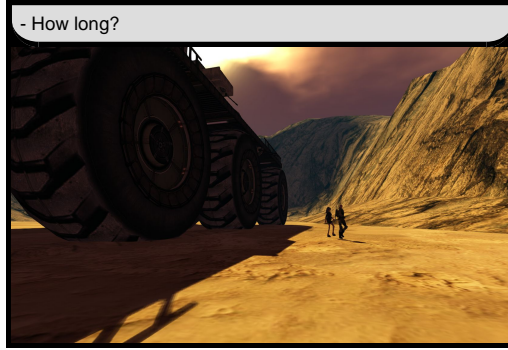






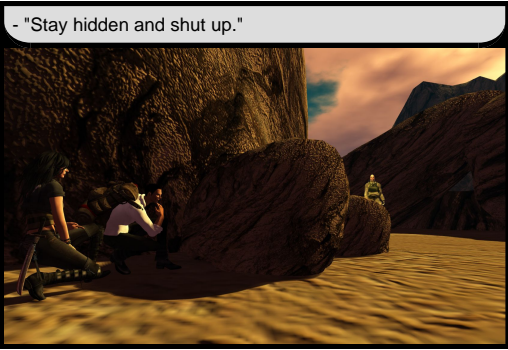
-- We are still in the middle of nowhere.  
- It is indeed strange. Particularly since it was a bit early for them to encamp.











- Stop moving if you want to live! ... Roland! ...Give me one of the straps of the bag.  
-- Bitch! You're gonna eat dirt, I swear!



- Take this, and if he moves, shoot him in the knees... I'll be right back...  
-- What? But... ((This doesn't make sense!))



(( He won't move... He won't move... I'm still not going to shoot him... ))

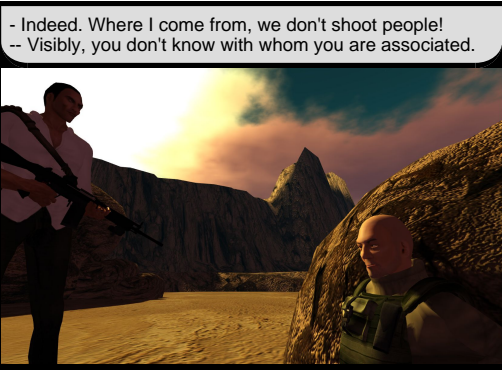


( What a carnage... She was clearly not from here... )



- You! You're not from here it seems...





-- Who was this woman? And why did you kill her?  
- Arrrrgh...



-- Now that you're bleeding... I strongly recommend you to answer!



- She was a "U.E.", I had order to terminate her.  
-- What is a "U.E."?

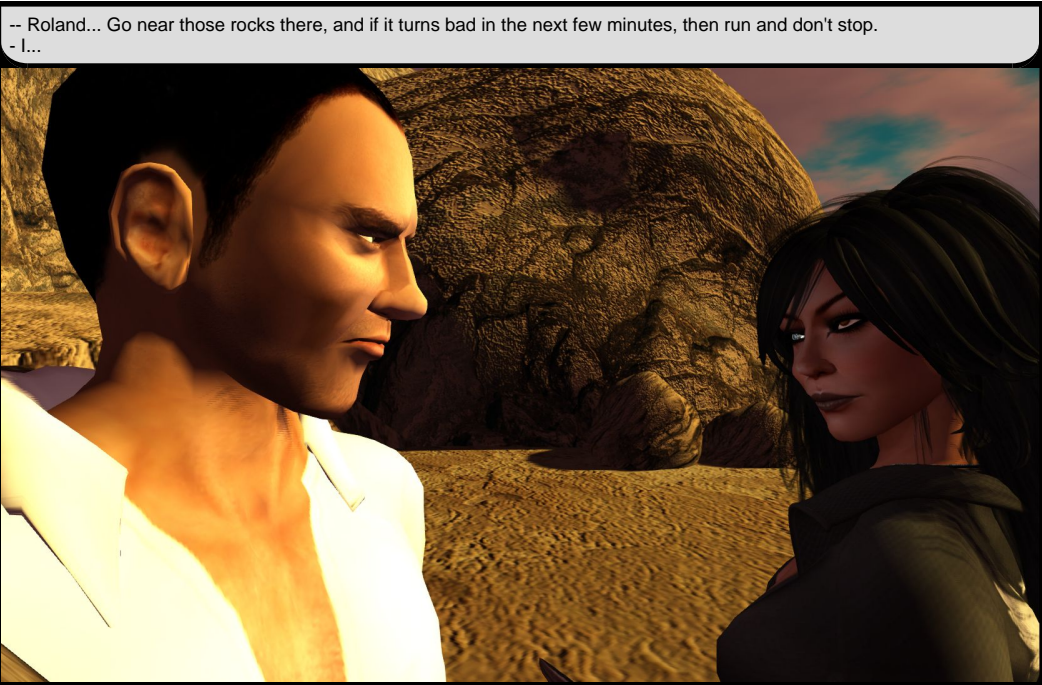
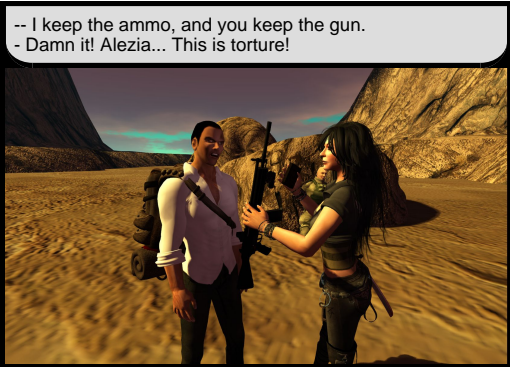


- U.E. for Undesired Entity... Arggh...  
-- Now, I'm going to push it through... How many men on the carrier?



- AHHAARG! Four, Three well-armed soldiers and one technician.





- You and I have both made some very questionable things...



- So I'll leave us the chance to apply justice or to pay fine...



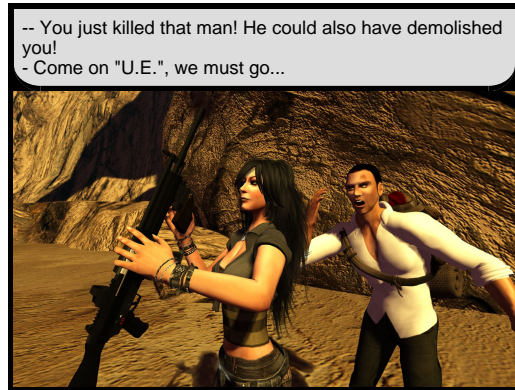
- Come on! Take it!



- Bitch!





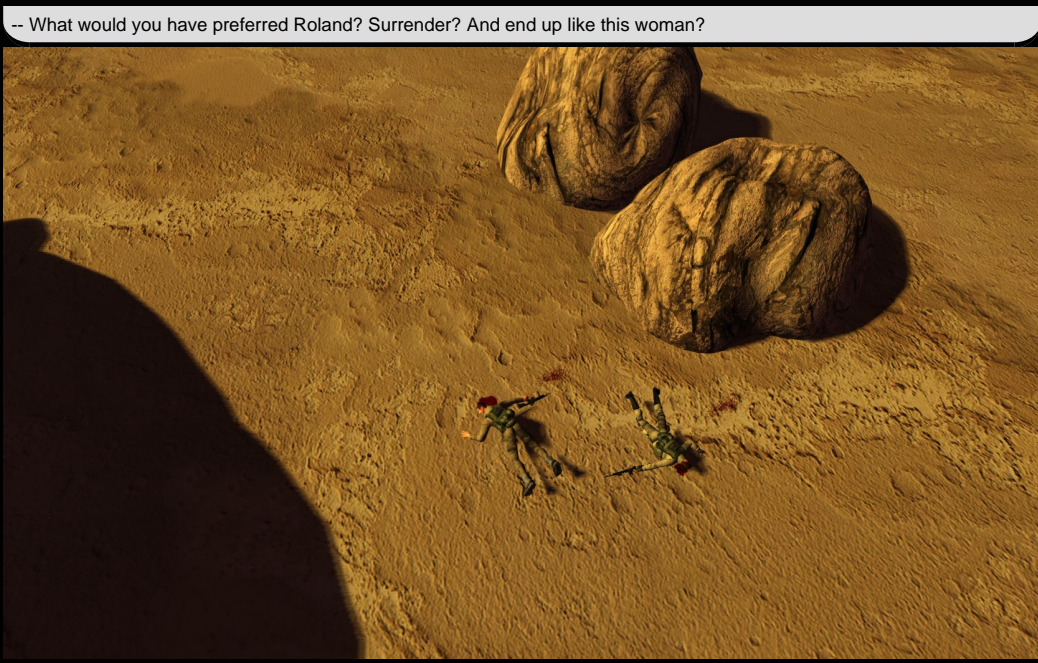
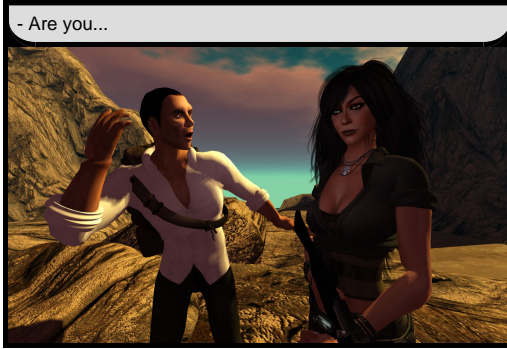


-- We should at least bury them...  
- We don't have time for that. Also, the scavengers will quickly take care of them. Look out, we have visitors again...

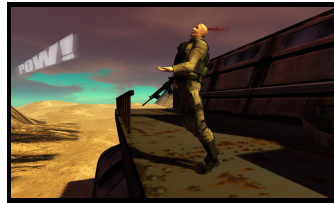


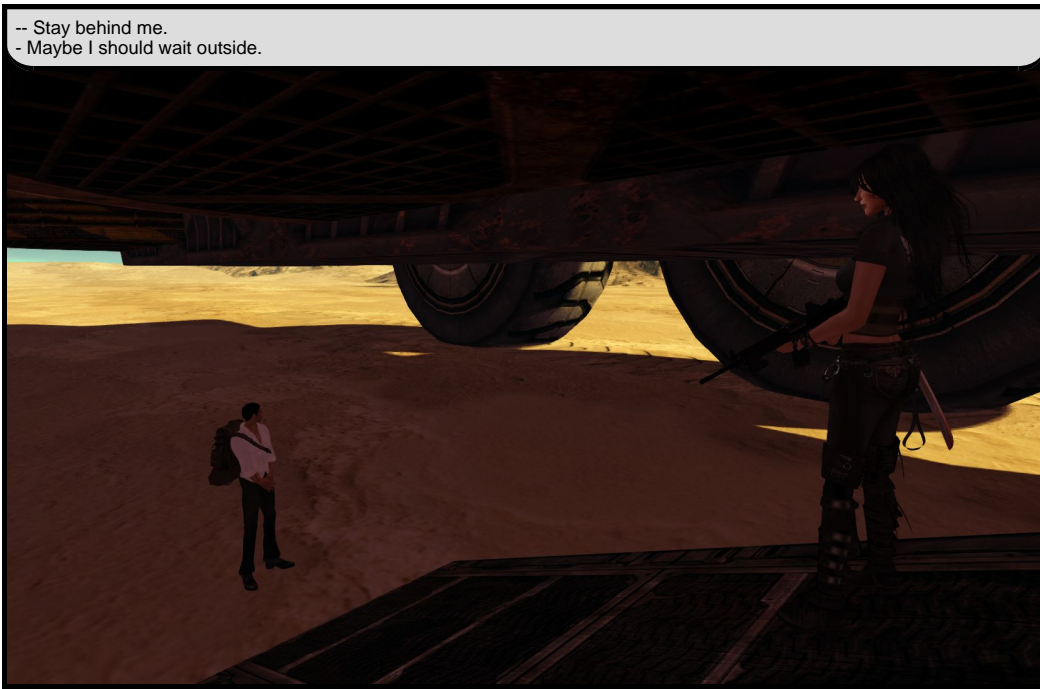
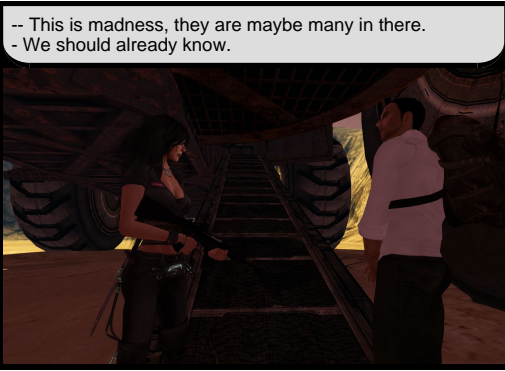
( They are armed to the teeth... They'll chase us tirelessly... and kill us. )

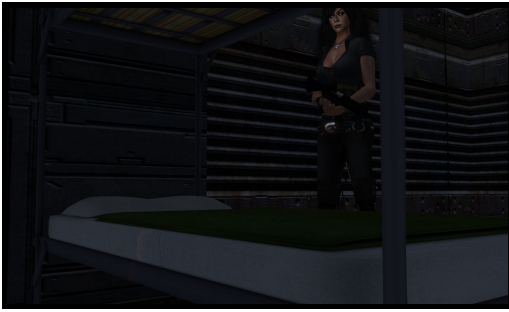




-- Come on, we have a carrier to take!  
- ?!



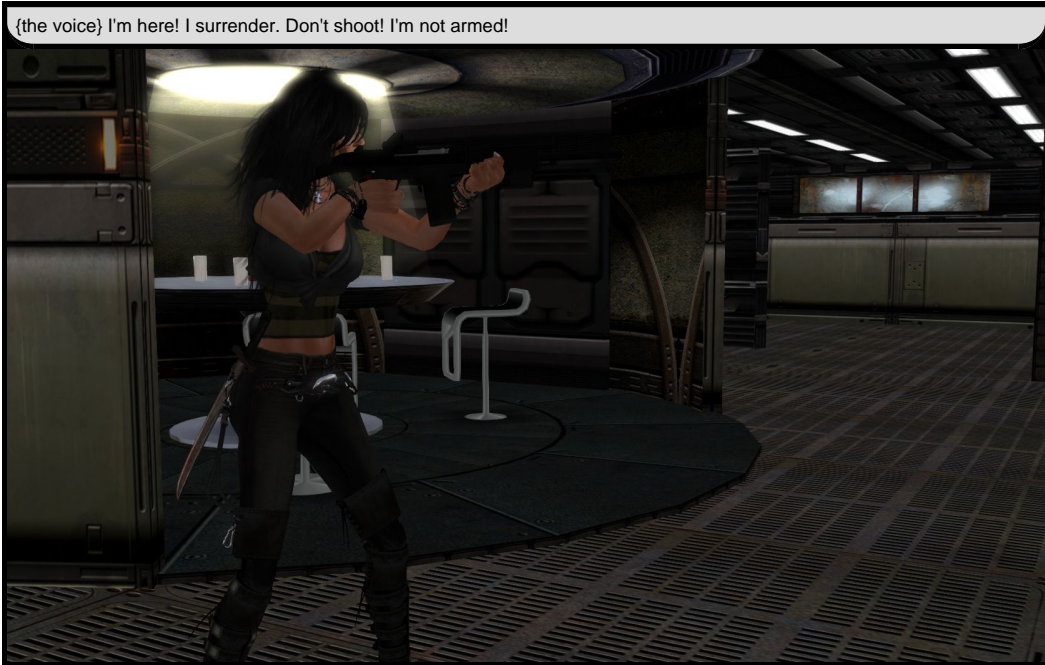


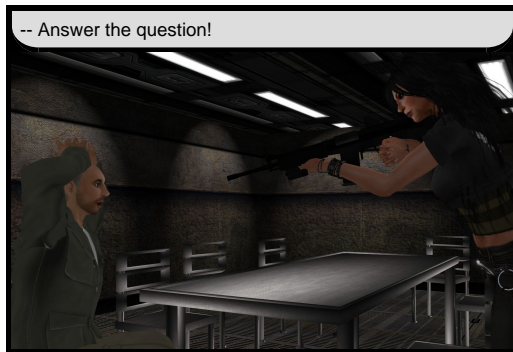
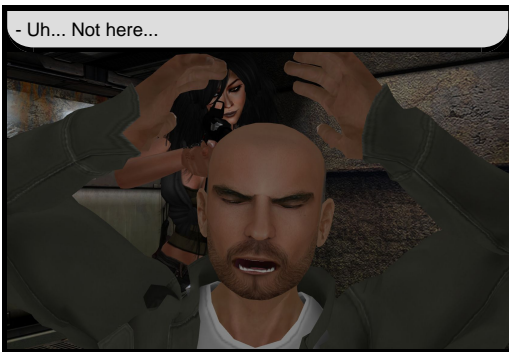
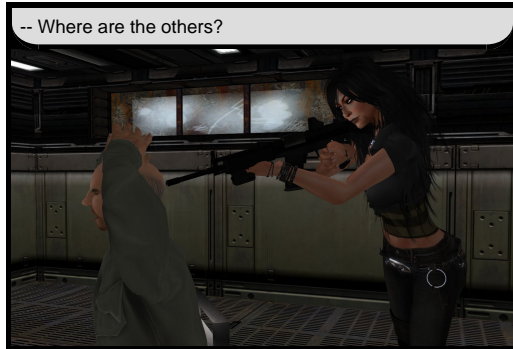
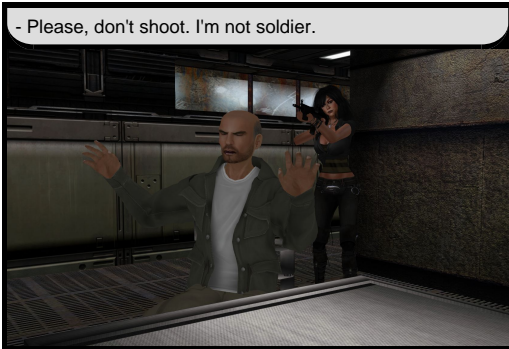
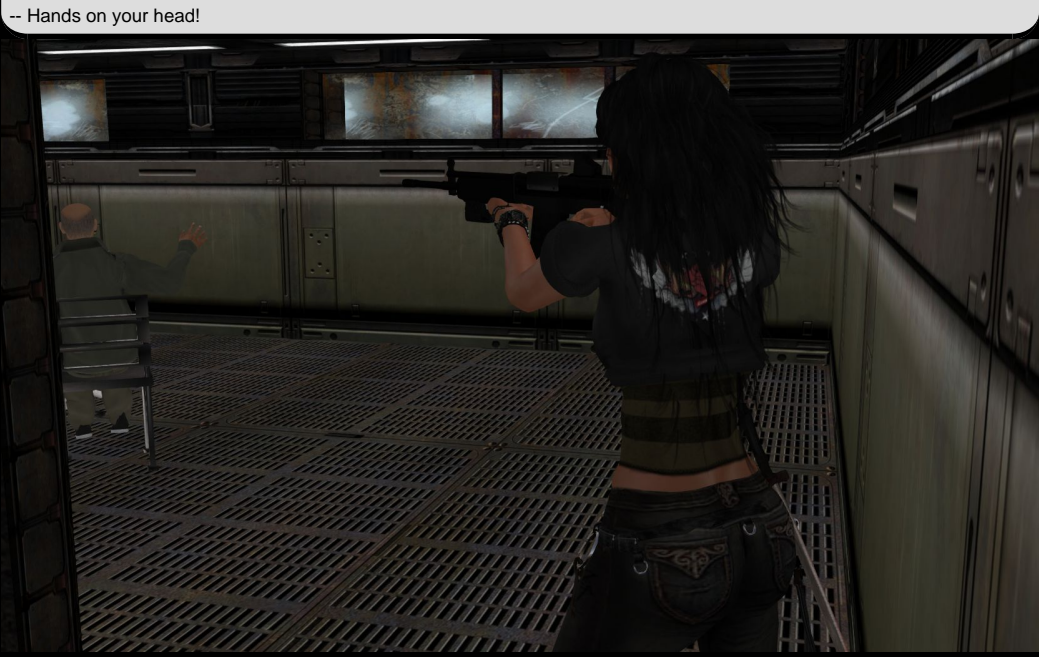


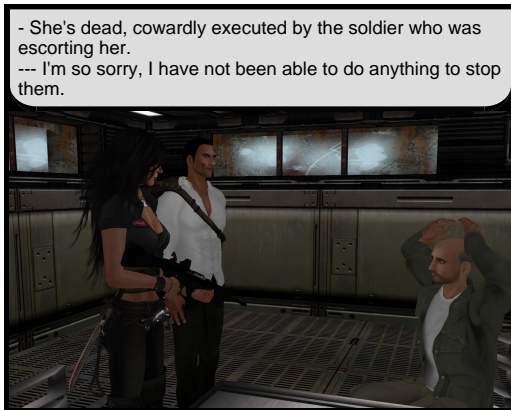
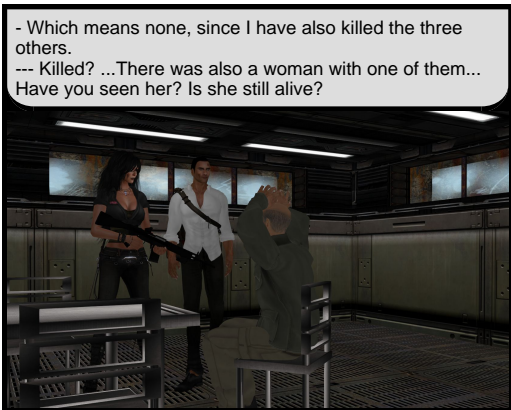
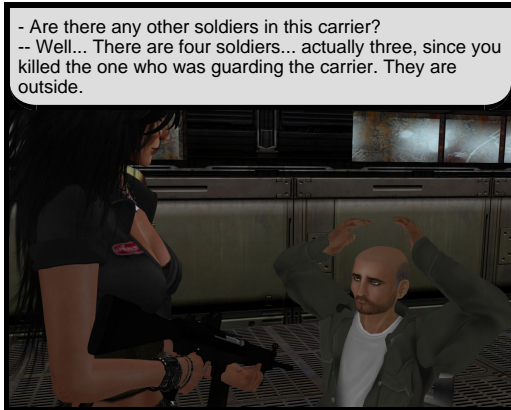
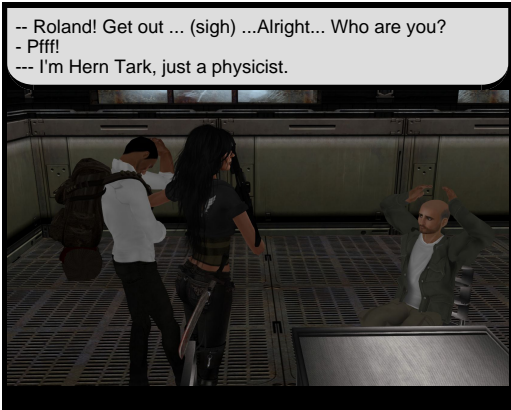
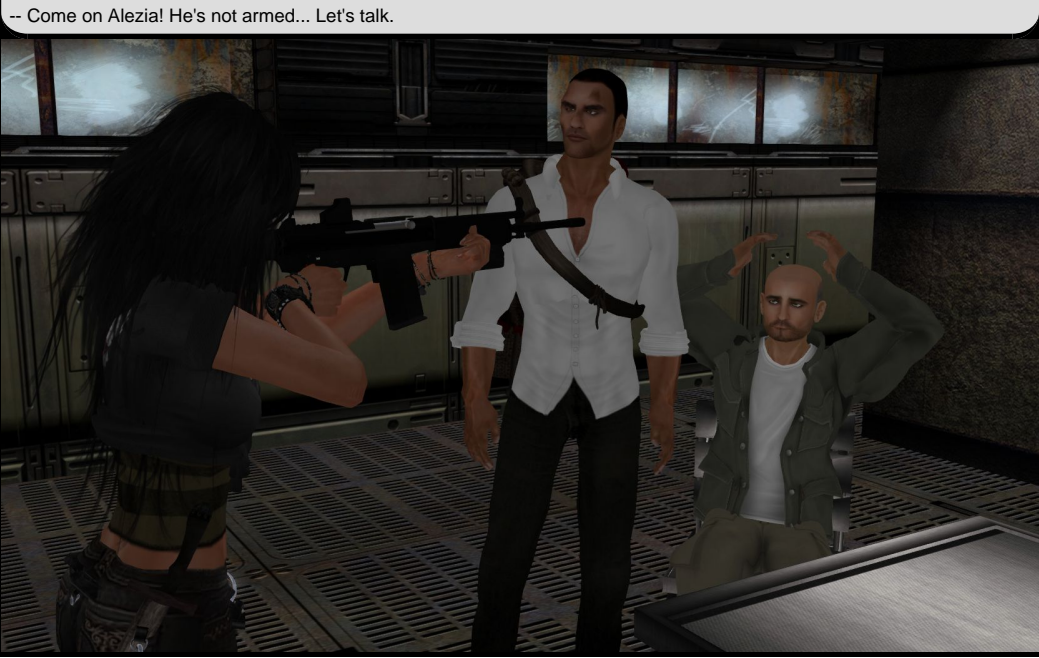
{a voice} I'm not armed! Please don't shoot!

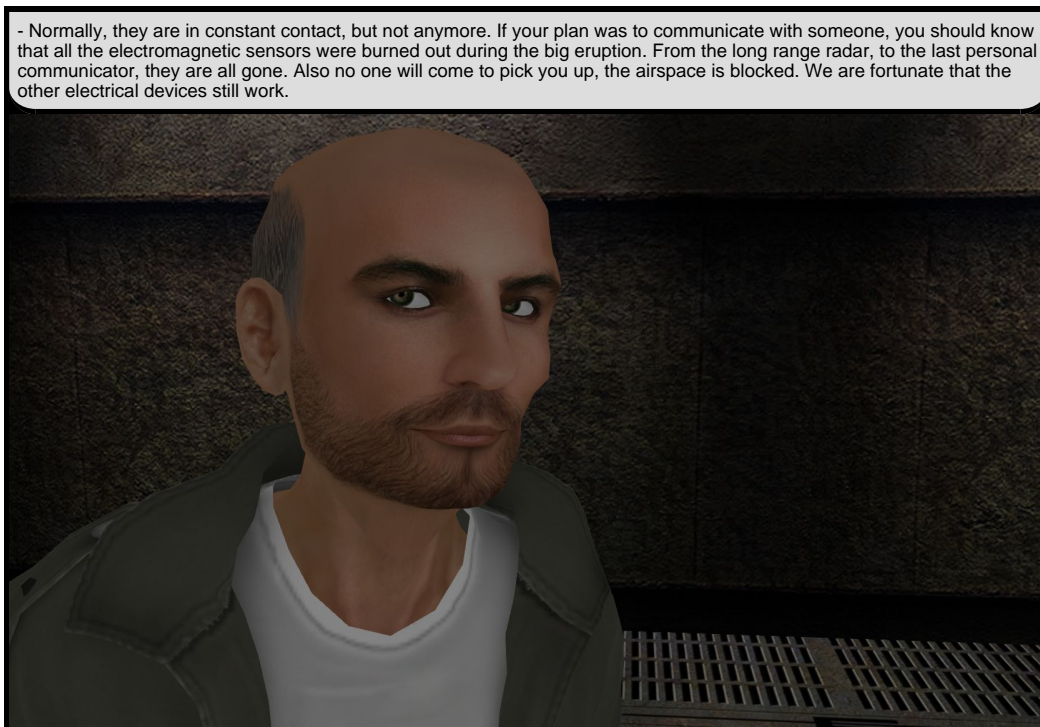
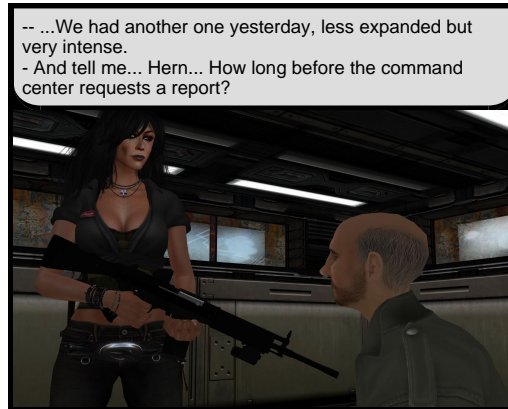
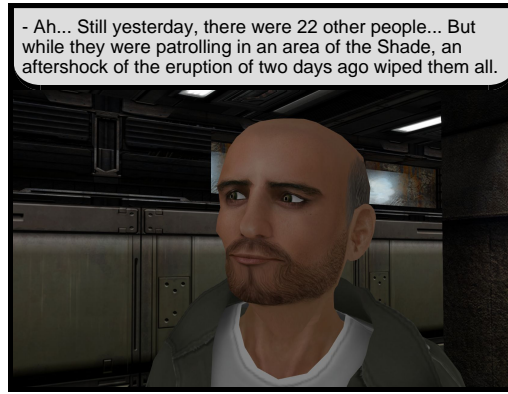
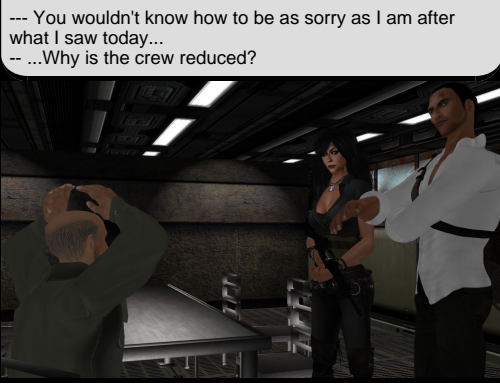


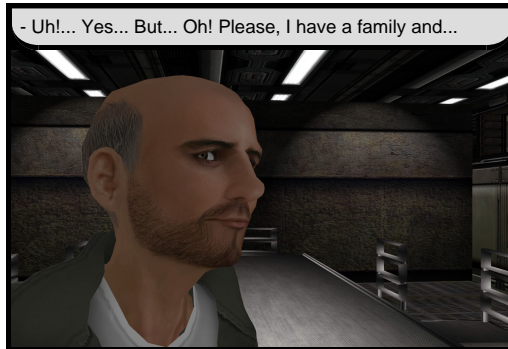
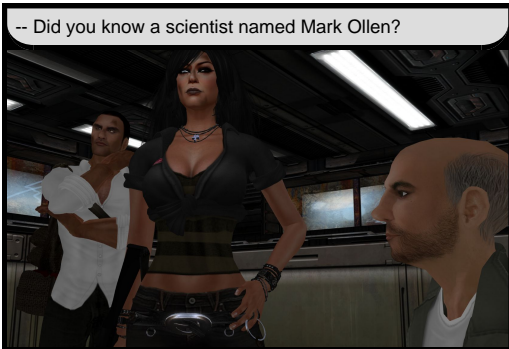
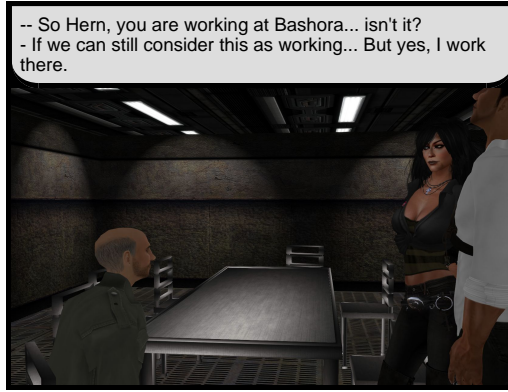
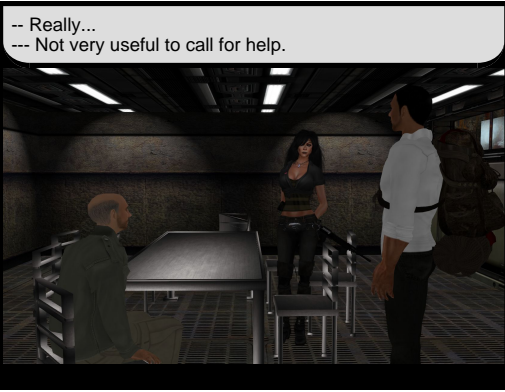
{the voice} I'm here! I surrender. Don't shoot! I'm not armed!











-- Yes... Of course... They say that I have murdered him... But it's not the truth. He was shot by Dallusian Special Forces while we were trying to escape by the super-train from Garkitak. He died in my arms. ...It's specifically because of what he told me about Bashora if I came back here.



- You were friends ?!  
-- Absolutely... It's a long story...



- Look Hern... I'm not here to harm you... You seem cooperative... And...

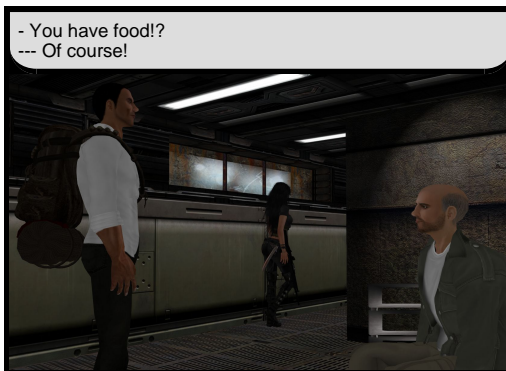
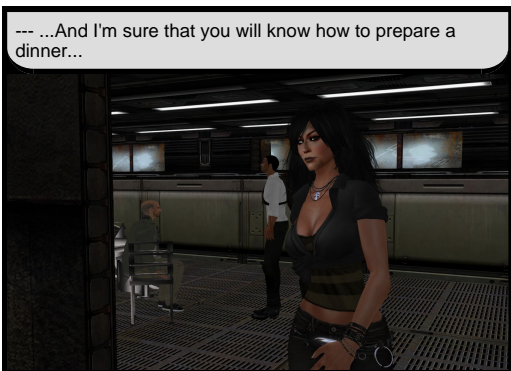
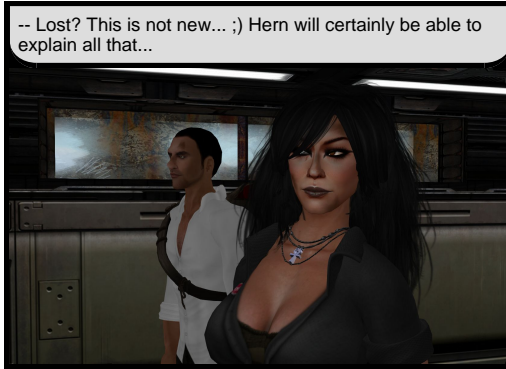
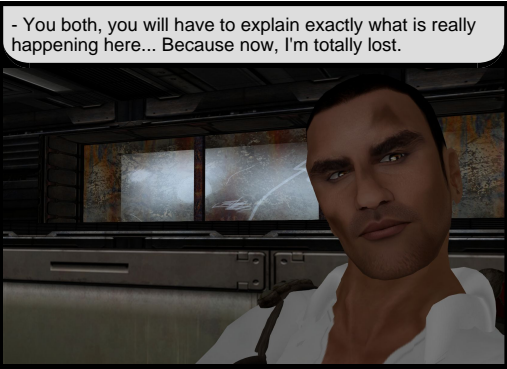


- If I can be useful to help put an end to the Bashora project, I have no problem with that. But understand that I have a family that I would like to see again. I wouldn't be part of a suicide mission.



- I understand that very well... So stay on board and don't cause trouble and I promise to do all I can to make sure to not involve you directly.





A bit later...



-- This Alezia Kurdis seems to live up to her reputation...



- Kurdis? So, this is her last name? You knew her name?



- She did a lot of damage last year near Garkitak... In addition to being the suspected slayer of a former co-worker. The Special Forces speak of her as a dangerous byproduct of the war.



-- To be honest, this woman gives me the creeps... She's somewhat chaotic.



-- You are not from here, isn't it?  
- Indeed... I'm a "U.E." according to what I've learned... Apparently, the thing to destroy.



- This is more than unfortunate. The government is afraid of contamination of any kind: viral, bacterial, genetic, or even cultural or technological.



- Trust me, I would prefer to not be here... In addition to this constant feeling of being late for work. What a weird shock.



-- Tell me, this woman that was killed today, Jennifer Dux... She said she was born in 1984. Is it something that makes sense for you?



- Uh... She was only 29 years old... This is really too young to die.



-- 29 years old... So for you, we would be in... 19...Uh 2000... 2013?  
- Why this weird question?



- Because we are in 669.



- Sorry!? ...Did you say 669?

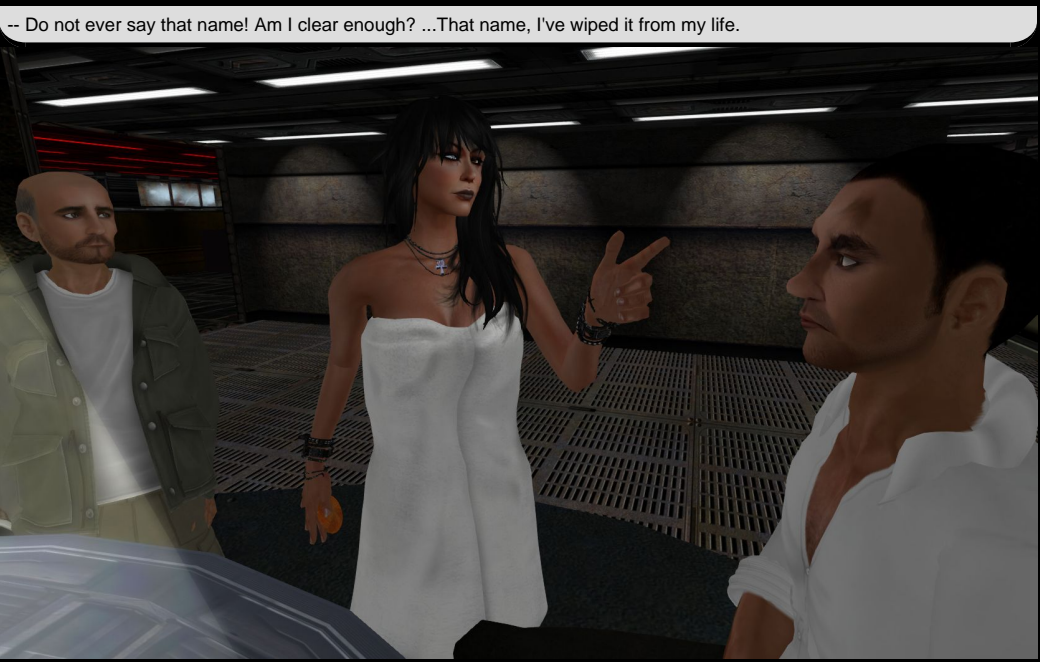
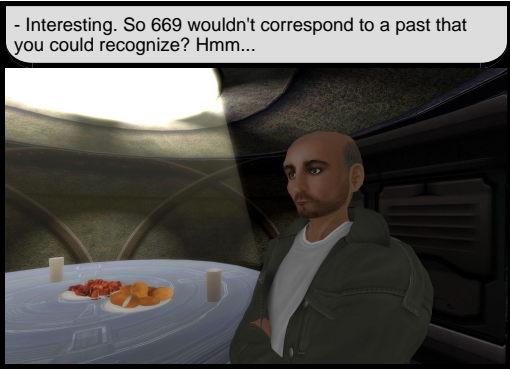


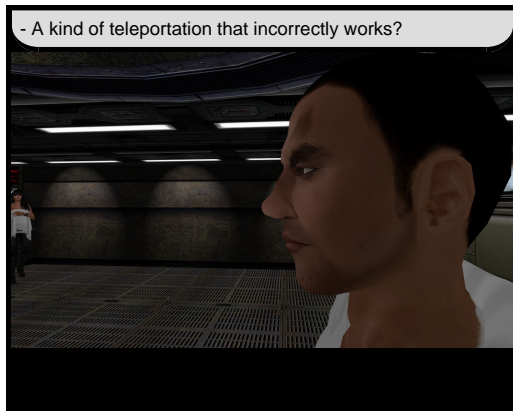
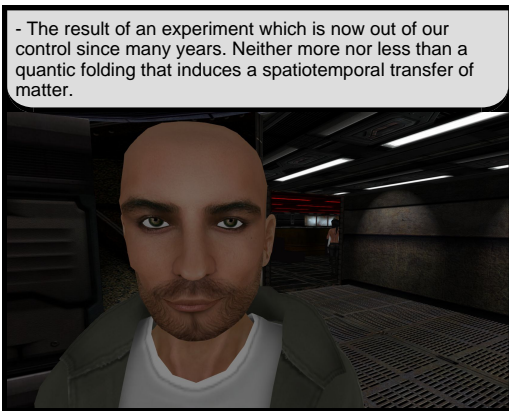
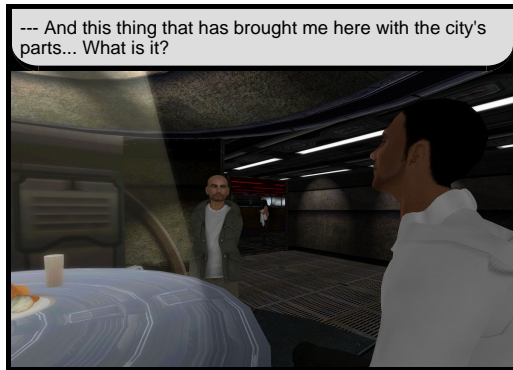
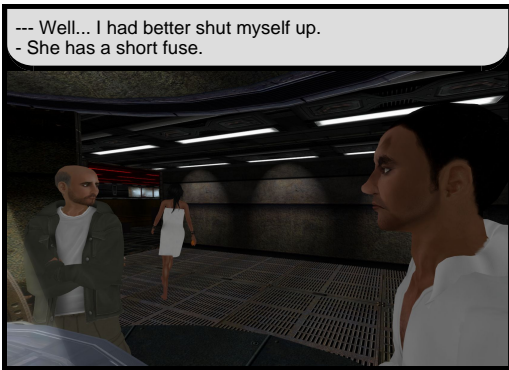
- You would be snatched from the future. That's quite different from the current theory.

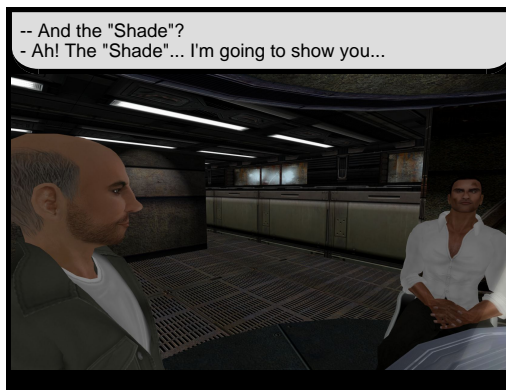
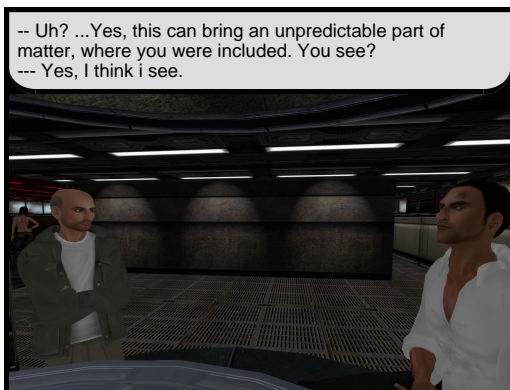
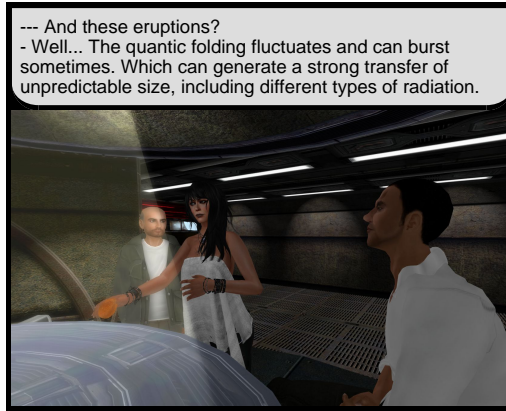
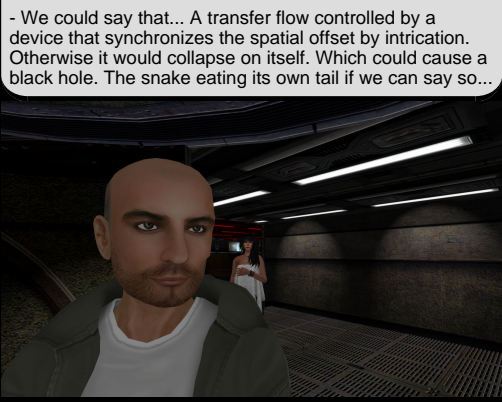


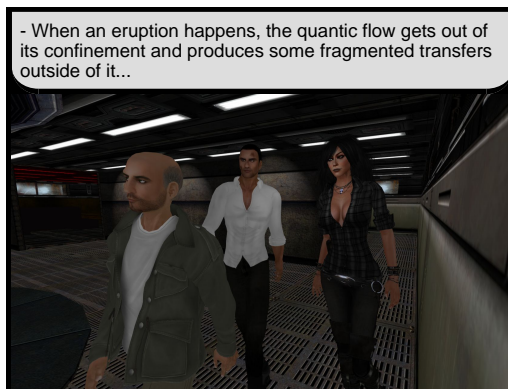
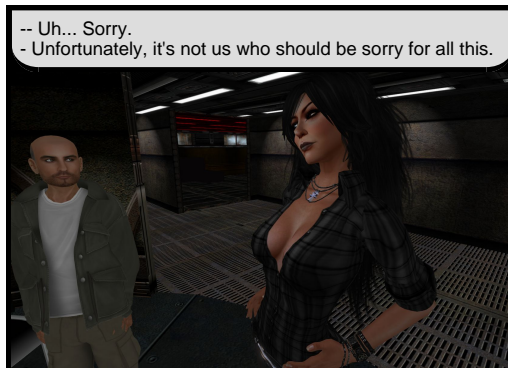
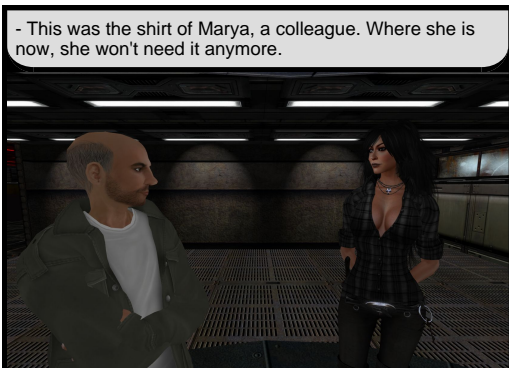
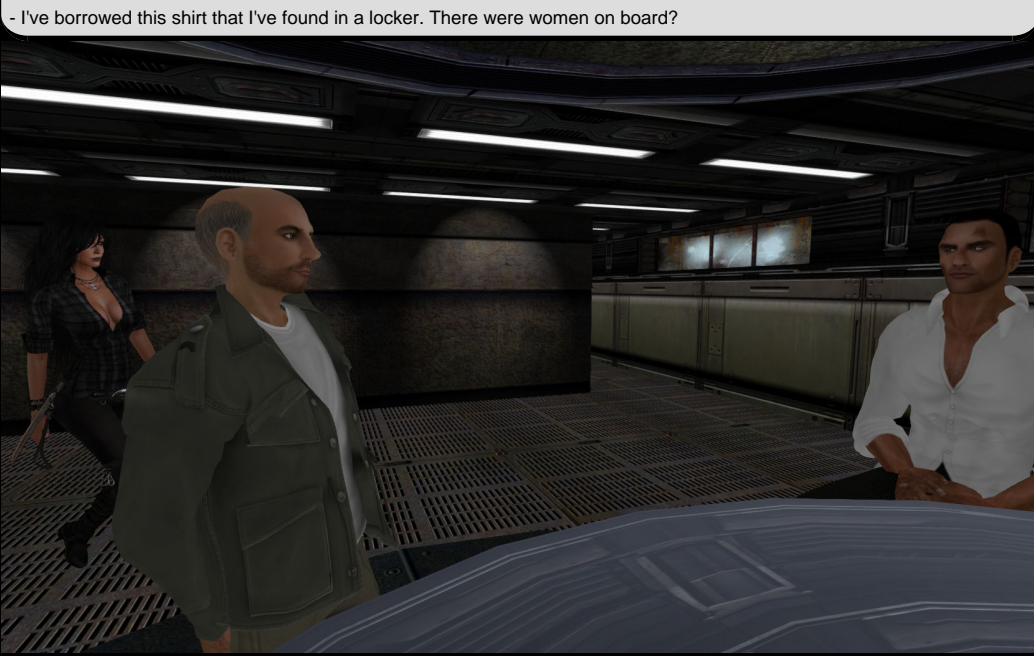
-- Whoa! Are you kidding me?  
- Uh... Not at all.



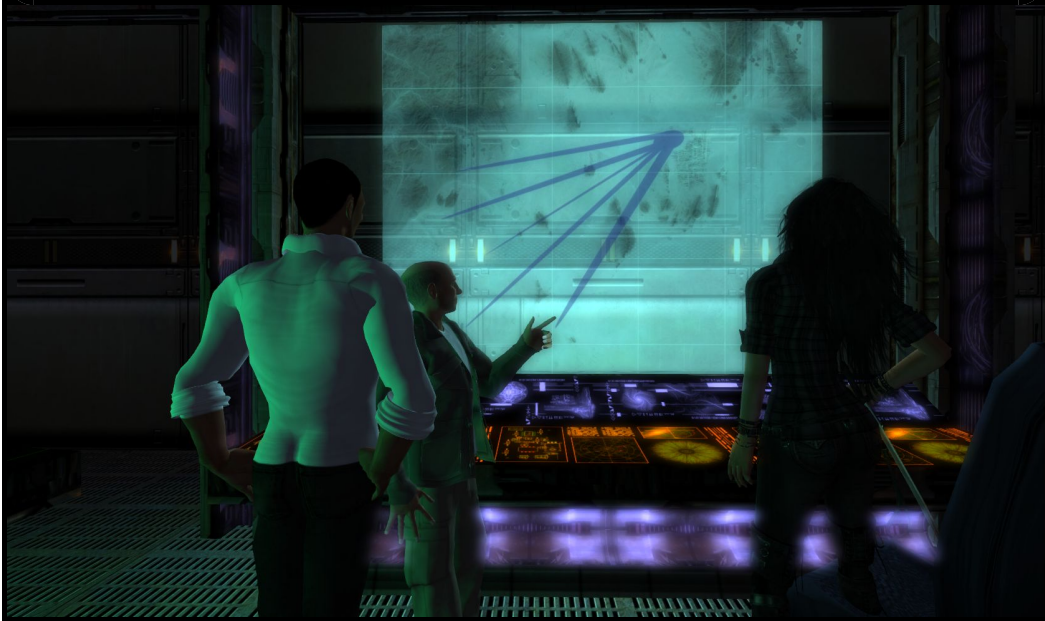








-- This always occurs in the same specific quadrant, at the south-west of Bashora. It's this area where the burst hits, which is named the "Shade".



- So this is where I have landed, if I can say so?  
-- Yes.



- And it's in that zone where the Dallusian Special Forces are doing their infamous clean up. Isn't it?



- Sadly yes.



-- How many carriers are patrolling the Shade?



--- There were two others when we left the technological village of Bashora. But I have no idea if there are any others in the area.



- Are they all modified like this one?  
--- The ones I saw were also mobile laboratories.



- Hern, tell me... This thing that brought me here... This...  
-- Taalus... We call it Taalus.



-- What are my chances to return home by this Taalus?



--- To be honest with you... Your chances are null. This is a one-way.  
- And a very dangerous one-way.



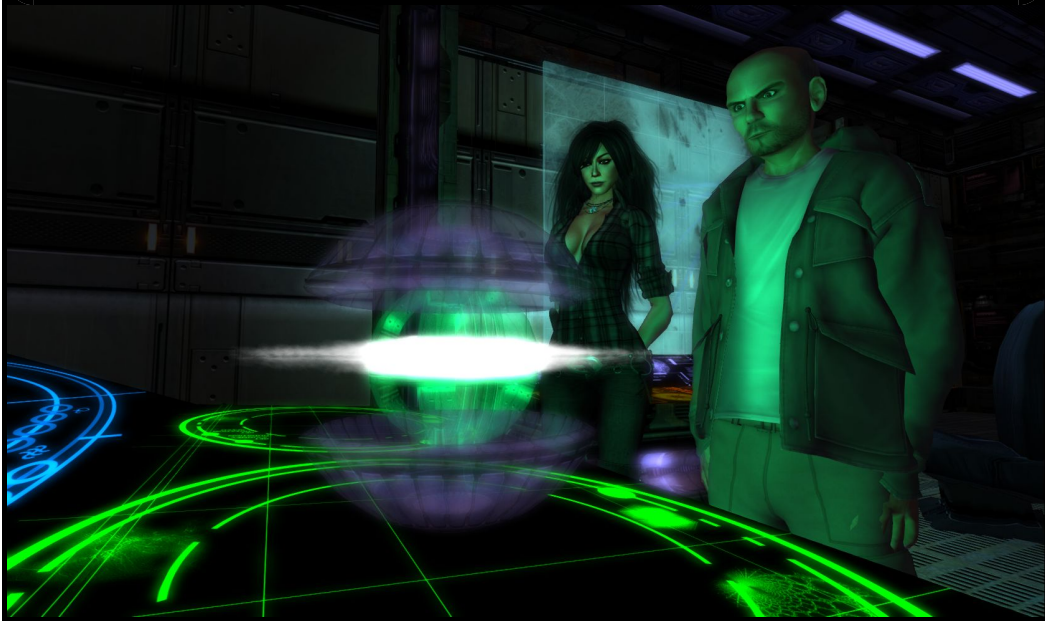
- This causes a shift of matter from the past to the future, jumping from a quantic harmonic to the next one, exchanging matter for matter in equal quantity.



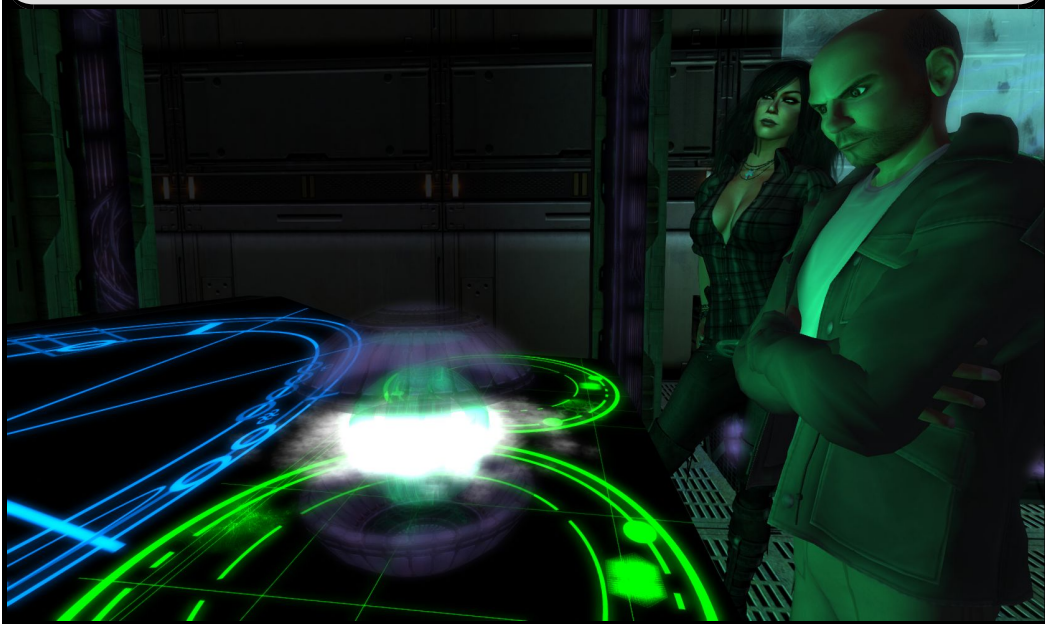
- It has to be stopped before it destroys everything. You certainly know that a catastrophic burst may occur at any time...



-- Well, easy to say... If the intrication synchronizer is stopped... This could generate a stellar black hole in 23% of the cases, otherwise a planetary collapse.



-- If we stop the Taalus flow... Then the synchronizer structure that contains it, will be swept. And you must be inside to stop it. A human wouldn't survive more that 15 minutes inside. The electronic devices won't last much longer, and all the communication signals will be distorted.



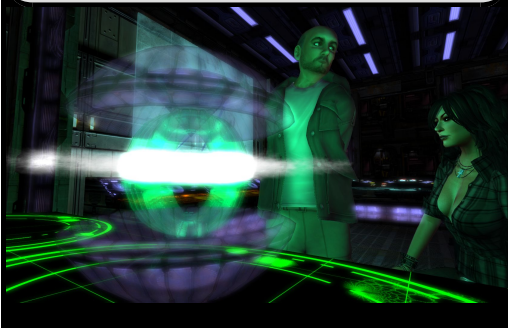
-- And we don't know the impact on the other harmonics if the Taalus flow is suddenly interrupted. What happens when the sliding has ceased ? We don't know... maybe that could directly affect our present reality.



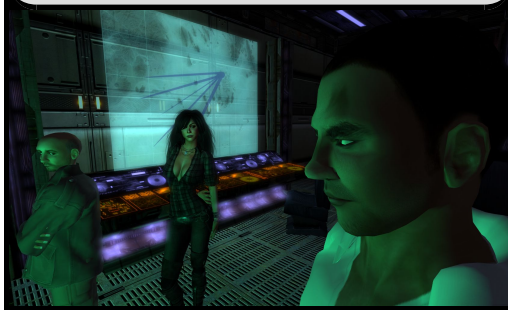
- Ollen thought that it should be stopped... Not doing so could be more destructive in the long term.  
-- I tend to agree... But are you ready to pay that price?



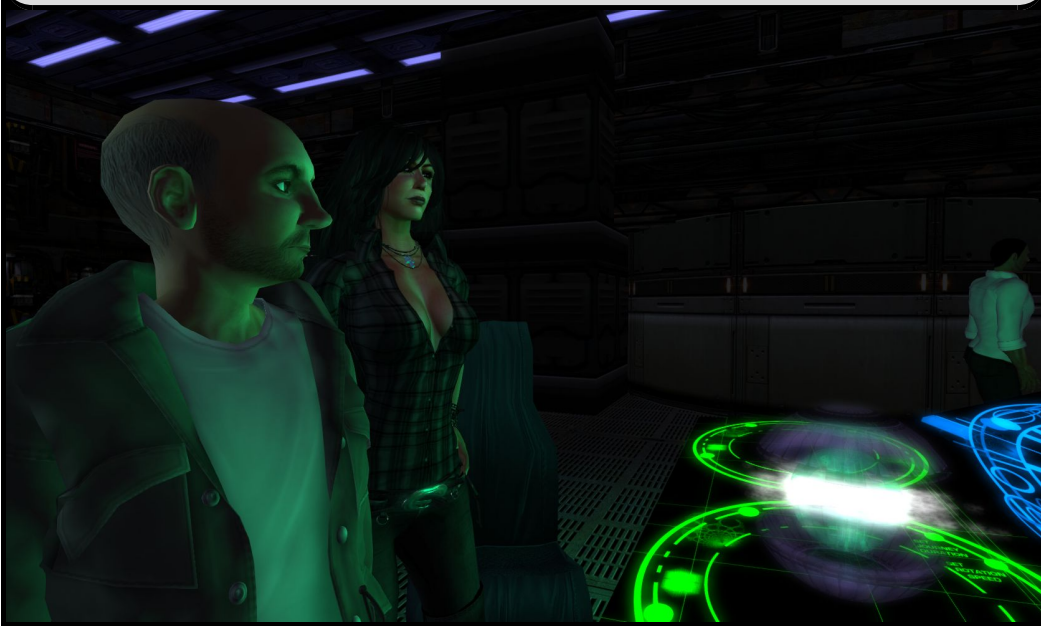
-- I have my little idea about that...



--- Nice... My life is fucked up... Now, i do need a shower too!



-- This thing has broken enough lives... Don't you think?  
- I agree.

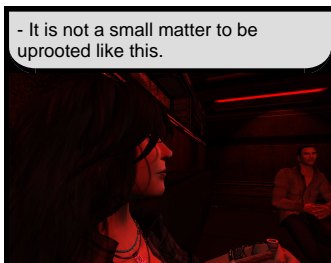
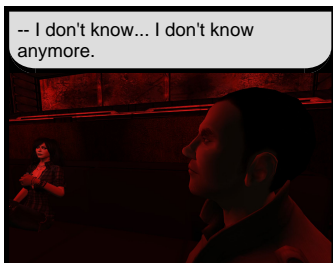
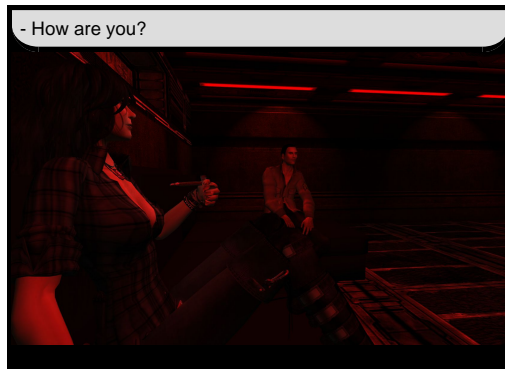
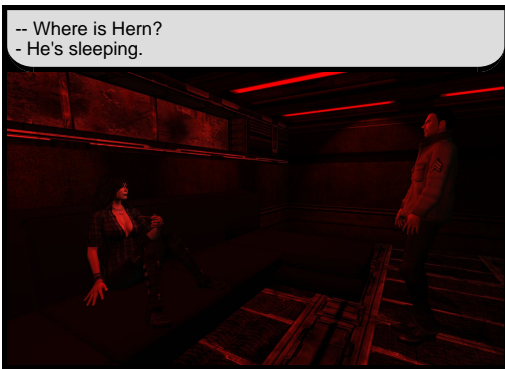


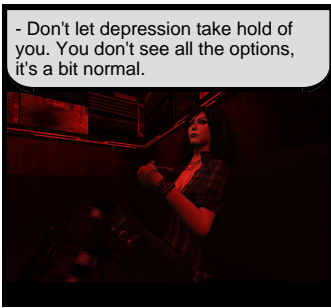
- HERN, the Dr. Liu Branys, is he still alive?  
-- The old Branys? He was when we left the technological village. Do you know him?



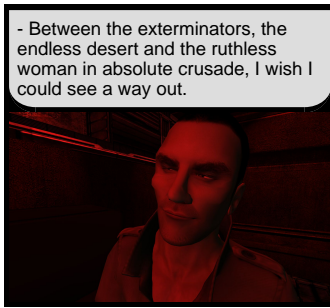
- No, it's Ollen who has mentioned his name. Where can I find him?  
-- In the village, He's at the 103. He's the dean. He's been there from the beginning of the experiment.







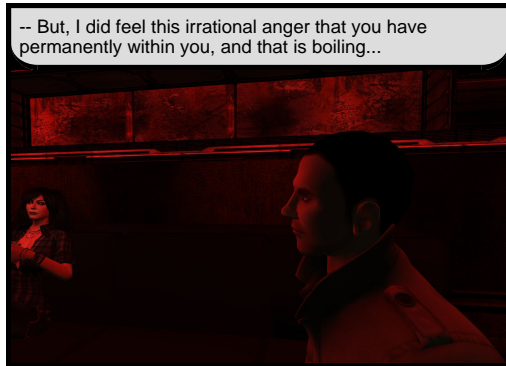
- Don't let depression take hold of you. You don't see all the options, it's a bit normal.



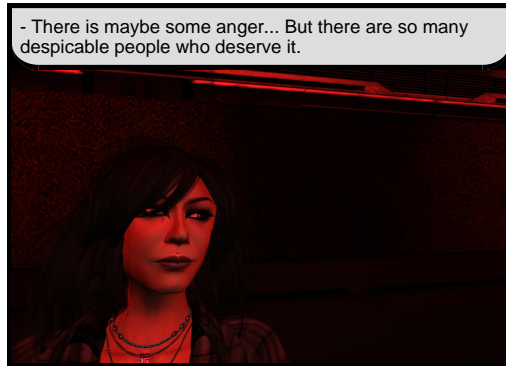
- Between the exterminators, the endless desert and the ruthless woman in absolute crusade, I wish I could see a way out.



- Ruthless?! ...Ah, thank you!



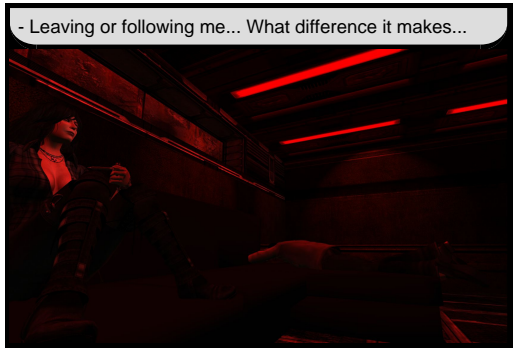
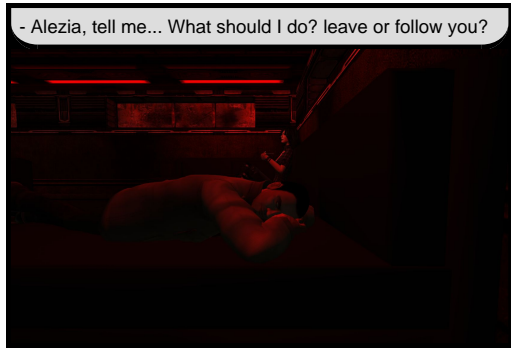
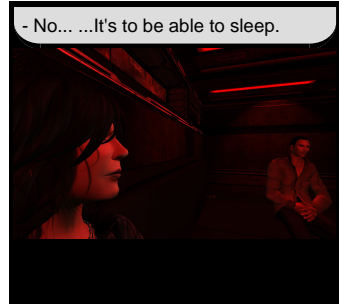
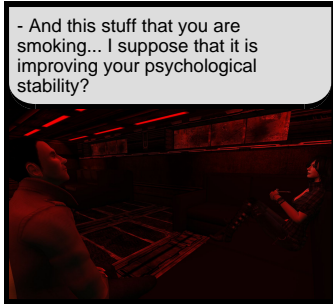
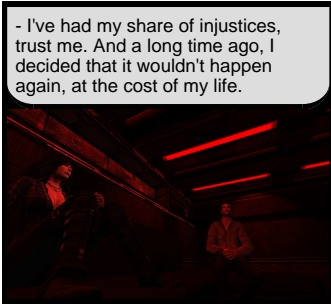
-- But, I did feel this irrational anger that you have permanently within you, and that is boiling...

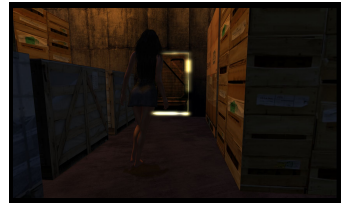


- There is maybe some anger... But there are so many despicable people who deserve it.



-- How can you say such a thing?

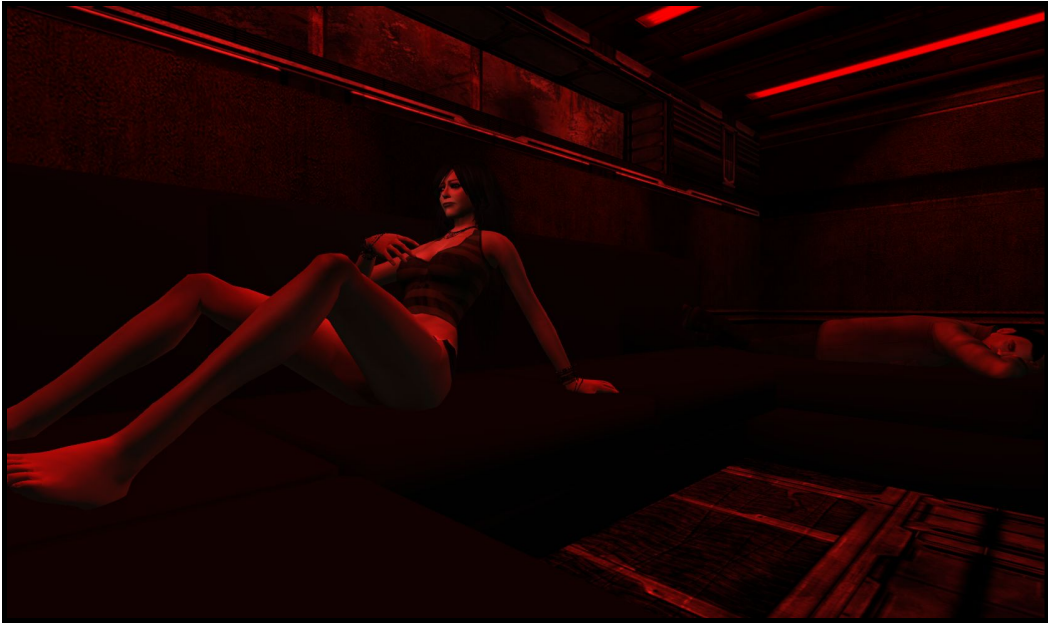




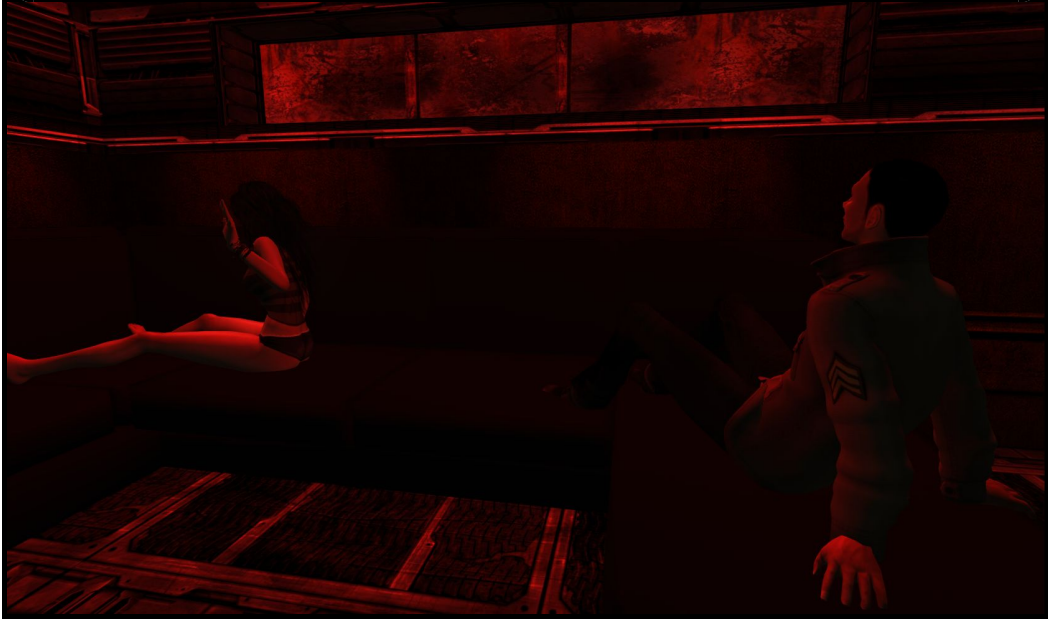








-- Are you well?  
- Yes, I am... ..Get some sleep!  
( ( What a mood! ) )

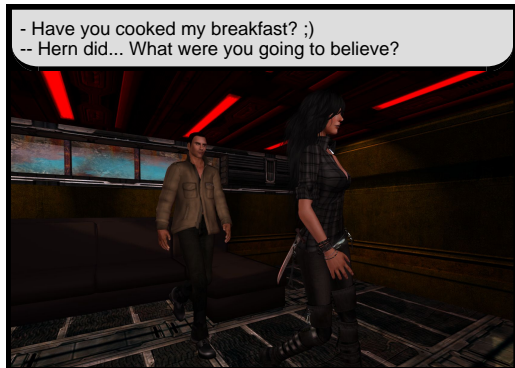
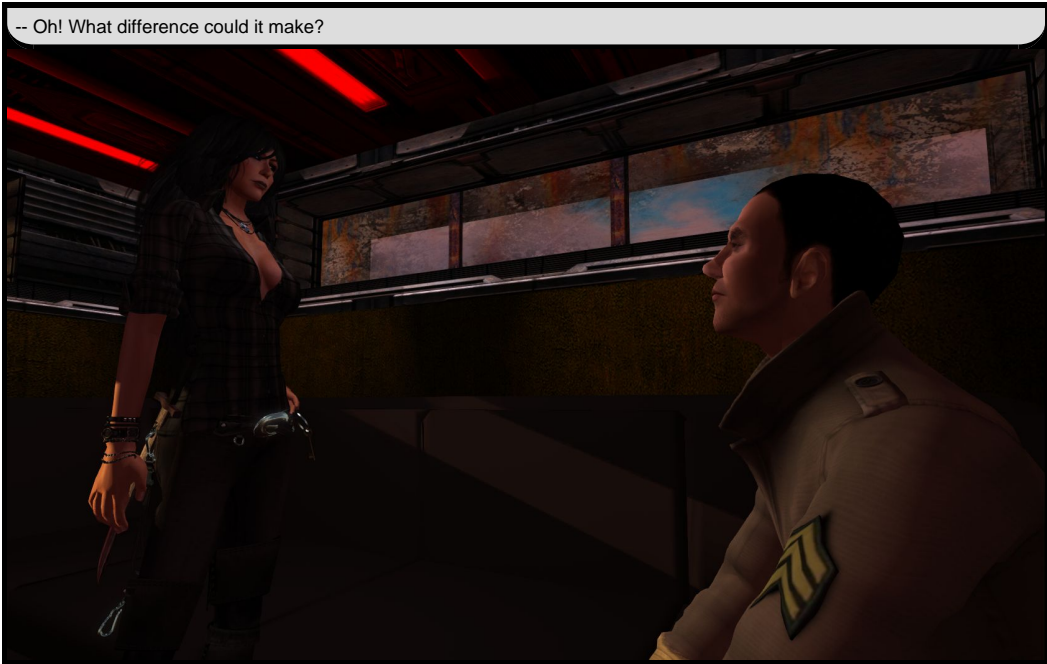
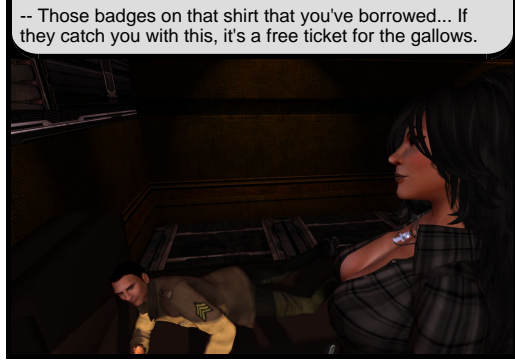
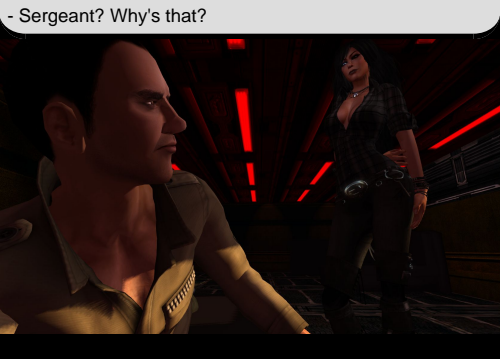


A few hours later...



-- Come on Sergeant! Get up! The sun is rising. We must break camp.  
- Gmmrrr...





-- So the best path to reach Bashora, without being intercepted, is to circle around by the east and then approach from the north. Isn't it?



--- Definitely. The other carriers will certainly pass by the south-east lands. It's the most common way to access Bashora.



- We will have to navigate without any geolocation instrument. But there are some rocks to help us to deduce our location.

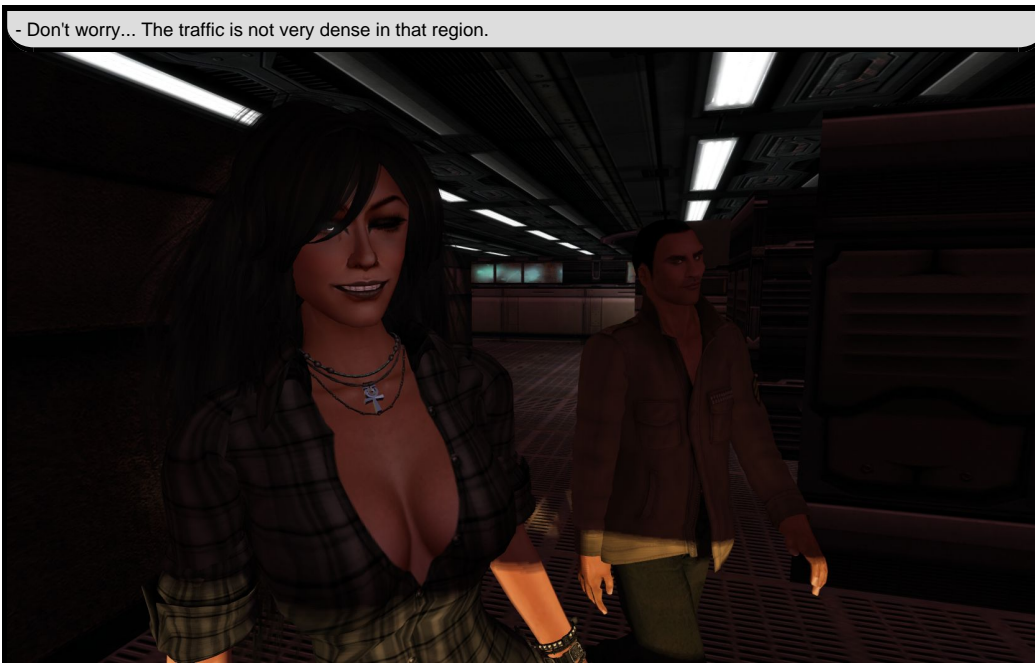
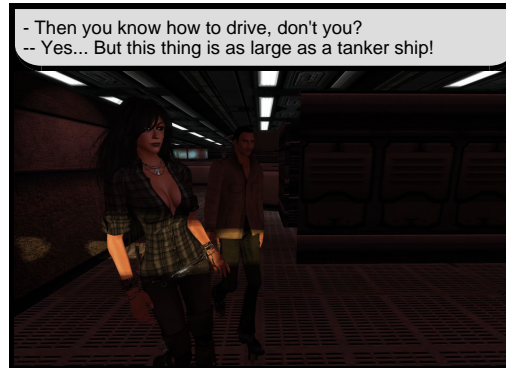


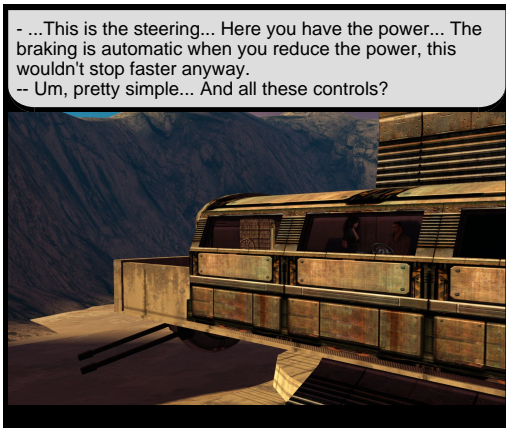
-- So we will stay hidden on the carrier and be ready to get down once Hern will have made us cross the security control to get inside the technological village.



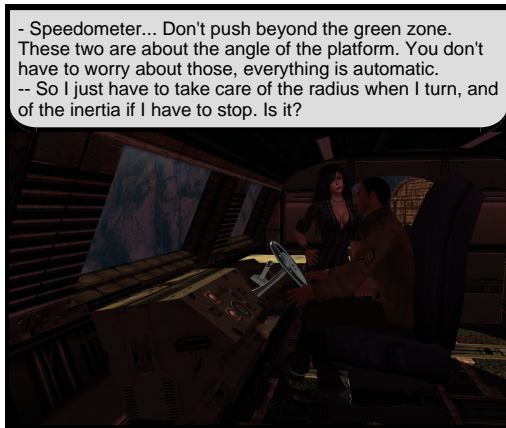
- They will certainly get on board to do an inspection. I expect to have some difficulty explaining to them why I am the only survivor.



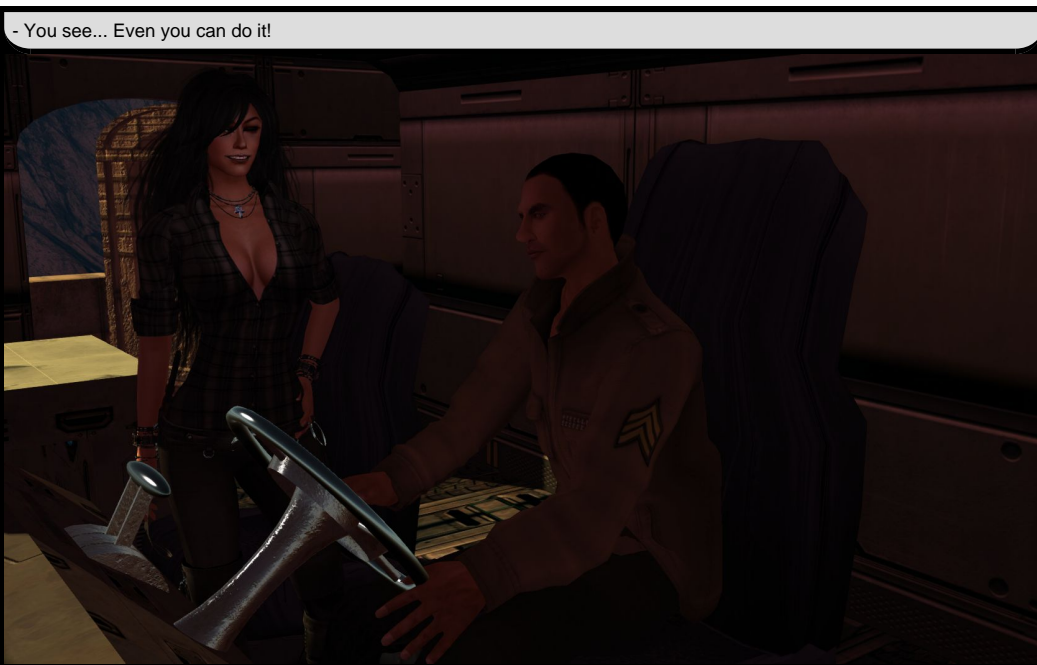




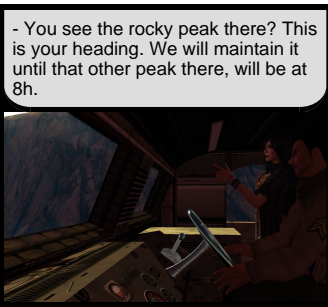
- ...This is the steering... Here you have the power... The braking is automatic when you reduce the power, this wouldn't stop faster anyway.  
-- Um, pretty simple... And all these controls?



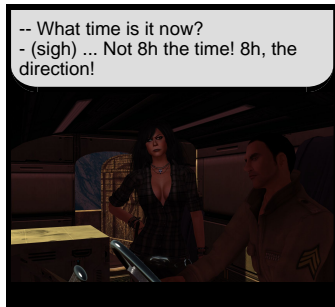
- Speedometer... Don't push beyond the green zone. These two are about the angle of the platform. You don't have to worry about those, everything is automatic.  
-- So I just have to take care of the radius when I turn, and of the inertia if I have to stop. Is it?



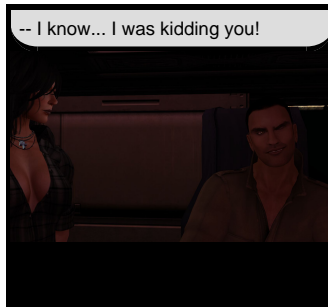
- You see... Even you can do it!



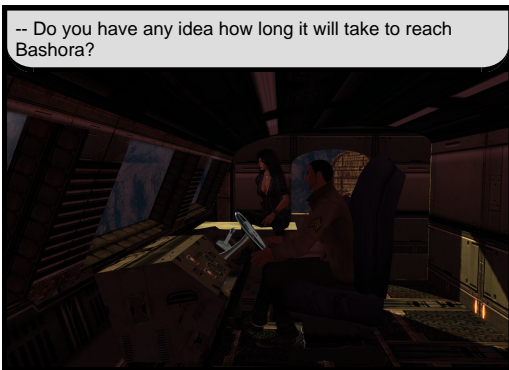
- You see the rocky peak there? This is your heading. We will maintain it until that other peak there, will be at 8h.



-- What time is it now?  
- (sigh) ... Not 8h the time! 8h, the direction!



-- I know... I was kidding you!



One hour later...



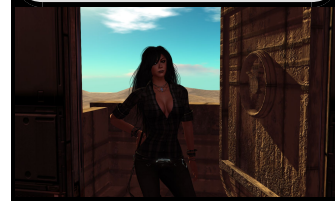
- Alezia...



- Once we will be at Bashora, and if we can stop this Taalus, do you have any escape plan?



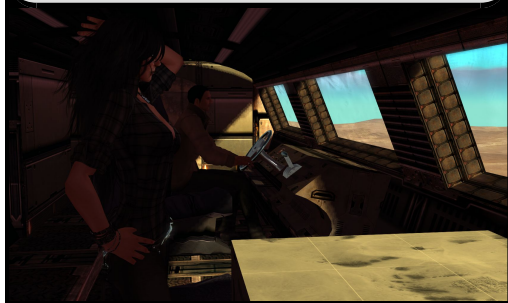
- Yes and no... If we survive to the interruption, I hope to be able to count on the confusion of an emergency evacuation, including a good dose of improvisation. But in the worst case ...

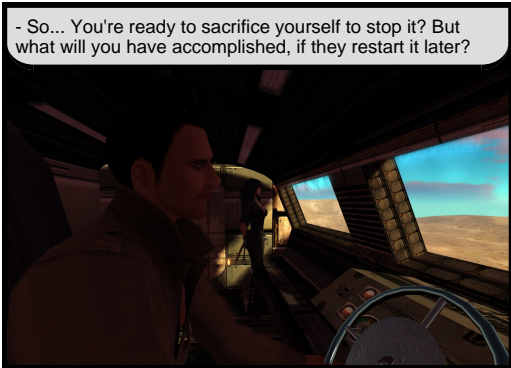
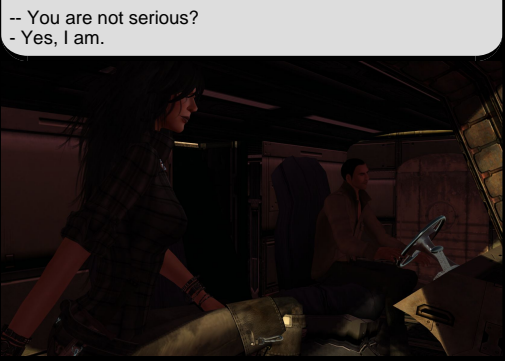


-- In the worst case?



- Well. I will have to stop the Taalus myself... And then you will have to improvise to get out of there.





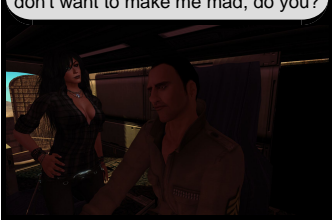
-- Do you see those dirt clouds there? What is it?  
- Two carriers... I'm watching them since already 15 minutes...



-- Maybe it's a good time to change of direction... isn't it?  
- Oh! No! Keep the heading!



-- But we are running directly to the problems!  
- I've said... Keep the heading! You don't want to make me mad, do you?

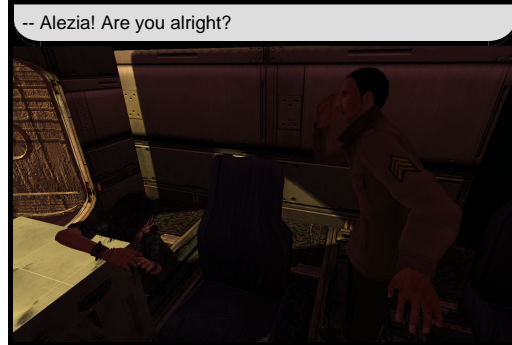
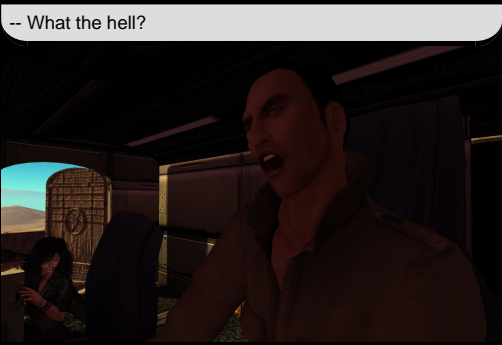


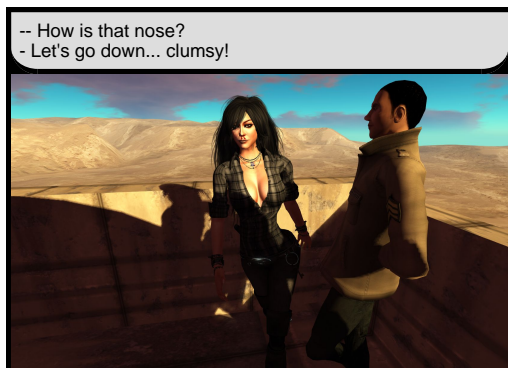
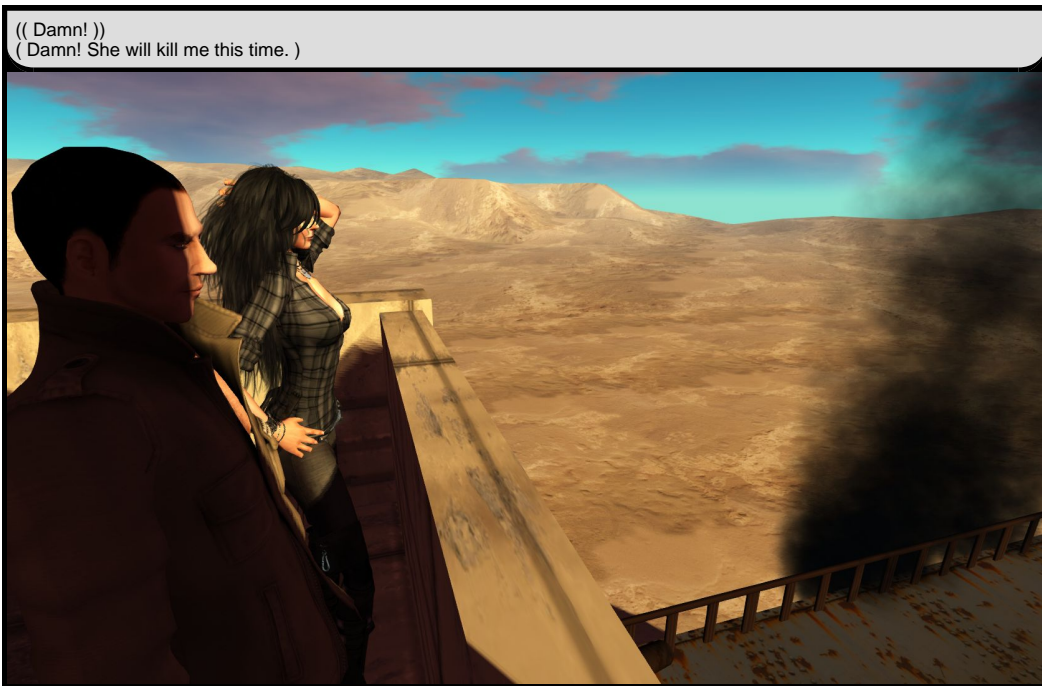
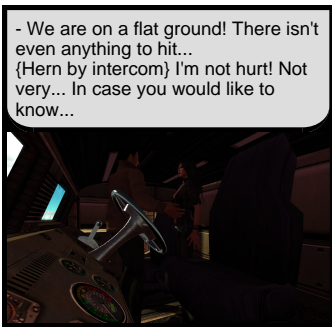
- (sigh) I don't like that...

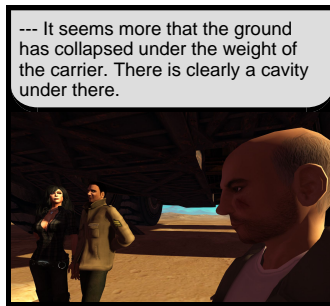
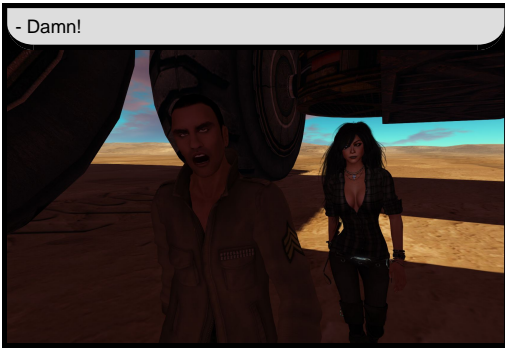


- Relax...

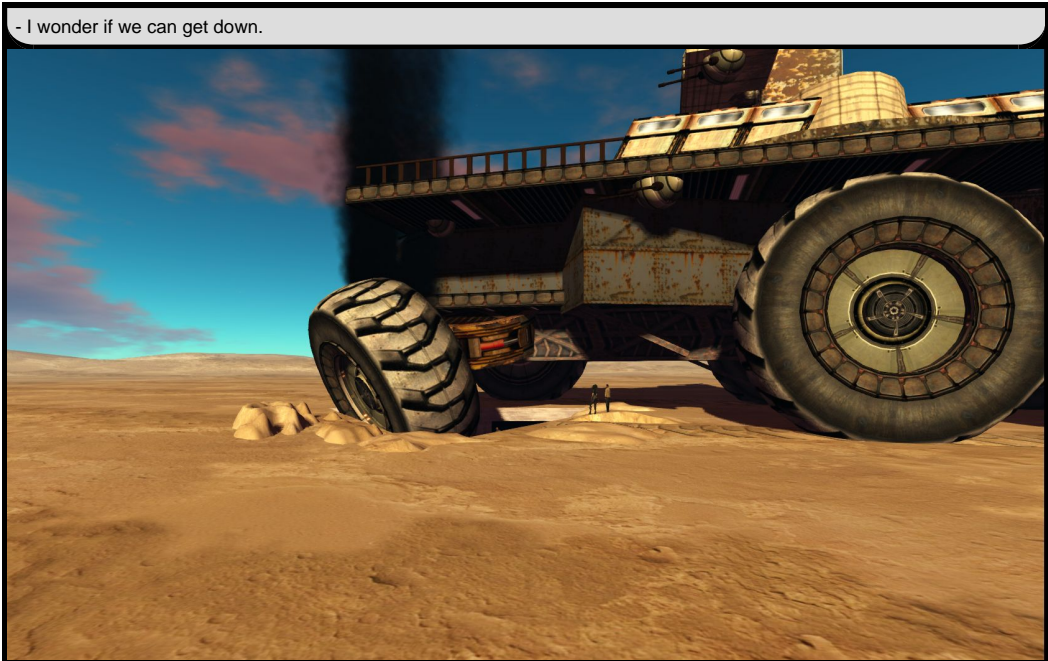
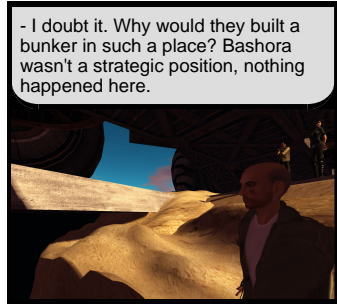


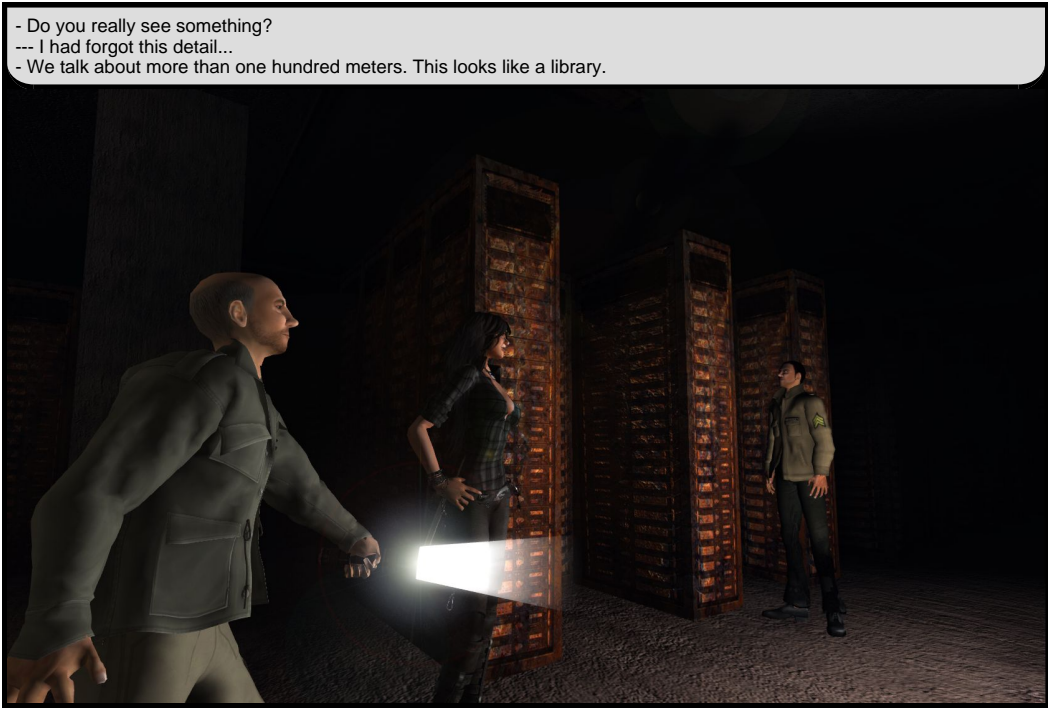
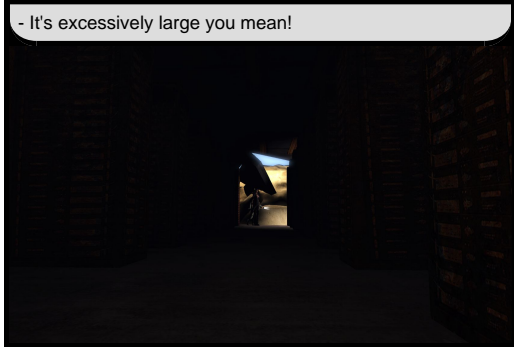
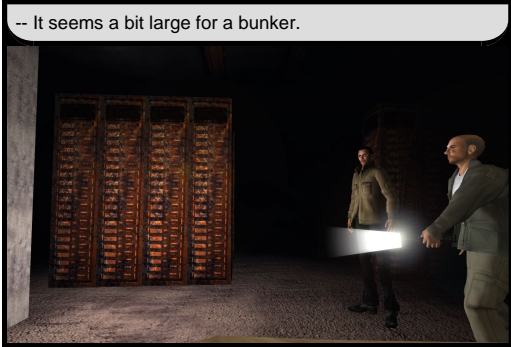
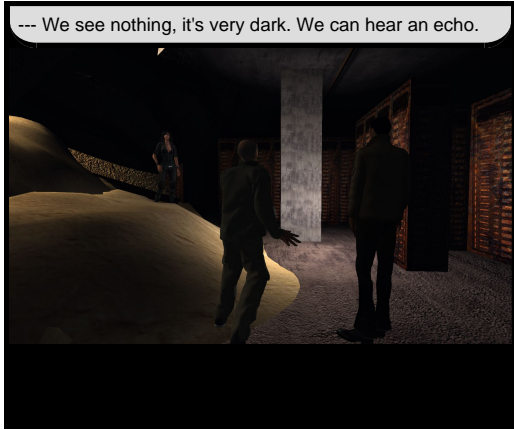
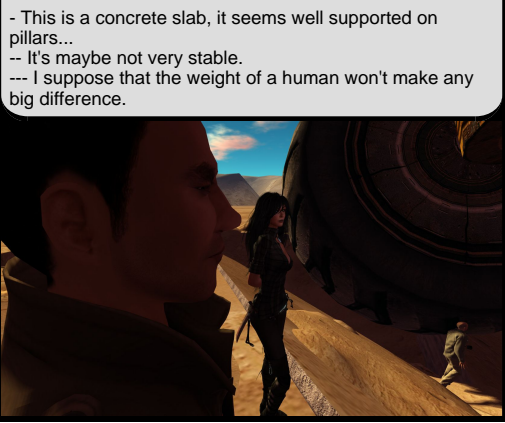








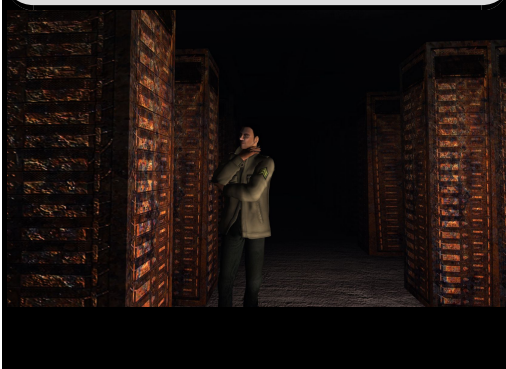




-- Do you think it could have been brought back by the Taaalus?  
- I doubt it. Normally, the things returned by the Taaalus, are relatively in good condition... But here, everything seems old and decrepit. I would say that it dates from a lot time before the war.



- It's a data center!



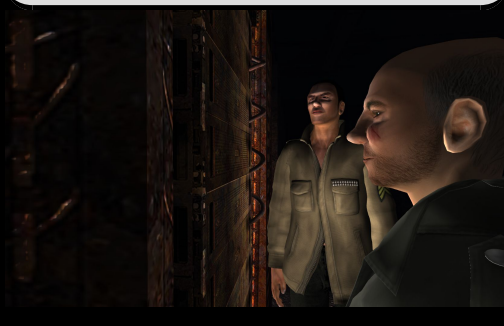
-- A what?  
- A warehouse for data storage. Thousands of servers connected to each other.  
-- So, you know what all this is?

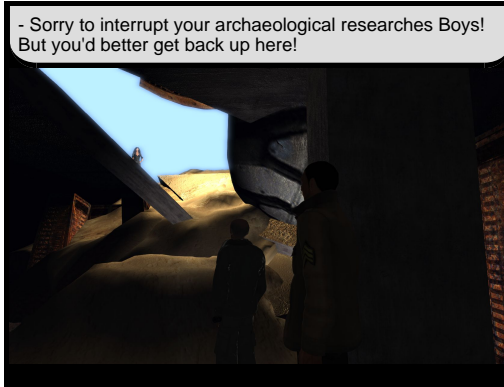
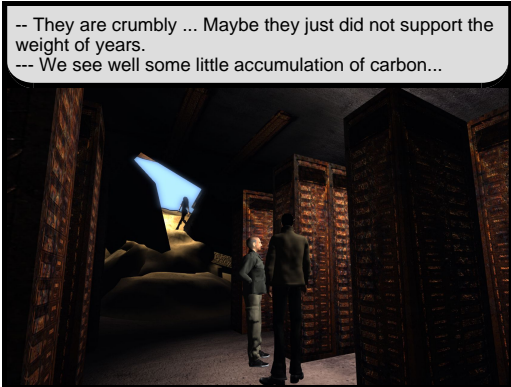
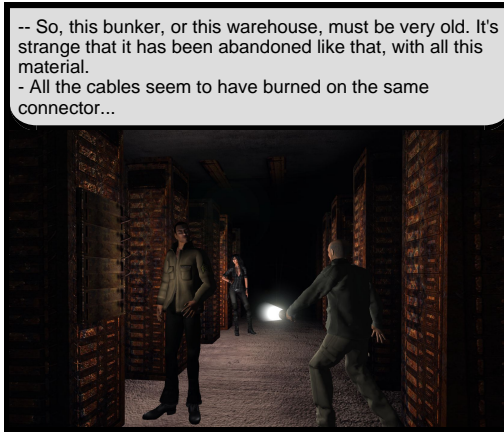
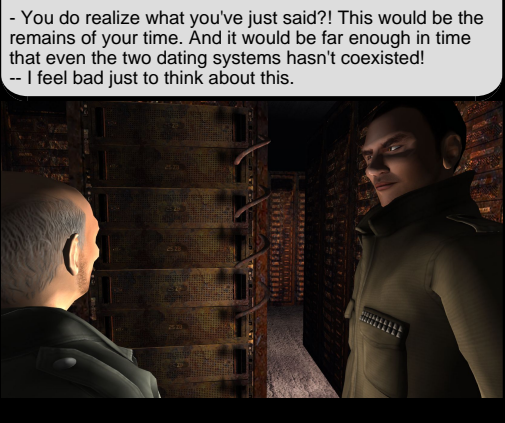


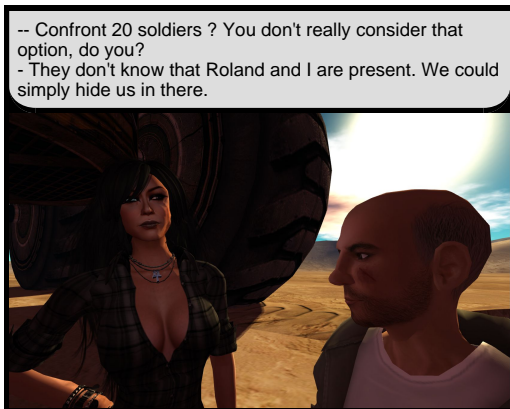
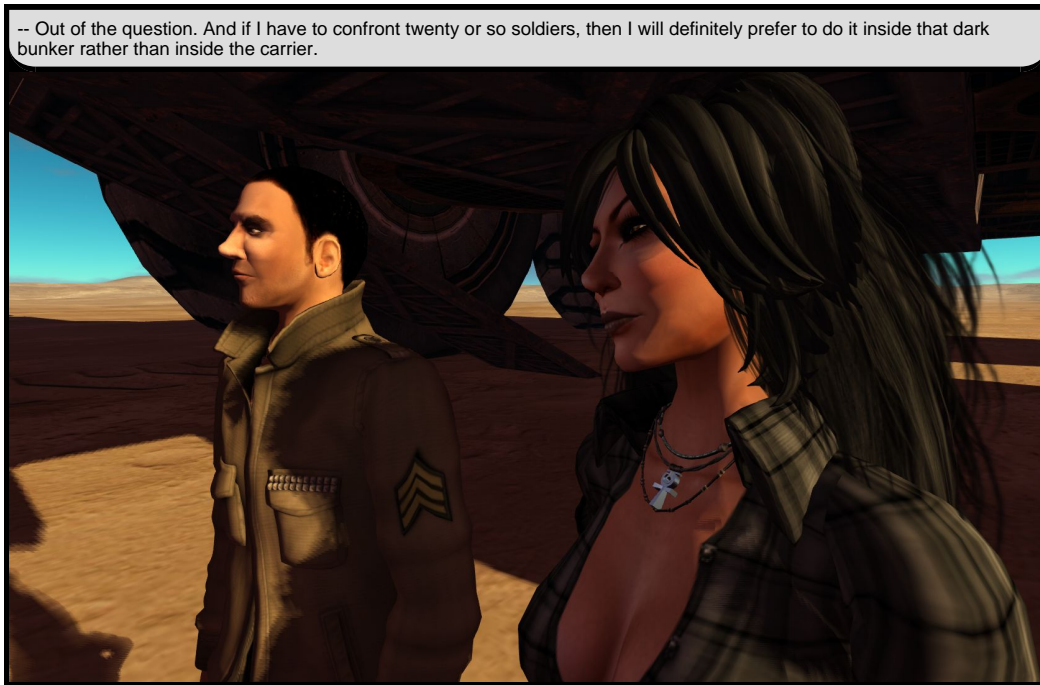
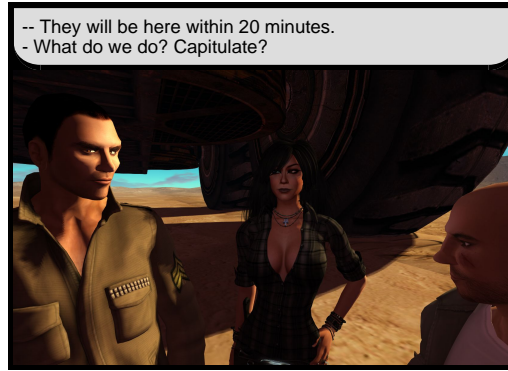
-- Yes... Data servers, but all this seems abandoned since a really long time. These models looks far superior to those used nowadays... Uh... In my time I mean. This indicates "25 Zb"! ...Hum!

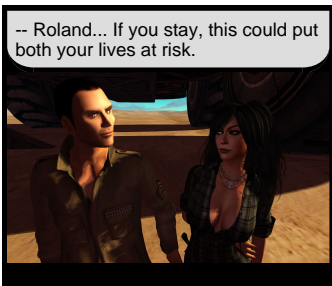
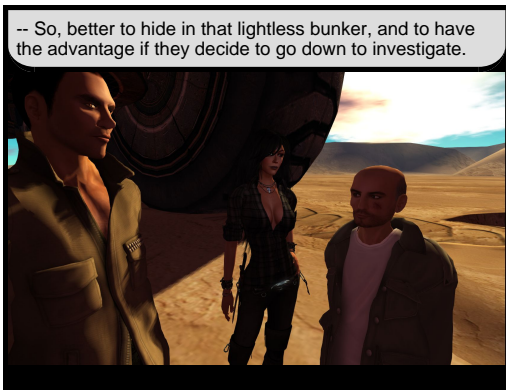


-- Zb?  
- I don't know exactly what the Z means. But it's certainly larger than a Terabyte.









A few minutes later...



--- I'll wish you good luck down there... Now, regarding to stop the Taalus, I hope you know what you are doing. We all had great confidence in Mark Ollen, so I'm going to cross my fingers.



-- Don't worry, I always have a plan B.  
- I'm still going to worry a little about it.

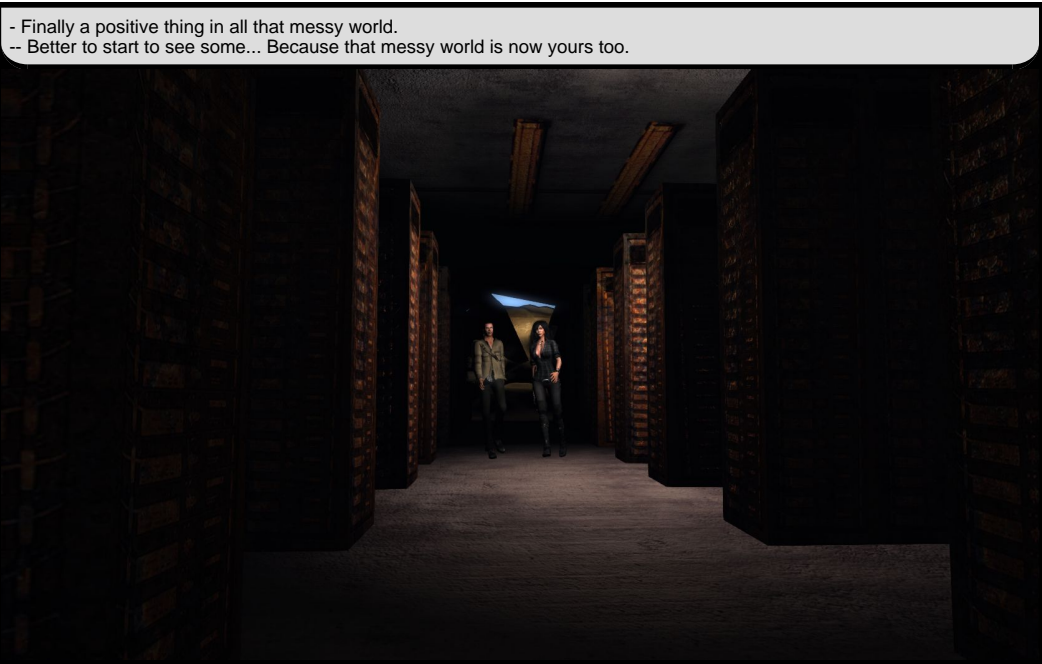
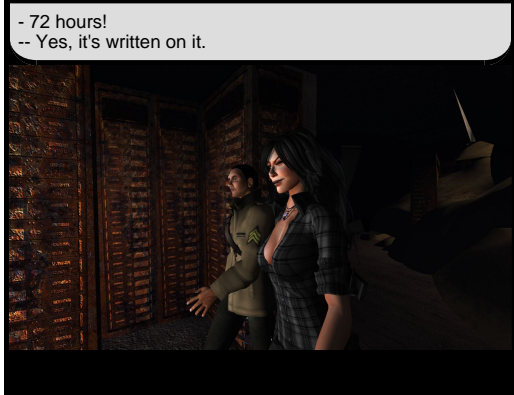
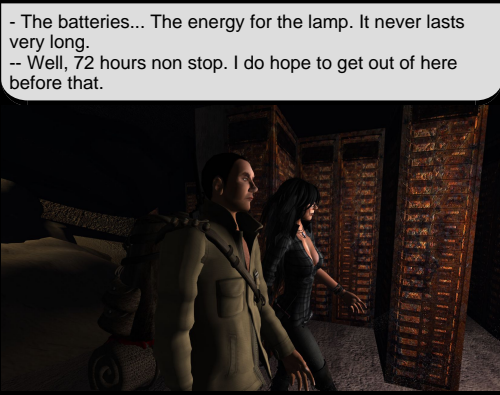
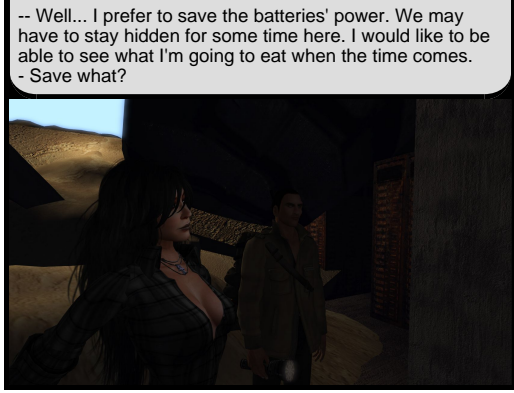
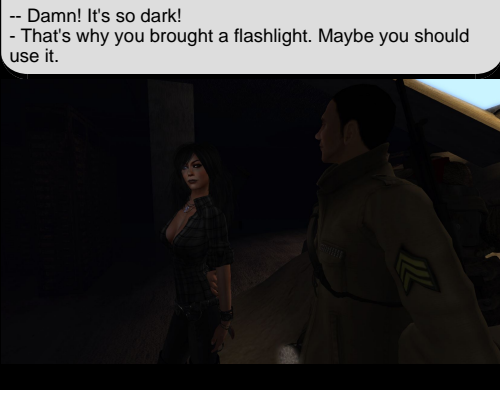


- Thanks for everything Hern... Especially in being more open-minded than those who employ you.  
-- This is the least thing. I really would have liked to learn more about you and your time, it's sad.

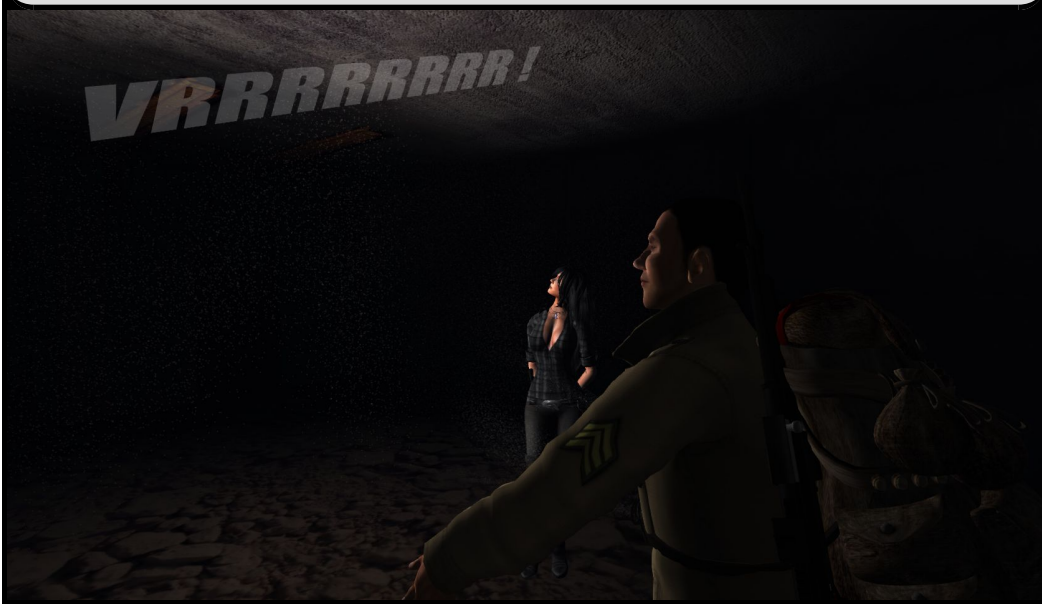


--- Thank you, and good luck with the soldiers... Don't let them put all their responsibilities on your back. ...Let's go Roland, it's time...

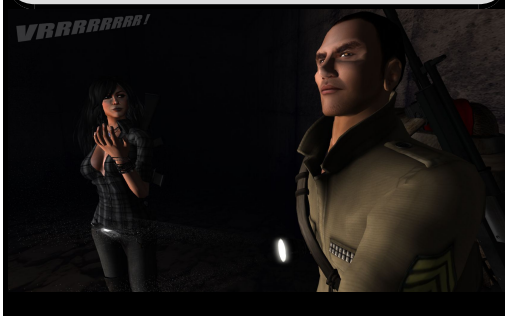




- The carrier... They arrive.



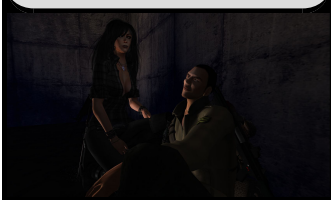
-- We better stay close to the walls.



- Sit here... I'm going see what is happening there. Stay here... And no noise.



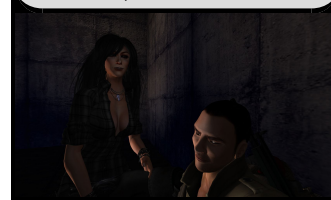
-- Do you really see something in that darkness?  
- Oh yes, I see very well... I will try to find out what are their intentions...

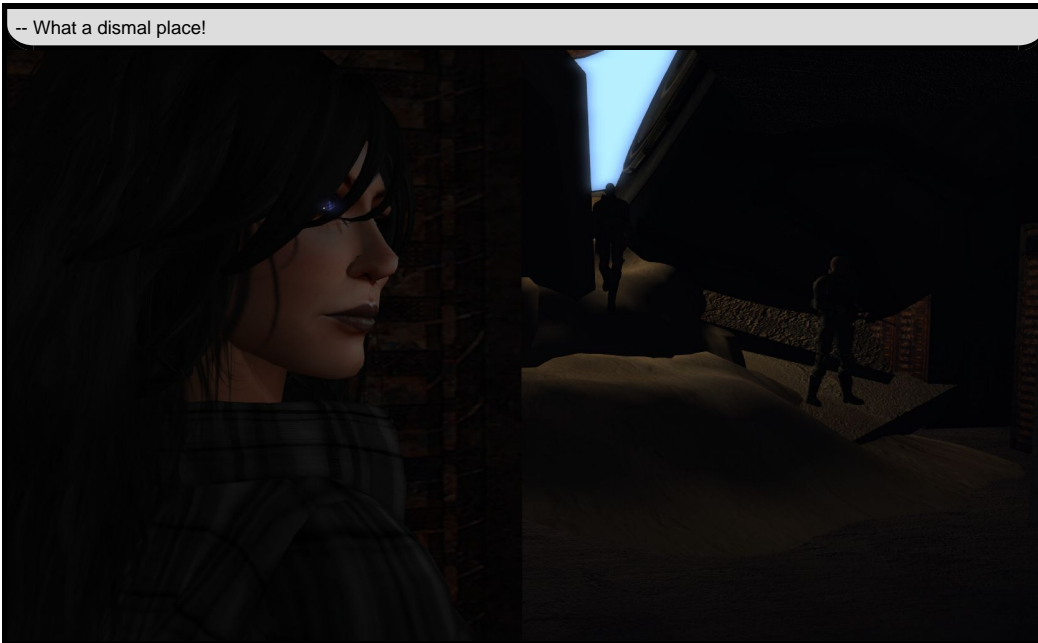
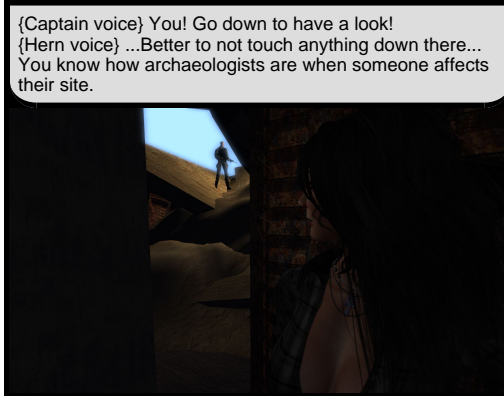
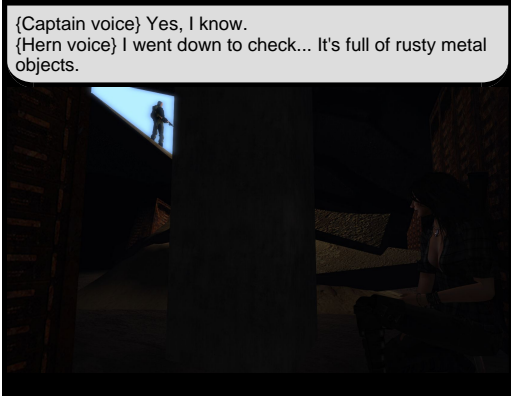
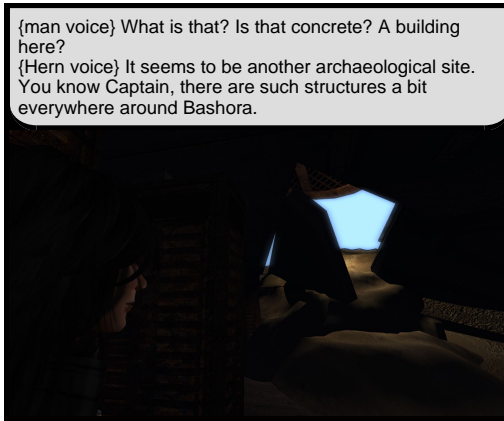
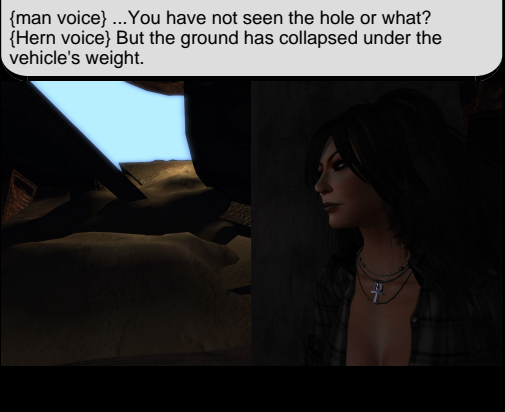


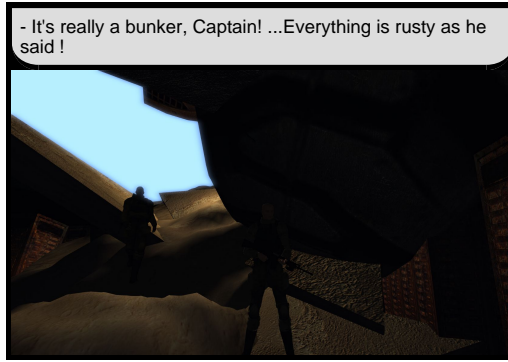
- How could you be sure that they won't see you?



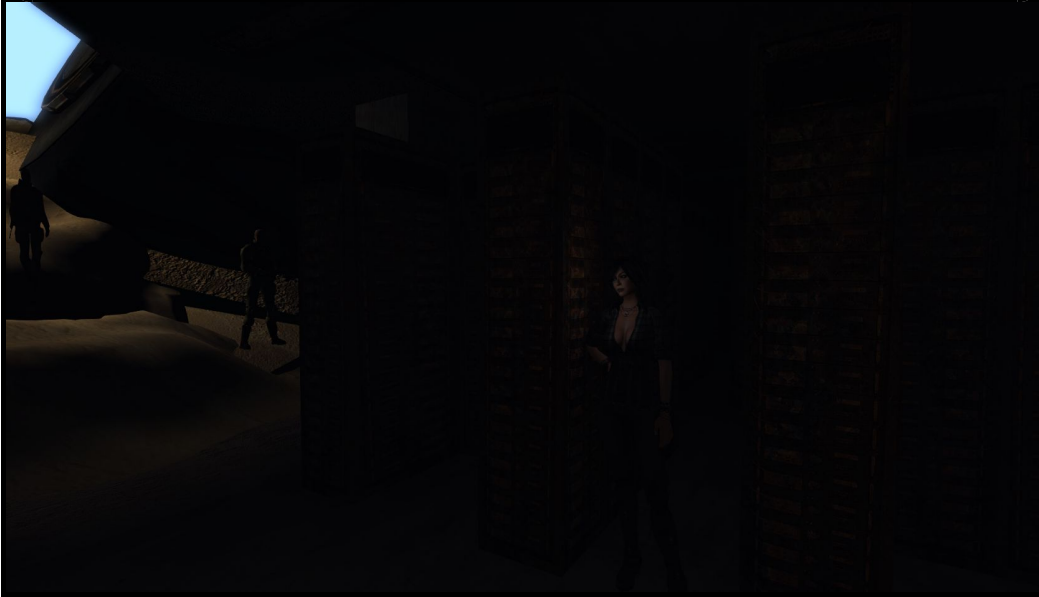
- I've already spotted where to hide to watch them. Turn off that flashlight... And save your "batteries"! ;)







{Captain voice} All right. We will pull the carrier out of that hole. Jess! Do you think you will be able to fix that wheel?  
{Jess voice} The engine is burned up, but I can make the wheel spin. We will have to operate without the power on it. To fix the steering, it will take at least the rest of the day!

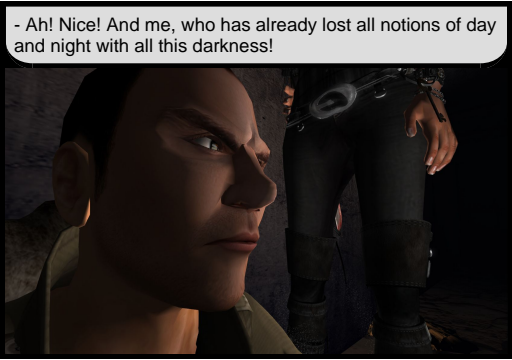
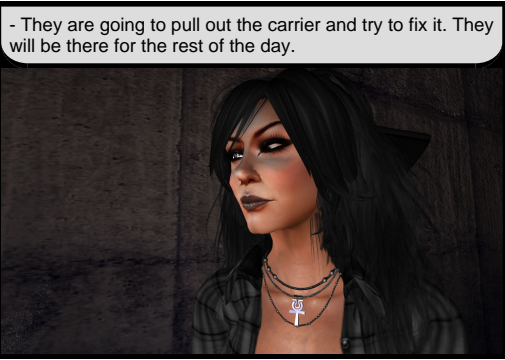
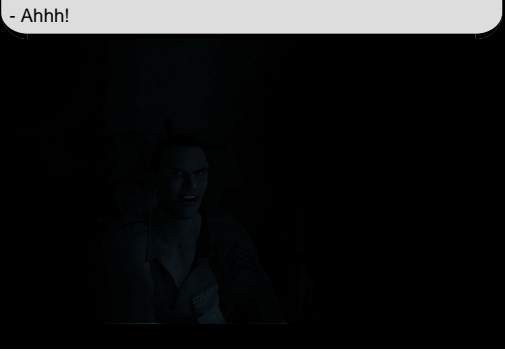


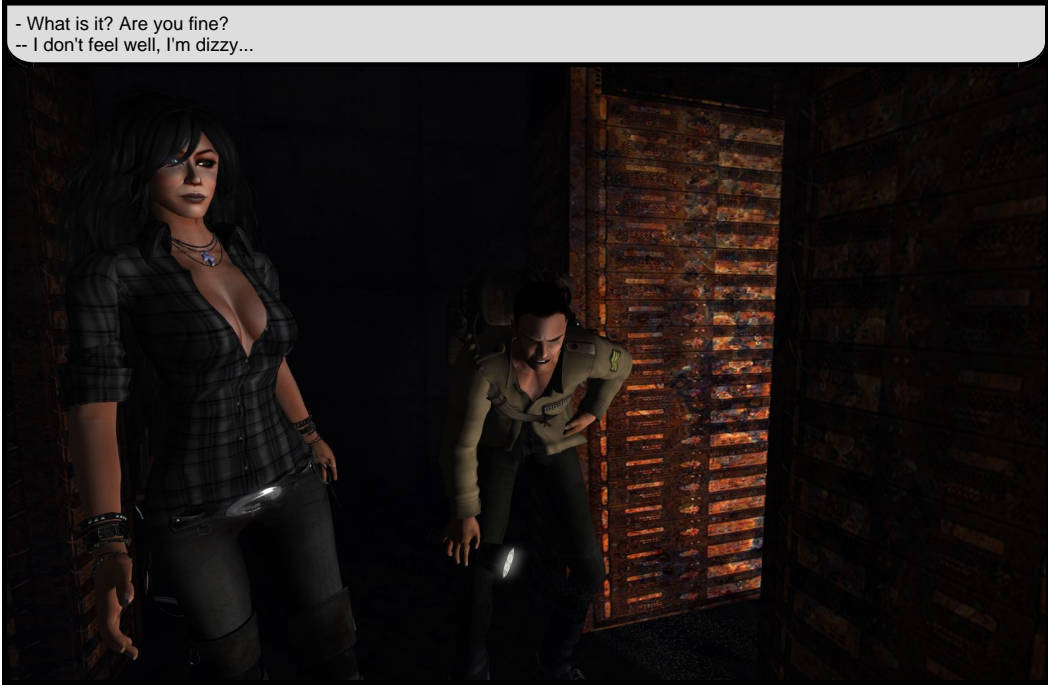
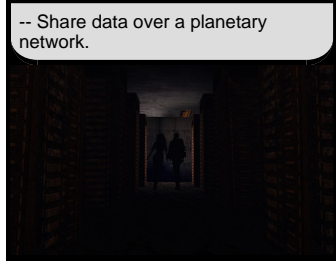
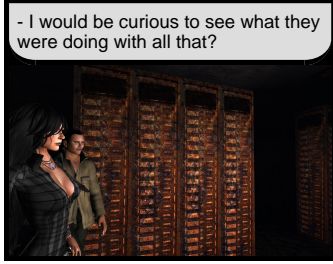
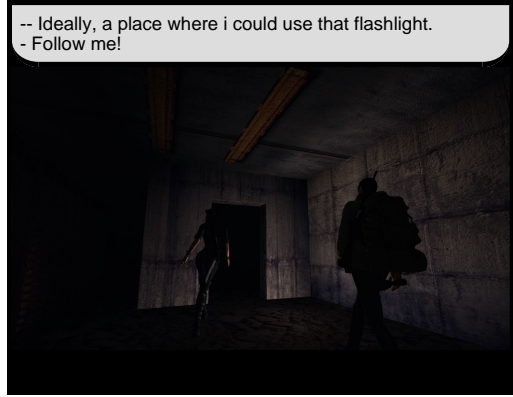
{Captain voice} You! ...Come with me. I want a detailed report of everything that happened!  
{Hern voice} Yes Captain.

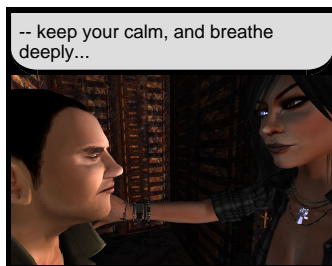
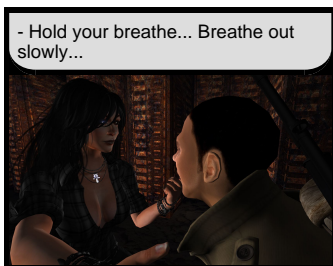
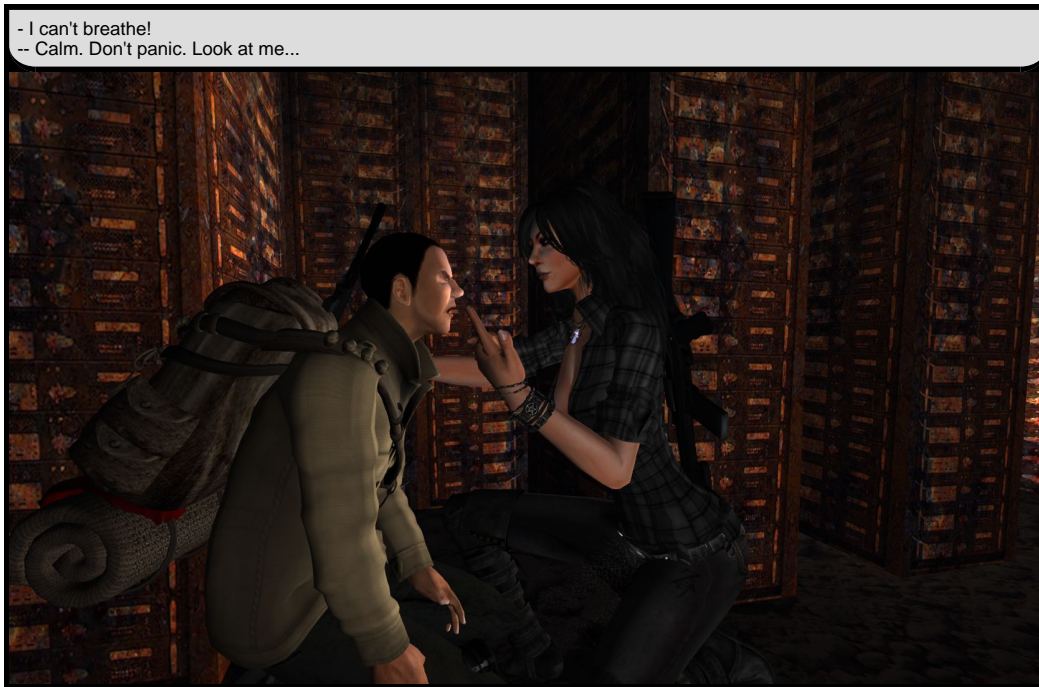


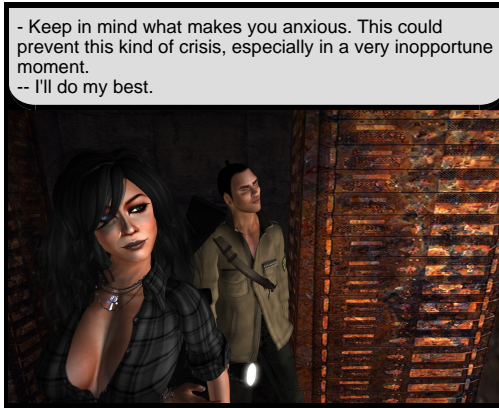
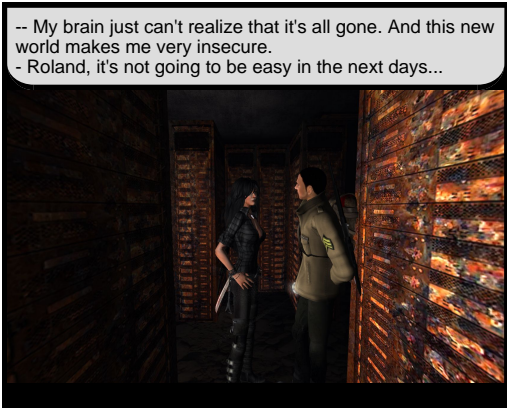
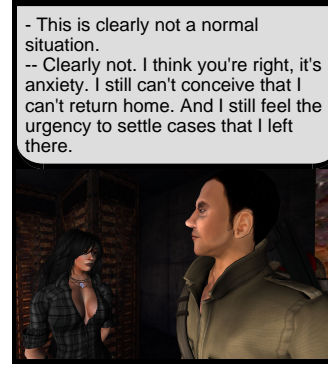
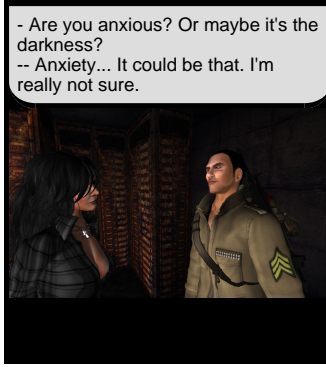
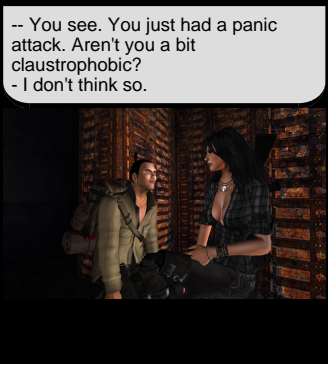
- Let's get out of that creepy place.  
-- That guy is really a clumsy idiot to crash a carrier like that!

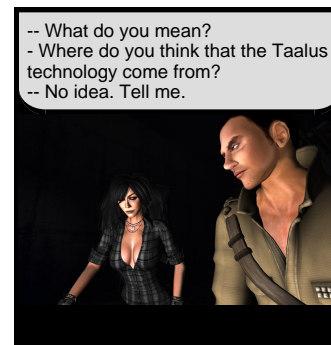
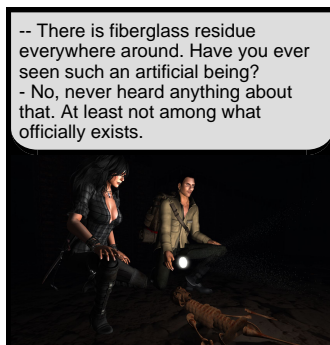
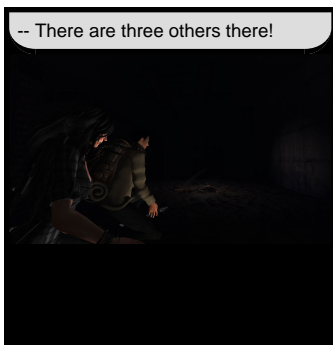
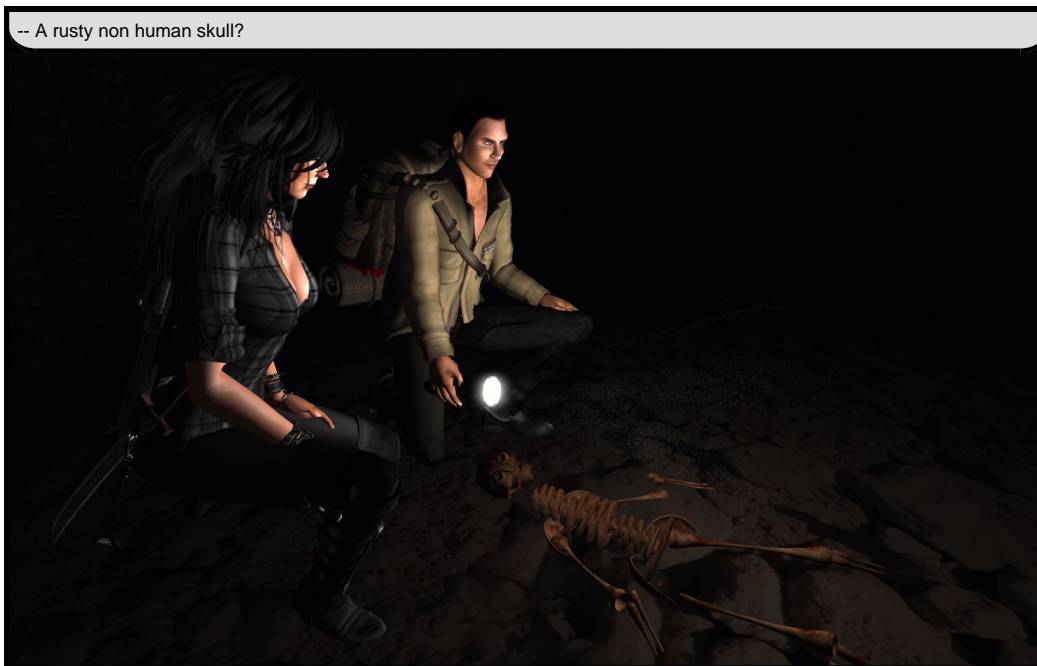
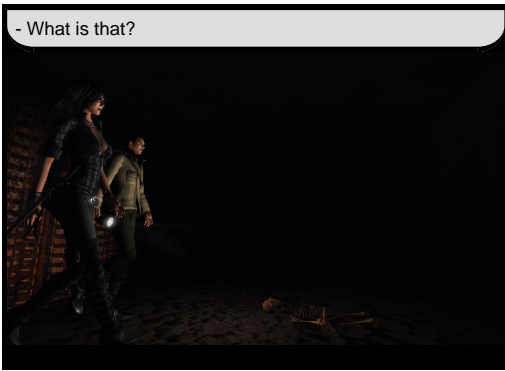


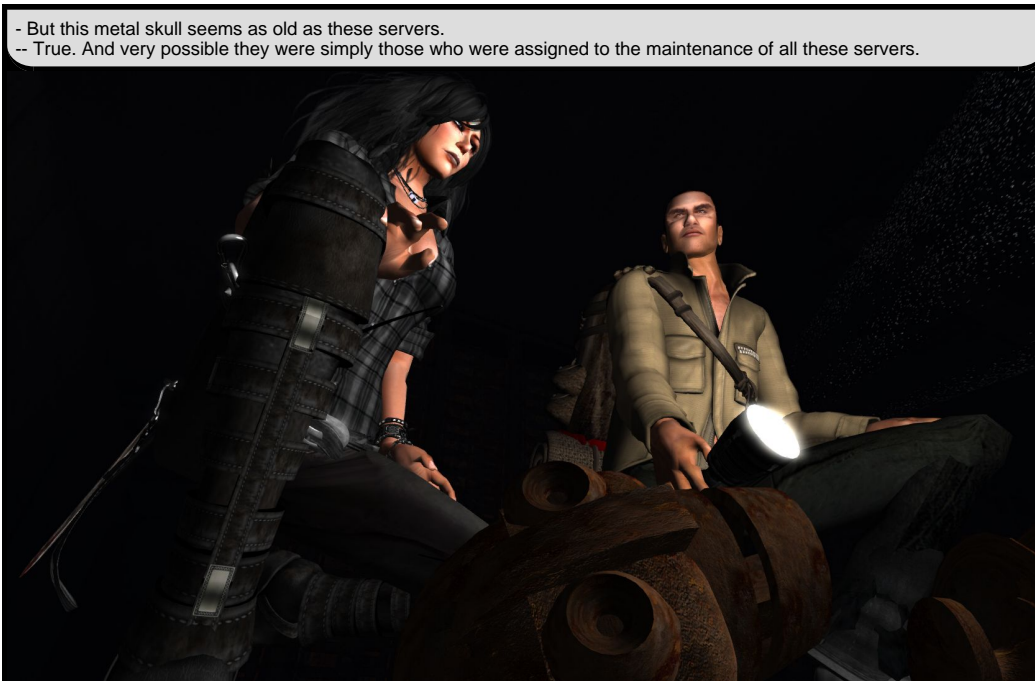
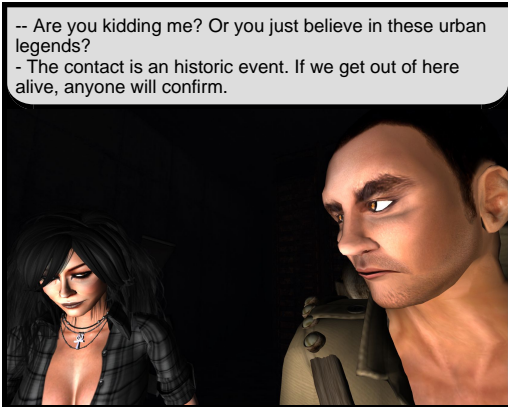
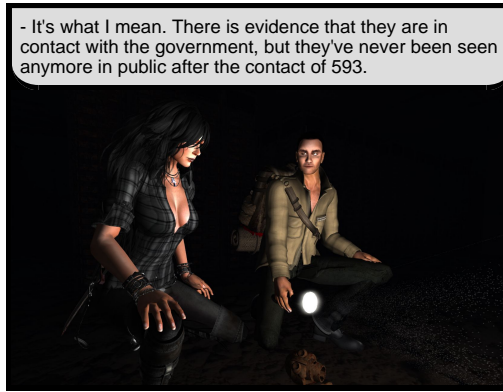
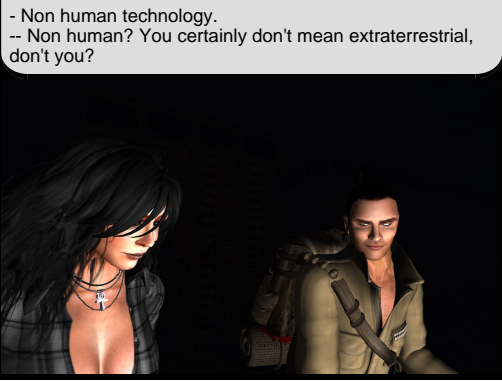


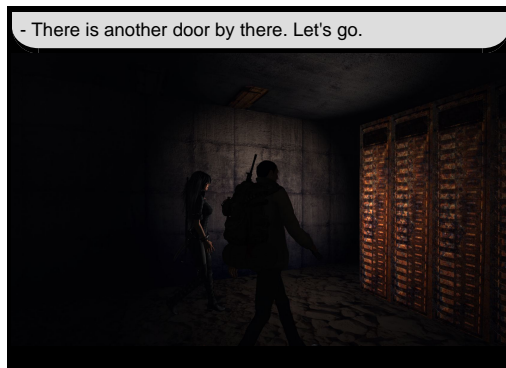
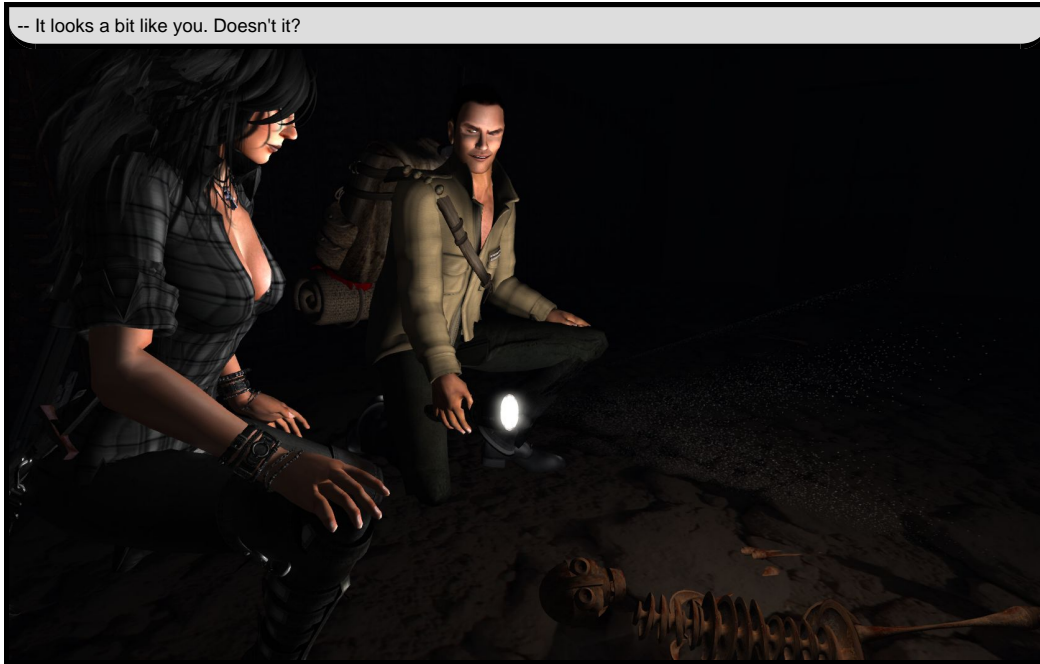
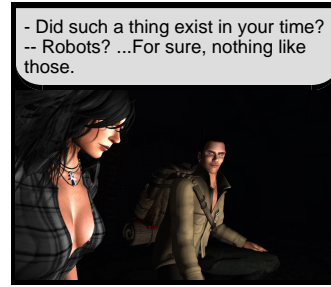
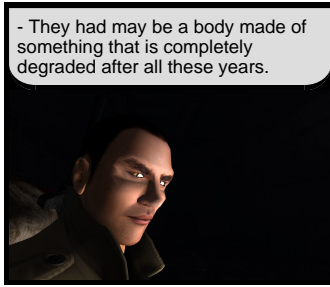
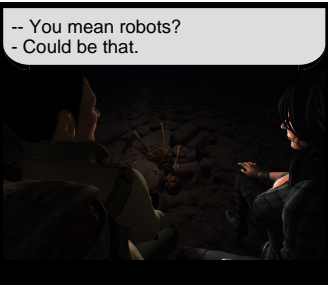












- ... So you're saying that Sergeant Milly never came back from the Shade after he went to search for the lost team, right?  
-- Yes Captain. that's what happened.



- And he would have left only you, a civilian, to guard the TC-21?  
-- Again, yes Captain. It's what he did. He didn't want to have me with them, so he ordered me to guard the carrier. We can't say that he has a very great opinion of us, especially of me.



- I have difficulty to believe that he didn't leave at least one soldier on guard. It's not the procedure, and it's definitely not like him.  
-- We were only four men to cover all the area. I think it's why he chose to do that.

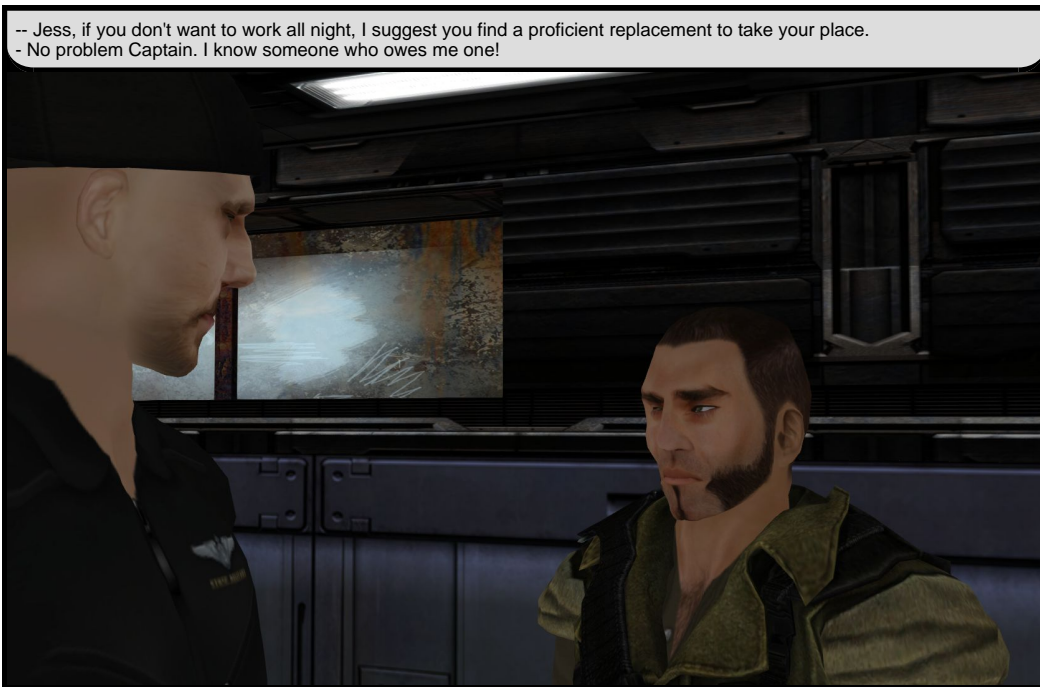
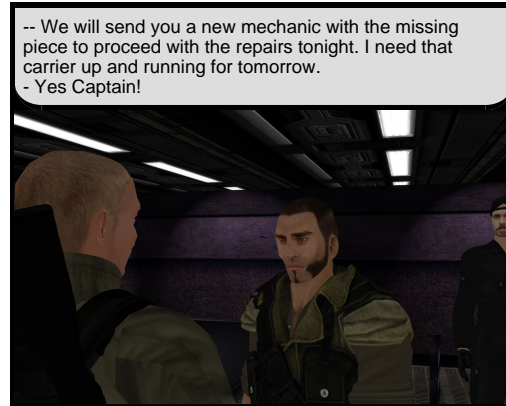
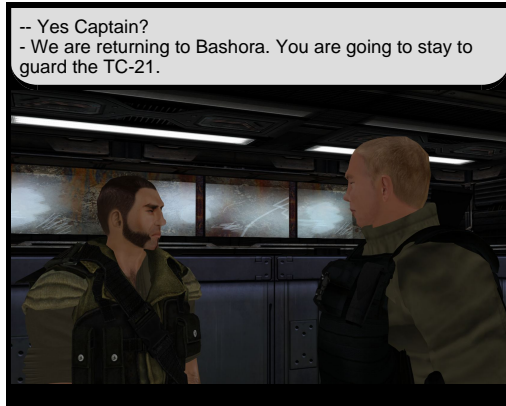
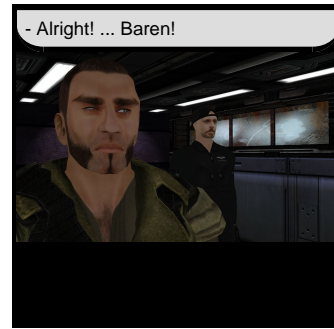
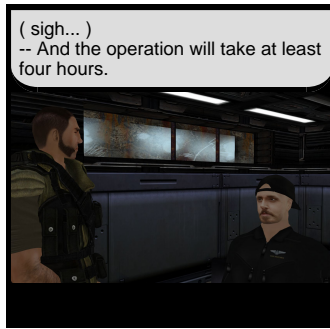
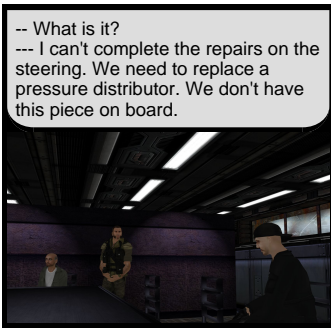


- Listen to me my little friend! I will have to open an investigation about that. I hope for you that what you have said is true!



- You have the recordings from the Taalus. They will confirm the two eruptions.  
--- Some "U.E." could be in the game...





-- Here's something else!  
- A bit incredible, remains of plasterboard walls!



- You call that a wall?  
-- This is only the structure. Look on the ground, this pale powder is all what remains of the panels that were attached on it.



- Offices! These were offices. Maybe the administration offices of this data center.



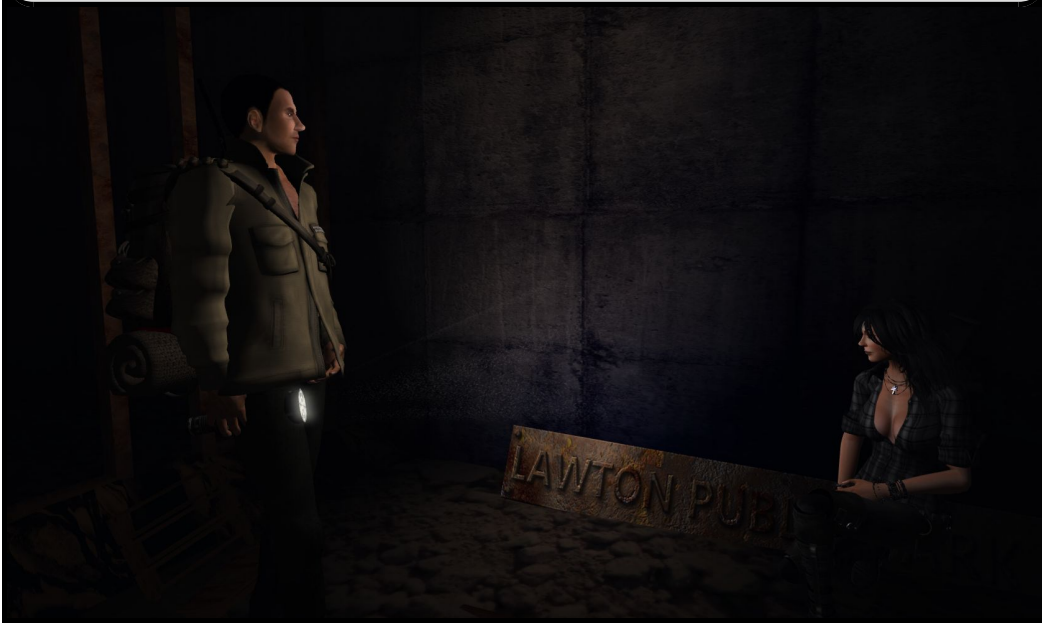
-- Lawton Pu... blic...  
- What?



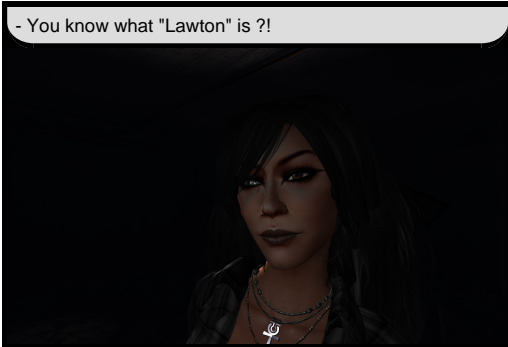
- Did you say Lawton?



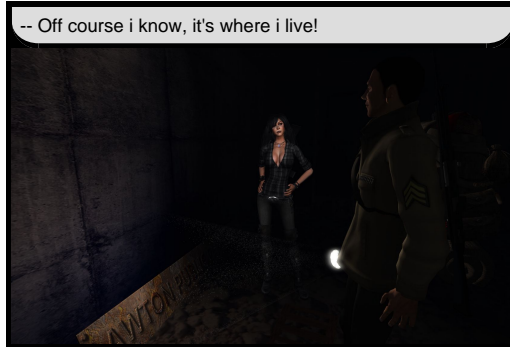
-- It's what is written on this rusty panel. Check for yourself!  
- Lawton!!! ( Am I awake? )



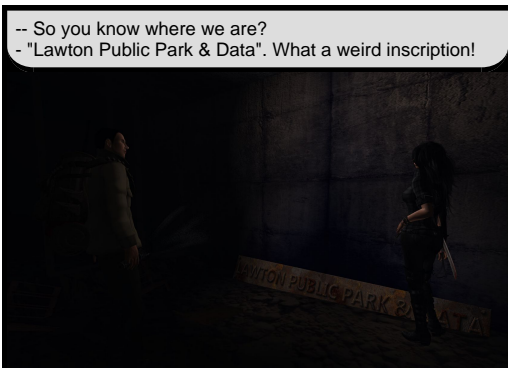
- You know what "Lawton" is ?!



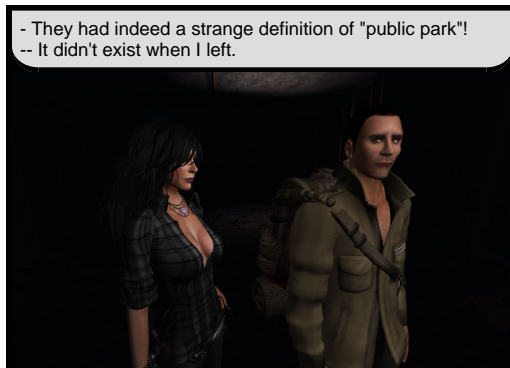
-- Off course i know, it's where i live!



-- So you know where we are?  
- "Lawton Public Park & Data". What a weird inscription!



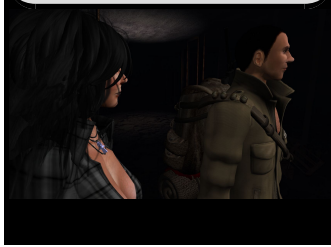
- They had indeed a strange definition of "public park!"  
-- It didn't exist when I left.



-- Maybe the data center was underground, and a public park built over it...



- According to what you pretend, the desert didn't exist in your time, right?



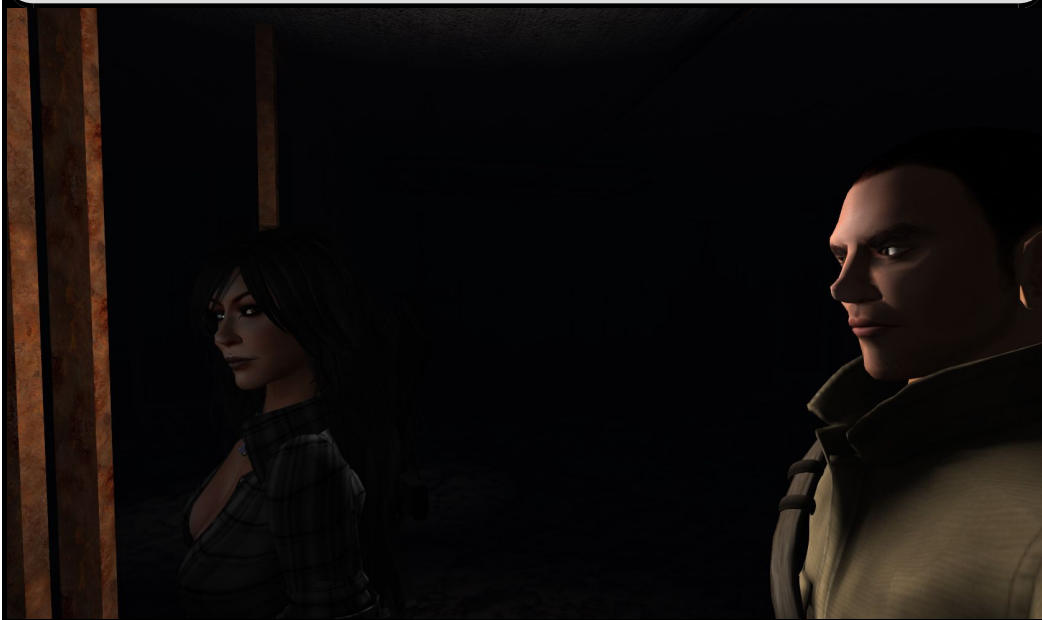
-- True. And it is difficult to imagine how it may have changed so much. That seems a bit fast, even if all what we see here seems very old.

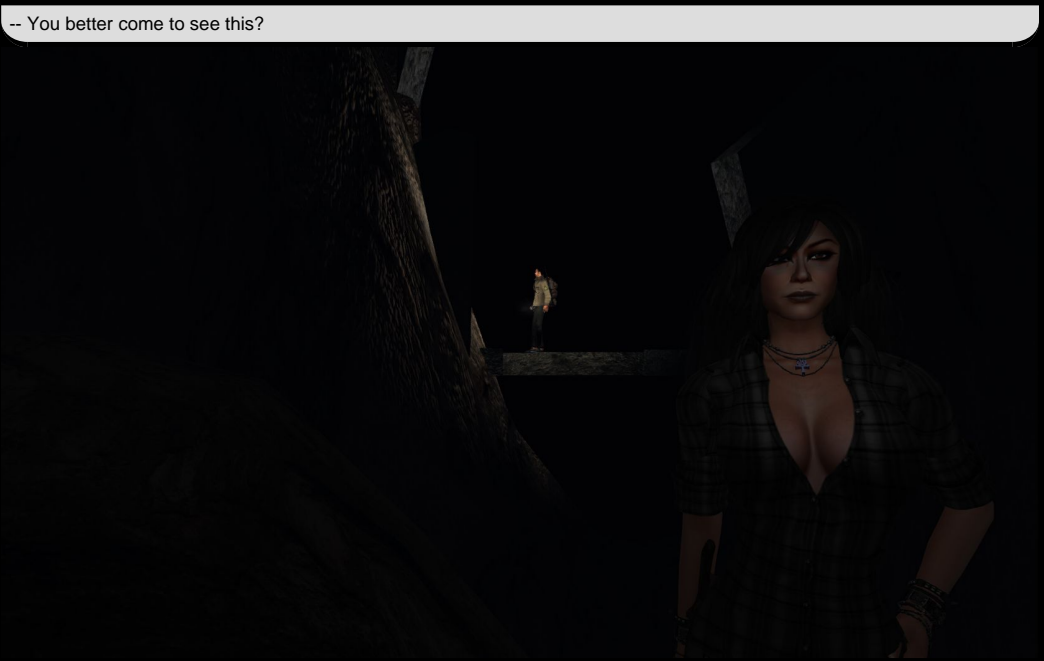
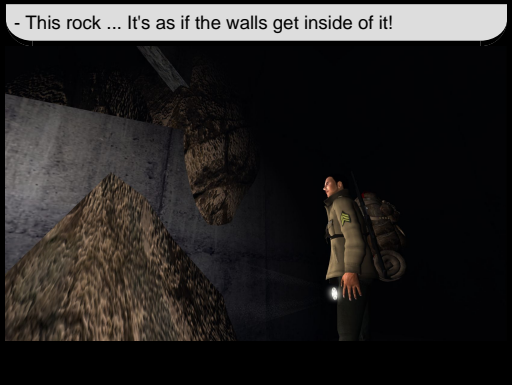
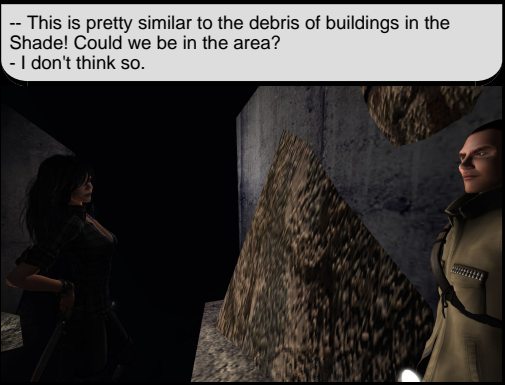
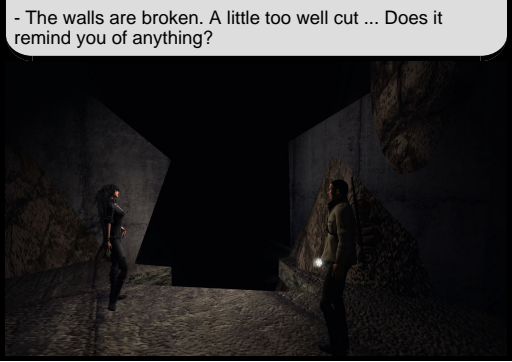
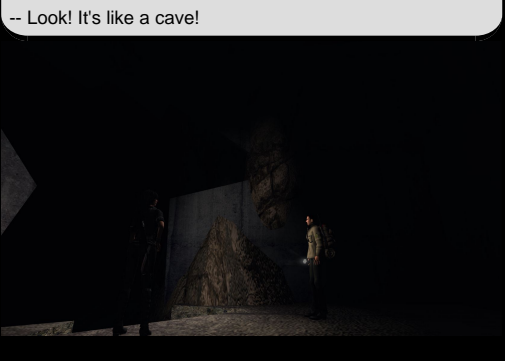


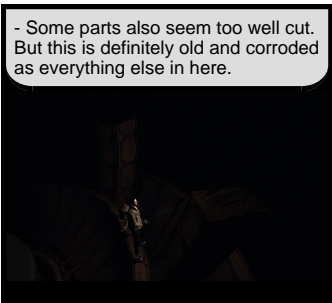
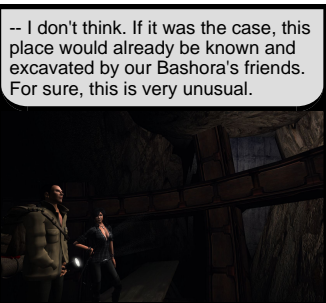
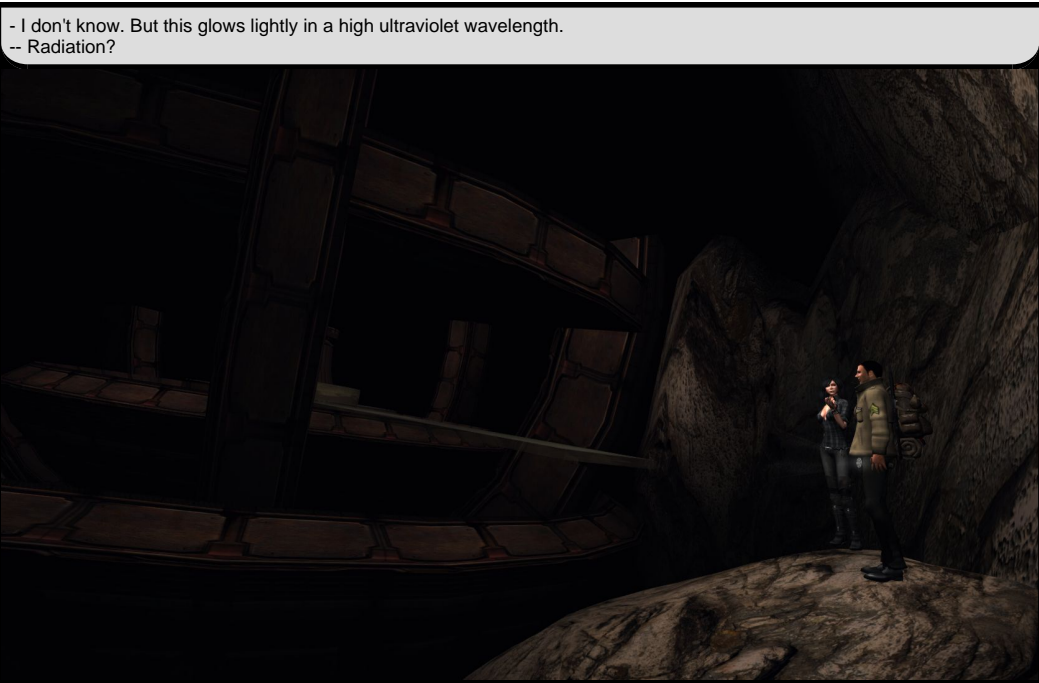
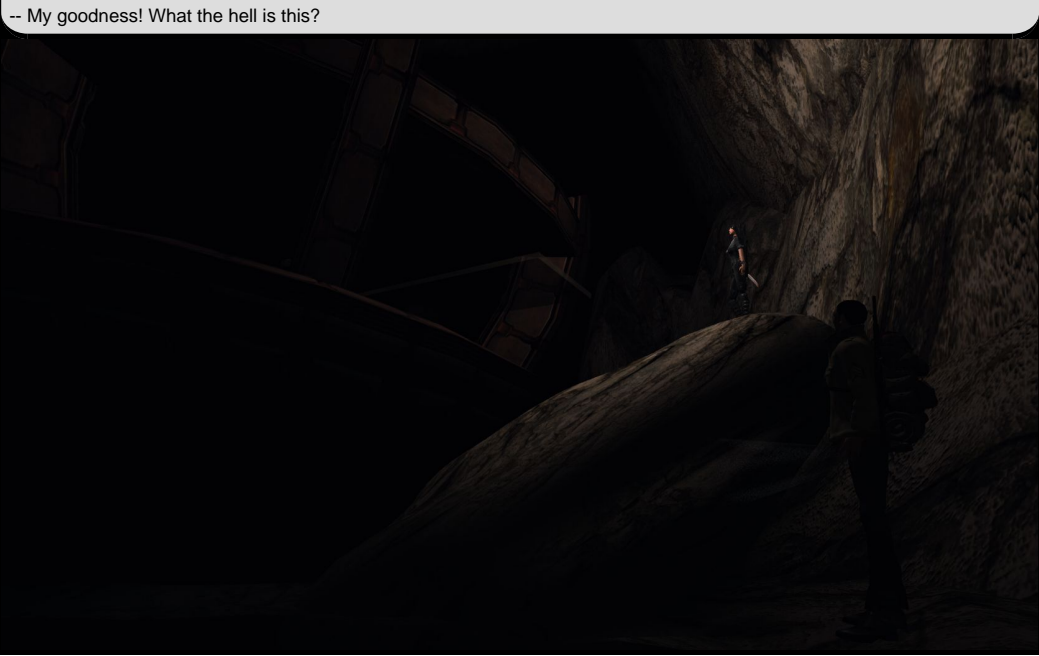
- Maybe the aridity of this region has limited degradation.

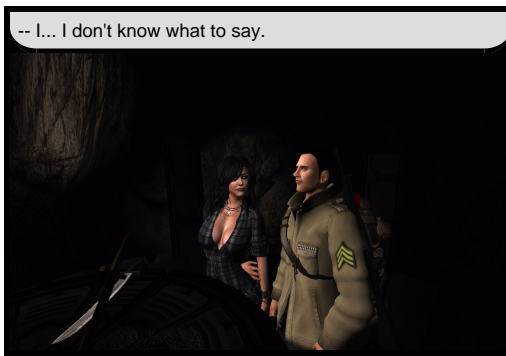
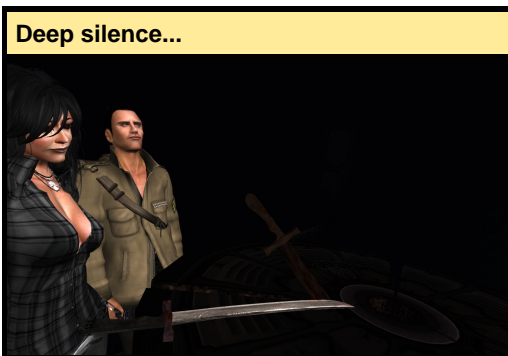
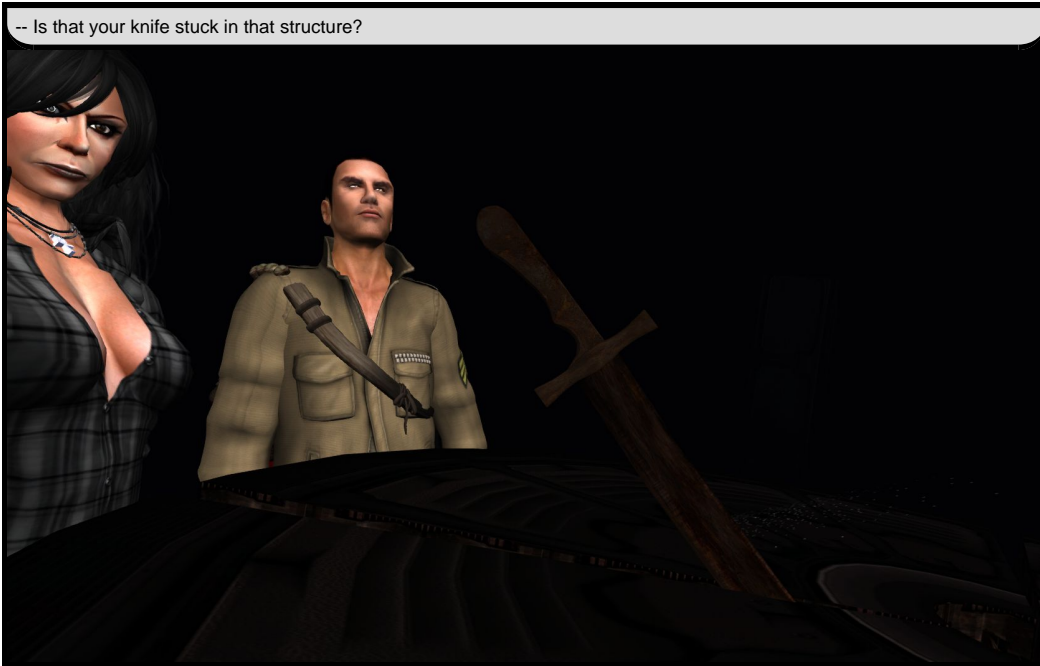
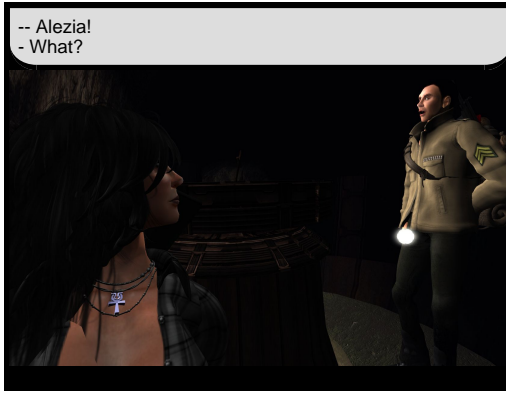
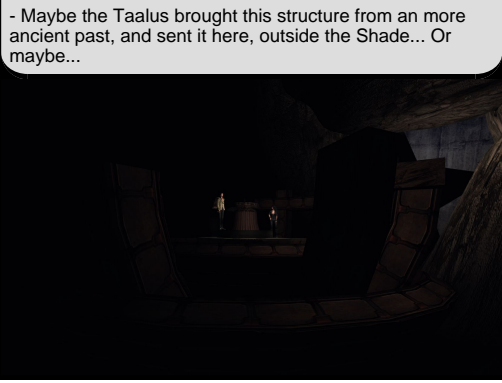


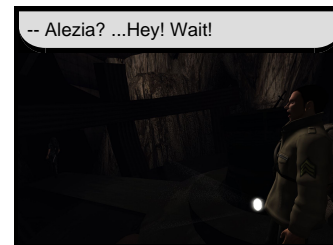
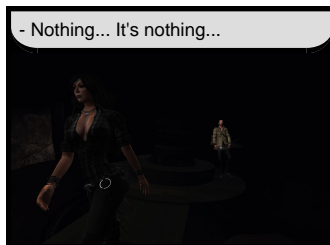
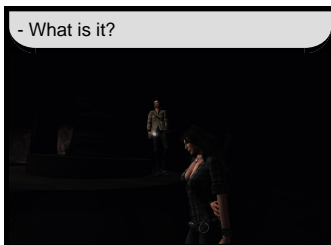
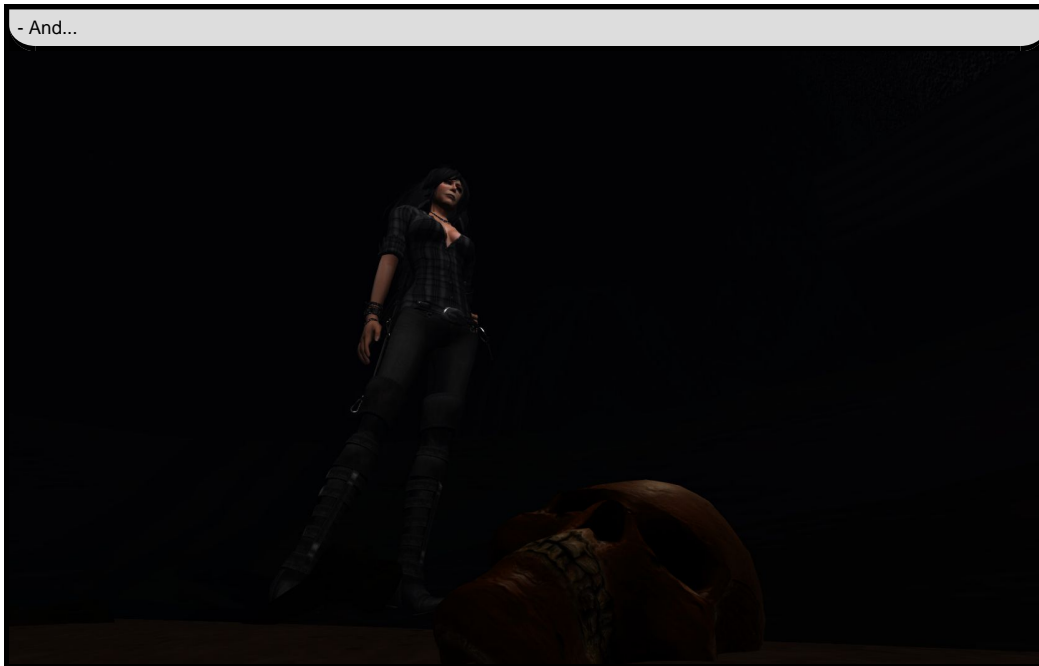
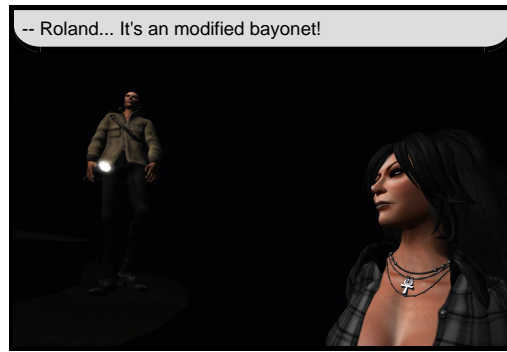
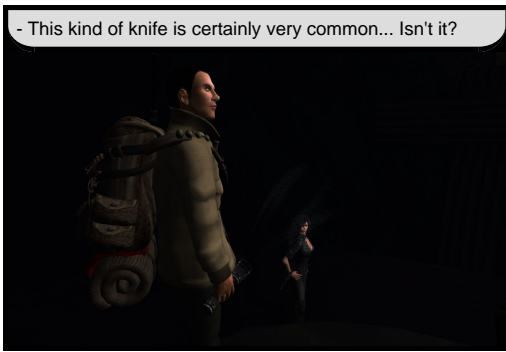
-- Alright... Now, at least, I'm sure that I'll never have to worry anymore about being late for my work!

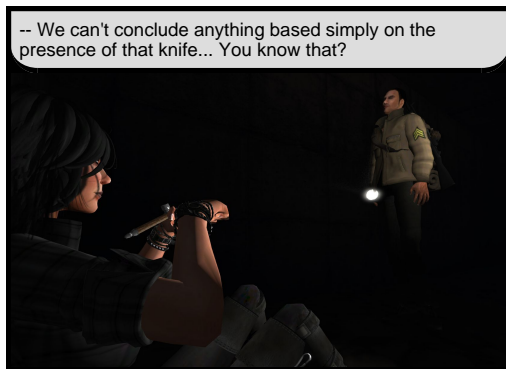
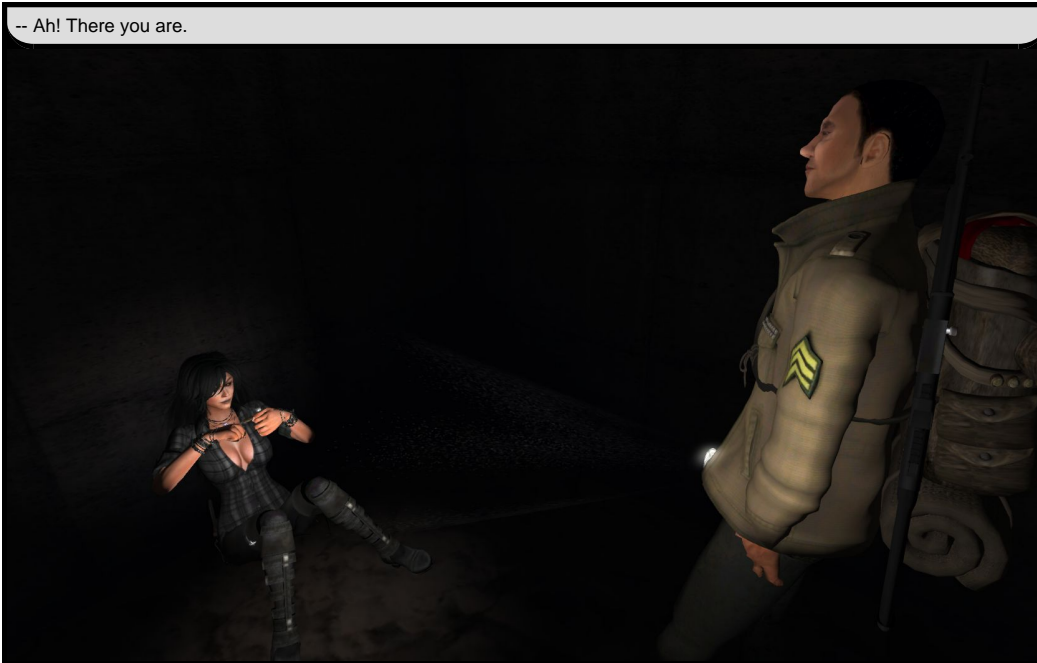
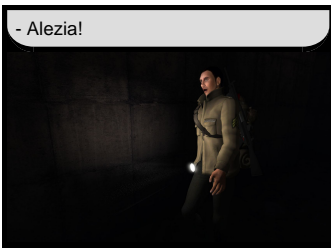


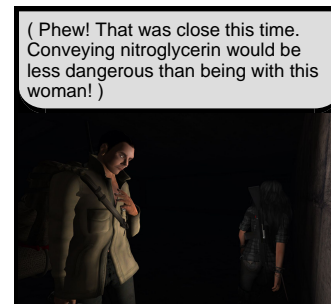
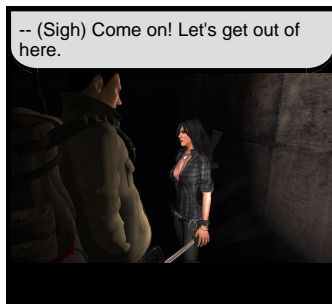
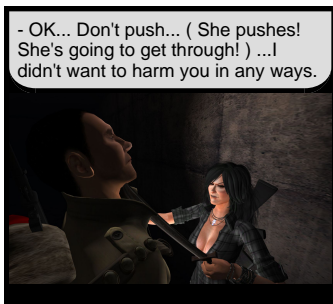
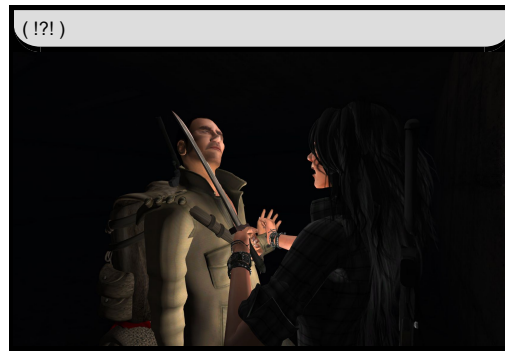








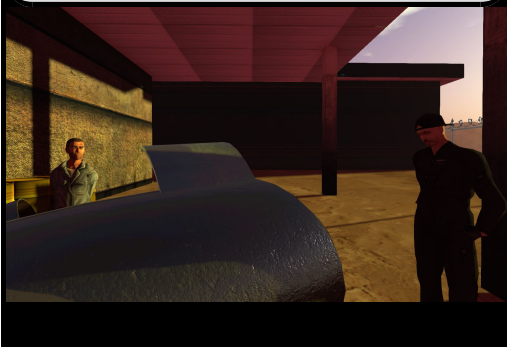




Meanwhile...



-- Hey! Bushel! I'm going to waste your evening!



- For what? You want that I take care of your wife?  
-- Not really. But I have an opportunity for you to pay me your debt!

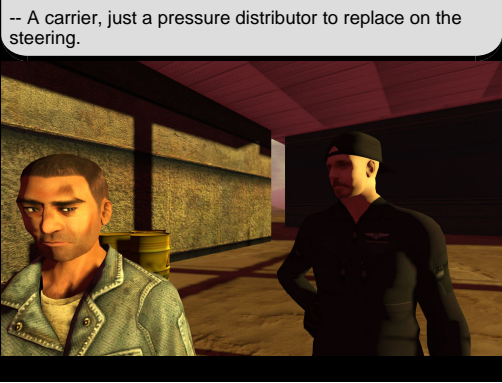


- Really! How?

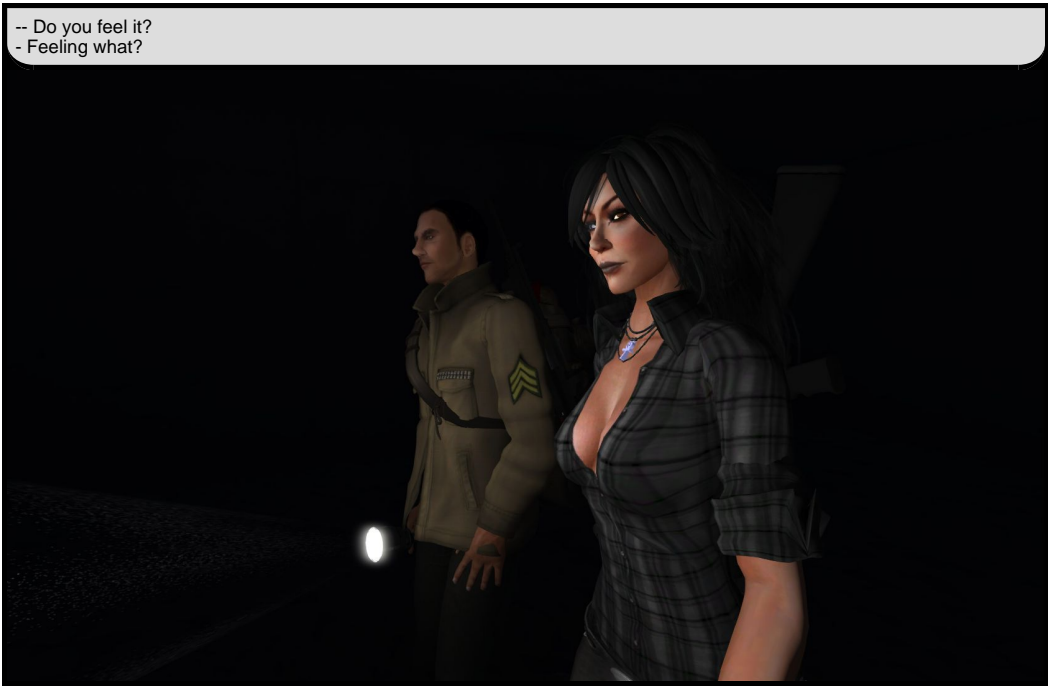


-- I have a job to finish for Slong. He wants that for tomorrow morning.  
- So, what have you been unable to repair this time?

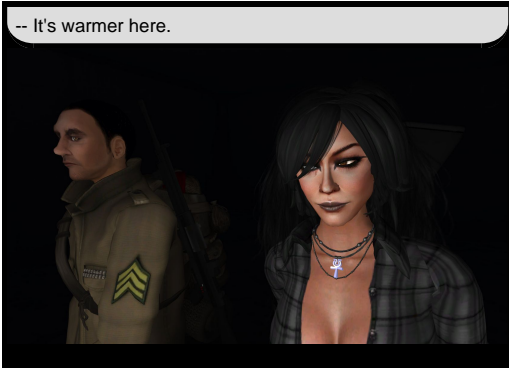




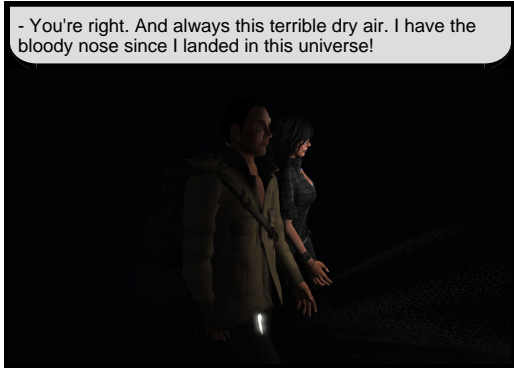
-- Do you feel it?  
- Feeling what?



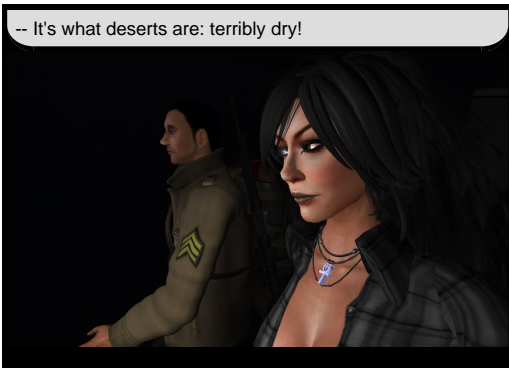
-- It's warmer here.



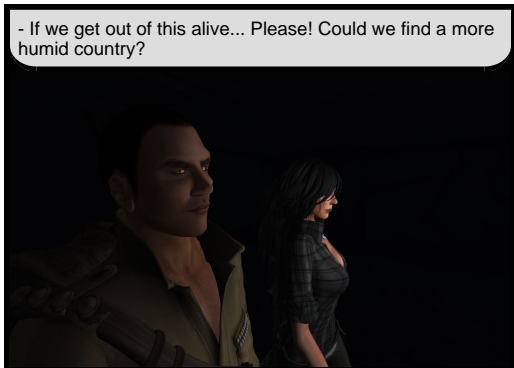
- You're right. And always this terrible dry air. I have the bloody nose since I landed in this universe!

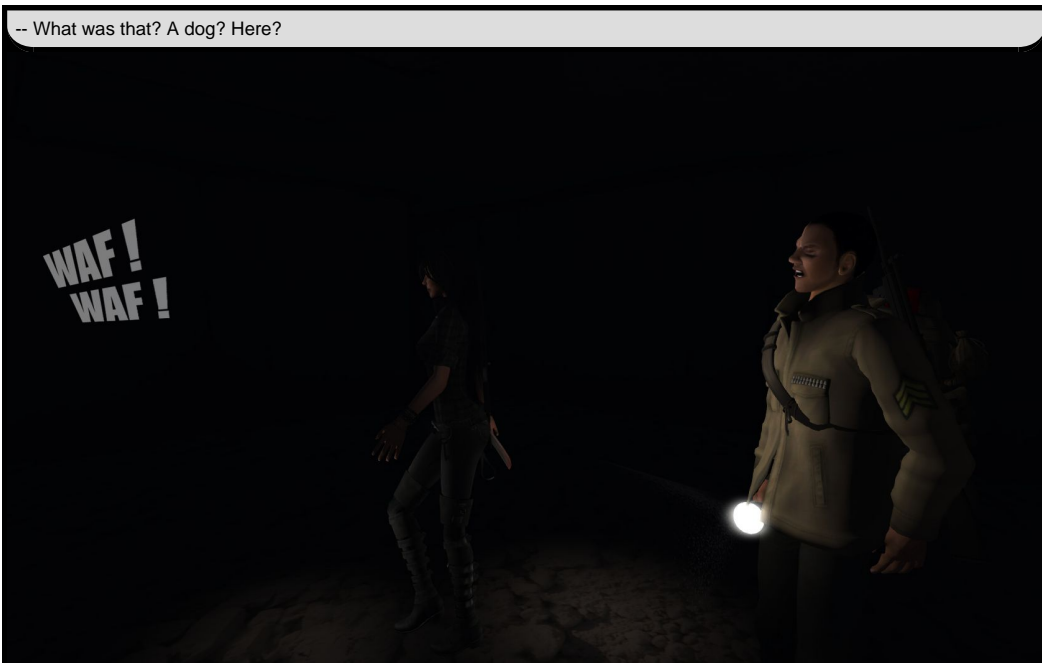
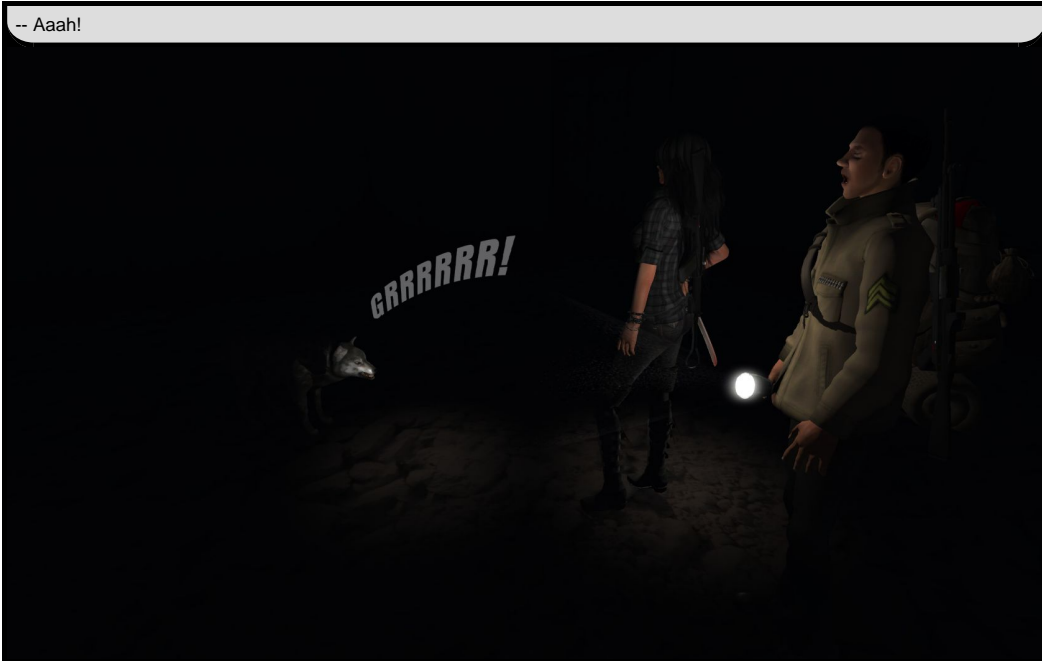
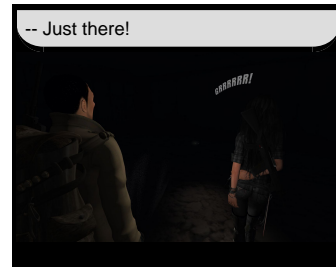
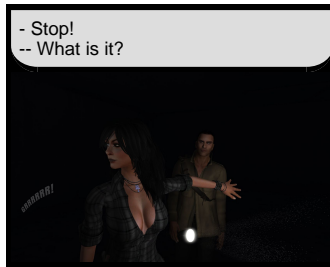
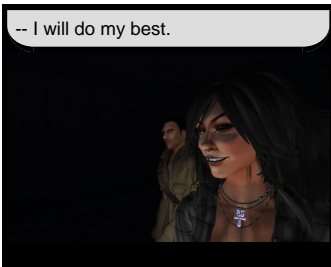


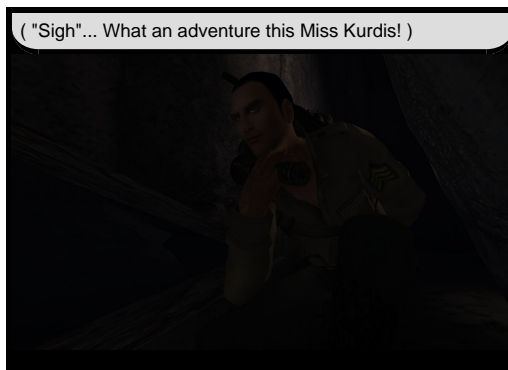
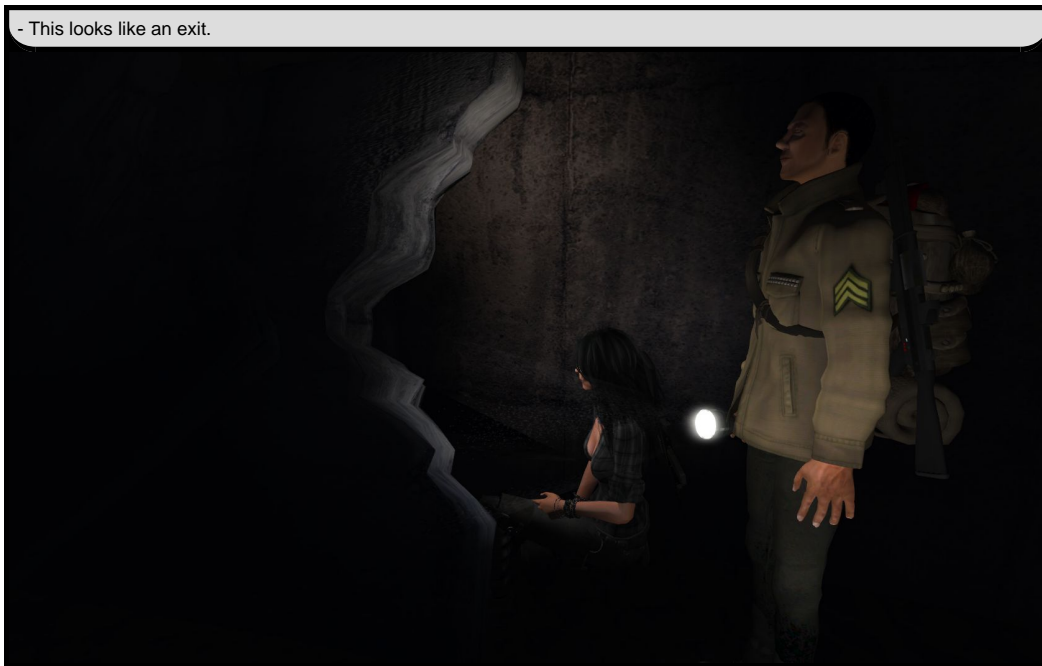
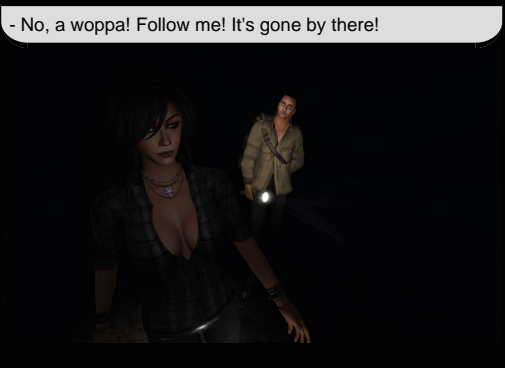
-- It's what deserts are: terribly dry!



- If we get out of this alive... Please! Could we find a more humid country?









-- Where is the dog? Er... the woppa?  
- Gone.



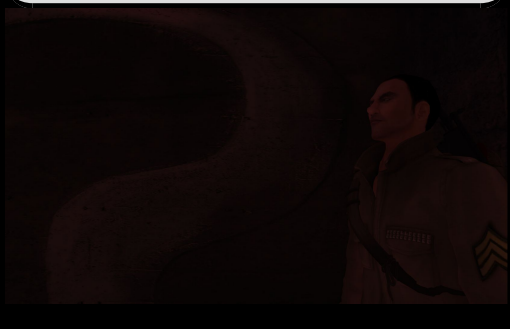
- Ah! Sunlight... So hot, but so good to see!

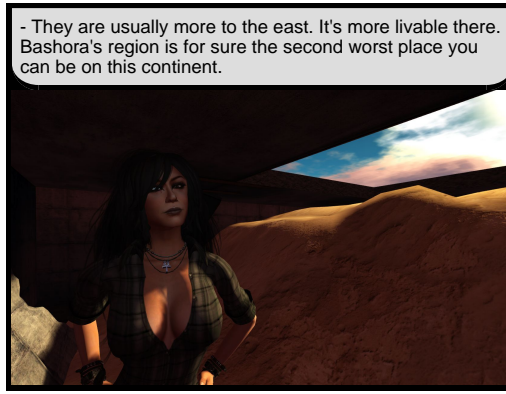
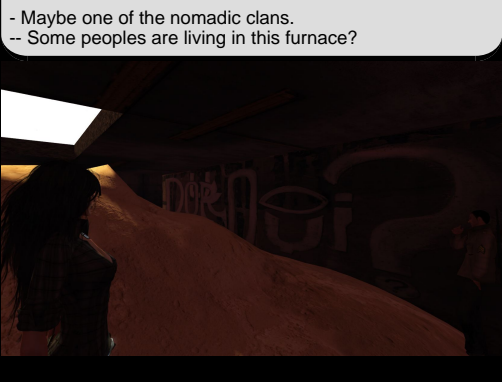


- We are not the first to come here. These drawings are certainly more recent



- But it doesn't seem very fresh either.





-- They are gone! They have left the troop carrier!



- Yes, but they have pulled it out of the hole.



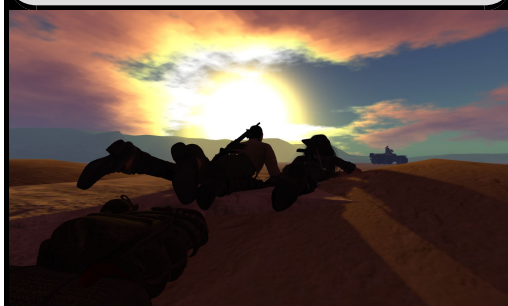
-- Can you see someone there?

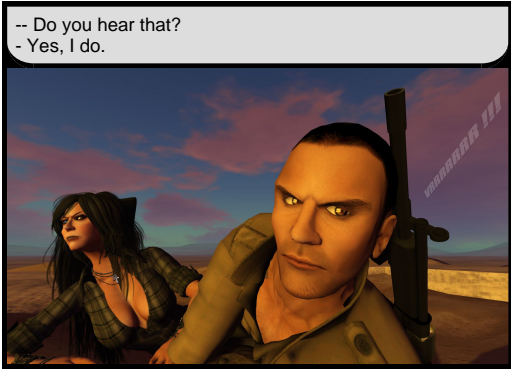


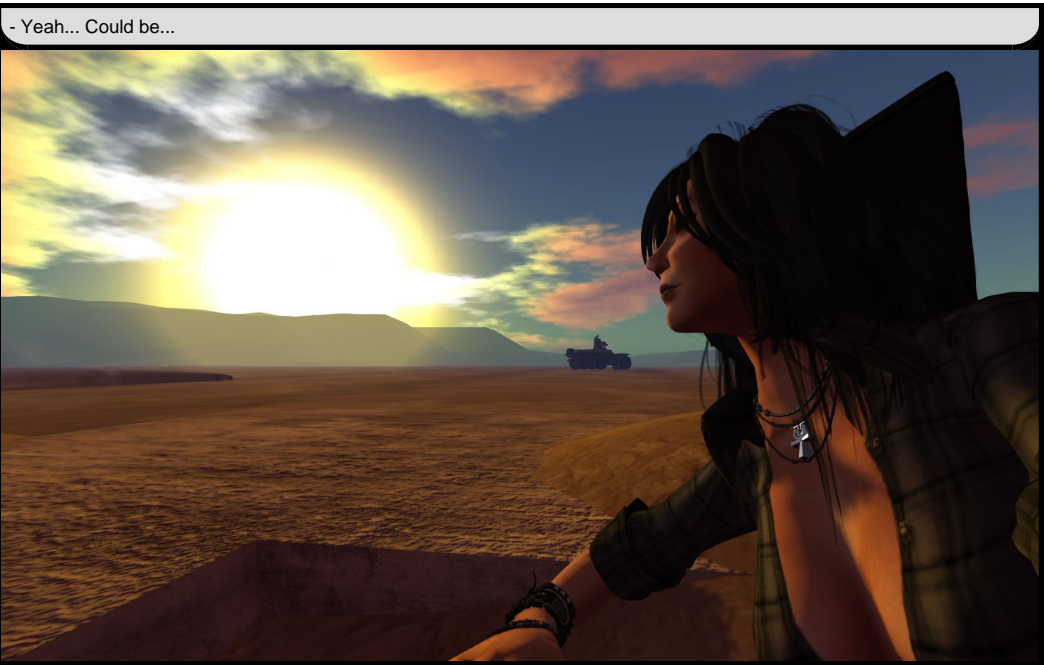
- No. but there's maybe still someone that works on it. For sure, they have certainly not left it unguarded.



- It's amazing the distance we did in that underground complex.  
-- Indeed!







( There it is! What the hell have they done to break the steering? )



( Stupid soldiers! They take care of nothing! )



- Finally! (Stupid mechanics, always late!)



-- Hi! I expected you earlier.



- Well... It was not really in my plans for today!



-- Damn! What happened with this wheel?  
- It's a scientist. He drove it in that hole there.



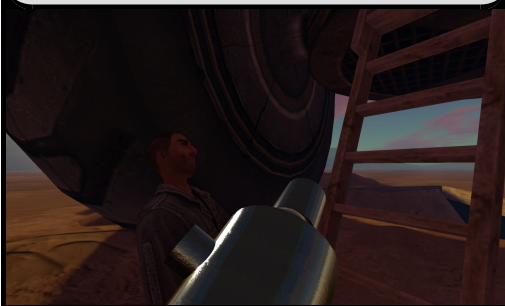
-- Really! Is this desert not wide enough to not have to do such a thing?  
- I know.



- How long do you think it will take to finish the repair?



- A few hours. ...If I'm lucky.



- (Sigh) Huh... OK!



20 minutes later...



- Who's coming by here?  
-- What?



-- Just right there, further! There is someone!



-- I don't know who it can be.



-- It seems to be one of yours, isn't it?



{Guard} Could be... But what is he doing alone in the desert?



- He's coming here. We'll know very soon.



- I don't like that! After all these disappearances!

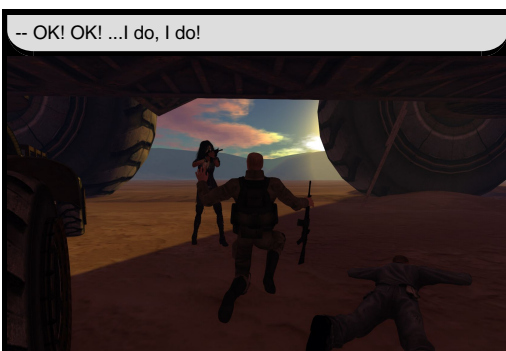
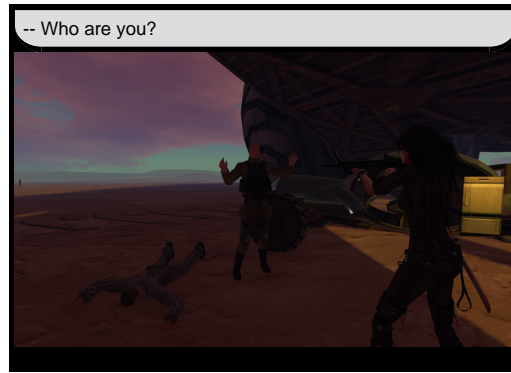
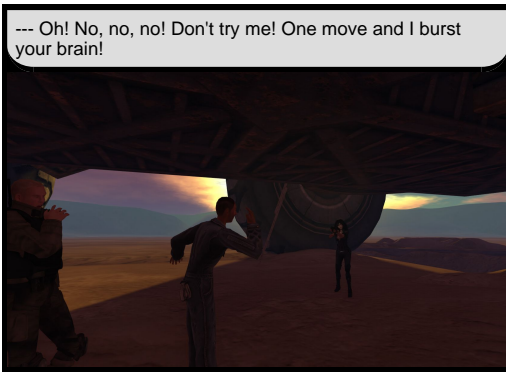


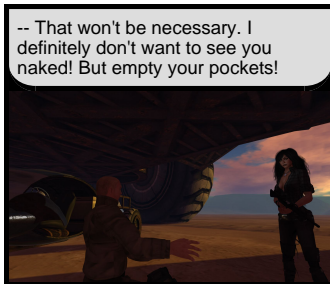
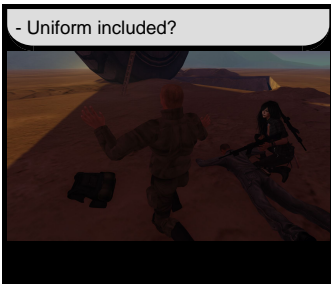
- Some people are missing?  
-- Yes, many in the last days.



- Alright boys! If you want to live, then lie face down!







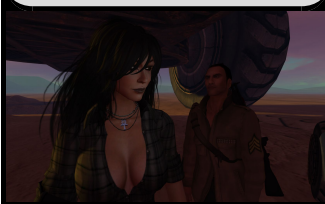
-- You did that quickly!  
- The air is cooler down there, it helps...



- And as you can see, I have not killed anybody. As you wanted. ...At least for now!  
-- It was a good idea, isn't it?



- Well, it's less efficient, but anyway! ...Please, take the handcuffs in the soldier's vest. And make sure you have the two keys.



--- Alright boys! Climb onto the truck and lie down!



--- Roland! Chain'em to the frame! We're going to take a little ride all together!

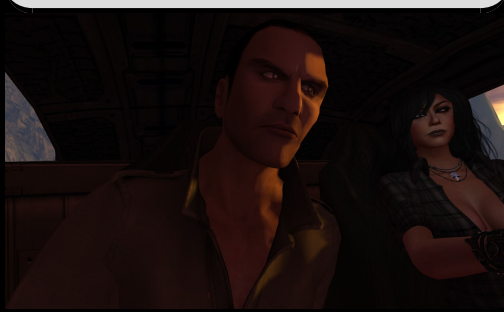




- Bashora, isn't it in the opposite direction?  
-- True, you have a good sense of direction!



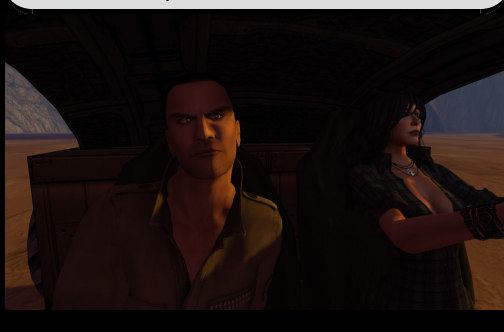
- Wait a minute! Why are we bringing them with us? And why are we going in the opposite direction?  
-- Because we don't want to see them arriving while we will be at Bashora!



-- We'll get rid of them far enough, so they do not bother us.  
- Abandoning them in the desert... That won't be funny for them.



-- The only other safe way would have been to eliminate them. But you were opposed to that option.  
- Come on! Could you be less excessive sometimes?



-- Ah! Sorry to not trust any of these soldiers! Do you need I show you my back to make sure that you understand? ...You know nothing! ...Really!  
- I saw it... Sorry...



Further...



-- Nearly 20 miles. It should be good here. Take the gun and keep them quiet.

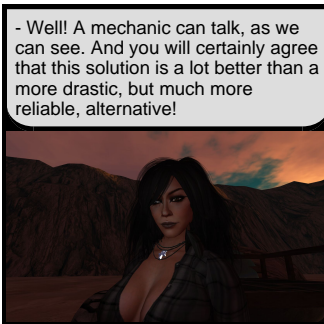
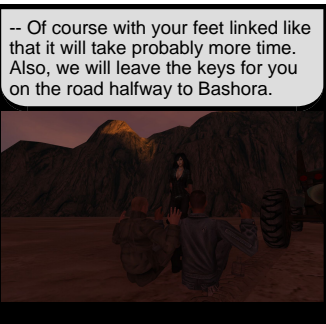
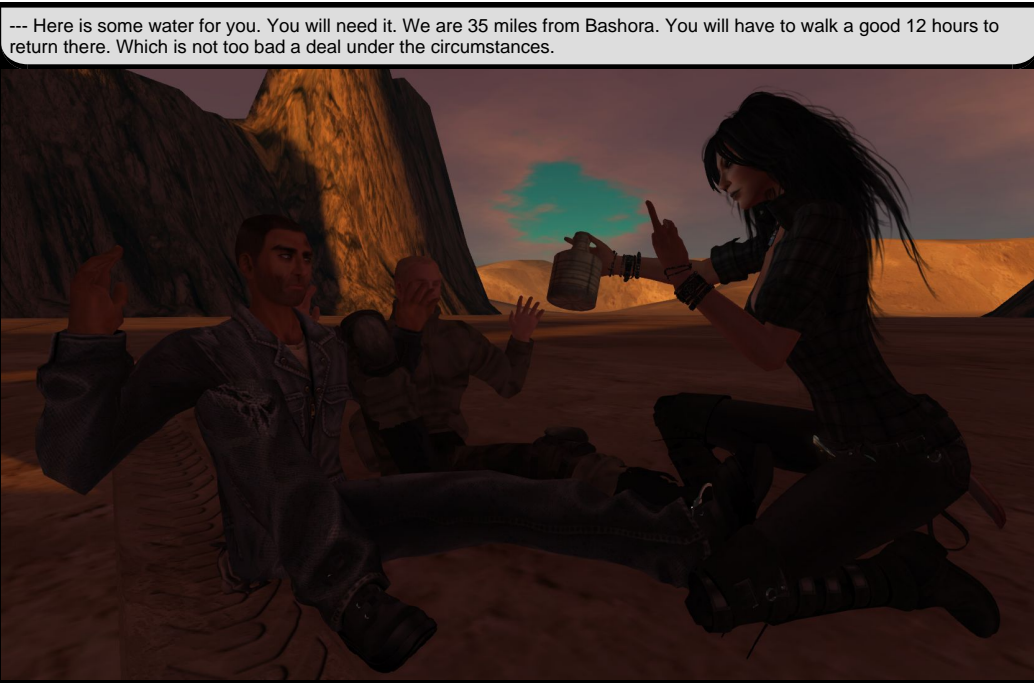


- OK Boys! Get down!



--- Sit down! And I want to see two left feet in front of me!



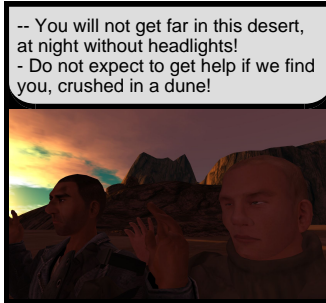




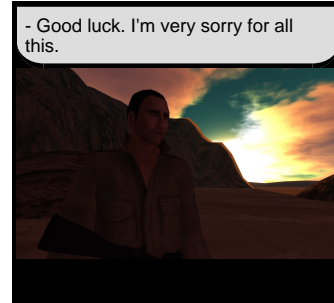
-- What are you doing?



- Roland, get in the truck. We're leaving.



-- You will not get far in this desert, at night without headlights!  
- Do not expect to get help if we find you, crushed in a dune!



- Good luck. I'm very sorry for all this.



{Alezia} Have fun!

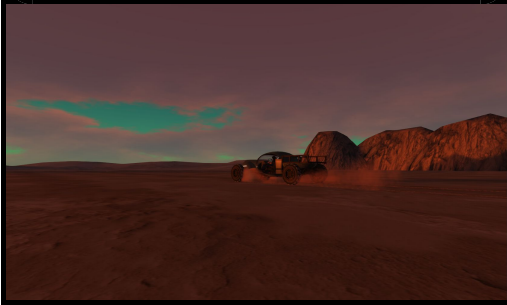
-- It's not really fair!  
- You think that? Maybe it will be better for them to not be at Bashora in the next hours.



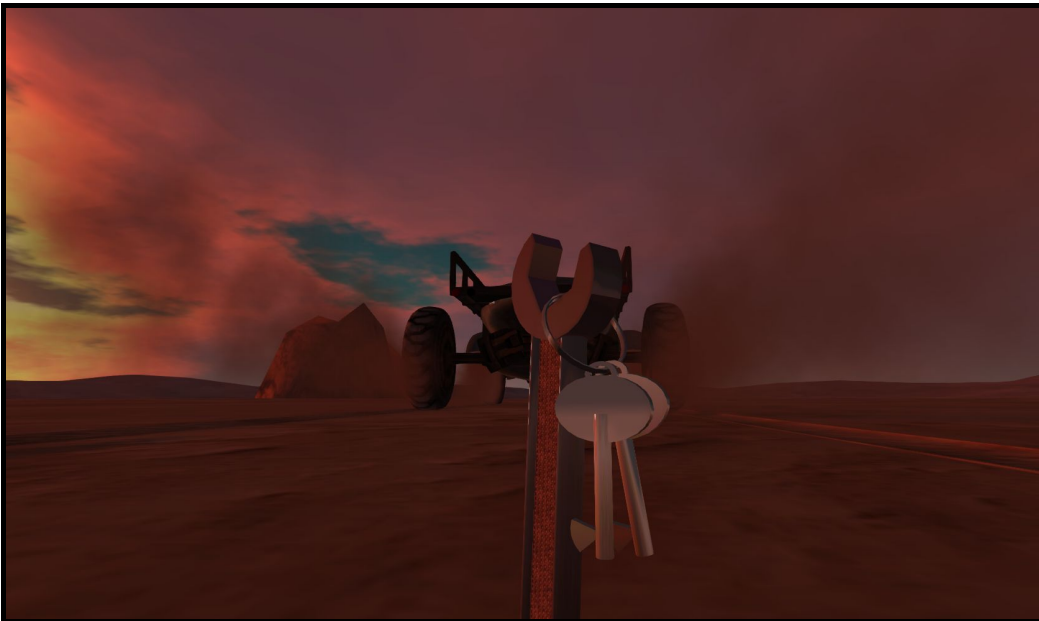
- Was that necessary to break the headlights?  
-- There is no switch for the brake lights and the position lights when we ride.



-- I won't be able to drive it in the dark if something happens to you.  
- Don't worry! ;)



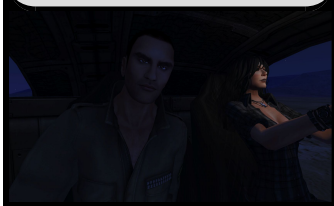
- Here! That will do the job!  
-- ?!



Later...



- I'm very impressed, you drive it as if we were in daylight. It must be very awesome to have such an eye!



-- Awesome?! Have you said awesome?



- What?



-- Come on! Give it to me!  
- What?! Have you lost your mind?



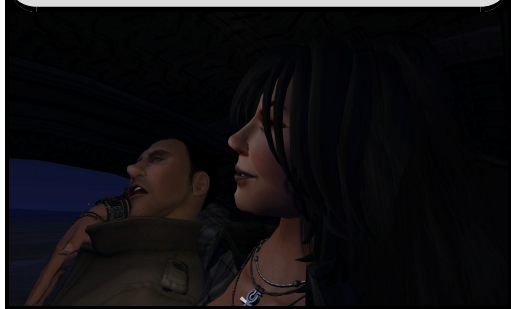
-- Give me this eye! Come on! I can take it myself, you know? I'm pretty fast with my thumb to remove one! ...Do you know the old war medical procedure? ...Let me show you it!



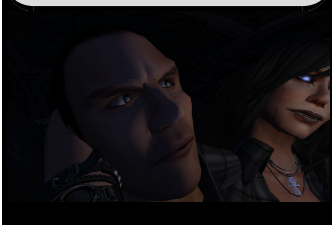
- Don't! Please don't! It won't be necessary, please!



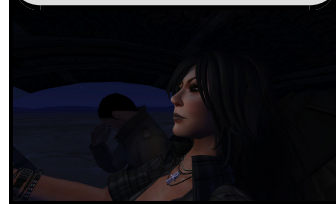
-- Do you still see something awesome in that? Huh?



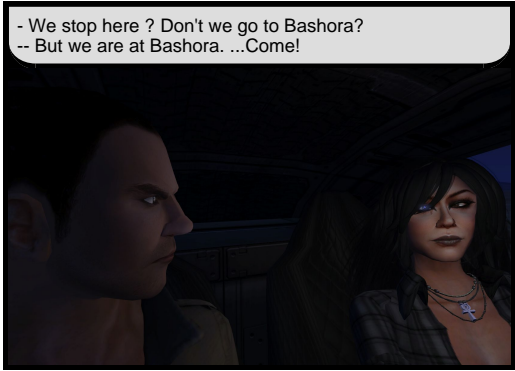
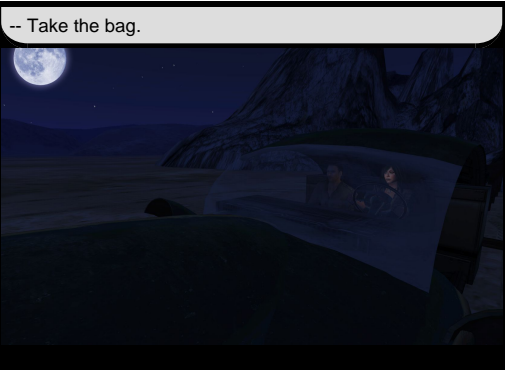
- Alright! I've learned the lesson!



( Damn! She must beat her boyfriends. )



20 minutes later...



-- What are you doing?  
- I'm tying down the steering wheel.



- And why are you doing this?  
-- Well... To get rid of the truck.



- You want to... No but... My goodness!

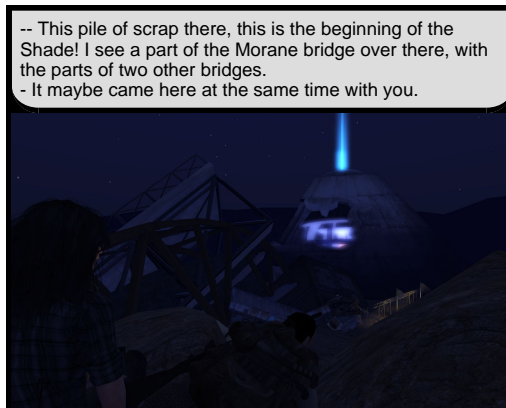
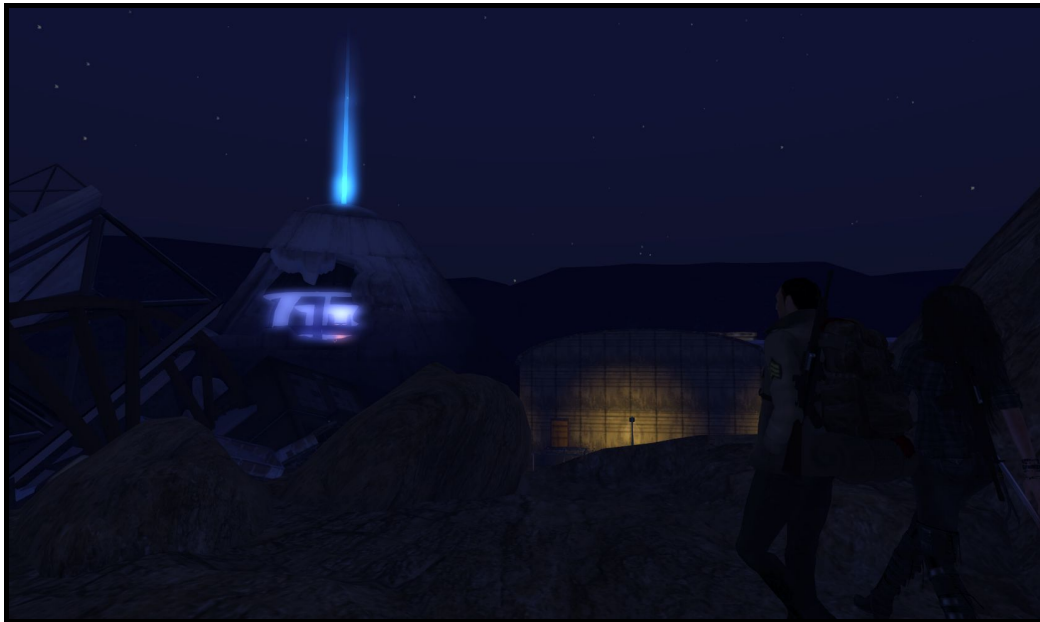
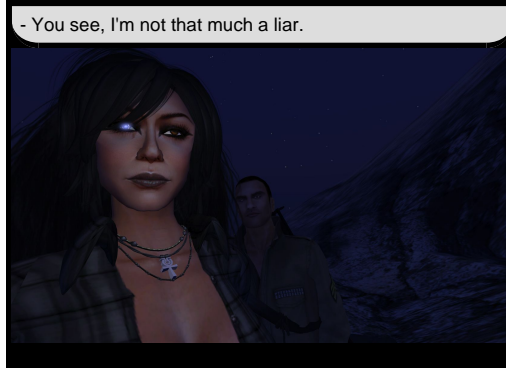
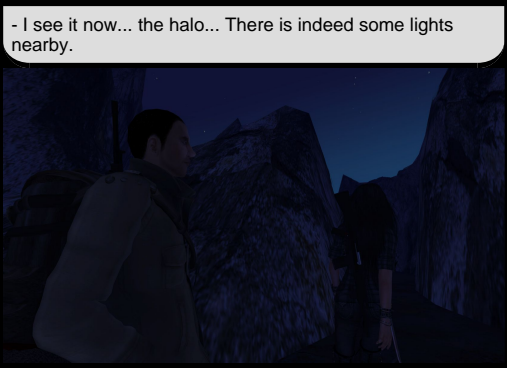


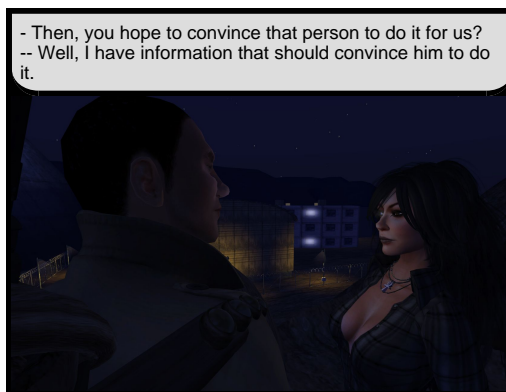
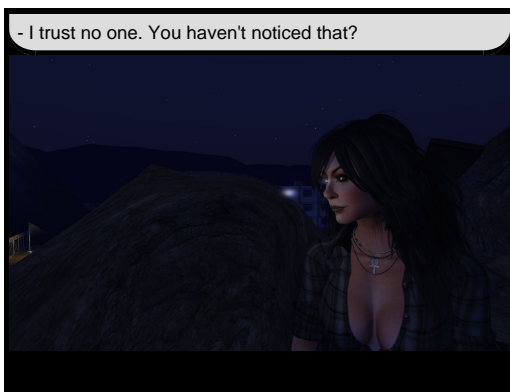
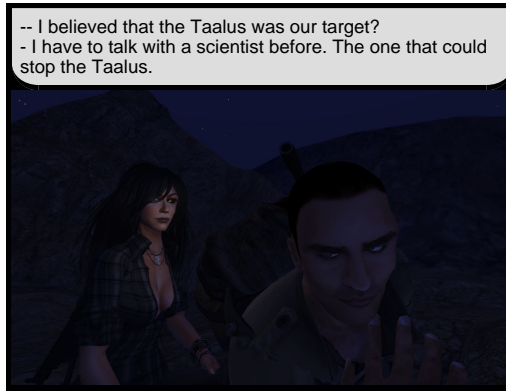
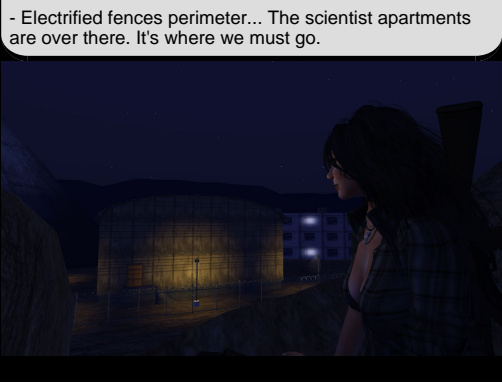
- You are awfully confident! It was our best option to leave that place and you've deliberately rejected it!  
-- They do patrols on a regular basis. They would have found the truck.

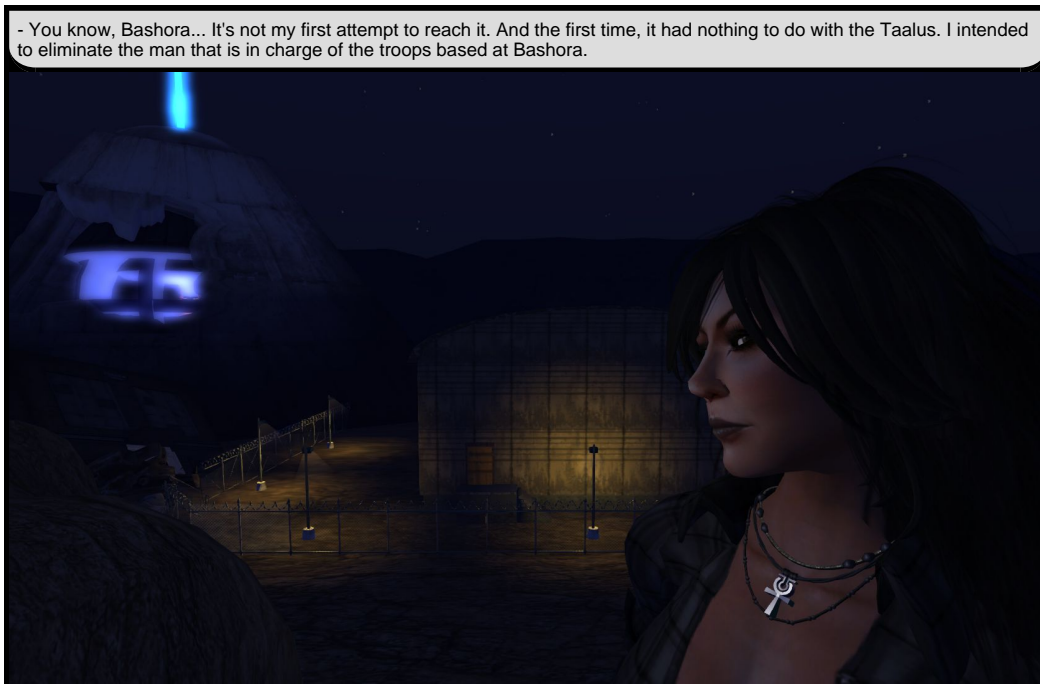
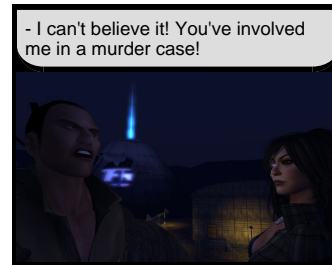
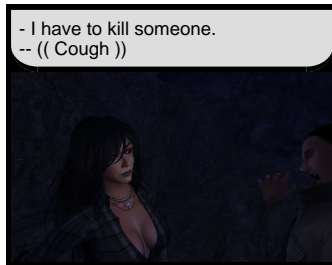
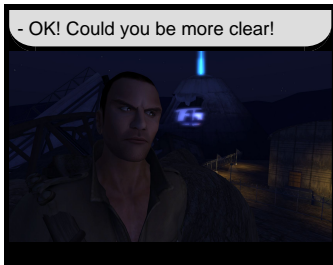
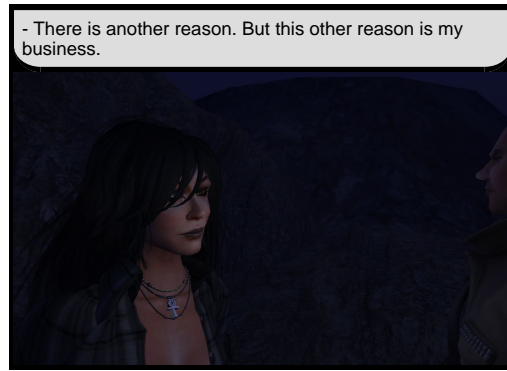
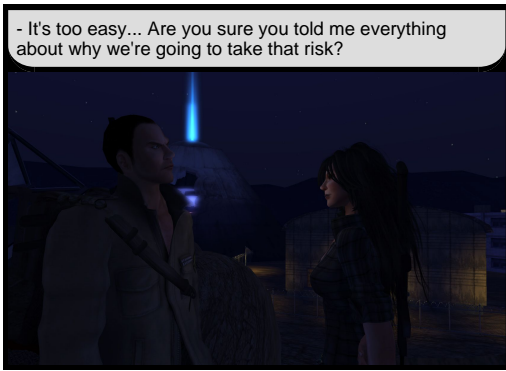


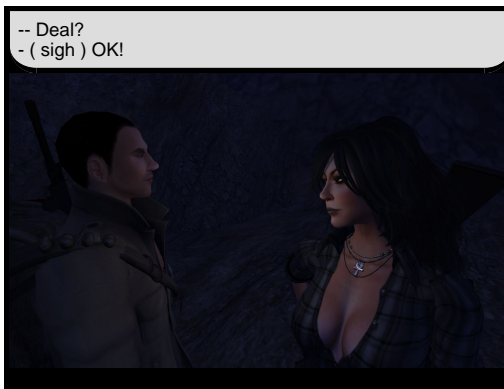
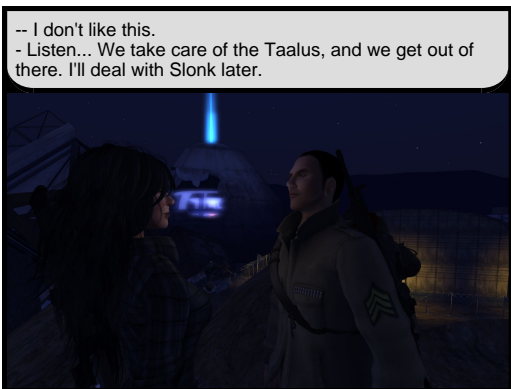
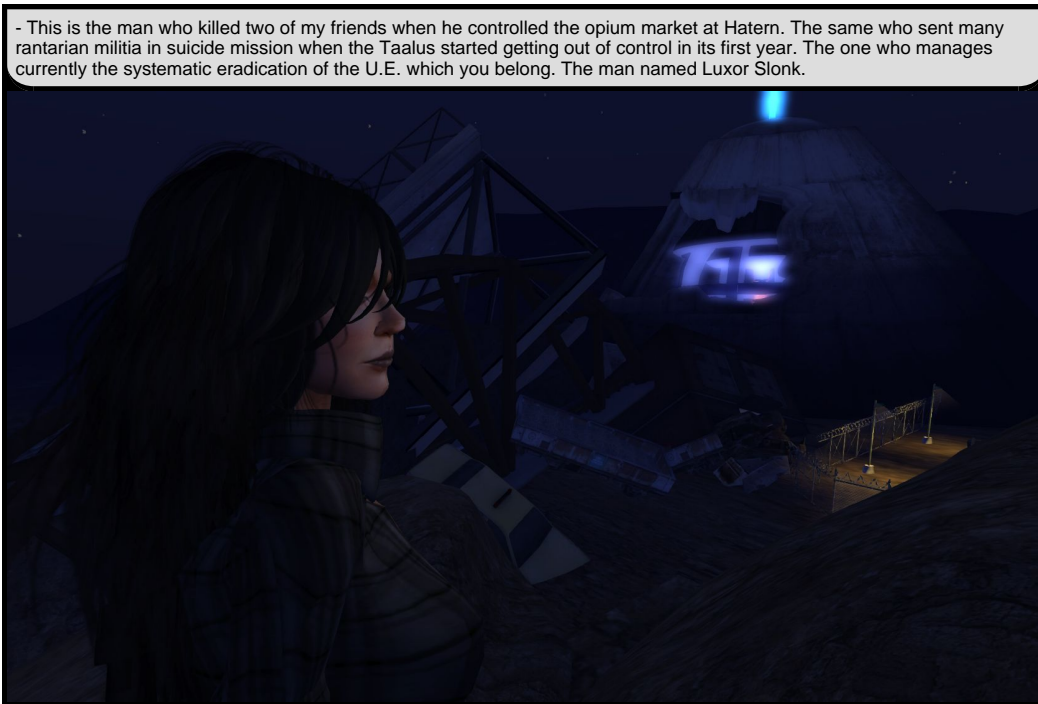
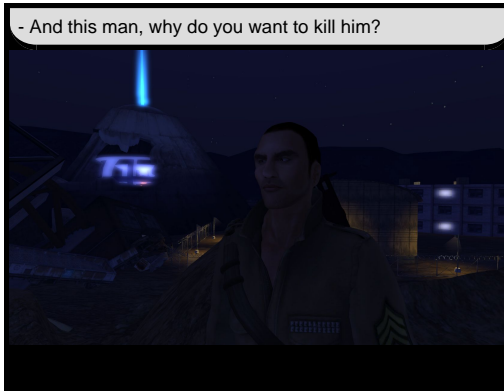
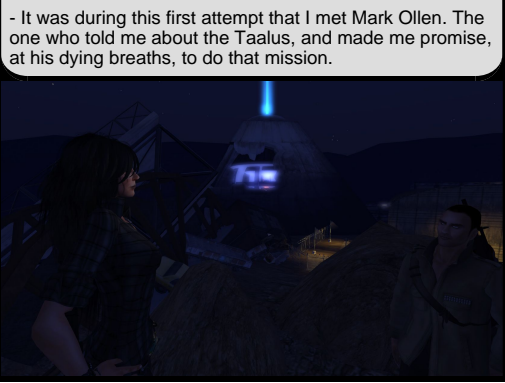
-- I just hope that your next plan is not to walk on a wire, because I won't follow you.  
- If it was only that!

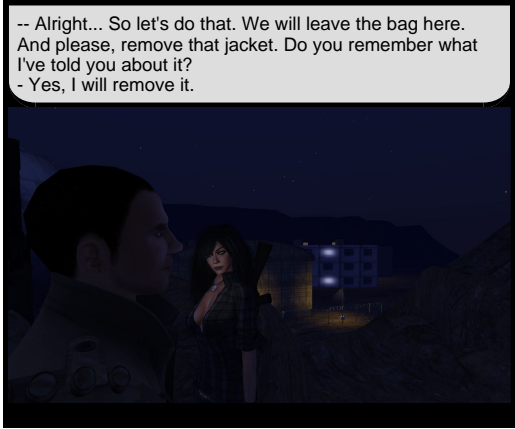
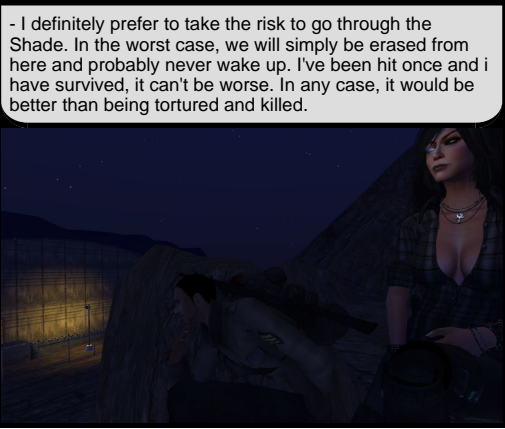
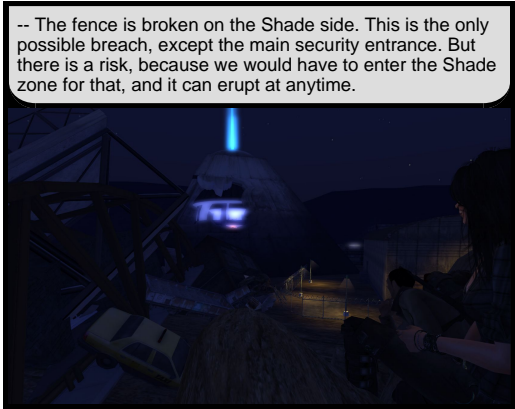
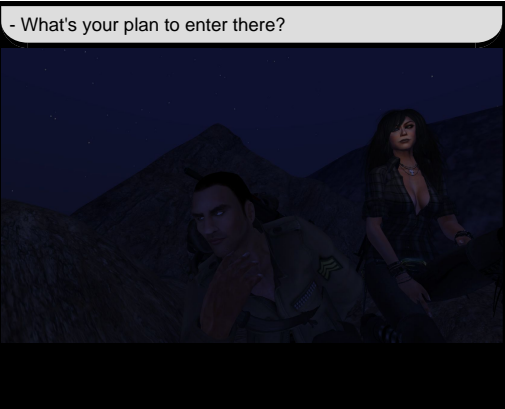














-- Roland... Don't forget to breathe.



- I won't deny that I'm a bit scared.



- It's normal. It's the adrenaline. Don't try to fight it. It's better to use it to your advantage.



-- I've got to admit that your plan to kill someone has destabilized me once more. You know that vengeance won't bring back anybody!



- Roland... Luxor Slonk is the one who created the monstrosity that I've become. I've killed so many men like him thereafter, often just because they were in my way.



-- Monstrosity... What has he done to induce in you so much hatred?

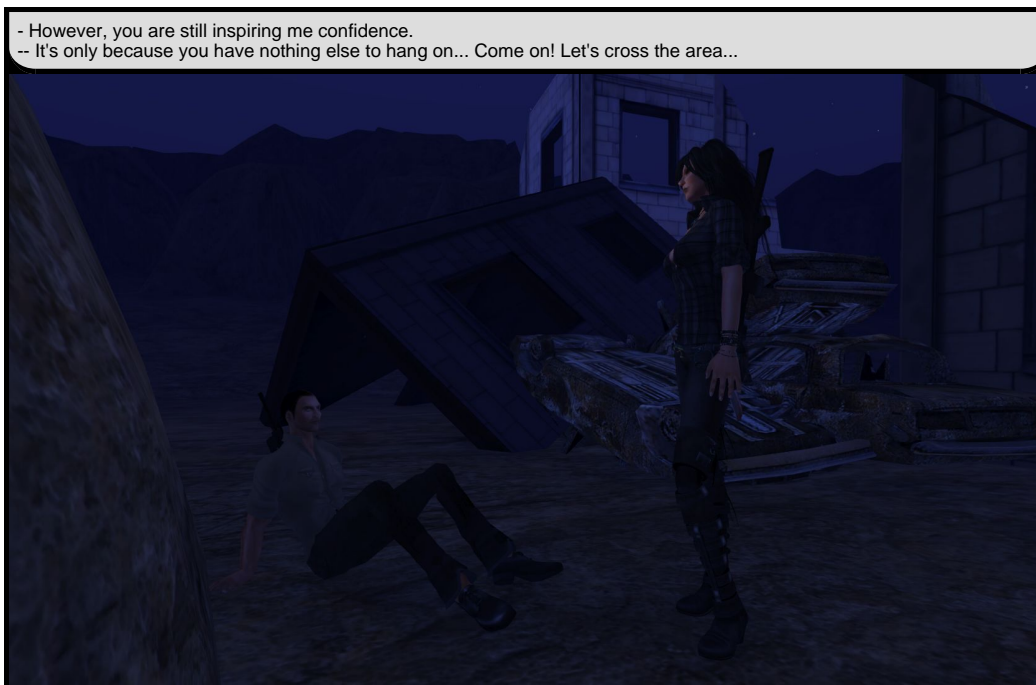
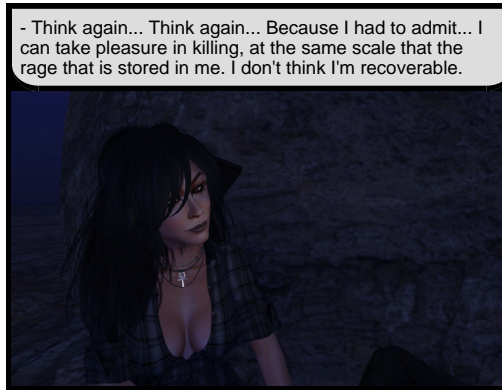
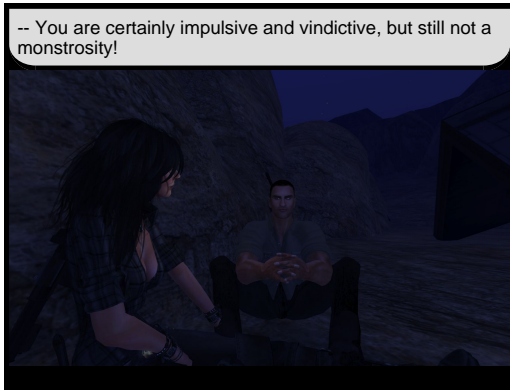
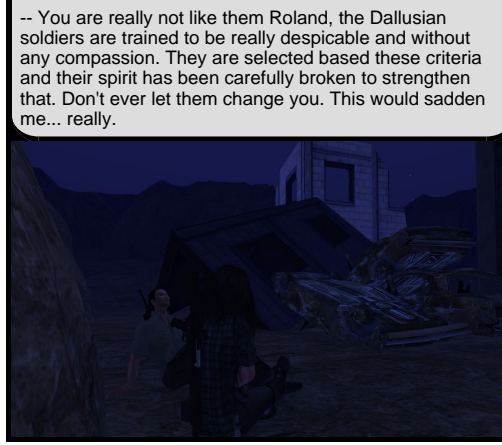
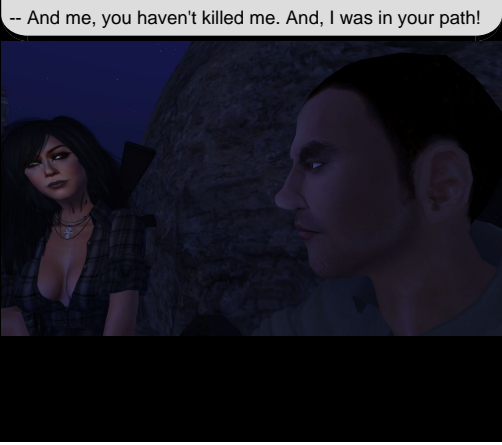


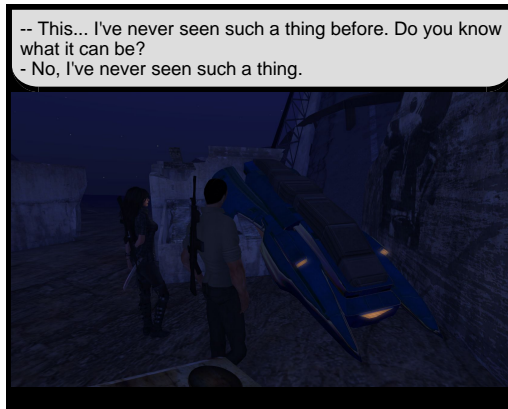
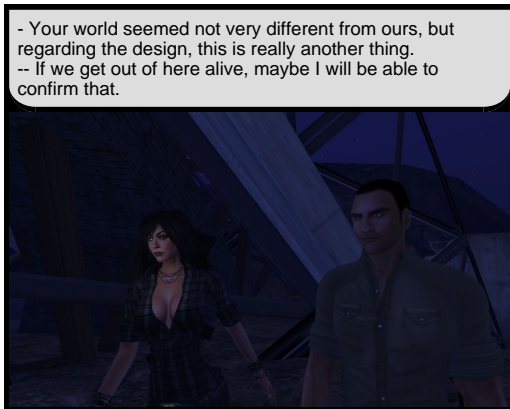
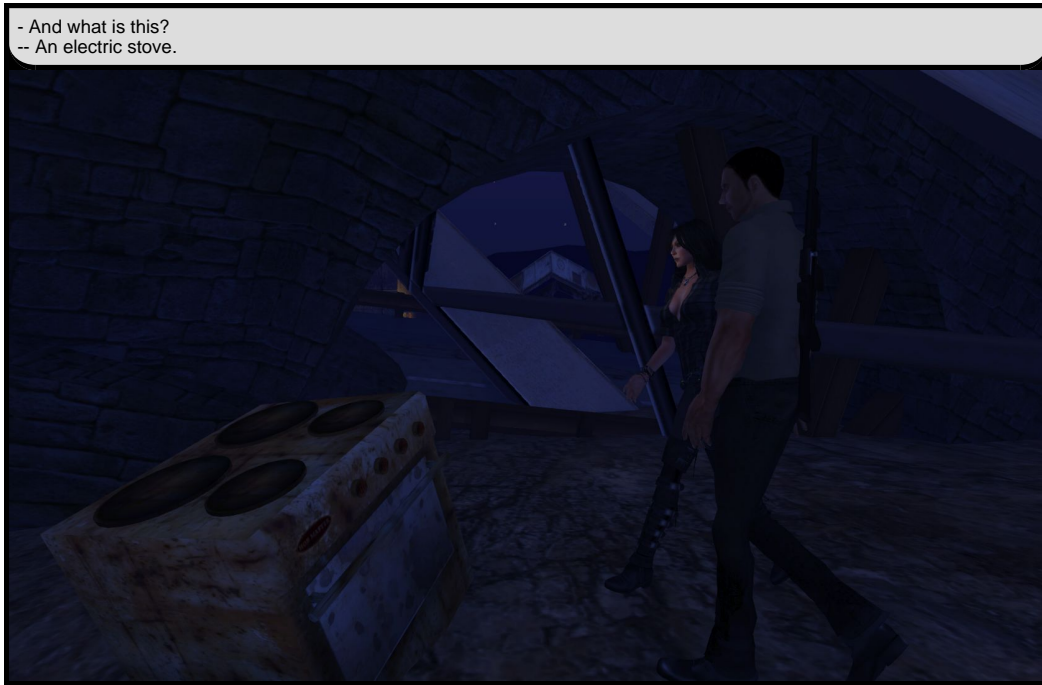
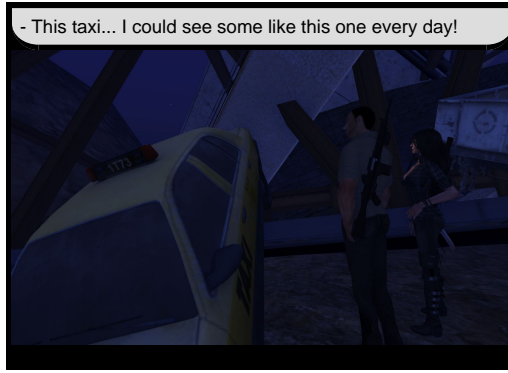
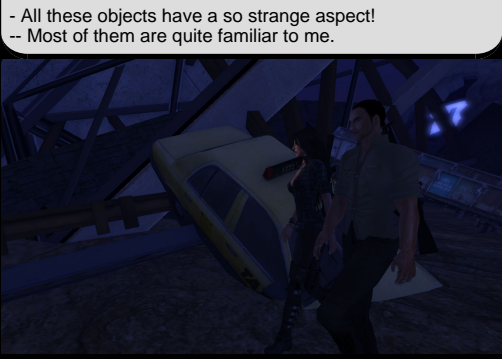
- One day, I tried to stop his men from exploiting a friend. The only one I had at that time. They forced her to sell herself, to be able to pay for the heroin that was keeping her in a bearable state. After have beaten us really savagely, they raped her in front of me, while they lacerated her with a knife, before killing her. I miraculously survived, but I've never been the same since.

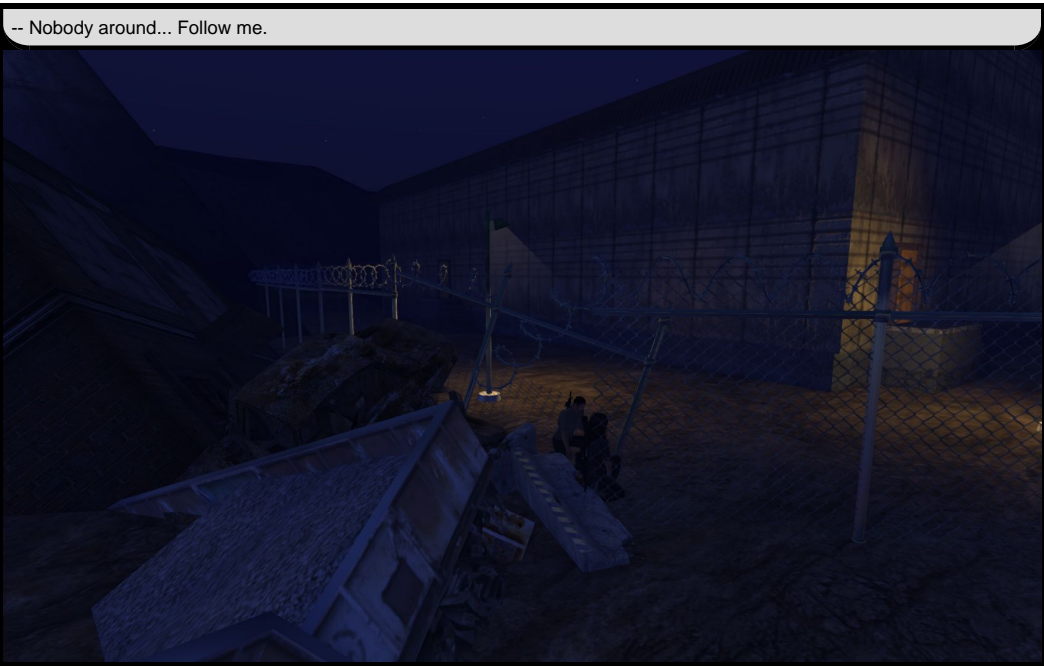
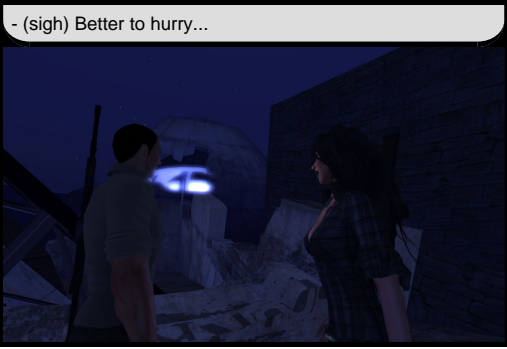


- Then, I killed them all, one by one... except Slonk. Maybe after I have killed him, I'll stop to constantly reviewing these images... and having all these nightmares.



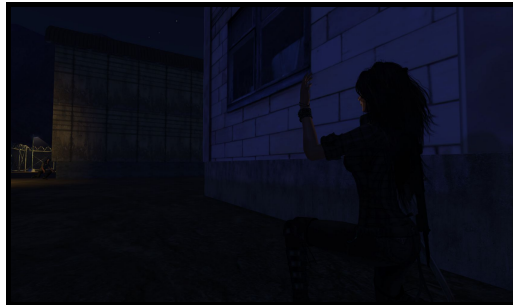




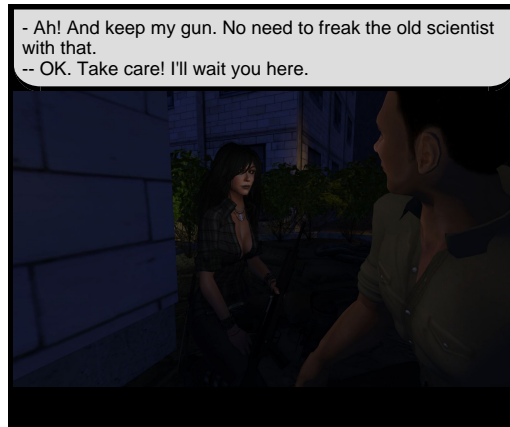
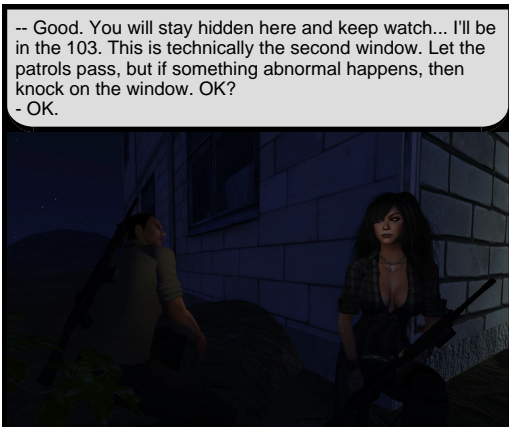
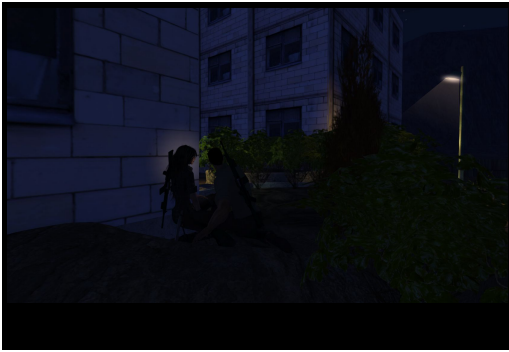


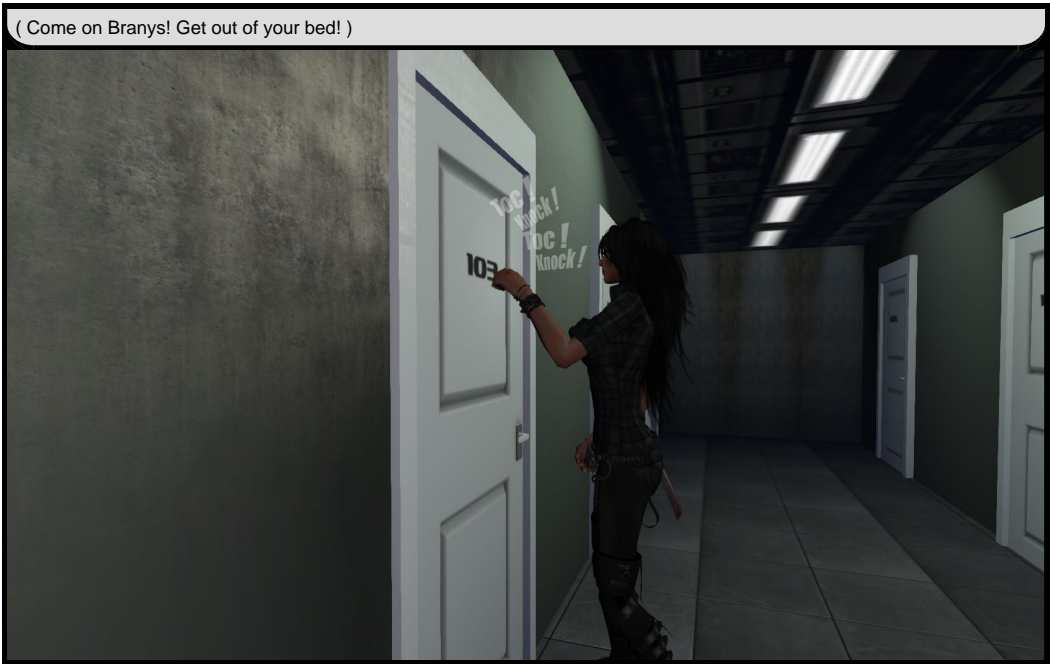


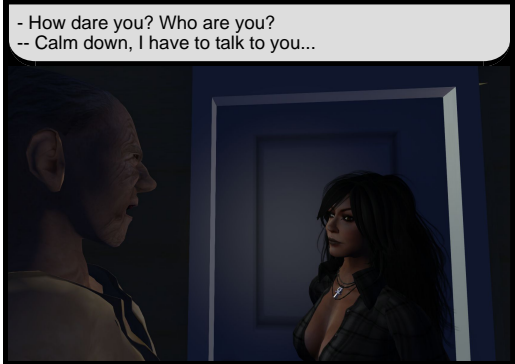
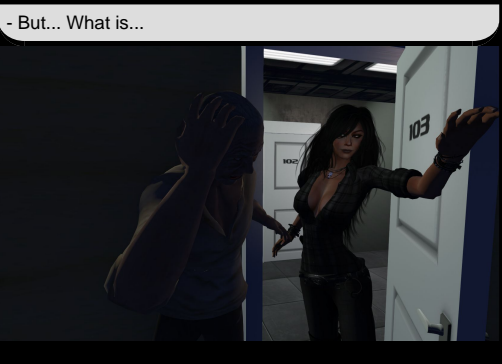
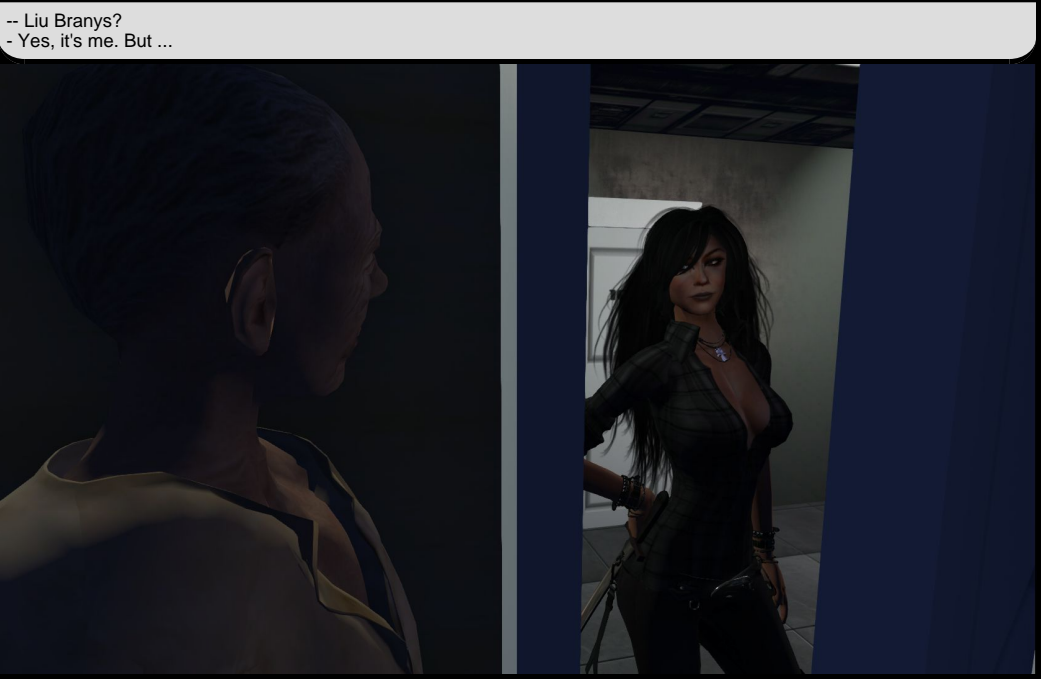
-- The apartments are just over there. I will go first. Wait for my signal before moving.  
- Alright.

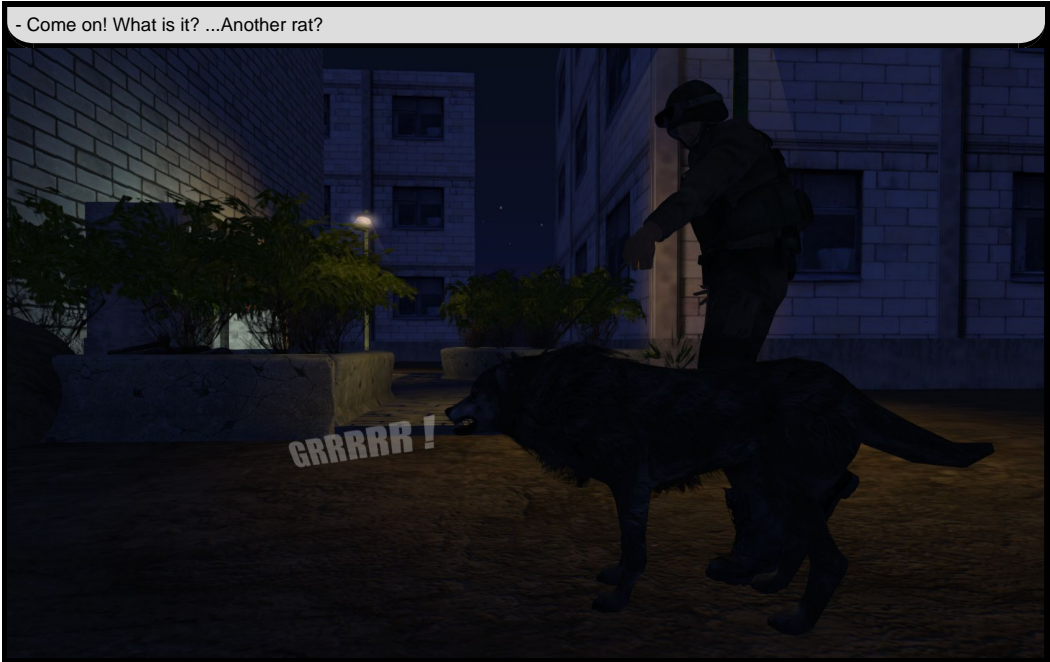
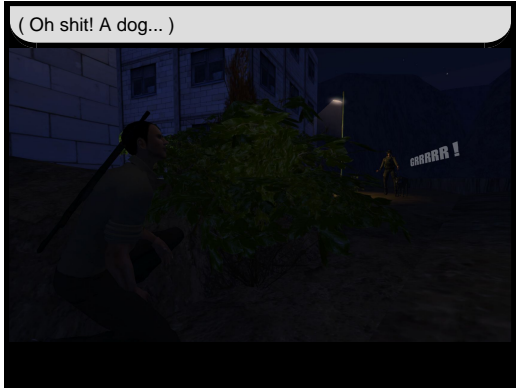
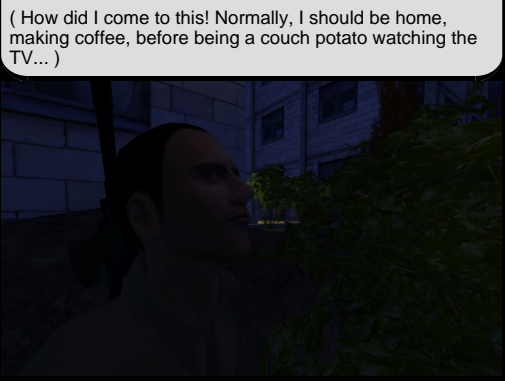


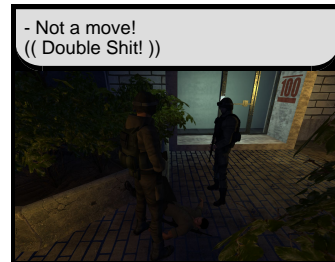
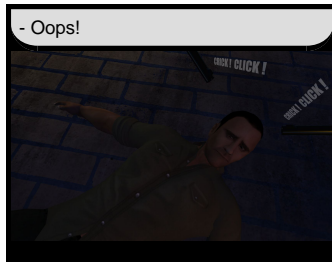
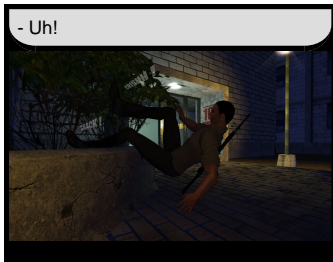


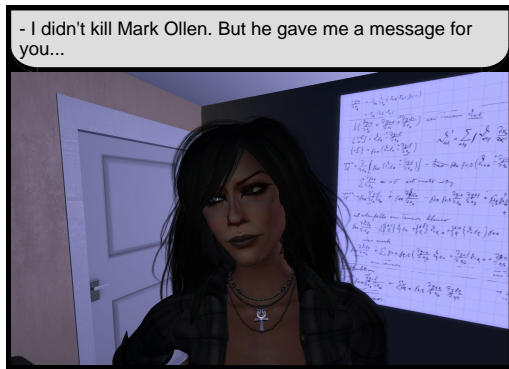
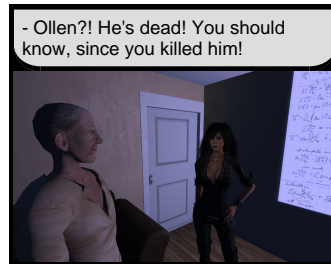
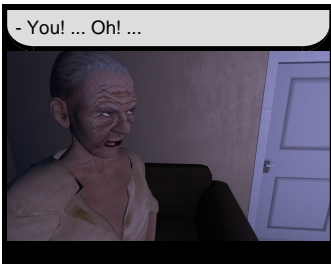
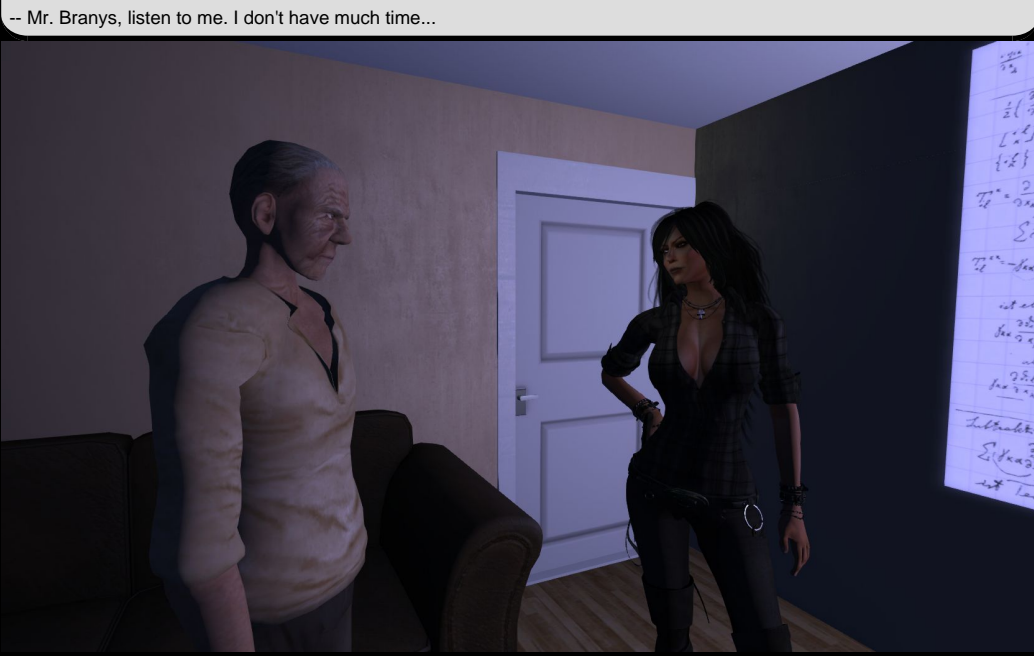








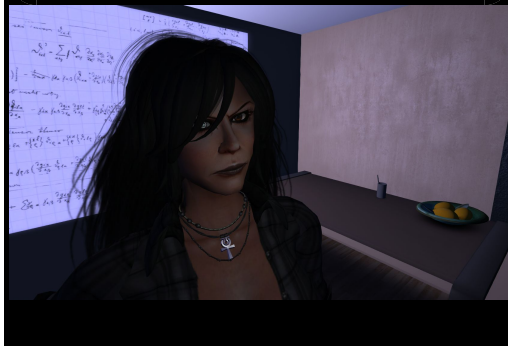




- He confirmed the calculations of the Veraz's theorem.  
And he wanted...  
-- If you think that I'm going to give you some information,  
you're mistaken!



- Are you listening to me?! He confirmed the calculations  
of the Veraz's theorem!



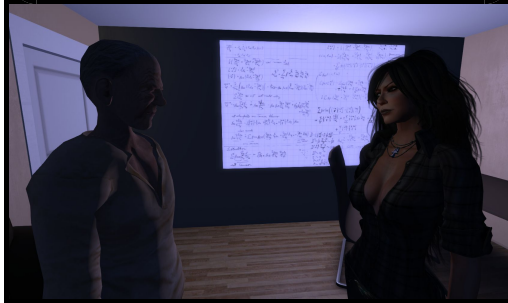
( Sigh )

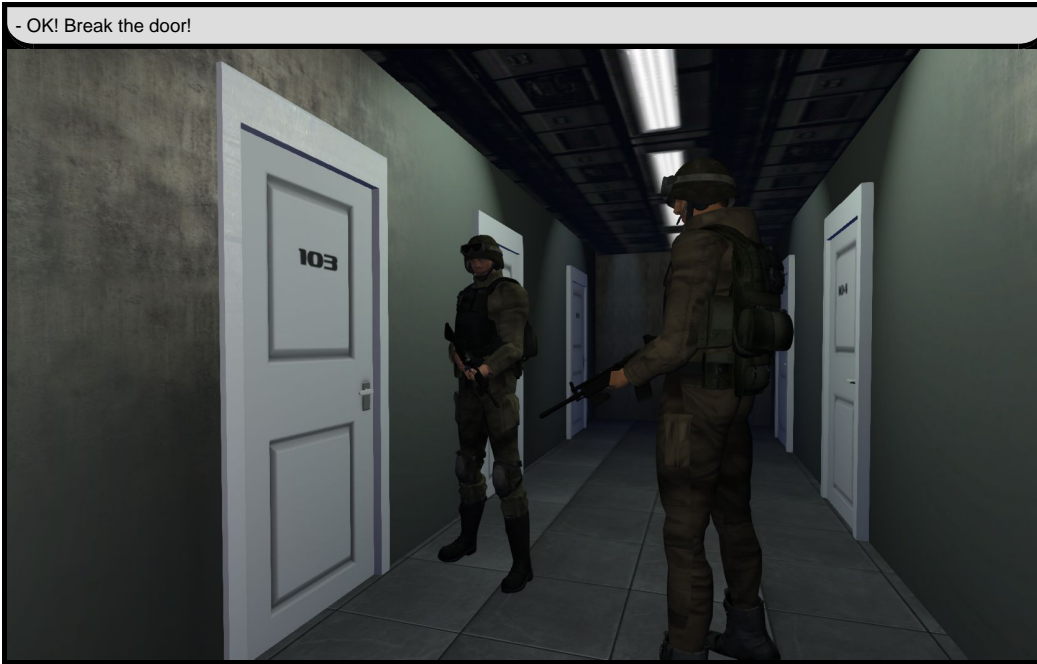
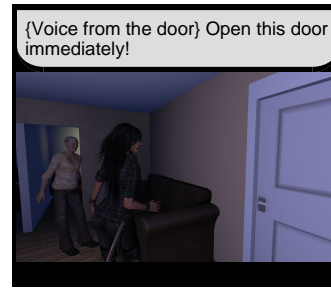
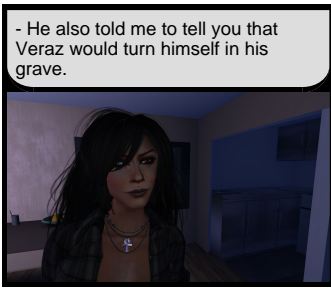


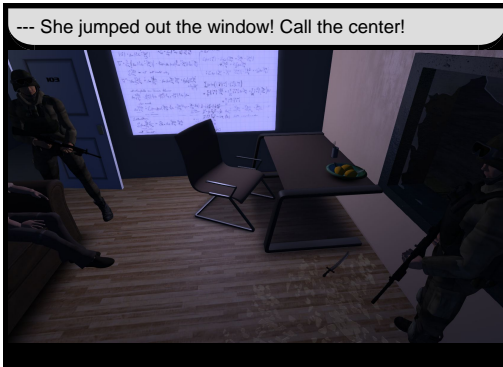
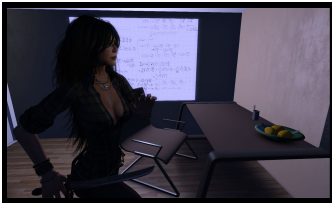
- Do you think that i'm going to believe this ? ...From the  
one who killed him!

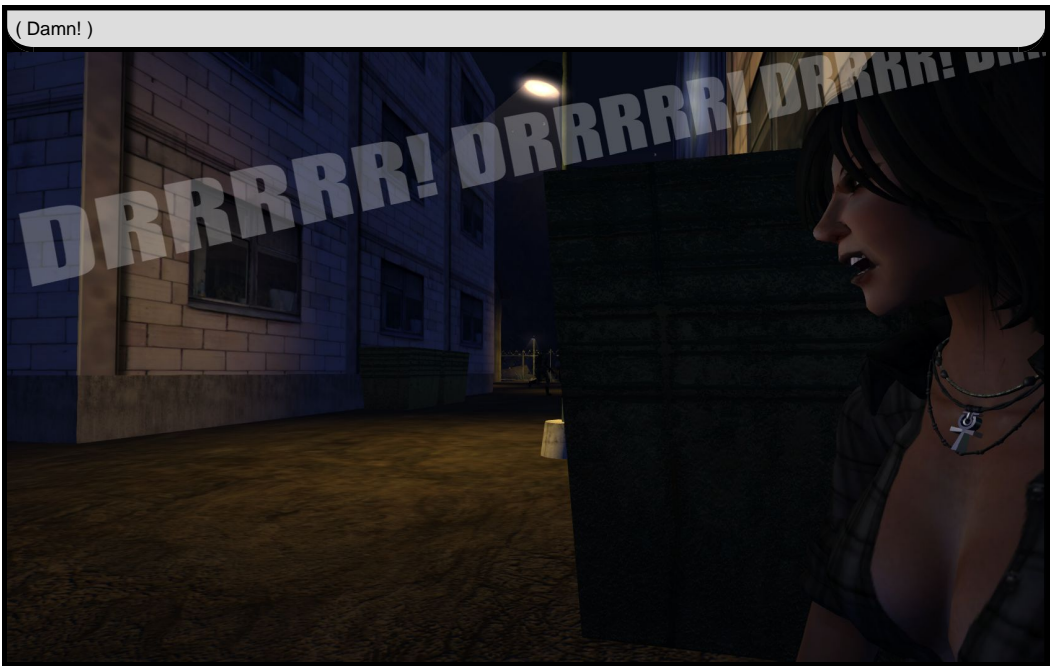
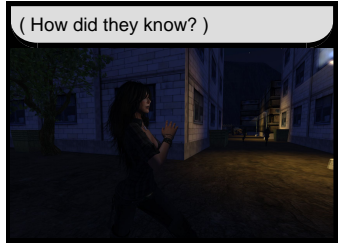


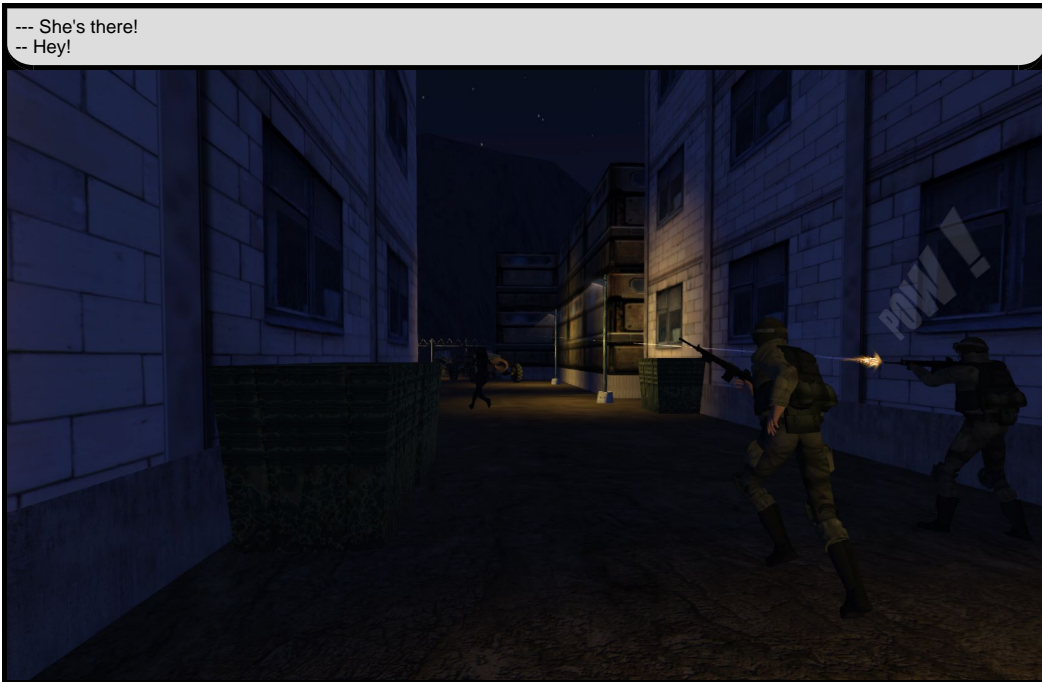
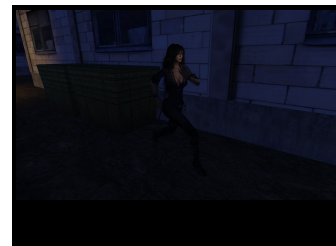
-- I have crossed this desert on foot to give you this  
information!  
- I don't want to hear anything of your absurdities!













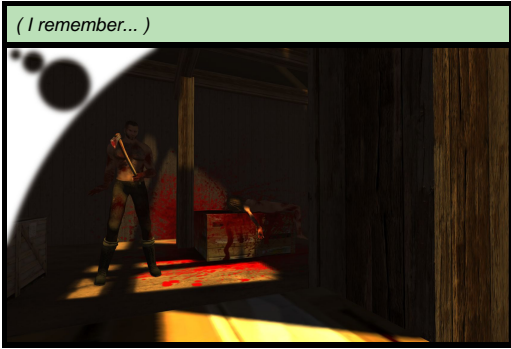
-- This is her! This is Kurdis! This time I'll finish with her!

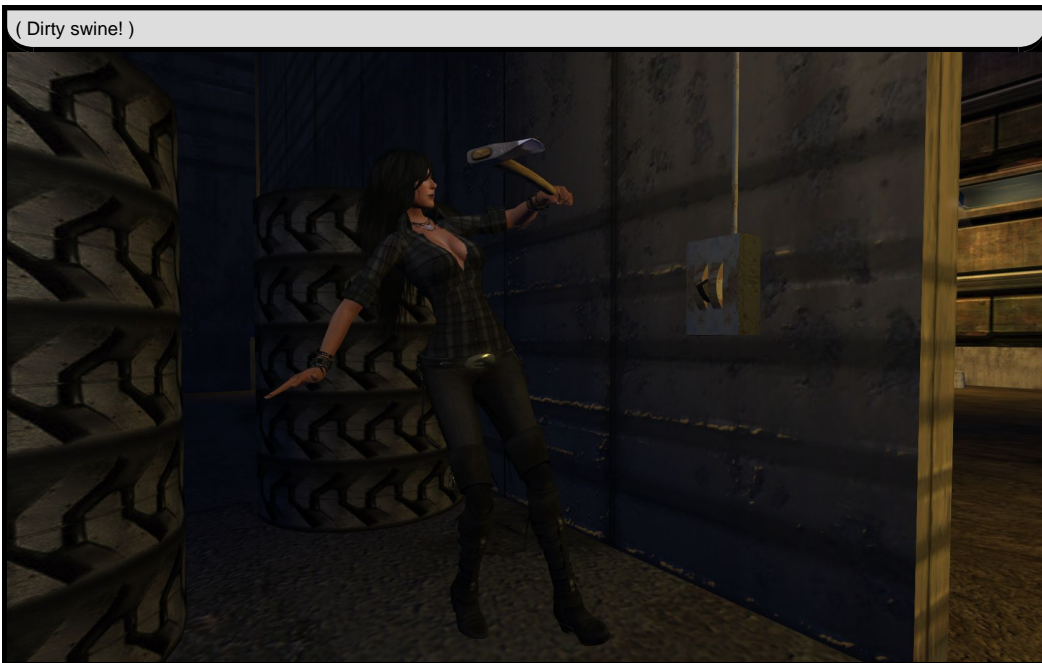
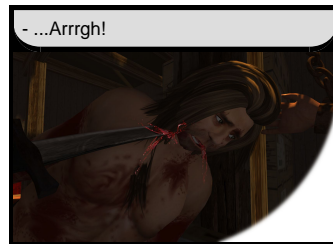
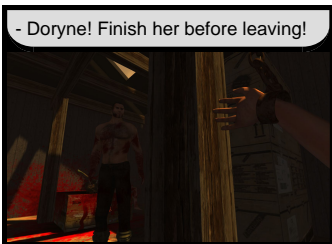


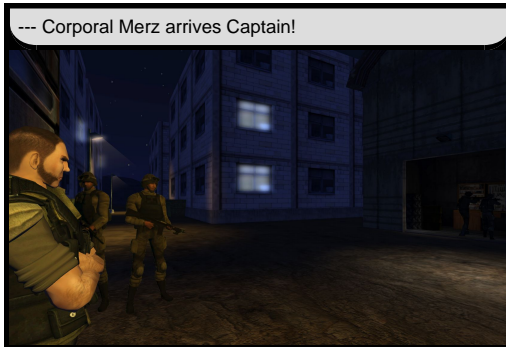
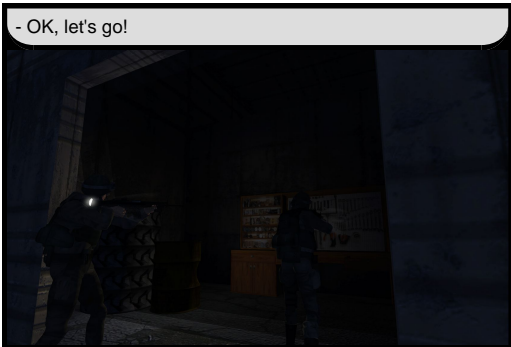
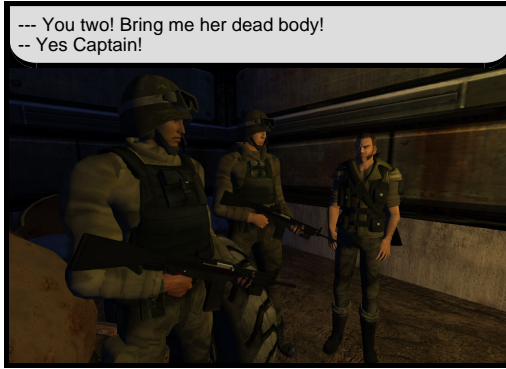
( Slonk! )

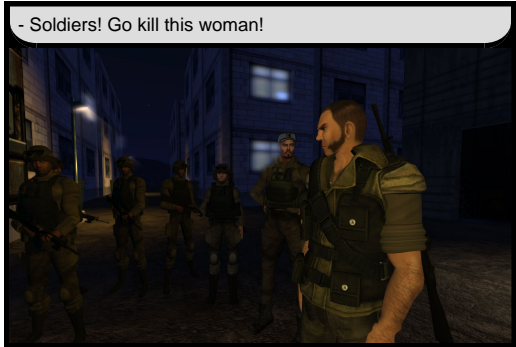
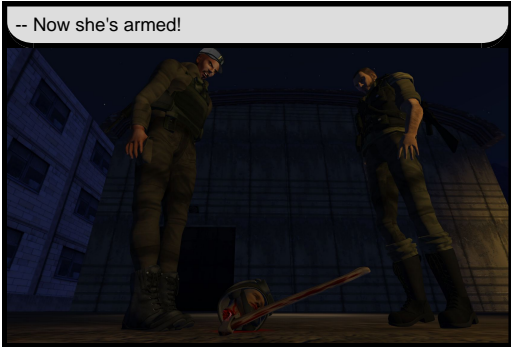


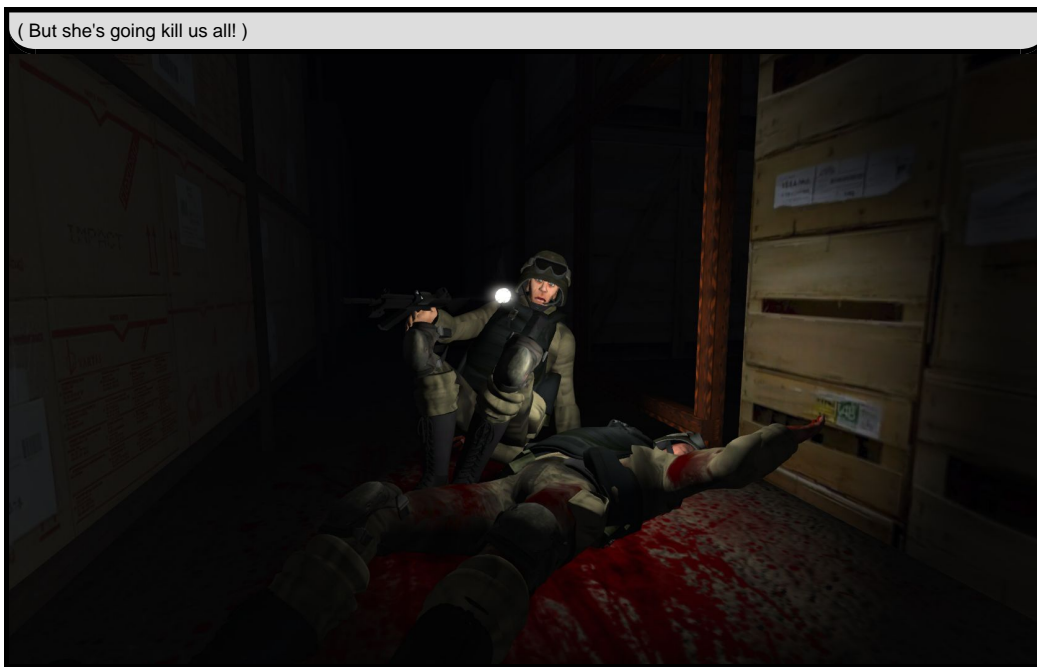
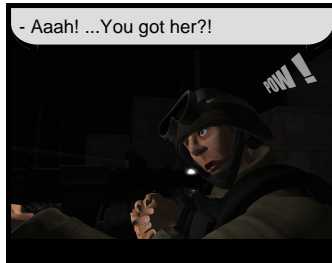
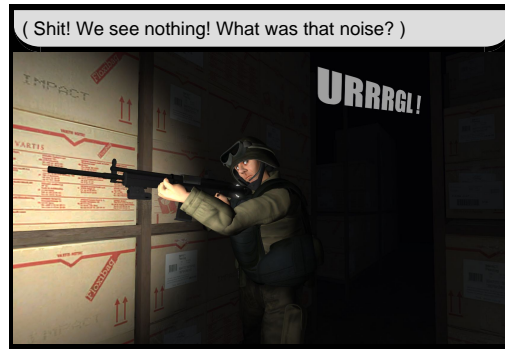


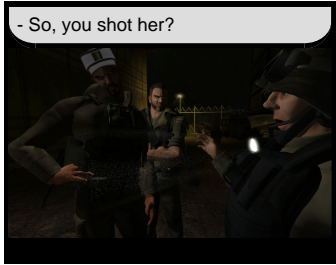
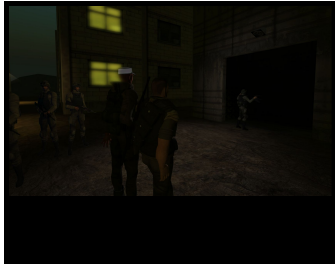
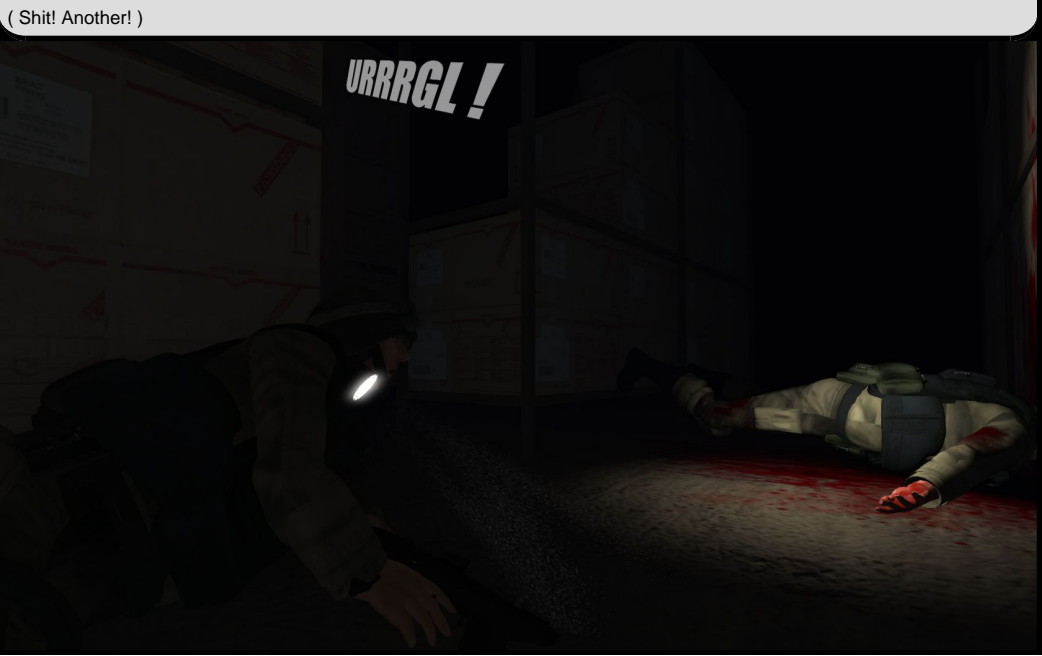


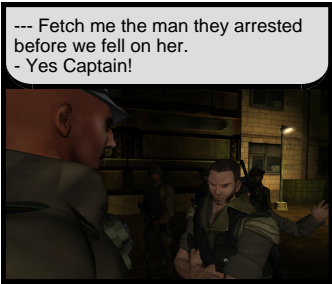
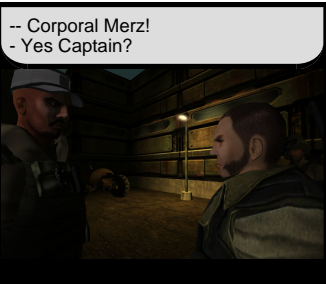
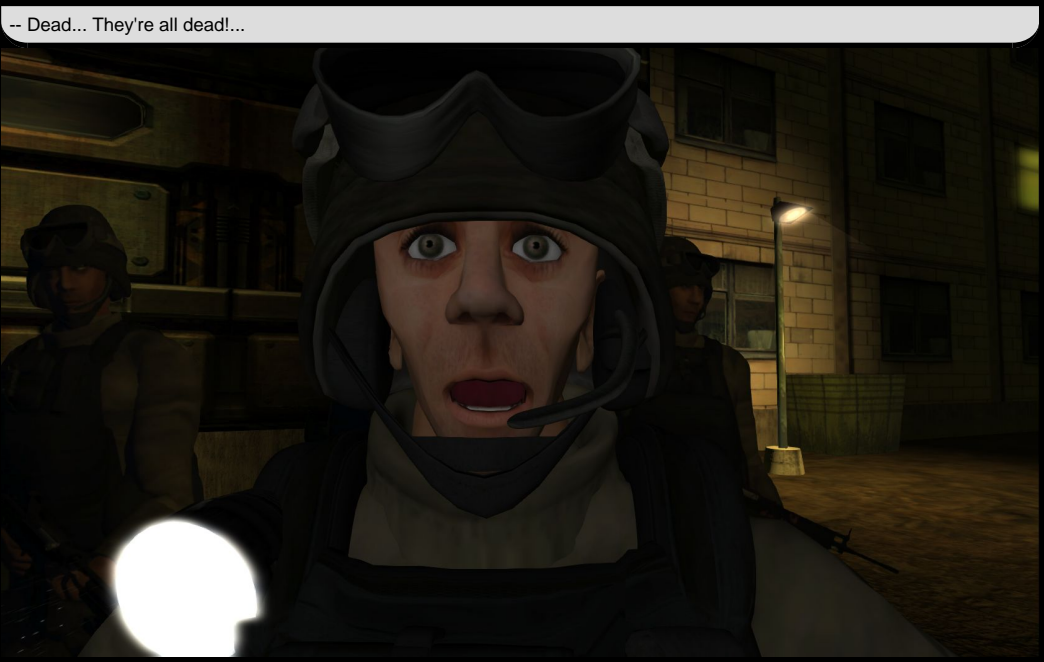












A few minutes later...



--- Here is the guy who was arrested near the block where the woman was discovered.



- So, do you think that she will show herself if I slit your throat?



-- Once done, I hope not!



--- I'll have to slit slowly in that case.

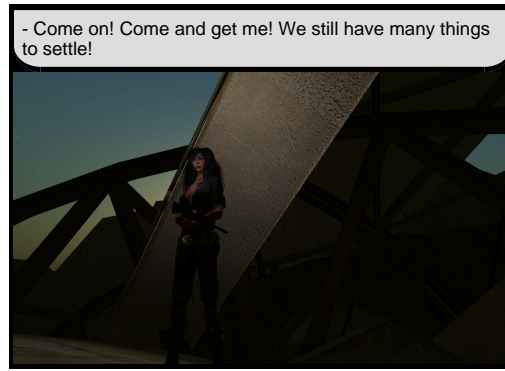


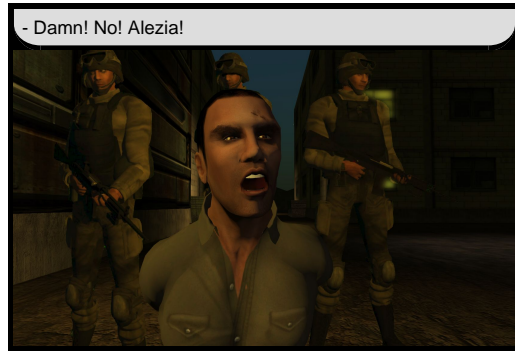
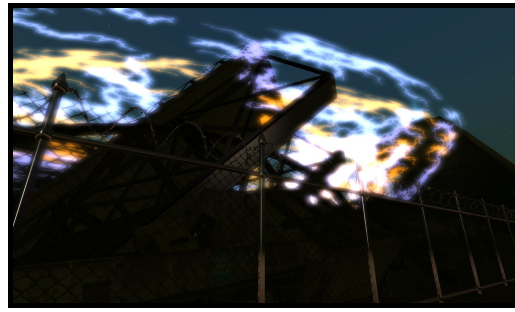
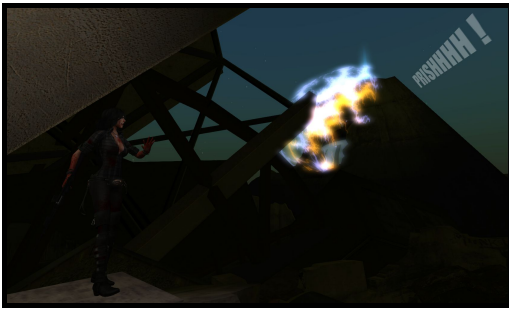
- So bitch! Show yourself! Otherwise I'm going to cut the throat of your little friend very slowly!

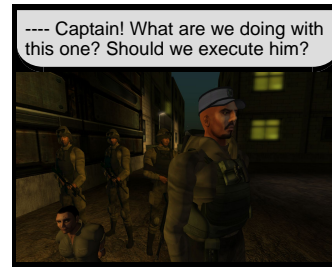
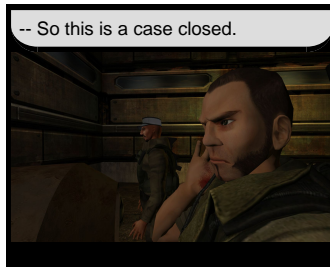


- This is no use Slonk! I'm going to destroy this machine anyway!









- Evacuate our men from sector 300. We won't risk keeping them exposed. I want the scientists on the ground immediately. If you find something, I'll be in the infirmary.  
-- Yes Captain!



3 hours later...



( Why the hell did she return to the Shade? She knew that it was risky! )



( Now she's gone... and I'm very alone to deal with those butchers. They are going to execute me, or even worse, torture me before. This is really the worst scenario. )

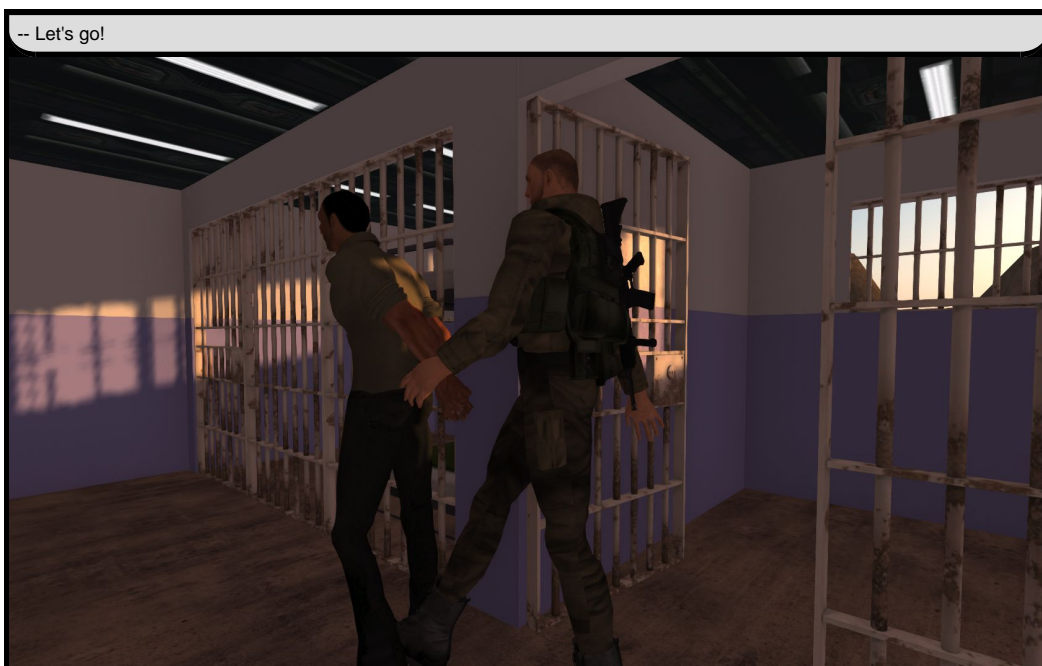
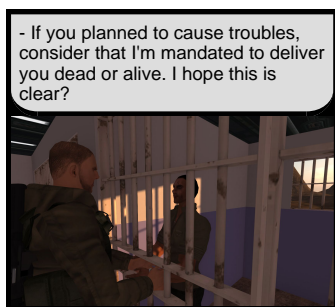
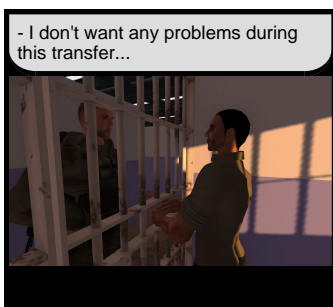
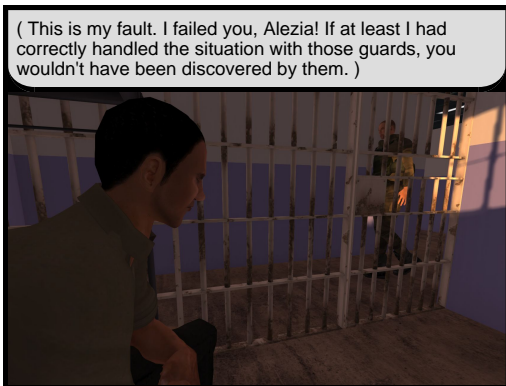


( Remember Roland! Breathe... breathe... )



( Damn! Alezia! I miss you so much... violent woman... I must be a bit masochistic to miss that much your so explosive attitude! )







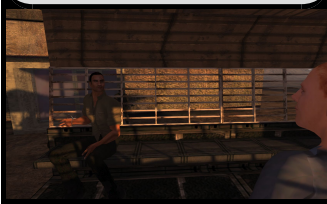
-- Do you know where they are taking us?  
- Yes, to a place called Garkitak. You are not from this region, are you?



- God no! I'm from New York. And what about you?



- Really! You are from New York! So all this must be very confusing for you right now?

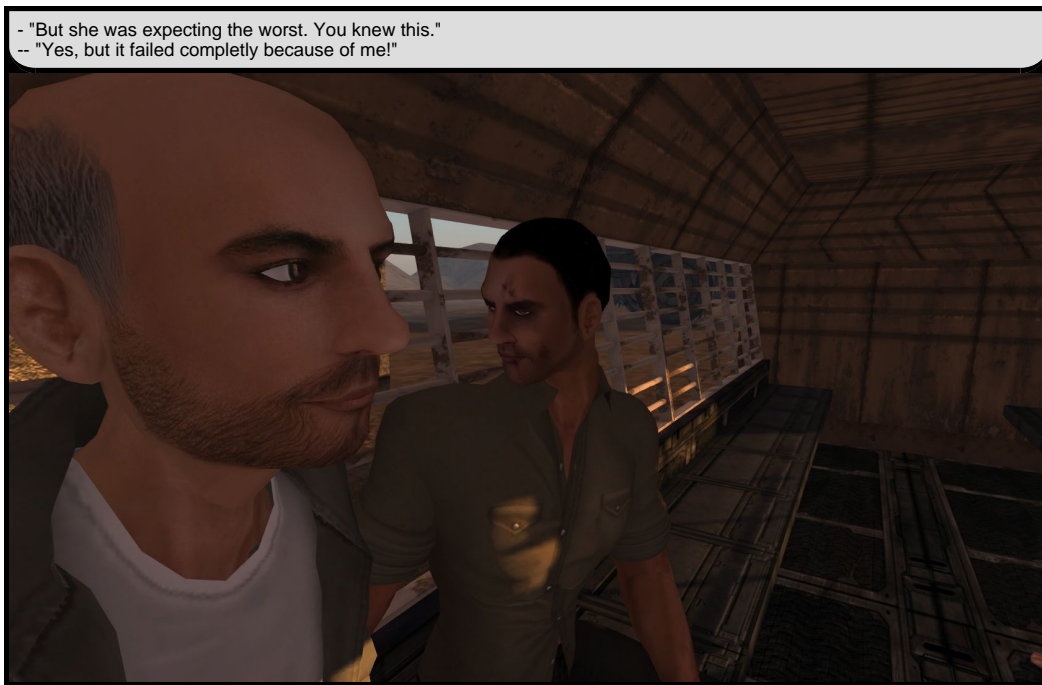
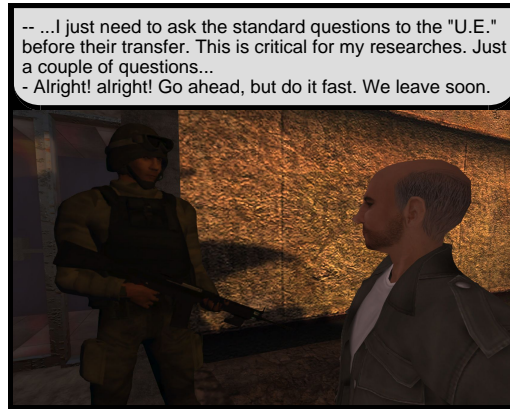
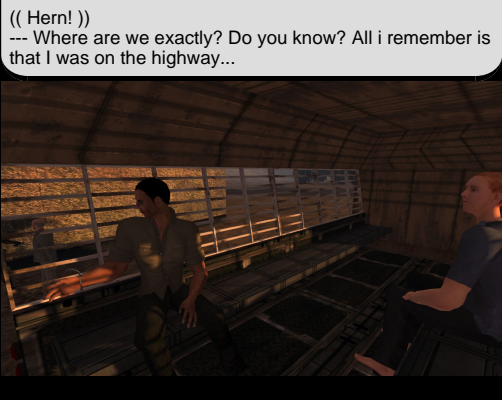


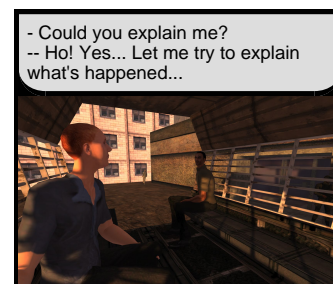
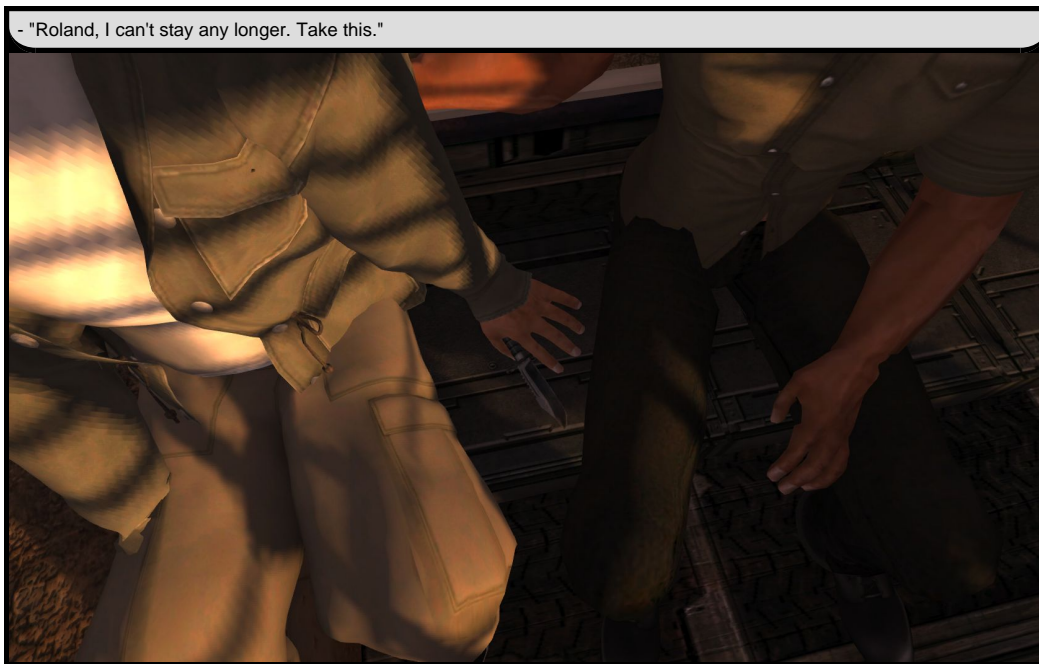
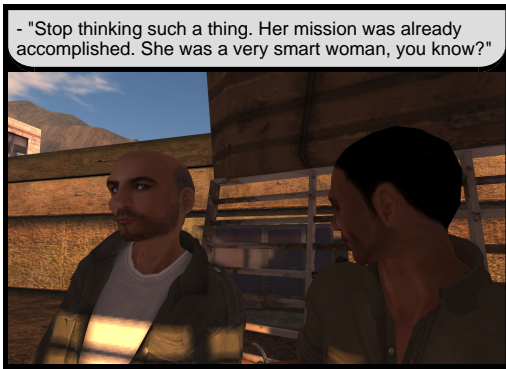
- Confusing you say? If you can tell me what the hell is happening here, please tell me it!

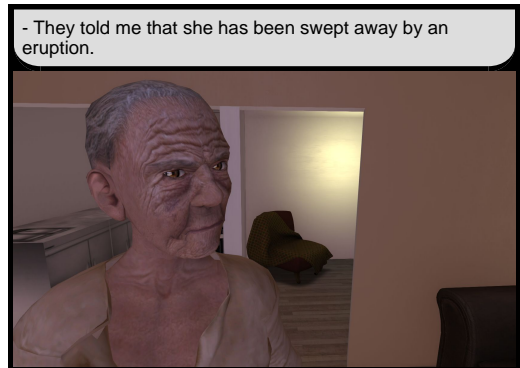
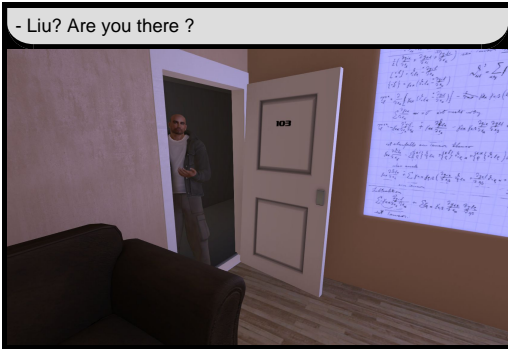


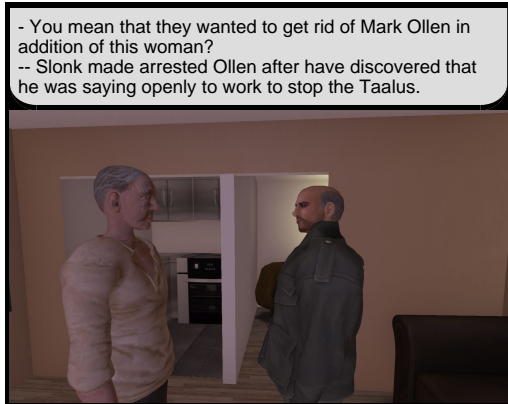
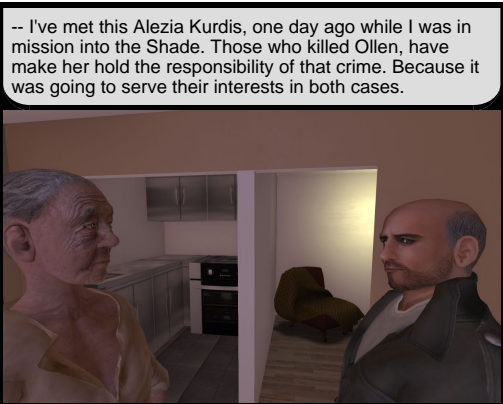
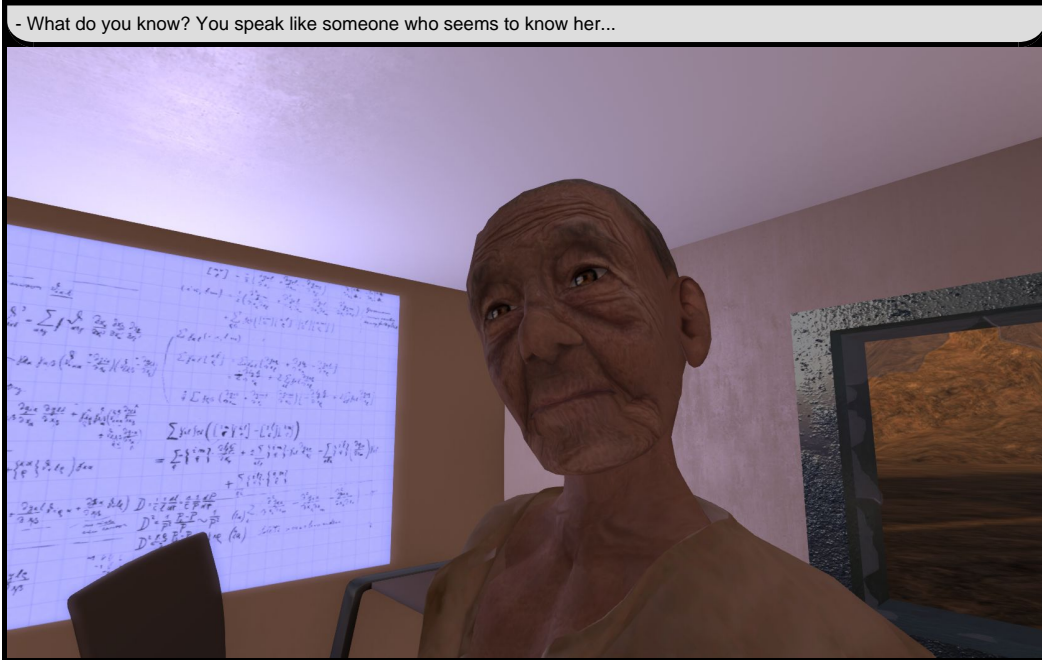
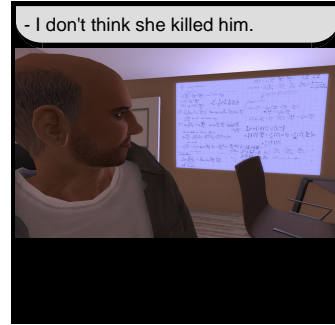
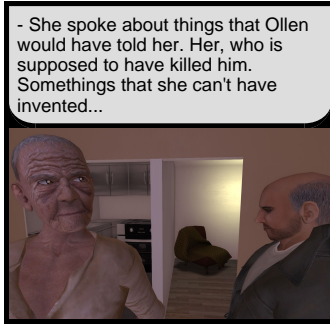
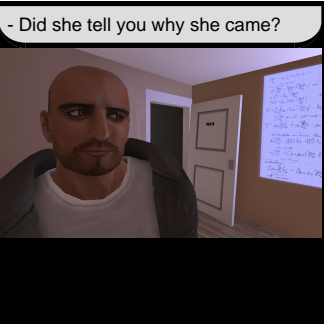
-- You won't believe me...

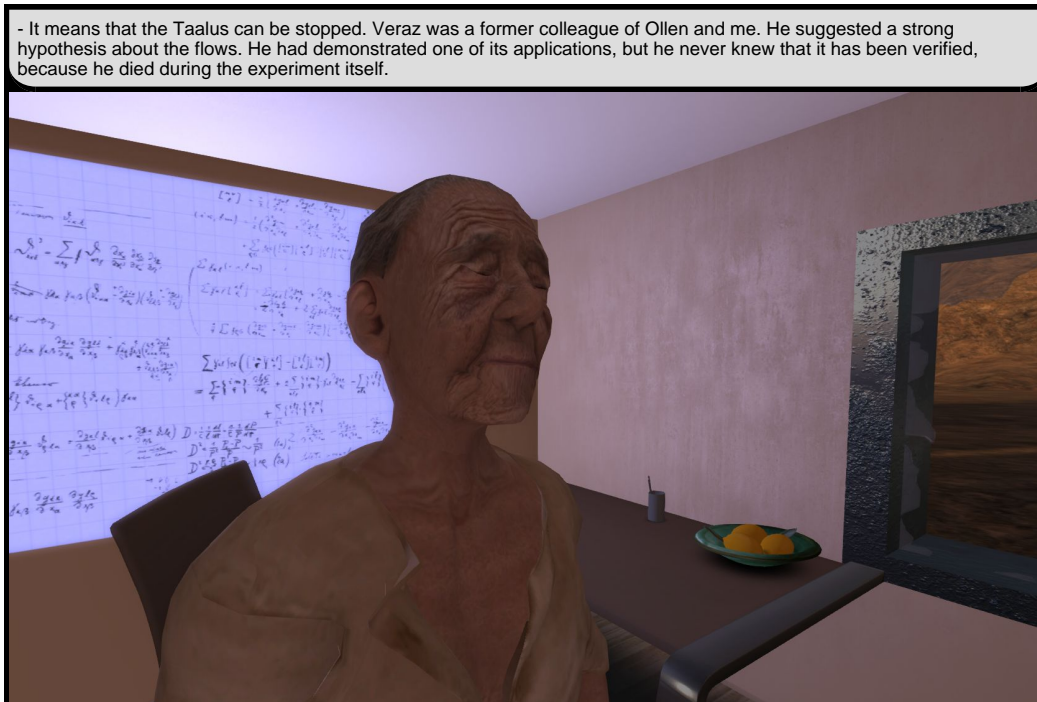
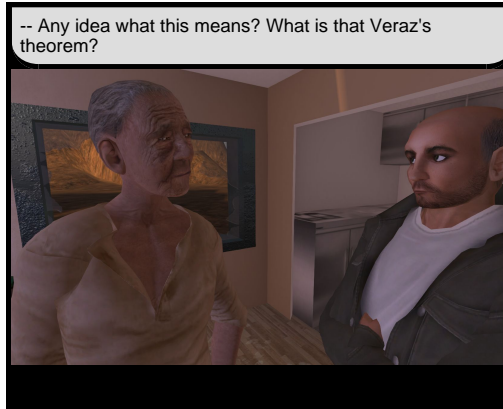
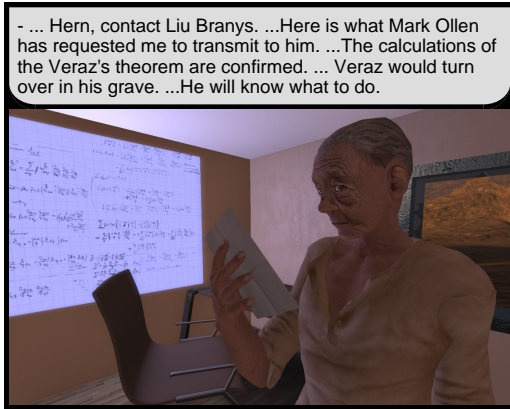
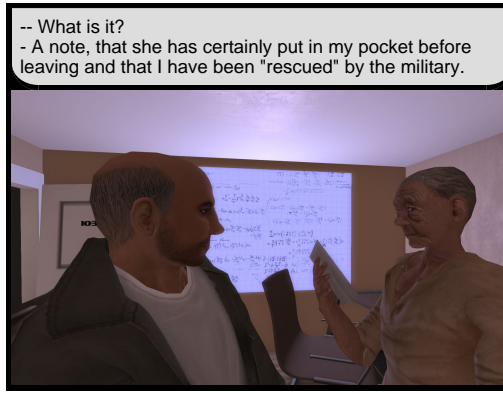
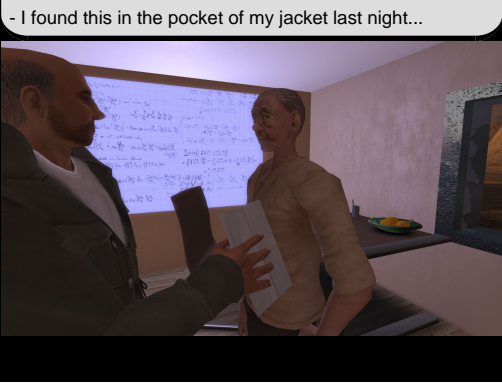








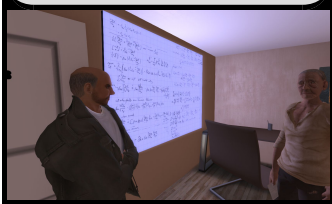




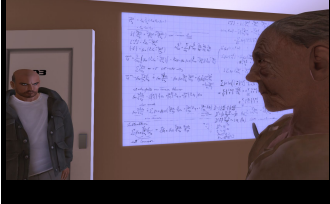
- And could it be applied to the Taalus?  
-- Theoretically, yes. Ollen was working to prove it mathematically. It was out of question to take any risk before this confirmation.



- She came to stop the Taalus, did you know? Someone will have to do it.



-- I know. We will have to see what it will cost to do so.



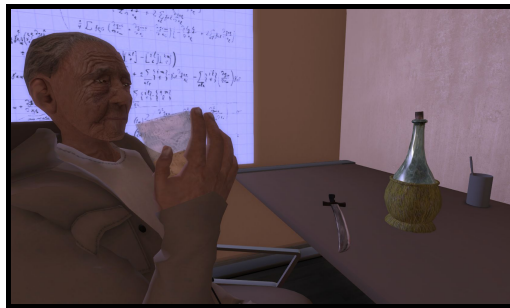
-- You look tired Hern. Maybe you should take some days off outside of Bashora.

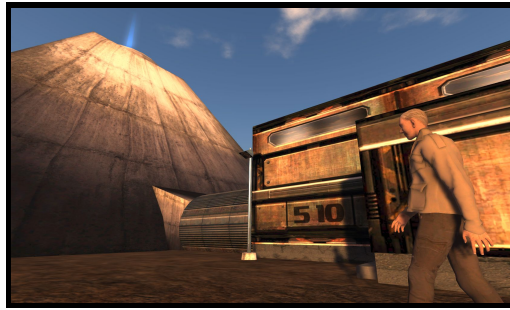


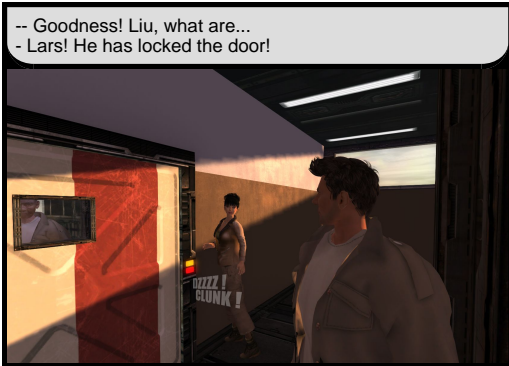
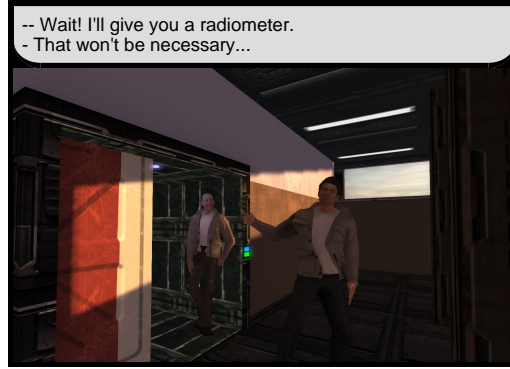
- You are right. I made a request to see my family at Kentor. I leave with the convoy for Gartkitak in two hours.



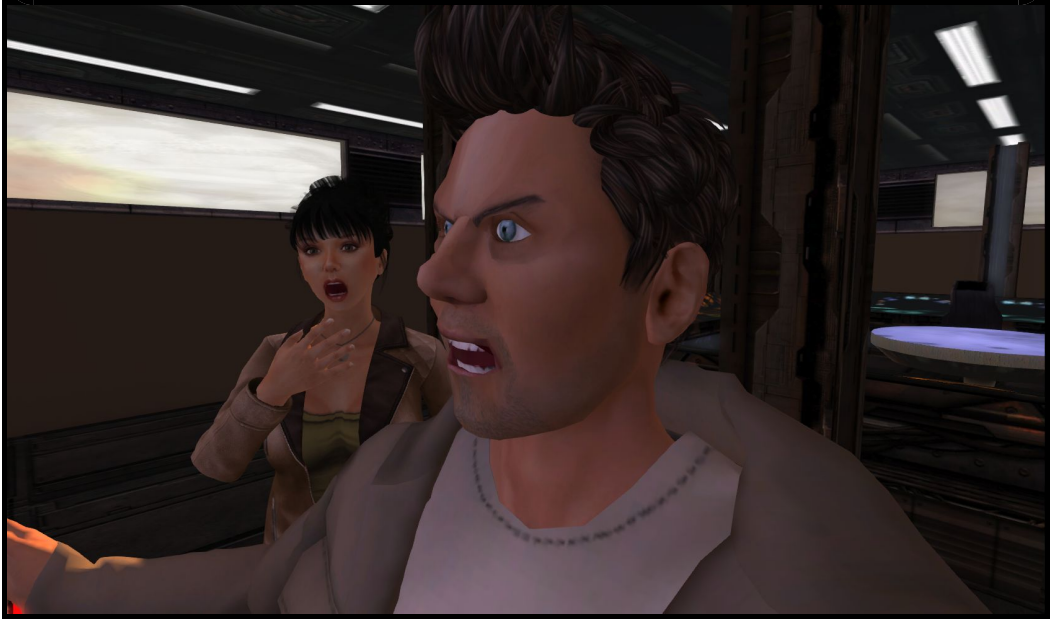
Later...







-- Branys! You don't consider such an option!  
- Oh my God!



- Lars! I have nothing to lose anymore. The cancer would have caught me in the coming months.  
-- But you will risk killing us all!

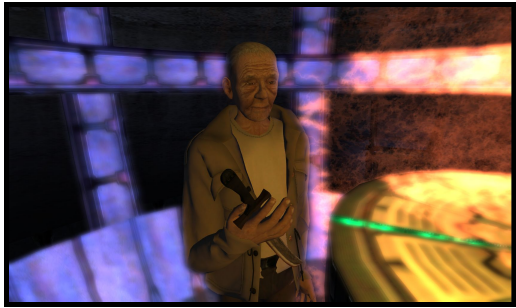
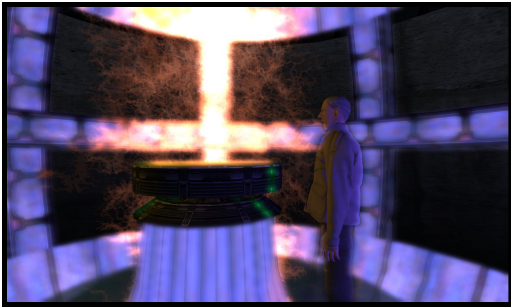
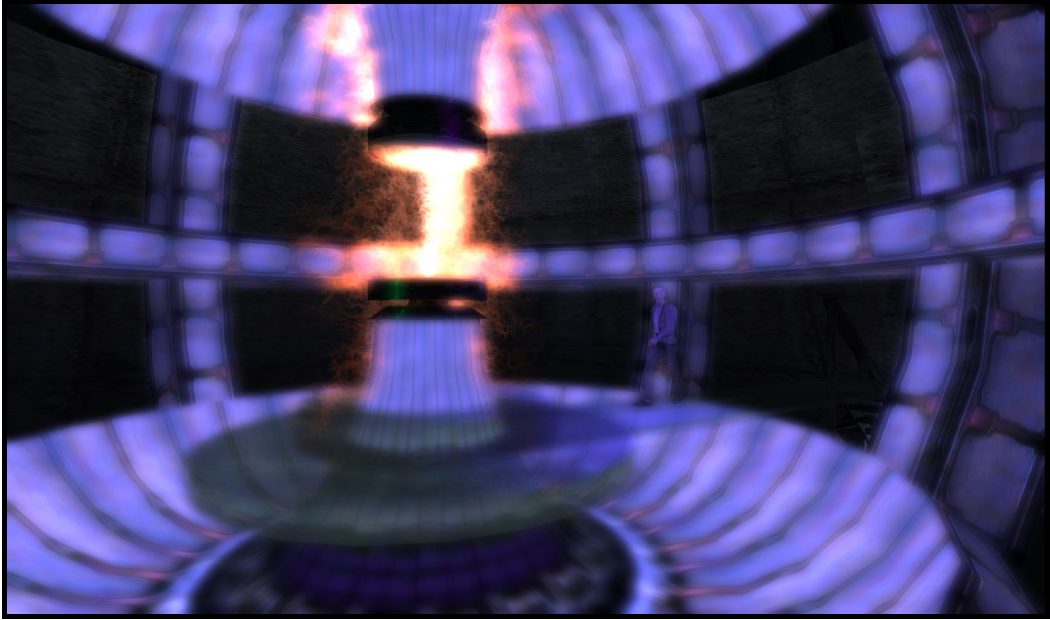
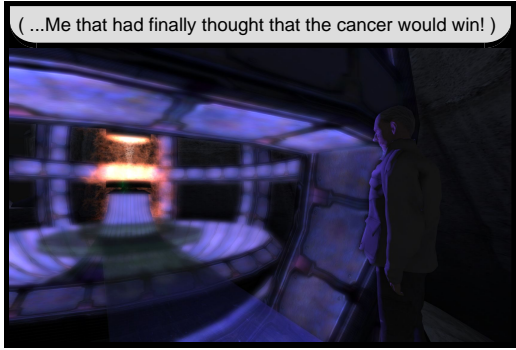
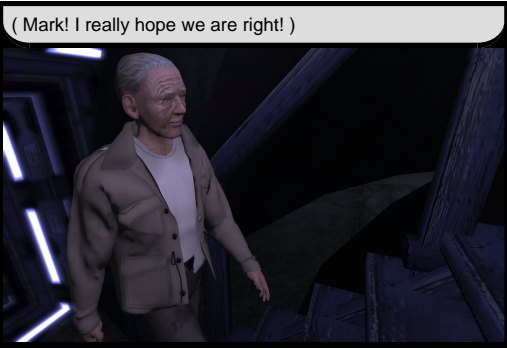


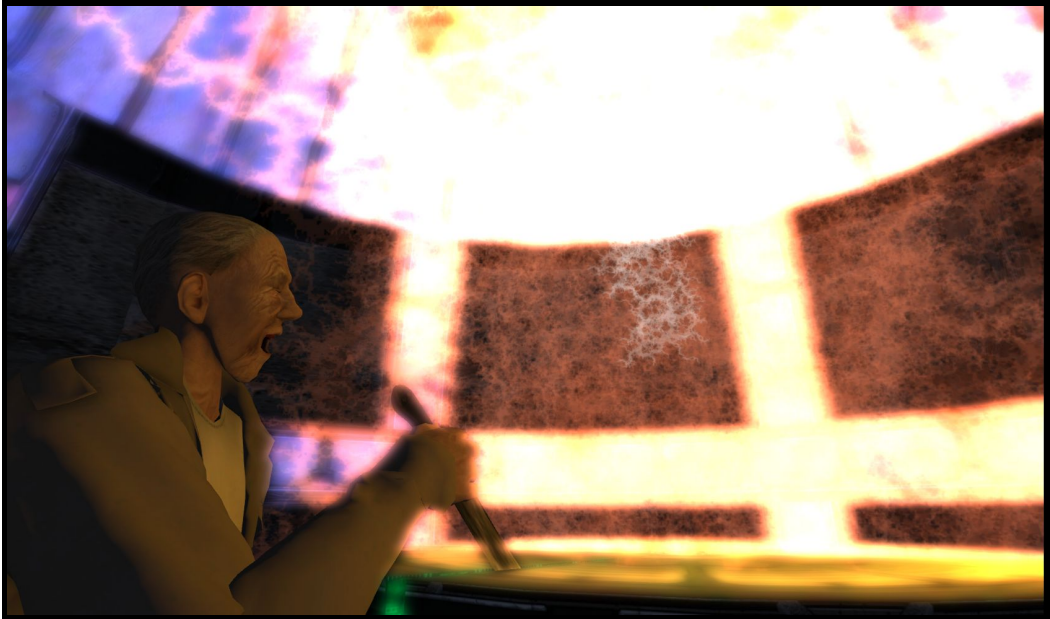
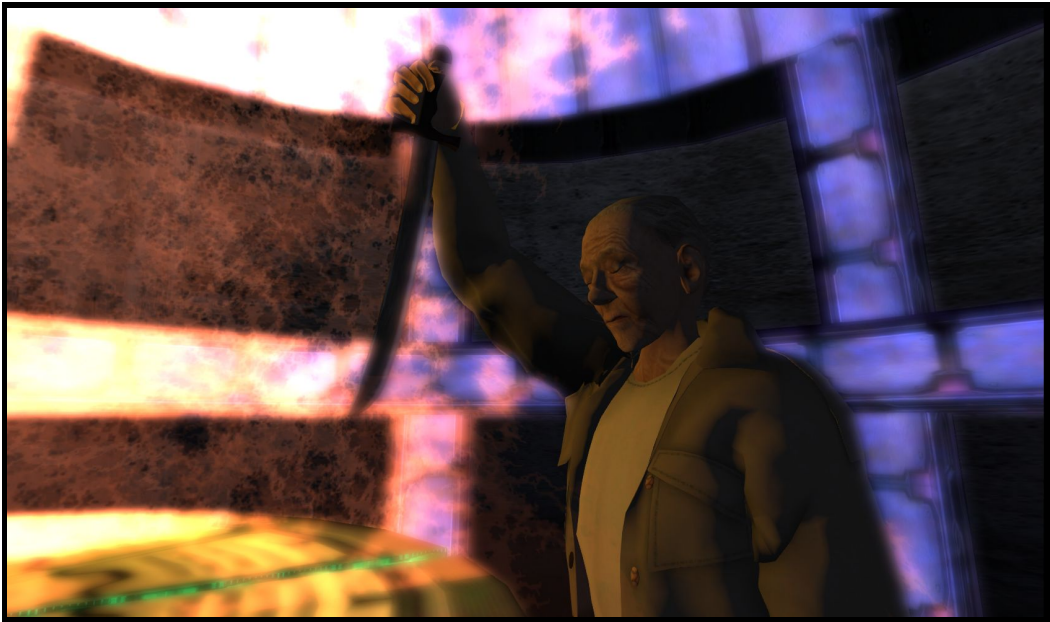
- Lars! Someone must do it! You know that! Mark Ollen has confirmed the Veraz's calculations... Don't stay here!

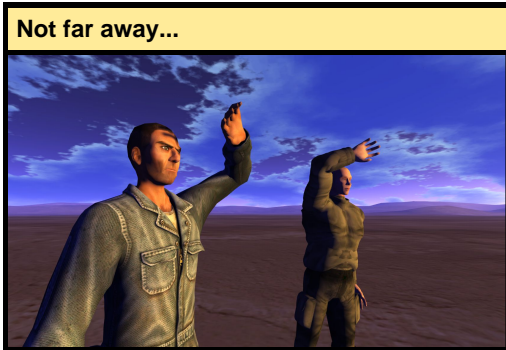
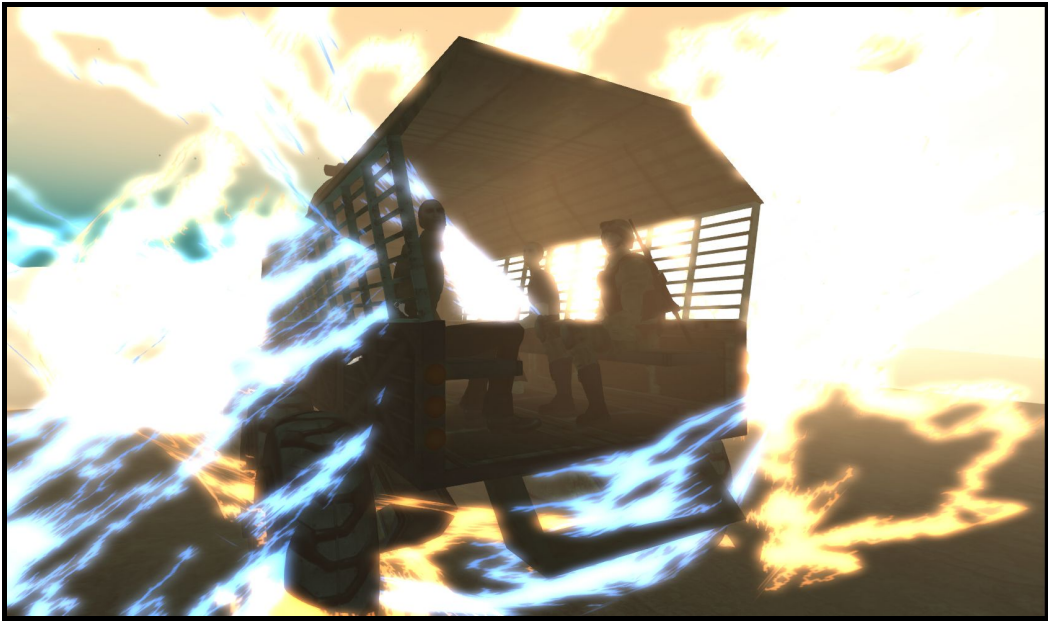
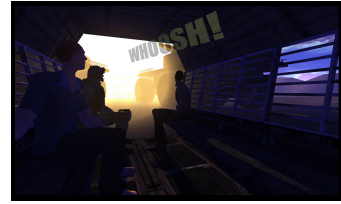


-- Quick! Let's get out of here! We must warn Slonk and leave immediately!







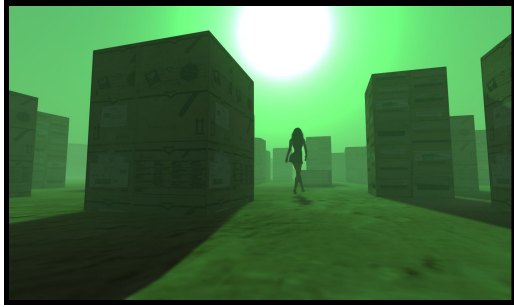
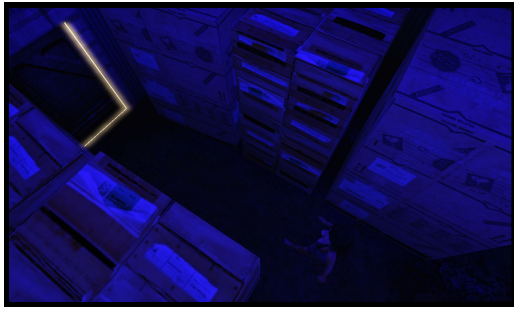


Still not far away ...

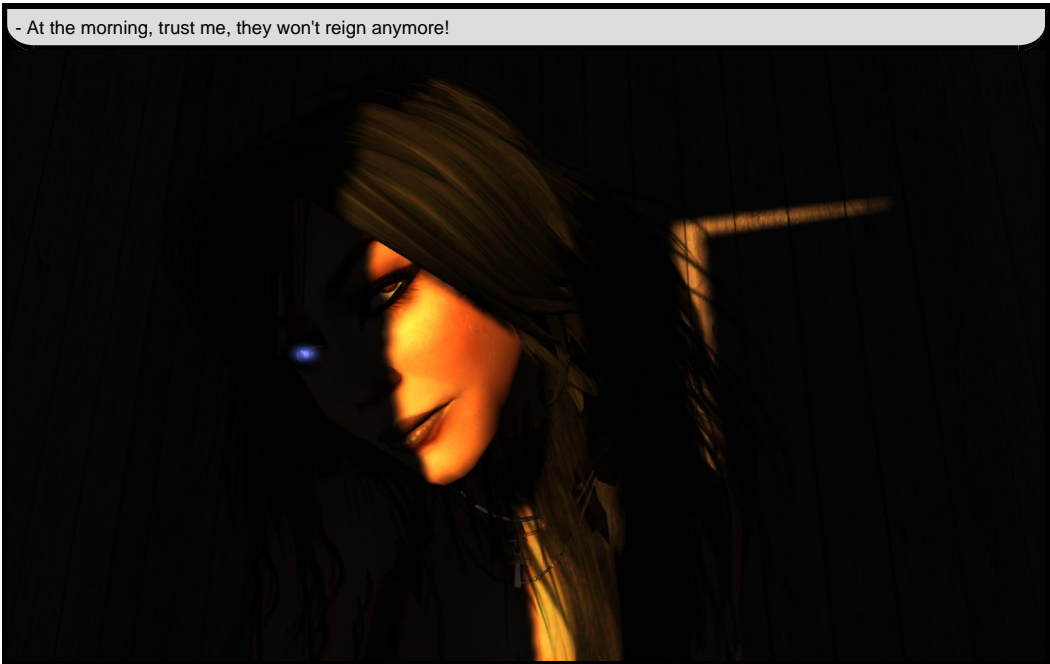
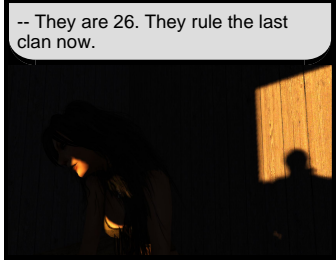
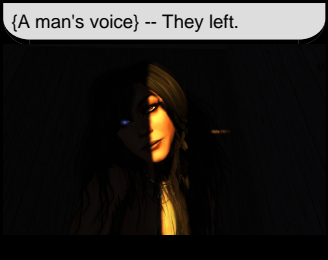


A bit more far...









**The End.**



# ALEZIA: The Shade of Bashora

Alezia continues her path to Bashora where she discovers the first impacts of the experimentation that takes place there.

by Zeja Pyle



Contact

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