

Isn't She Lovely (2020)

Crazy Maple Studio, *Chapters: Interactive Stories*

Scene: Chapter 1, Scene 3 Excerpt



Isn't She Lovely is one of the projects I worked on for Crazy Maple Studio's mobile game *Chapters: Interactive Stories*. For this project, I adapted Lauren Layne's novel of the same name into CMS's visual novel format. The entire project took ten weeks: two weeks to compose an outline for the 20-chapter VN and then delivering scripts for five chapters every two weeks. A single chapter would feature 300-450 lines of text, totaling roughly 3,000 words per chapter. My goal for this project was to emulate the tone and language featured in Lauren Layne's prose to ensure the writing matched the feel from the novel even when the players select actions that diverted from what the protagonist did in the book. Through hard work and the guidance of my editor, I feel that we achieved that goal.

Note: The scene below occurs early in the first chapter, immediately after the Player Character (Stephanie) quite literally runs into their obnoxious but soon-to-be Love Interest (Ethan) on the way to class.

Text Type	Speaker	Narration/Dialogue Text	Emotion
		The following is an excerpt from the first chapter of <i>Isn't She Lovely</i> , released in July 2020 for Crazy Maple Studio's mobile app <i>Chapters: Interactive Stories</i> .	
Normal Text	Narration	Just as you feared, your Film Narrative class has already started.	
Normal Text	Narration	You quickly locate one of the last remaining seats and scoot over to it without causing a fuss.	
Normal Text	Holbrook	From Aristotle and Syd Field, understanding three act structure is key to screenwriting in Hollywood.	neutral
Thought Bubble	Stephanie	<i>And there he is, Professor Martin Holbrook, Oscar-winning screenwriter, in the flesh.</i>	smile
Thought Bubble	Stephanie	<i>I've been on a waitlist to get into his class for over a year. It's not often you get to learn from a real pro like him.</i>	neutral
Thought Bubble	Stephanie	<i>Sure, it's only a summer section, but I'd rather take a shortened version of his class than fly back home for the summer.</i>	neutral
Thought Bubble	Stephanie	<i>Two months in North Carolina around my stepmom? Hard pass.</i>	angry
Normal Text	Holbrook	However, every story must have its own unique shape. Keep that in mind while working on your project.	neutral
Normal Text	Holbrook	And you're going to need a good grasp of story structure if you hope to have your writing project done before the end of summer.	neutral
Thought Bubble	Stephanie	<i>Wait— what project?</i>	shocked
Thought Bubble	Stephanie	<i>Crap. First day of class and I'm already behind.</i>	shy
Thought Bubble	Stephanie	<i>I'll...</i>	normal
Choice 1	Choice	Play it cool and hope he goes over the assignment again.	
Choice 1	Holbrook	Is everything clear?	neutral
Choice 1	Narration	Professor Holbrook scans the room. Not a single hand goes up. Holbrook chuckles.	
Choice 1	Holbrook	I can tell by the look on some of your faces that maybe it's not so clear. Let me go back a bit.	smile
Choice 1	Stephanie	<i>Why do I get the feeling he was talking about me?</i>	shy
Choice 2	Choice	Raise my hand and ask him to repeat the assignment.	
Choice 2	Narration	You nervously raise your hand, catching Holbrook's attention.	
Choice 2	Holbrook	Yes, what is it?	neutral
Choice 2	Stephanie	Sorry, but could you go over the project again?	shy
Choice 2	Holbrook	Of course.	smile
Choice 3	Choice	Peek at another student's notes.	
Choice 3	Narration	You crane your neck discreetly, but the person next to you has only scribbled incoherently on a tablet.	
Choice 3	Holbrook	I get the sense that some of you are distracted.	smile
Choice 3	Holbrook	Ms. Kendrick, I believe it is? Perhaps you could repeat the assignment for everyone.	neutral
Choice 3	Stephanie	<i>Oh... well, uh...</i>	shy
Normal Text	Holbrook	The aim of this project is to compose a modern take on a well-known storyline from any genre; rom-com, slasher, whatever you like.	neutral
Thought Bubble	Stephanie	<i>So we're writing a screenplay based on familiar plotlines? Seems simple enough.</i>	neutral
Normal Text	Narration	You hear the class door opening and turn around to see the well-built preppy guy you bumped into earlier.	
Normal Text	Holbrook	Ah, Ethan! Glad you could finally make it. Please, find a seat.	neutral
Thought Bubble	Stephanie	<i>Wait, Holbrook knows this meathead?</i>	shocked
Normal Text	Narration	The guy approaches the last available chair -- right behind you.	
Normal Text	Narration	Before he sits down he tosses a granola bar onto your desk.	
Normal Text	Ethan	I think you dropped this.	smile
Normal Text	Narration	You suddenly feel the entire classroom's eyes on you.	
Thought Bubble	Stephanie	<i>I should...</i>	angry
Choice 1	Choice	Ask why he's in this class.	
Choice 1	Stephanie	Shouldn't you be in an econ class or something?	neutral

Choice 1	Ethan	Oh, I've already finished all my econ credits. But I was short a few electives. So, here I am.	smile
Choice 1	Stephanie	Joy.	angry
Choice 2	Choice	Ignore him.	
Choice 2	Ethan	The old silent treatment, huh?	smile
Choice 2	Ethan	All right. I know when I'm unwanted.	laughing
Choice 2	Stephanie	<i>You got that right.</i>	angry
Choice 3	Choice	Roll my eyes and put the granola bar away.	
Choice 3	Narration	You roll your eyes in gloriously exaggerated fashion as you pick up the granola and drop it in your bag.	
Choice 3	Ethan	Pleasant as ever.	laughing
Normal Text	Holbrook	For this assignment, I've paired you off into writing teams.	neutral
Normal Text	Holbrook	Collaboration is essential to writing for film. How well you and your partner work together will affect your final grade.	neutral
Thought Bubble	Stephanie	<i>A group project? Why can't I work alone?</i>	shocked
Thought Bubble	Stephanie	<i>Maybe I can pair up with my pal Candice. Where is she sitting anyway? Ah! There she is.</i>	neutral
Normal Text	Narration	You spot Candice on the other side of class. She's looking back at you with her fingers crossed.	
Thought Bubble	Stephanie	<i>Glad Candice feels the same way I do.</i>	laughing
Normal Text	Holbrook	Candice Miller. Could you raise your hand please? You're with...	neutral
Thought Bubble	Stephanie	<i>Say [playername] Kendrick. Say [playername] Kendrick!</i>	sad
Normal Text	Holbrook	Bethany Cook.	neutral
Thought Bubble	Stephanie	<i>Crap.</i>	sad
Normal Text	Holbrook	And [playername] Kendrick...	neutral
Normal Text	Holbrook	You'll be paired with Ethan Price, the young man sitting behind you.	smile
Normal Text	Ethan	Hear that, Morticia? We're gonna be partners.	smile
Normal Text	Stephanie	I think...	sad
Choice 1	Choice	"You misheard my name."	
Choice 1	Ethan	Come on, you got the whole "mistress of the night" thing going on.	neutral
Choice 1	Stephanie	That's Elvira. Morticia is... Nevermind, explaining it to you would be pointless.	angry
Choice 2	Choice	"This day couldn't possibly get any worse."	
Choice 2	Ethan	Oh, lighten up, little miss dark and dreary.	laughing
Choice 2	Stephanie	Are you actively trying to make me despise you? Because, congrats, you're nailing it.	angry
Choice 3	Choice	"I can hardly contain my joy."	
Choice 3	Ethan	I know you meant that to be sarcastic, but I think a part of you is happy to see me again.	smile
Choice 3	Stephanie	That statement couldn't be further from the truth.	angry
Choice 3	Stephanie	<i>Even though he is pretty easy on the eyes.</i>	shy
Normal Text	Holbrook	And that's a wrap for today's lecture. I suggest you all convene with their partners to get these projects rolling.	smile
Normal Text	Ethan	What do you say, partner, shall we "convene"?	smile
Normal Text	Stephanie	Yeah, whatever.	neutral
Normal Text	Narration	You grab your belongings and make your way to the exit. Ethan follows.	