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Dialogue Sample

“May I Please Have a Glass of Gin?”  
PC v. NPC Dialogue Encounter:

[Opens to a modern bar cast in blue lighting with neon accents. PC pushes open the door and stumbles inside. She is worse for wear, looks like she’s been in a fight and it took everything she had to make it to this bar. The patrons glance up from their drinks, some staring for quite a while. Rigidly, she walks to the bar, trying to hide a limp.]

[She sits at the far side of the counter, with her back to the wall. A hooded Stranger occupies the spot two seats down. The Stranger has an ink blue cowl pulled up over his head. Silver-gray hair peaks from his collar. He looks over to her, face cast in shadow.]

**NPC:** You look like you’ve had a rough night.

[She turns to face him, and the glow from the counter shows the full damage to her face. The black eye is significant, but the crusted blood around her likely-broken nose garnered the most stares.]

**PC** [coughing]: I’ve certainly had better.  
[She orders a drink and the bartender pours]

**NPC:** Going to take a lot more than gin to fix that broken ankle.

**PC** [averting]: You seem to have a few problems yourself.

[She gestures to his mangled fingers and the bulbous purple veins appearing to weakly glow in the light winding up his wrist and forearm.]

**NPC:** Now you see that’s a shame. I thought you’d know what this is.

[He drums his fingers on the counter and tilts his head. The overhead light shows deep purple blood leaking from the creases in his lips. He grins and reveals purple-stained teeth.]

**PC:** [Hushed whisper barely keeping a hold of herself] So...you found one. How did you...how did you find it?

**NPC:** Ah so you do know what it is!

**PC** [firmer]: How did you find it?

**NPC:** What if I told you that finding one of these—[Shows where the purple crystal shards embedded themselves into the palm of his hand. The crystals look like they drove into his skin like a splinter. Forcing themselves deeper into his veins, glowing faintly in the neon light. The crystals themselves seem to shimmer and shift. She imagined they moved with the beating of his poisoned heart.] --is not what you think it will be. What if I told you...you don't want this. That it comes with...a price.

[She looks around and sees that everything in the bar has stopped moving. It's as if time stopped. She looks back to the NPC. He has mastered the power of the crystal already.]

**PC:** You can bend time?

**NPC:** It's a fickle thing: time. You can hold an instant in your grasp, then the next thing you know, the years slip between your fingers like sand in an hour glass...And yet, I cannot go back and change the past. I can only manipulate the present. Slow it down. Mold it like soft clay. I wonder, would you go back and change the past if you could right the mistakes you've made?

**PC:** I don't know what you're—

**NPC:** Don't play that game with me, girl. I recognized you the moment you walked in here. But it doesn't matter what you would have answered because you'll never get that chance. This, you see— [he lifts up his hand] --this is different for every one of us.

**PC:** What do you mean?

**NPC:** The price you have to pay when you accept the power of the crystal.

**PC [rush]:** I don't have time for your riddles. Whatever the price, it will be paid. Now, how did you find it? [She hesitates] If you know who I am, you know why I must find one.

**NPC:** Ah! Your sister. *She* is the reason. Well...now that makes perfect sense.

**PC:** [a different approach] Who are you? How do you know who I am?

**NPC:** I knew you wouldn't recognize me, but I remember you. Oh yes. I smuggled you and your sister out of the West the day the city fell. The day your father died. I promised I'd deliver you safely to your aunt.

[Realization dawns on her. The Stranger takes off his cowl to reveal a gaunt, pale face.]

**PC:** Sievers? We got separated at the Green River, I thought they'd killed you. But...you're alive?

**NPC:** Like I said. There is a price you must pay.

[Time unfreezes, and his fingers turn a sickening shade of dark purple, almost black. A bit of purple blood drips from his nose.]

**NPC [times run out]** : You were followed here. They are coming for you.

**PC [panicked]**: Wait, I have to know. How can I find one?

**NPC**: There's no time girl. You hear me? You don't want this. Get out of here, NOW!

**PC [grabbing him]**: How!?

**NPC**: It's not that easy...they're not all in one place. You have to listen for them. You can't just search. They'll call for you.

**PC**: That can't be it! How did you find yours the last time?

**NPC**: I—I don't know. I fell into the water and got washed far down river. Next thing I knew I was awake and face down in a beach covered in marble white pebbles. Folk round there called it one of them vortexes. But from what I reckon, finding them is...different for each person.

**PC**: An energy vortex? I thought those were just a myth!

**NPC**: Go to the southern fork of the Ribbon River. Two miles east of the crossing is an old friend's lodge. Ask for Arin. She can help you. Now, GO!

**PC**: Thank you. I wouldn't have...she's...they're going to kill her if I can't stop them.

**[He nods knowingly, saldy]**

**PC**: What are you--

**NPC**: I'll be fine. Go! Quickly now, out the back.

**END**

**Potential Story Reactivity from this sequence:**

- The PC can learn from this dialogue sequence that there is no other cure to the illness that plagues her sister aside from the power of the crystals.
- If the PC does not go out the back within the allotted time, or decides to use the front door, they will engage in combat.
  - If this occurs, and the threat is not neutralized quickly, drones will be called to the scene.
- If the PC discovers who The Stranger *really* is, they will meet again. The NPC will find her again on her journey when she needs guidance.
- If the PC reveals she is doing this for her sister, she will learn later that NPC loved her sister, and that was his main motivation for helping her.