

The Casting of Frank Stone: In-Game Objects & Collectable Text

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These are a few extracted samples to showcase some of my work supporting the writing of The Casting of Frank Stone, a AAA branching narrative horror game released by Supermassive Games (with the support of Behaviour Interactive) in September 2024.

The game was created as a standalone adventure set within the 'Omniverse' of the Dead by Daylight horror game. Spanning three timelines (1963, 1980, 2024), it follows a complex plot centred around the legacy of an infamous serial killer, Frank Stone, who is resurrected by an enigmatic collector in service to her malevolent god: The Entity.

As part of the design team, I was given responsibility for writing in-game object text descriptions and collectable summaries that appear in the UI menu.

Collectables were split into three categories:

-- 'Artifacts ': In-game written texts or objects, like journals and newspapers, that expand the lore and context of the game's story. Each also have a short summary in the UI menu.

-- 'Relliks': Discoverable children's dolls, each mimicking a specific killer from in the Dead by Daylight Omniverse, that have a snappy tagline and short summary in the UI menu.

-- 'Trinkets': Small chess piece objects that give a subtle nod to the DBD Omniverse, with an accompanying line quoted from Frank Stone appearing in-game. These did not have UI menu summaries.

For brevity this sample will include a couple examples from the Artifacts category, and some Relliks summaries (Trinkets are very limited in scope).

Rather than detail the game's plot in full, I will offer brief context to each written text to help you understand when and where it can be discovered.

Also, the game uses American English spelling.

"Frank's Journal"

Text Type: Artifact

Found: (Chapter 9) On a table inside Frank Stone's secret lair.

Context: In the 1980 timeline, whilst fleeing from the spectral form of Frank Stone, the player can explore a maze of concrete tunnels that form the mill's underbelly. Here they can discover the secret nest Frank Stone used to keep his victims trapped for weeks on end before ritually killing them. The journal is dated about halfway through Stone's bloody crusade against the town of Cedar Hills (where the 1980s timeline is set), and forms two entries, each a double page spread.

UI Menu Summary: The inner thoughts of the bogeyman himself: Frank Stone's Journal. Even in the midst of his bloody crusade, Stone had doubts... but a mystery voice renewed his faith, was this just another delusion?

November 12th, 1962

I have not heard from her. I did as instructed, but for weeks I have been left alone. Have I failed? Did I not perform my purpose as I was told? Five names I have taken, but I feel no closer to the path, now she has stopped giving me more. Am I finished? Is there no more evil left to conquer? How am I to know if I am ready? I do not feel it.

Every night I dream of the forest, of the darkness all around me. I am afraid, too scared to move forward or cry out, because of what stands beyond the fog. Sometimes I can see their shapeless forms writhing in the flames like snakes, the hiss of their screams burns my ears. If they are evil, why do they scream? Should they feel such fear, when their deaths are righteous? Do they mock me, to make me doubt?

I think of Dorothy, how she slept. She did not seem so evil to me. Her face was cold. It reminded me of Ma. How can I know the difference? Ma was not evil, what made Dorothy different? I think of that pig George with his whore Joyce, how they wallowed in each others sin with such pleasure and felt no uncertainty with them...

I am conflicted, and it frustrates me. How am I to know evil alone? How can I be sure all of Cedar Hills has not been lost to sin? Should I not just destroy them all, purge the town completely? I will not act without instruction. I stand alone in the forest, waiting to reach the other side. If I cry out now, I will be lost.

I will wait.

8th January, 1963

Finally she has come back to me, and she is happy. I have well exceeded her expectations. She is more certain now that I am worthy and that the path through the forest will reveal itself for me.

She says she has found the root of evil, the source of the rot that has eaten at the town. I sit beneath its very foundations. Howard Tester is the leader of a wicked coven, from him the branches of evil stretch out and infect everything. But he is beyond my righteous judgement. Although he rots in a pit of Hell, his spawn still lingers here. They are destined for evil that outweighs what I have dealt with before, just as I am destined to stop them. This is my calling.

DP. BK. LR. JR.

Four names, four more trials I must conquer. She tells me not to rush - I cannot make a mistake. I will not fail. I will use the very fire that Tester birthed to carry out my task, I will turn his creation into the thing that destroys his legacy. I will purify it as I will this town.

Man and beast. Metal and flesh, bound by fire. Then I will reach the other side and see what it is to be eternal, to be divine.

I know what it is to believe. Through the forest the path is clear, and the fire waits for me. I will not be afraid.

"Lawyer Letter"

Text Type: Artifact

Found: (Chapter 3) On a table inside the curiosity shop.

Context: In the 1980 timeline, the player visits a local curiosity shop in Cedar Hills, hoping to replace a broken Super-8 camera. This letter details the store's recent change of ownership, the new owner later being revealed as an alias of the secret villain of the plot, Augustine Lieber.

UI Menu Summary: A letter confirming the recent sale of the Curiosity Store. Poor Mr Olson, would he ever have sold up if not for his terrible luck?

Dear Mr Olson,

This letter will serve to confirm the agreement regarding the sale of 'Ned's Nutty Ned-Nacks' (my client want me to clarify they will be retiring this name, despite your insistence, to avoid any potential confusion). All relevant legal paperwork has been signed, and you should receive payment by month's end. Although the valuation fell below what you expected, rest assured you have been given a fair price, and given your current pressures the speedy resolution of this sale seems the most desirable solution for all parties.

My client also wanted to extend their sympathies to your recent hardships. Hopefully the funds will be enough for you to make a down payment wherever you choose to settle next, given the insurance company were not much help to you. They were particularly distressed to learn of the terrible murder resulting in the loss of your beloved Belinda. The police informed us they will not investigate, given they lack the relevant expertise in the behaviours of crows to track down the culprits. But certainly, if they do return, my client is insistent there will be retribution on your behalf. Hopefully moving on from Cedar Hills will give you some distance from the bereavement, after all time is a great healer, and perhaps one day you'll find yourself able to adopt another cat.

On a final note, the new owner would also like to gently insist you make arrangements to remove personal items from the store as soon as possible. They were rather concerned you might forget the giant portrait of yourself and Belinda from above the counter, although they understand if the memory is too painful and can make arrangements to have it disposed of.

Respectfully,

R. Straker.

'Relliks: Doll Summaries'

There are twelve 'relliks' that can be found across the game. These are small children's dolls, each mimicking a specific killer from the DBD Omniverse. When found in the game a snappy tagline appears with the killer's name, and a short summary of the killer's backstory is provided in the UI menu. For brevity I have selected my five favourite examples.

The Huntress: The lullaby that haunts the dark forest.

Anna left the harsh winters of the Red Forest in search of more dangerous game, but none has so far proven a challenge worthy of her talents. Her lullaby haunts the darkness, hinting at the tale of a hunt unfinished, a gentle prize she has not yet captured. Her axe remains sharp. The hunt goes on.

The Wraith: The spectre that stalks the fog.

Philip Ojomo was already a ghost, haunted by a childhood of war. Autohaven Wreckers offered him a new beginning. But familiar pains followed like a shadow, ready to break his spirit. Now this banshee of suffering stalks the fog, striking without remorse. Fear this apparition of terror, fear greatyl the wail of its bell, for it wails for thee.

The Nurse: The gentle touch of death.

Sally Smithson , a gentle hand that delivers the touch of death. Her perfect life stolen from her, Sally drifts through the halls of the Crotus Penn Asylum, her mind as broken as the ones she once cared for. Now she offers no comfort, just a promise, to put at once an end to the suffering. Blink once and you might miss her... but she won't miss you.

The Doctor: The brilliant mind, the broken psyche.

Herman Carter possessed a brilliant genius and a broken psyche. Despite his swift ascension through the ranks of the neuroscience program at the Lery Memorial Institute, Carter's talents were not fully realized until he applied them beyond the lab. No need to make an appointment, the Doctor is always looking for new patients. But be warned, his methods may shock you.

The Champion: The destiny realized in fire, steel and celluloid.

Forged in fire, moulded by steel, immortalized on celluloid. Frank Stone is a monster built to realize the destiny he was promised. Now he has reached the other side of the forest, where he waits... for the campfire grows weak and the final trail will begin soon.