

LAURA WALSH - DIALOGUE SAMPLE

Following are the interactive responses of an NPC from the text MUD/MMO Achaea. In Achaea, NPCs are able to give basic responses to players when triggered to do so by different events, such being greeted, hearing defined keywords, or being given specific items. I wrote the material and implemented it using Iron Realms Entertainment's in-house scripting language.

Faedor, the hermit

Overview: Faedor is a slightly mad old man who lives on a spit of shoreline he possessively refers to as his island (though it is neither his nor an island). He offers several basic quests that involve gathering items from around the area.

Entry of player (1 of 3 reactions, selected randomly):

- i. Faedor squints suspiciously at you.

Faedor says, "This island is private. Shoo!"

- ii. Faedor gives you the once-over, eyeing you suspiciously.

- iii. Faedor peers at you unscrupulously.

Faedor says, "How'd ya get here, <player name>?"

Greeted by player (1 of 5 reactions, selected randomly):

- i. Faedor ignores you as he putters around the beach, examining seashells.

- ii. Faedor cocks his head to the side, as though listening for something.

Faedor says, "Tis a good month for collecting, says I! What might wash ashore, oh indeedy what! Have ya found anything?"

- iii. Faedor turns to face the eastern sea, a faraway look in his eyes.

Faedor says, "Ah, for the good ol' days of adventure on the open seas."

- iv. Faedor says, "Say, if yer in the area hunting fish, I'd be happy to buy em off ya. Just the big ones you find right 'round my island though, ya hear? I don't much like any others."

- v. Faedor mutters discontentedly.

Faedor says, "Explorers... hunters... visitors... always more people these days!"

Faedor shakes his head sadly from side to side.

Keyword heard: island

Faedor says, "Unless you have business with me, move along. This is my island, traveler. And private!"

Faedor says, "YES, it's an ISLAND. Don't be talkin' no different!"

Keyword heard: adventure

Faedor shakes his head and looks off to sea, a shadow falling over his face.

Faedor says, "Years ago, when I was an adventuring sort like yerself, I traveled east to the island of Ulangi. Beautiful place, that, and I spent many a day learning about its wonders. I slept on the beach by night and explored in the day, meeting the Groom and Horkval that live there, the strange Sentinel in the forest, and others..."

Faedor says, "One night I dreamt of a beautiful woman, come to visit me upon the island. She had the loveliest eyes, and beautiful long green hair, and her br... eh, well, I suppose that's not meant for polite company!"

Faedor coughs softly.

Faedor says, "Woke up the next day, and there she lay on the beach beside me! Loveliest thing I ever saw, and I was hooked. Only she wasn't just some woman, she had the lower half of a giant fish, all covered with scales that looked like jewels. A mermaid, sure as my life depended on it. And she was mighty ill, bein' out of the water like that."

Faedor says, "Bein' that I'm a kind sort, I helped her into the water, and when she roused we talked a bit. She didn't know where she was nor could she remember where she was from, but it seems she'd got caught in a storm while she was atop the surface of the ocean."

Faedor says, "Poor girl was so tired out she stayed round the beach to get stronger, and after a few more days my heart was completely lost to that minx o' the sea. Blessed days on the beach, both of us meetin' in the shallow water to... eh, well, yes that's not meant for polite company either."

Faedor says, "I thought she loved me too, but fickle as the merfolk are, turns out I was wrong. One day I woke and she was gone, and I never saw her again. Curse the Sea God for carryin' that girl away from me! Curse the God of the Skies for bringin' her to me in the first place!"

Faedor shakes his fist in the air defiantly, then slumps down dejectedly.

Faedor says, "Best time o' my life, there. Some days I wish I'd kept a seashell from the island to remind me of the beauty I did find on its shores... but my traveling days are over, and here on my island I stay."

Keyword heard: shell

Faedor says, "The shells here on my island are just so... ordinary..."

Faedor gives a pained sigh.

Keyword heard: mermaid

Faedor says, "Not around here, no sirree! You'll find none o' those fishy characters 'round my island."

Keyword heard: fish

Faedor's eyes grow wide and a trail of drool slips out of his mouth as he begins to salivate.

Faedor says, "I loves me some fresh fish... if ya catch any of the big ones around here - flounder, grouper, barracuda - I'll match yer efforts with some gold."

Keyword heard: Shastaan

Faedor says, "Nice little town, that. On the eastern shore of Sapience, no? But I haven't left my island here in a long time, nope. So I guess you'd know better than me."

Keyword heard: Adryn

Faedor says, "I wouldn't know about that... ya go pokin' around in too many places and ya might get in trouble, hear?"

Keyword heard: Riparium

Faedor says, "Land of the merfolk, a terrible place! It's 'round a bit north of my island if ya really want to go down there. But don't say I didn't warn ya!"

Item given: barracuda/grouper/flounder

Faedor says, "Ooer, this sure is a big one! Thank ya, <player name>!"

Faedor hands you some gold as payment.

Item given: any other fish

Faedor says, "Ah, this is a nice fish but I prefer the grouper and flounder that swim 'round here. Even the barracuda make a tasty meal!"

Faedor smiles apologetically and hands the fish back to you.

Item given: dolphin

Faedor blinks rapidly as his eyes widen and he refuses the dolphin.

Faedor says, "N-n-no dolphins!"

Faedor flaps his arms madly.

Item given: mermaid

Faedor shoves the mermaid back at you with a growl.

Faedor says, "Get this away from me, those fickle creatures are bad luck, dead or alive."

Item given: a rotting fish tail

Faedor wrinkles his nose in revulsion and says, "Yuuuuucckk!"

Faedor says, "What are you doing with a nasty ol' fish tail like this? Why, I'd say it looks like it came from a... well, now."

Faedor looks closely at the fish tail before shoving it back in your arms.

Faedor says, "Yep, that's surely the tail of a mermaid. Bad luck for certain! You take it back, stranger, and get offa my island with it!"

Item given: driftwood

Faedor says, "Just what I need! Wait here a moment, <player name>, and I'll have a task for ya."

Faedor grins broadly and gives you some gold as you hand over the driftwood.

Faedor says, "Look, <player name>, this is a private island, and I don't want no more visitors. Find a good place by the edge and stick this sign in the sand so they know to keep away. Then get outta here yerself!"

Faedor lashes together a few pieces of driftwood and hastily dabs a bit of ink on it before handing it to you.

Item given: seashell

Faedor gives a short gasp of elation.

Faedor says, "This beautiful shell! It can only be... yes, it is! A shell from the isle of Ulangi. Oh, how my heart remembers the place. You have made me a happy old man, <player name>. Here, take my gold!"

Faedor presses a small pile of gold into your hands as he croons softly to himself, stroking the seashell tenderly.

Item given: pail

Faedor turns the pail from side to side as he looks it over.

Faedor says, "Now that'll make a right fine hat in rainy weather!"

Faedor upturns the pail upon his head and gives a toothy smile, proudly tossing you a few sovereigns.

Item given: anything else

Faedor says, "Thank you, but I only collect items of the most rare and unusual sort."

Faedor smiles apologetically and hands <the item> back to you.