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Dark Nights with Poe and Munro Review

By **Gareth Brierley** - May 4, 2021

I relish playing full motion video games. There is just something about them that resonates, as they hark back to the 'choose your own adventure books' that I adored and devoured back in the 1980s. I do however understand that these games aren't for all, with the lack of control, and need to instead watch a film and decide on the path any characters should take, not going down quite as well with others.

What a good FMV game should do though is make you feel the illusion that the decisions you are taking along the way affect the story and the endings on offer. And this has happened with many great FMVs over the years, with a personal favourite that of **The Infectious Madness of Doctor Dekker** by D'Avekki Studios. Now we get the chance to play their latest effort – Dark Nights with Poe and Munro. Let the decision making begin.

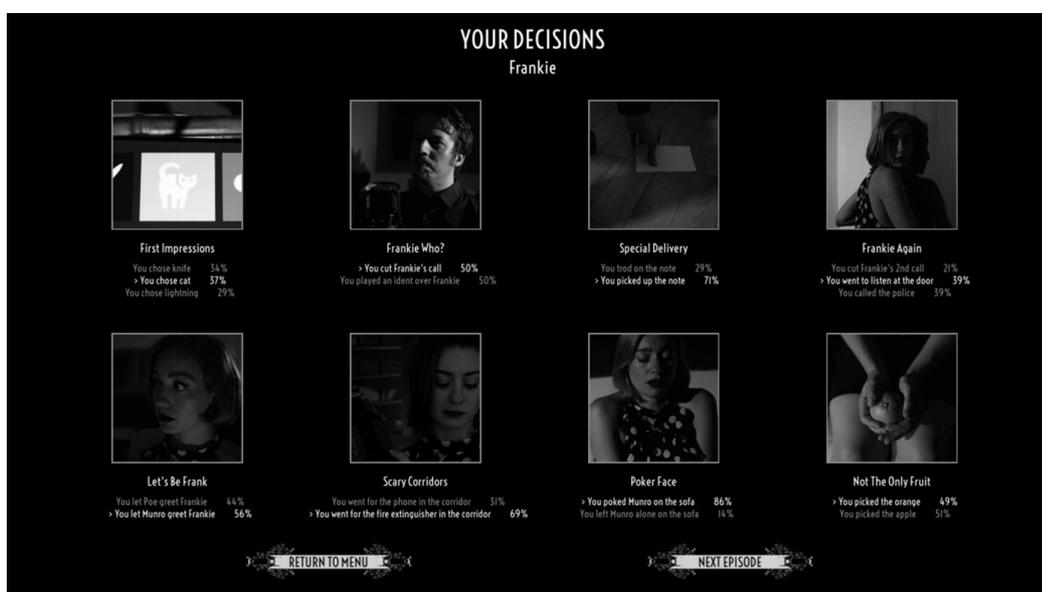


Dark Nights with Poe and Munro has been written by the talented team of Tim and Lynda Cowles and they bring together a game that features six episodes of action, all covering the world of Poe and Munro. The narrative roots are very much planted in the sci-fi/fantasy world of British TV – stuff like Tales of the Unexpected or more recently of Black Mirror. The story focuses on the two characters – Poe and Munro – who are two individuals who run a night time radio station in the town of August.

Poe is a sort of Vincent Price English gent; flamboyant and flawed. Munro is an intelligent American woman who is both thoughtful and insightful. The two of them combine to great effect. The setup is that the radio programme they present delves into the unusual happenings of August in each episode. In one we get to hear them being stalked by a

possible murderer, whilst in another there is a tale of a werewolf sighting. Another deals with a story that is a combination of Oscar Wilde's Dorian Grey, supernatural prisons, and different realities. There is also a great episode where Munro gets hypnotised and ends up back in the previously mentioned Doctor Dekker as a character the same actress played back then. Needless to say, that it is very meta and extremely clever. In fact, that's what I love about this piece of writing the most – it's hugely camp at times and wonderfully playful, constantly winking at the audience as it deals with all sorts of mysterious shenanigans.

With each episode you will find yourself taken on a variety of paths and various conclusions. In fact, should you choose to use a certain object in one playthrough, but then select another in a different playthrough, you will happen across different endings. But you're not alone in making these choices, with a list popping up at the conclusions showing all of the decisions you made per episode, with a percentage next to it to show how others from around the world made their choices. Needless to say, I made some very weird choices compared to normal people.



Whether you get anything out of Dark Nights though will entirely depend on how well-versed you are with the FMV scene. For me, someone who has now played a lot of this genre, it stands out as one of the best of the bunch, and that's all thanks to the writing and its charm. You see, these productions don't come with a huge budget attached in terms of filming or effects, but how D'Vekki Studios compensate is by making a game that is full of energy, great performances, and clever writing. I was completely invested in each episode and fell in love with the characters.

So let's chat about the performers themselves. Poe is played by Klemens Koehring and he does a great job. He has a superb voice, like an old actor or storyteller weaving tales from the crypt. He is pompous, sometimes leering, but has a large heart. Leah Cunard plays the part of Munro and she delivers a stunning performance; one that is full of heart and nuance. She has a brilliant American accent as well, which is made even clearer when she switches to her native English during one part. What makes the game though is the chemistry between the two – this is always entertaining and full of mischief. They are, frankly, a great pairing and you can't imagine anyone else playing the parts. But they are helped along nicely by some great support from Lara Lemon and Aislinn De'ath, as well as all the other talent.



Visually, *Dark Nights with Poe and Munro* comes with some great lighting and some nice colour grading, especially in the outdoor scenes. The costumes, makeup, and lighting are good throughout and there is some decent use of some interesting locations. But then even the menus and title sequences manage to come with an amazing design quality to them as well, as does the sound and graceful score which is excellent throughout.

Dark Nights with Poe and Munro is a hugely enjoyable FMV and I would love to see more episodes follow this in the future. The writing, choice-making, and innovative ideas are all of a high standard and this means that it's another big tick for the fascinating and exciting D'Avekki Studios. Fans of the FMV scene should definitely give this a go.

*You can grab a download of *Dark Nights with Poe and Munro* from the **Xbox Store** for Xbox One and Xbox Series X|S*

TXH Score ★★★★★

Pros:

- Great writing and storytelling
- Fantastic lead characters
- Clever use of the choice system
- Excellent menus and soundtrack

Cons:

- FMV isn't going to be for everyone

Info:

- Massive thanks for the free copy of the game go to - D'Avekki Studios
- Formats - Xbox One, Xbox Series X|S
- Version Reviewed - Xbox One on Xbox Series X
- Release date - 4th May 2021
- Launch price from - £9.99

User Rating: Be the first one ! ★★★★★

4/5

Gareth Brierley

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I am an actor and a writer. I act quite a bit on stage, a little bit on tv and never on tuesdays. I have had some of my writing published and have written for TV and stage. I have been playing games since they begun and don't seem to be getting any better.