Oh What A Tangled Web We Weave: Interactive Storytelling Using Twine

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Twine

Create your own interactive stories with Twine, the same tool used to produce the stories on this Web site.

Think Visually

Twine lets you organize your story graphically with a map that you can re-arrange as you work. Links automatically appear on the map as you add them to your passages, and passages with broken links are apparent at a glance. As you write, focus on your text with a fullscreen editing mode like Dark Room. Rapidly switch between a published version of your story and the editable one as you work.

Free As In Free

Stories you create with Twine can be used however you'd like. Because the final output is a single, small Web page, you can easily email a story to friends, post it on your Web site, or even distribute it on a CD-ROM. (You could use a floppy disk just as easily — stories take up that little space.) You can also use your stories for commercial purposes without restriction.

Twine is free to download and use, and you can share it with anyone you like. You can even modify the Twine, provided you release your own version under the GNU Public License.

Propellerheads Welcome

If you like working with a command prompt, you can also use *twee*, the command-line version of Twine. It's easy to incorporate into the toolchain you know and love, and syntax modes are available for some common text editors.

Seeing Is Believing

The screencasts below show how easy it is to create a story in Twine.

Download

Twine 1.3.5 for Windows (7.1mb)
graphical interface

Twine 1.3.5 for OS X (28.1mb)
graphical interface
requires OS X 10.6

twee 1.7.1 (370k)
command-line interface
requires Python

Documentation

Twee Reference
A guide to writing stories with Twine and *twee*.

Twee Google Group
Get help and share your work.

Twee API
Technical information on how the story engine works.

Syntax Modes

If you use a plain text editor to write, these will colorize your text so markup stands out.

Download for: BBEdit

Go

Start

After many years abroad, you return to London. You are looking for someone to share a room with,

StoryTitle

Watson's First Case: The Game Is Afoot

StoryAuthor

Ruben R. Puentedura - Based on characters created by Sir A.C. Doyle

The Hospital Lab

<html><img src="http://upload.wiki Sherlock Holmes stands here. He fixes you in his gaze,

He's a cement wor

"Excellent, Dr. Watson! I look forward to continuing our conversation at Baker Steeet."

He's a brewer

"Dr. Watson, whatever your other merits as a doctor might be, you have clearly become rusty

Baker Street

The rooms you hope to share with Sherlock Holmes in Baker Street. The room is cluttered and

Ask about the rent

I think five guineas should cover it nicely - what do you think? [[Accept the offer]] [[Ask for a lower

Ask about the slip

"That's where I keep my tobacco", Holmes replies. <<display "Baker Street">>

Accept the offer

"Splendid! I'll let Mrs.Hudson know", Holmes replies. <<if $poor>> Holmes is clearly sympathetic

Ask for a lower pri

"Well... I suppose I could take just 3 guineas..." Holmes replies dubiously. [[Accept the offer]]

After Dinner

Holmes sits back in a worn yet comfortable armchair, and sighs. He then turns to you and says: <<if
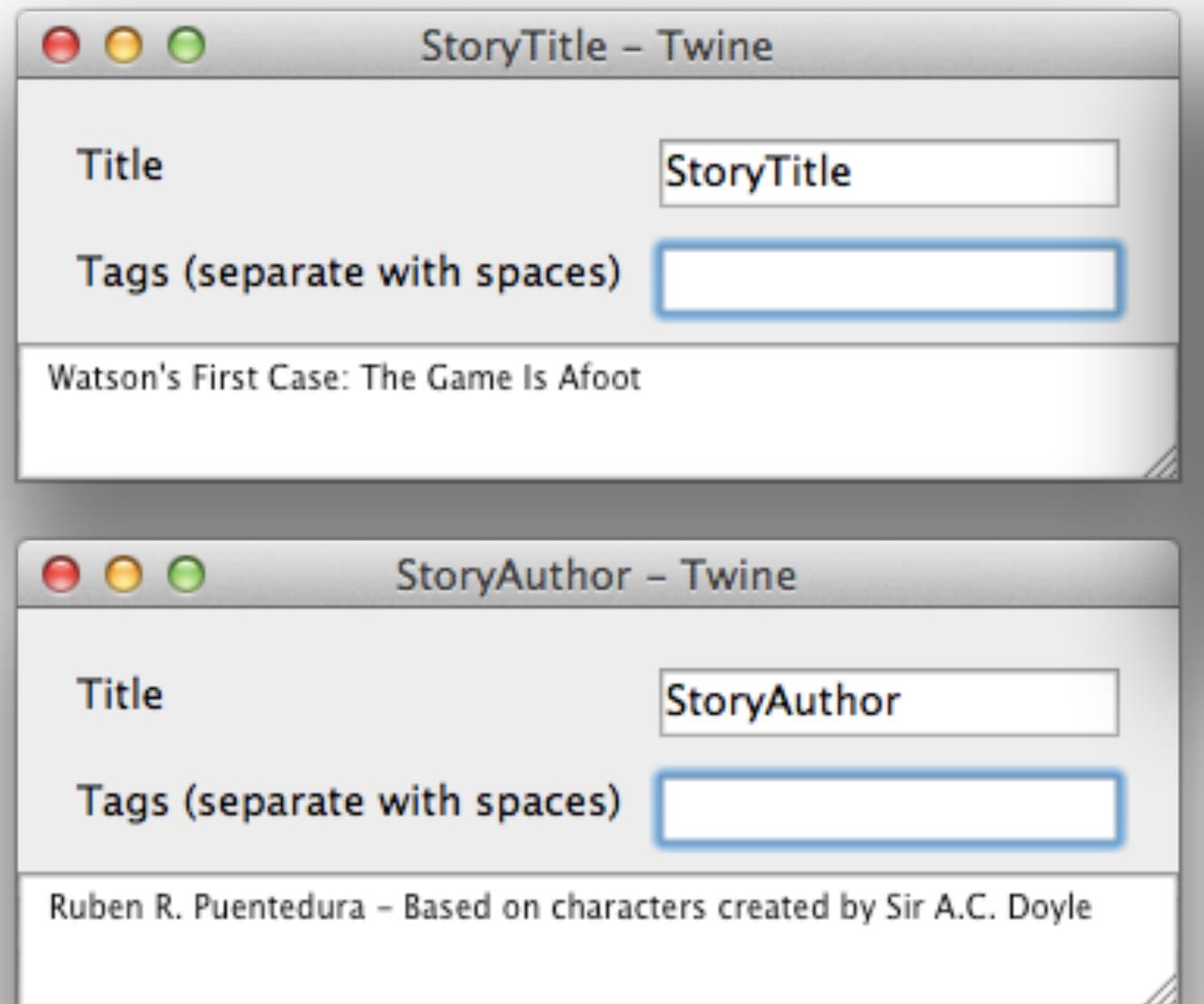
You must be exha

You agree with Holmes, and go to bed. Before turning in, you check your wallet: you have

How about a few r

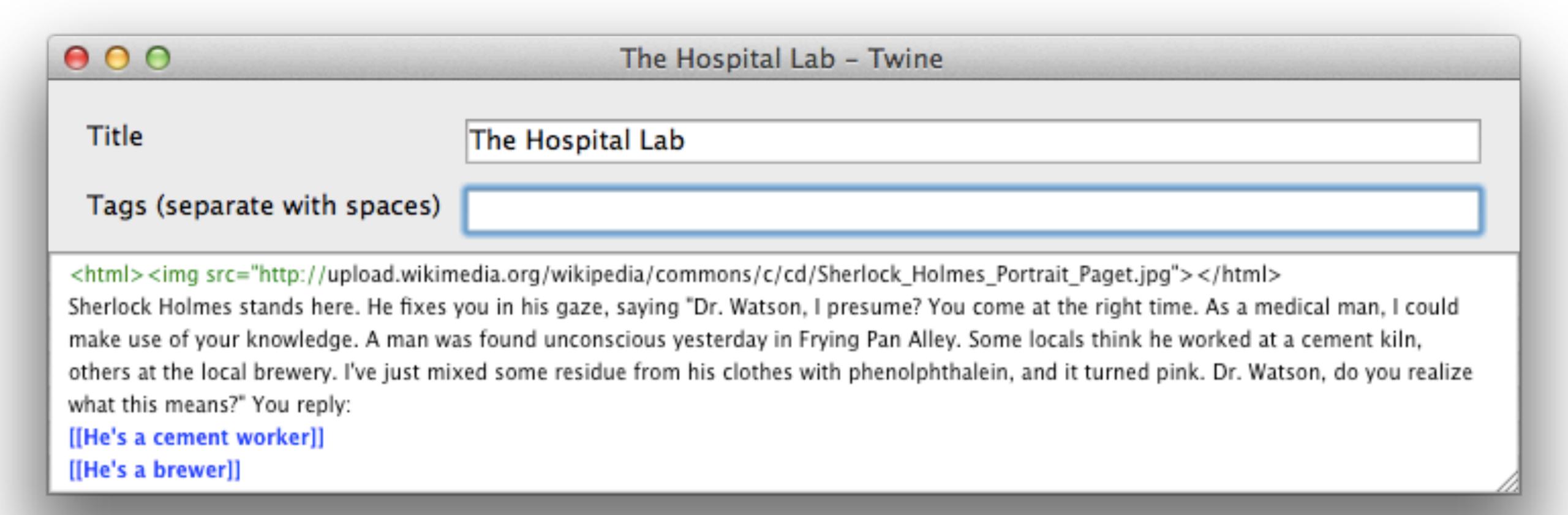<<silently>> <<set $lostmoney = Math.round(Math.rand * 8)+2>> <<set $wallet = $wallet -

Setup

StoryTitle – Twine

Title: StoryTitle

Tags (separate with spaces):

Watson's First Case: The Game Is Afoot

StoryAuthor – Twine

Title: StoryAuthor

Tags (separate with spaces):

Ruben R. Puentedura – Based on characters created by Sir A.C. Doyle

Start – Twine

Title: Start

Tags (separate with spaces):

After many years abroad, you return to London. You are looking for someone to share a room with, and are directed to the lab at the local hospital, to speak with a gentleman by the name of Sherlock Holmes.
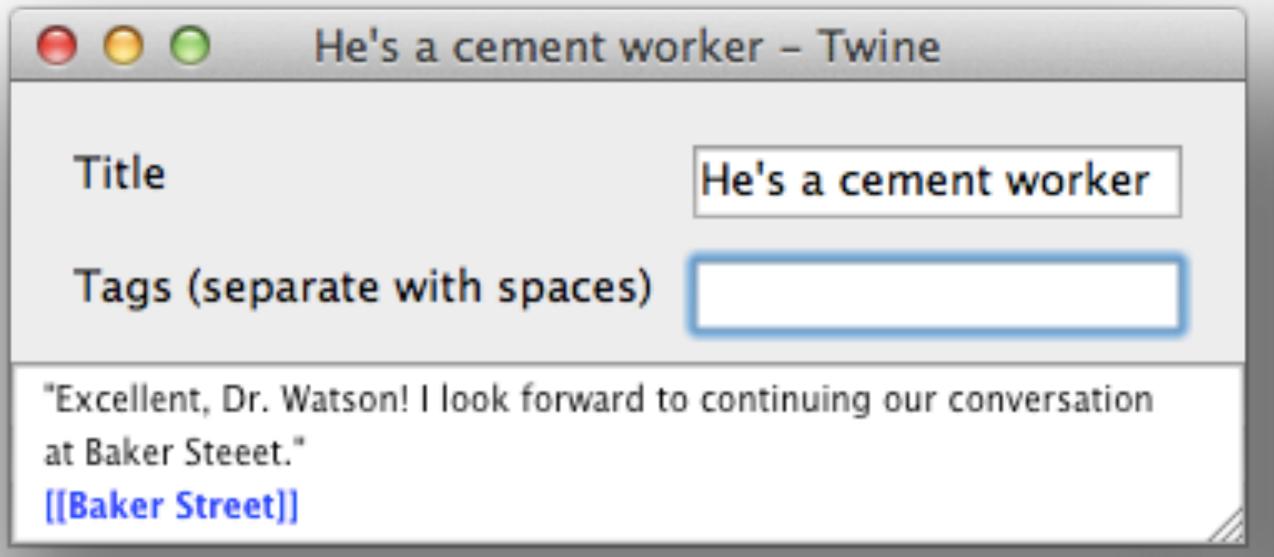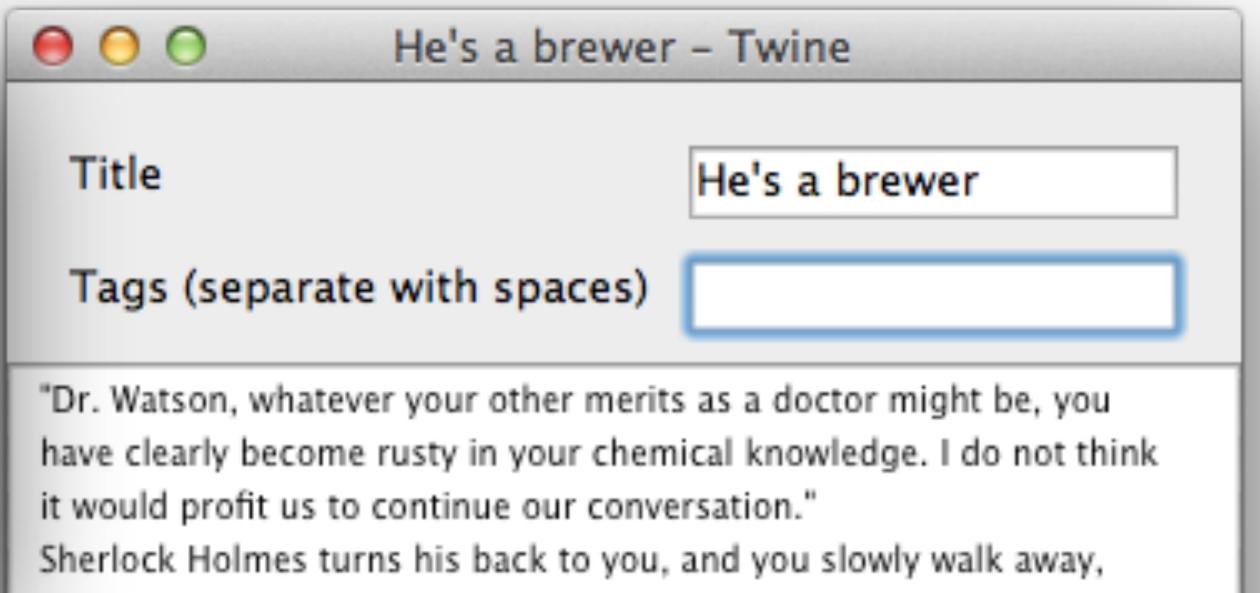[[The Hospital Lab]]
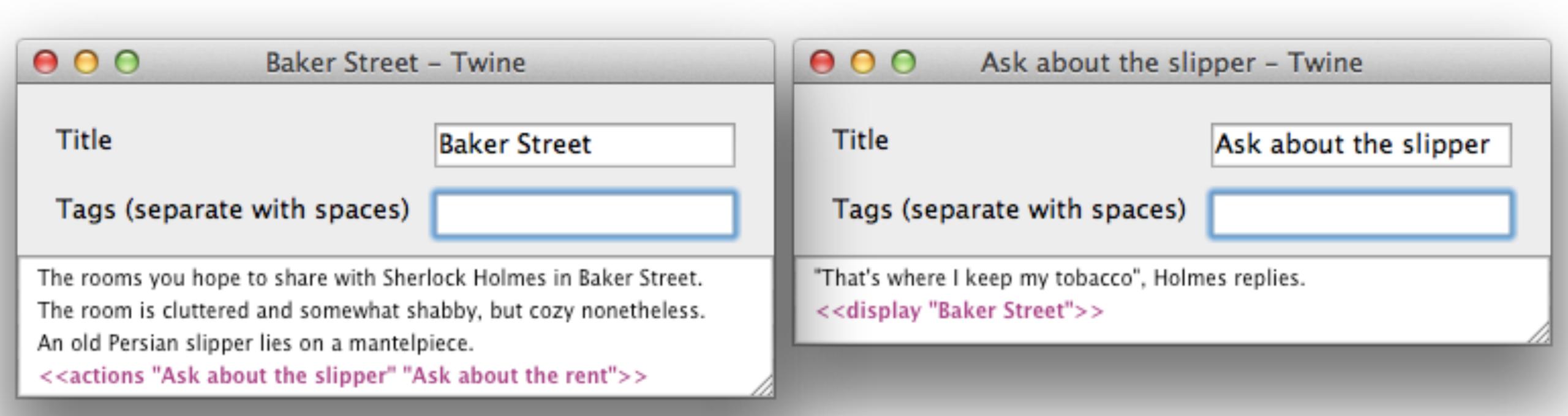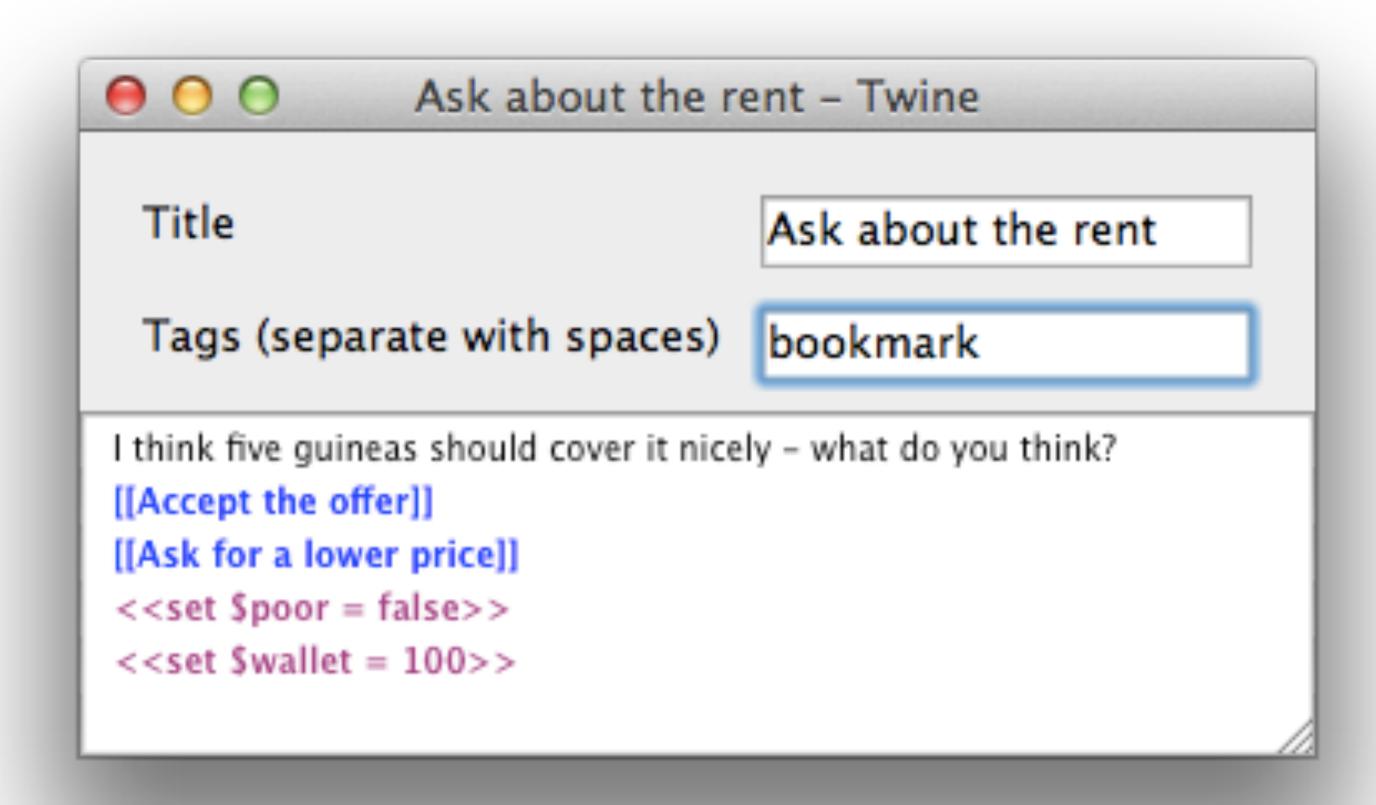
Branching and Inserting Media

The Hospital Lab – Twine

Title   The Hospital Lab

Tags (separate with spaces)

```
<html><img src="http://upload.wikimedia.org/wikipedia/commons/c/cd/Sherlock_Holmes_Portrait_Paget.jpg"></html>
```
Sherlock Holmes stands here. He fixes you in his gaze, saying "Dr. Watson, I presume? You come at the right time. As a medical man, I could make use of your knowledge. A man was found unconscious yesterday in Frying Pan Alley. Some locals think he worked at a cement kiln, others at the local brewery. I've just mixed some residue from his clothes with phenolphthalein, and it turned pink. Dr. Watson, do you realize what this means?" You reply:
[[He's a cement worker]]
[[He's a brewer]]

Puzzles and Endings

He's a cement worker – Twine

Title: He's a cement worker

Tags (separate with spaces): [   ]

"Excellent, Dr. Watson! I look forward to continuing our conversation at Baker Steeet."
[[Baker Street]]

He's a brewer – Twine

Title: He's a brewer

Tags (separate with spaces): [   ]

"Dr. Watson, whatever your other merits as a doctor might be, you have clearly become rusty in your chemical knowledge. I do not think it would profit us to continue our conversation."
Sherlock Holmes turns his back to you, and you slowly walk away, wondering at what might have been.

Using *actions* and *display*

Baker Street – Twine

Title   Baker Street

Tags (separate with spaces)

The rooms you hope to share with Sherlock Holmes in Baker Street.
The room is cluttered and somewhat shabby, but cozy nonetheless.
An old Persian slipper lies on a mantelpiece.
<<actions "Ask about the slipper" "Ask about the rent">>

Ask about the slipper – Twine

Title   Ask about the slipper

Tags (separate with spaces)

"That's where I keep my tobacco", Holmes replies.
<<display "Baker Street">>

Setting a Bookmark and Creating Variables

Using Variables and *if/else/endif* Statements

Ask for a lower price – Twine

Title Ask for a lower price

Tags (separate with spaces)

"Well... I suppose I could take just 3 guineas..." Holmes replies dubiously.
[[Accept the offer]]
<<set $poor = true>>
<<set $wallet = 10>>

Accept the offer – Twine

Title Accept the offer

Tags (separate with spaces)

"Splendid! I'll let Mrs.Hudson know", Holmes replies.
<<if $poor>>
Holmes is clearly sympathetic to your current financial woes, and offers to buy dinner. You gratefully accept.
<<else>>
Grateful to have a place to stay, you offer to buy dinner, and Holmes happily accepts.
<<endif>>
[[After Dinner]]

Displaying Variables

After Dinner – Twine

Title: After Dinner

Tags (separate with spaces):

Holmes sits back in a worn yet comfortable armchair, and sighs. He then turns to you and says:

<<if $poor>>

[[You must be exhausted – we can talk more in the morning.]]

<<else>>

[[How about a few rounds of backgammon?]]

<<endif>>

You must be exhausted – we can talk more in...

Title: You must be exhausted

Tags (separate with spaces):

You agree with Holmes, and go to bed. Before turning in, you check your wallet: you have <<print $wallet>> guineas left for the rest of the month – clearly, you will need to look for a job soon.

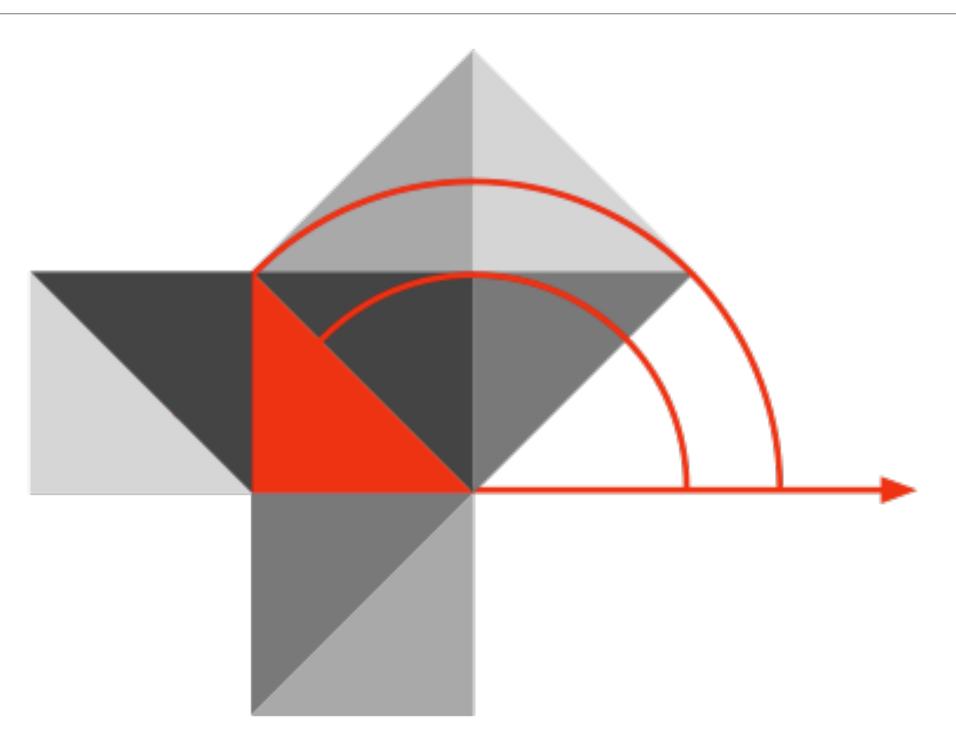# Using Variables in Calculations and *silently* to Eliminate Whitespace

How about a few rounds of backgammon? – Twine

Title   How about a few rounds of backgammon?

Tags (separate with spaces)

```
<<silently>>
<<set $lostmoney = Math.round(Math.random() * 8)+2>>
<<set $wallet = $wallet - $lostmoney>>
<<endsilently>>You agree, and a few hours later your wallet is <<print $lostmoney>> guineas lighter,
leaving you with <<print $wallet>> guineas for the rest of the month. You retire to bed, impressed by
Holmes' gaming prowess.
```

Some Text Formatting Options

Formatting	Source Code	Appears As
Italics	//text//	*text*
Boldface	''text''	**text**
Underline	__text__	<u>text</u>
Subscript	H~~2~~O	H_2O
Superscript	meters/second^^2^^	meters/second^2
Monospace	{{{text}}}	`text`
Horizontal line	----	————

Some Math Operators

- These operators are used "as-is" in expressions:

  - Logical Operators: *eq*, *neq*, *gt*, *gte*, *lt*, *lte*, *and*, *or*, *not*

  - Basic Operators: +, -, *, /, %

- These operators need to be prefixed with *Math.* and followed by an argument in parenthesis (*pow* takes two arguments, *max* and *min* take one or more arguments, and *random* takes no arguments):

  - Absolute Value, Rounding, Range, and Random Numbers: *abs*; *round*, *floor*, *ceil*; *max*, *min*; *random*

  - Powers and Logarithms: *sqrt*, *pow*, *exp*; *log*

  - Trigonometric Operators: *sin*, *cos*, *tan*, *asin*, *acos*, *atan*

- These constants need to be prefixed with *Math.*:

  - Constants: *PI*, *E*, *SQRT2*, *SQRT1_2*, *LN2*, *LN10*, *LOG2E*, *LOG10E*

Hippasus

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