

queers in love at the end of the world
by anna anthropy

Played by Kendall Gerdes

Begin.

> begin

queers in love at the end of the world doesn't tell you what you're getting into when you click "Begin."

In the end, like you always said, it's just the two of you together. You have ten seconds, but there's so much you want to do: **kiss** her, **hold** her, **take** her hand, **tell** her.

I've played this game so often that I don't always take the time to read passages. I sometimes click rapidly to see how far I can go in 10 seconds. Not sure what the distance metaphor stands in for—how many nodes I can advance through—but I can't *read* everything playing that way. I screencapped my playthroughs so I could transcribe them; you get the luxury of reading slowly this way.

> kiss

The world is ending. Let's make out.

You kiss her:

Softly.
Slowly.
Fiercely.
Hungrily.

> fiercely

Why does 'fiercely' appeal to me? Maybe it sounds heroic and apocalyptic.

You make out in the ashes of everything. Your tongue is in her mouth while the cities burn. Her fingers pull your hair while dollars turn to dust and laws that were too small to hold you blow away like old newspaper.

You're:
Laughing.
Crying.
Biting her neck.

Horny.

> laughing

I definitely didn't read the entire passage before laughing. Laughing felt appropriate, suited to an unavoidable end of all things.

Like witches, cackling as the spirits dance free through the streets. Neither of you can stop laughing. I mean, it's **pretty fucking funny**.

> pretty fucking funny

How much capital does it take to change a light bulb?
What's a thousand cops at the bottom of the ocean?
Why did the chicken cross the road?

>

Everything is wiped away.

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Afterword Restart

The clock got me before I could take in any of the jokes. I played again (and again and again) to see the punch line to each one!

> restart

'Restart' is my favorite feature: the apocalypse can happen six times in a minute in this game!

In the end, like you always said, it's just the two of you together. You have ten seconds, but there's so much you want to do: **kiss** her, **hold** her, **take** her hand, **tell** her.

> take

Holding hands seems like it would be really reassuring right now.

You take her hand in yours, giving it a squeeze.

Look into her eyes.
Kiss her.
Put her hand up your skirt.

Just hold her hand.

> just hold her hand

With so little time, why not just hang on to what you've got?

Your fingers **twine** between hers. After all the forces that tried to keep you and her apart, maybe just holding her hand is **enough**.

This kind of slays me.

> twine

Well, obviously I'm clicking on twine.

What a powerful mode of expression.

This *really* slays me. A little meta commentary. No more passages out; if you got here with any time left, you'd just watch the clock until

>

Everything is wiped away.

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Afterword Restart

queers in love at the end of the world is perhaps my favorite Twine game that I've played so far. Each playthrough can only offer you a tiny little slice of a pretty vast and varied world, but every time I play it, I play it five or six times. And I come back and play it again fairly frequently. A brief moment of possibility opens, right before, and because, 'Everything is wiped away.' *queers in love* lets you explore that possibility.

Really this game is a testimony, a kind of evidence about the force of even ephemeral love to outlast. There's something great about knowing that there are so many permutations of this love – in an essay in the collection *State of Play: Creators and Critics on Video Game Culture*, anthropy says the game has 180 unique passages, but you get this sense of magnitude just from seeing all the links you haven't clicked on. That sense is humbling, for me, especially against the apocalyptic backdrop: you'll see only as much of this world as you can in the limited time you have left. Even when a path ends before the timer runs out, you can never exhaust all possibilities in one run. And yet, even in the face of total annihilation, you're always offered the chance to

> restart