# Black Mirror season 7 introduces interactive game and dual-version episode



Netflix’s acclaimed sci-fi anthology series Black Mirror has unveiled inventive new elements in its seventh season, pushing the boundaries of storytelling and viewer engagement. The Independent reports on two particularly striking experiments featured in the latest run of episodes.

In the fourth episode entitled “Plaything,” Scottish actor and director Peter Capaldi portrays Cameron, an elderly loner who becomes engrossed with a 1990s-style video game. This game within the show’s narrative, created by fictional character Colin Ritman (played by Will Poulter), centres on nurturing a rapidly multiplying digital population called Thronglets. Cameron’s immersion in the game develops into a dark plotline involving a grisly murder.

What sets this episode apart is an interactive element for the audience tucked into the end credits: a QR code that, when scanned, directs viewers to the App Store to download Black Mirror: Thronglets, a real-world version of the in-show game. The app is described in the store as a “retro pet simulation” and has received positive feedback with a 4.5-star rating from over 200 reviews. The game tasks players with feeding, entertaining, and evolving their Thronglets population, gradually unlocking new features and surprises as the creatures multiply. To access the game, players must sign in through Netflix’s video game service, connecting it directly with the streaming platform.

Another unique approach is found in the season’s second episode, “Bête Noire,” which was released in two distinct versions at random. The episode follows Maria (Siena Kelly), a confectioner threatened professionally by the arrival of an enigmatic new colleague, Verity (Rosy McEwen). Early in the story, Maria and her coworkers debate the name of a local chicken restaurant, with viewers initially seeing a hat bearing the correct spelling. However, when Maria later checks the name herself, it appears to have mysteriously changed. Audience members have since identified two alternate versions of the episode—one citing “Barnie’s” as the correct spelling, the other “Bernie’s.”

The creator of Black Mirror, Charlie Brooker, addressed the unusual dual-version release in a cryptic social media video on Netflix UK & Ireland’s channels. Holding a cap inscribed with “Barnie’s,” he remarked: “Depending on which version of the episode you saw, you might have a different take on it. Did we change anything? Well, I couldn’t possibly comment. You’re going to have to go back and watch it again for yourselves, and argue about it.”

The seventh season of Black Mirror is currently available for streaming on Netflix, inviting audiences to explore these layered, multi-dimensional narratives and interactive features.

Source: [Noah Wire Services](https://www.noahwire.com)

## Bibliography

1. <https://www.the-independent.com/arts-entertainment/tv/news/black-mirror-qr-code-plaything-b2738128.html> - This article confirms the existence of the QR code in the end credits of the 'Plaything' episode that links to the Black Mirror: Thronglets game on the App Store, describing the game as a 'retro pet simulation' connected to Netflix’s video game service and detailing its gameplay elements and user rating.
2. <https://screenrant.com/black-mirror-season-7-review/> - This review discusses episode 4, 'Plaything,' highlighting Peter Capaldi’s role and the narrative involving the 1990s-style video game created by Colin Ritman, while describing the episode’s inventive storytelling and nostalgic tech themes.
3. <https://www.the-independent.com/arts-entertainment/tv/news/black-mirror-qr-code-plaything-b2738128.html> - The same Independent article also confirms the unusual release of two distinct versions of the second episode, 'Bête Noire,' describing the differing spellings of the chicken restaurant's name and the effect on viewers' experience.
4. <https://www.the-independent.com/arts-entertainment/tv/news/black-mirror-qr-code-plaything-b2738128.html> - It also mentions Charlie Brooker's cryptic video on Netflix UK & Ireland's social channels addressing the dual-version release of 'Bête Noire,' inviting viewers to watch again and debate the differences.
5. <https://www.elle.com/culture/movies-tv/a64505088/black-mirror-season-7-episodes-ranked/> - This article discusses the creative and experimental storytelling approaches in Black Mirror Season 7, supporting the claim that the season pushes boundaries with layered narratives and interactive features.
6. <https://www.netflix.com/title/81272870> - The official Netflix page for Black Mirror Season 7 confirms the availability of the new season for streaming, inviting audiences to engage with the episodes, including those with the described innovative elements.
7. <https://www.independent.co.uk/arts-entertainment/tv/news/black-mirror-qr-code-plaything-b2738128.html> - Please view link - unable to able to access data