**Dream Jam**

Michael is a normal Game Developer with long white hair, done in a ponytail. He has been training to be a game developer for about a year and a half now. He was ready to take it to the next level by trying out to compete in a Game Jam. But due to his time zone, he had to wait till late at night to see the theme right away. So that's what he did. After a long day preparing supplies, so that he didn't have to go anywhere in the week, he was tired and ready to see the theme.

-Oh man... I am tired. But I want to see the theme for the Game Jam before I go to sleep. Who knows, maybe my idea for my game can come from my dream. Am I right Oscar?

- \*meow\*

There is little time left - seconds. Michael decides to wait them out in peace and quiet. The theme is announced - "Secrets of the mystic".

-Yes! The Jam started! And the theme is... "Secrets of the mystic"? \*yawn\* Too tired to think about it - better go to sleep. It's going to be a tough week.

And with that, Michael goes to sleep with Oscar.

Michael then wakes up. He's not in his room anymore. He is on a mountain, with a beautiful view, on a road with grass on the side and a tree close to the side. In the distance, there are some buildings with a tall tower beside them. It looked like a watchtower. And in between the tall trees, there was a kingdom. It looked kind of peaceful and beautiful.

- Wha........?

Then he realizes that this isn't his body. He is taller with a white beard and is in a purple...robe? In his hand, there is a staff with a beautiful blue gemstone on top. On top of his other hand, there is a book, levitating and going through its pages on its own.

-Wait, what!?! Where am I?

Then suddenly, the whole world for a second seems like half-static. Not completely but not the way you'd imagine. Now the kingdom is not that peaceful. Some of the buildings have collapsed. The watchtower is on fire. But otherwise, everything looks the same except for the tree – a part of its surface had changed.

-What is this place?

Then a cat, very similar to Oscar, comes running to him.

-Our Lord, please save us! After you were banished, the whole kingdom is terrified of the new Dark Lord! He rules with power unlike anyone has ever seen! Most of the people are dead from him or hunger! You need to huuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuu...[Insert secret message]

Then suddenly, the cat looks static too and Michael, now with a more cleared head, totally freaks out.

-What is that? And can someone tell me why Oscar talks!?!!?

Then everything becomes static once again. And when the static stops, the kingdom is like what it was like before but just for a second. Then it becomes static again and it's bad once again. The cat... Oliver is still there.

-Our Lord, please save us! After you were banished, the whole kingdom is terrified of the new Dark Lord! He rules with power unlike anyone has ever seen!

Michael doesn't want to hear this all over again.

-Okay, okay, I'll help. Lead the way to the kingdom.

-Follow me.

Oliver starts to walk at an amazing speed towards the kingdom. Michael, still stunned by this, follows him. But he stops by the tree to see what's changed. Deep into the wood, there is carved, almost as if a machine had done it:

"Made by

Michael Adler”

Oliver was out of sight when he finished reading it. But as he turns to see where he is, the world starts to be static again and the words are no longer there.

-Hey Oliver what is this? Oliver? Where did that he go? And what is...what? It was right here! Did I imagine this?

Michael, very confused at this point, decides to go in the direction Oliver went, still wondering what is going on and how any of this was possible.

On his way, he encounters a flying... ball? That is also smoking?!?

-And what are you supposed to be? A spirit? Or another citizen of this strange kingdom?

The ball goes closer to him like it was pulled.

-Ow! Okay, you really ARE on fire!

Michael runs away but the ball follows him. Knowing he has nowhere to hide, he pulls his arms in front of himself to try and protect himself. Then... nothing happens.

-What?

There is a force field around Michael that stops the ball. Then the ball disappears.

-Phew, at least I don't have this ball on my head anymore. Now, what was this? A force field? Could have I imagined it? No, I couldn't have. The ball was real! So, what triggers it?

Michael goes in the same position and the force field is there again.

-Nice! This should be useful.

And he continues. On the way, he meets a few other balls but nothing too bad. But then he finds a ghost of some kind. The ghost is with a scythe and looks hostile with his red glowing eyes.

-\*whispers\*. [Insert secret message] - in a barely hearable tone.

Then the ghost starts attacking Michael. He manages to defend against a few hits but he knew that he can't continue it this way.

-Does this staff have any powers at all?!?

Then he tries slamming the staff to the ground. First, it started to suck everything.

-Did I create a black hole?!

Then the black hole exploded. The ghost executor was hurt but weirdly enough Michael was perfectly fine.

-Well that's something else.

For a second Michael notices a floating bar on top of the Ghost Executor.

-Wait, is that... a health bar?

Then the Ghost Executor attacks and Michael defeats it.

- Okay, I am pretty sure that this was a health bar. Does this mean that I'm in a game? It should have a story but from what I've seen, something is CLEARLY wrong. Wait... The tree. Didn’t it say that all this was made by me? But how? I don't remember making any of this. Better get to the bottom of this. And I think I know just where to start.

Michael manages to get closer to the kingdom when a dark figure emerges from thin air. It looks like another magician but with very dark clothes. And a mask.

-What? Who are you?

-[Insert secret message]. Oh, don't worry about it so much. Soon you won't be able to forget me.

A fight starts but it's not like the other enemies. He is stronger and faster. And he uses this Glitch in the game to fight.

-If I made this game, I might be able to redact the code. This might work!

Nothing changes.

-Why isn't it working? What?! The code reversed the changes by itself?!? What is this glitch? That means that there is only one other way out of this.

Michael starts to change the code constantly to keep the glitch at bay. He has to be concentrated at all times. Luckily this made the glitch character disappear. Apparently, this kept him in here. So now he continues his journey towards the kingdom. When he encounters more of the balls he needs to concentrate more on the shield and not on the glitch. Not to mention when he attacks. He needs to enable the attack controls to even be able to attack.

After that, he manages to create small game objects to save his progress. They’re handy in this situation. When he finally meets the cat he is at the edge of collapsing.

-Finally! But wait... Where is the kingdom?

-...

-Answer me! What is going on!?!

The cat starts to be static again.

-Good work! Your job here is almost done. But you need to keep the Dark Lord's influence from infecting the land again. I am afraid I can't let you leave.

-What? Oh nononono. I can't stay! I can't even hold this in much longer! Wait... That gives me an idea!

Then out of nothing, Michael made a new game object - very tall.

-There. This is an obelisk. It will keep the 'Dark Lord's' influence under control. Now you don't need me. How can I go back home?

-[Insert secret message]. I see. I believe this is our farewell then. See you next time.

And with that Michael fades away.

Michael wakes up in his bed from his alarm. Still a little out of breath, he jumps from his bed in excitement, remembering yesterday.

-That's it! I know what game to make! Ready to see what happens, Oliver?

-\*meows excitedly\*

Then he runs to his computer to start working.

The day flies by in a flash. It is so late, it is dead silent. Even Oliver's asleep. But Michael wants to make the most of any single day, to make it in time, because his idea is quite big for a week of work.

-What time is it? 04:32 already!? Did I have dinner? Better not eat at this hour, but a drink would be nice. Better see what my fridge has in store.

He goes to his kitchen and opens the fridge. There isn't much choice because most of his drinks are energy drinks for the final days.

-Milk! That should work.

He turns around and Oliver spooks him by sitting without doing anything besides looking at him.

-Jesus Christ! Oh, you scared the heck out of me, Oliver! Did I wake you? Here, I think you'll like that as much as I do.

Michael finds himself a glass from above the sink, full of dirty dishes, and takes one of Oliver's bowls. He pours some milk to them and puts it away. They both start to drink. Michael finishes his glass in a matter of seconds.

-Well that was refreshing! I'm gonna head to my bedroom. It's going to be a long day tomorrow and I can't wait!

But as he goes into his room, he finds Oliver sleeping in the same place as before.

-Oliver? Aren't you....? Oh no. The last thing I need right now is a street cat in my house!

He rushes back to the kitchen to find that there is no cat, no bowl and his dirty glass isn't where he left it.

-What? The cat is gone? The bowl is also gone? And my glass is also gone?

He checks above the sink.

-Okay, they're here. But they're...clean? Like no one has used them.

He checks the fridge.

-And the milk hasn't been opened. Am I that tired that I hallucinated all this? Perhaps even dreamt it? No matter, I'll just have another glass of milk and I'm gonna go to bed.

Michael pours himself a glass of milk and puts the milk back. He drinks it with the same thirst and goes to his room.

-Well that was weird. I better go to sleep. If I'm like this or even worse in the next nights, I might lose it! I need to finish this!

With that Michael goes to sleep.

When he wakes up he isn't in his room, nor that mountain. He is somewhere similar to space but he can breathe. There is little to no gravity. It looks beautiful with these stars shining in the distance. Something that you don't see every day.

-Whoa! Beautiful! Maybe this is a better dream than last night!

But then he realizes that he is in the same magician.

-Oh. I am still in the game. But how am I supposed to progress when there isn't anything to stand on?

Right then he passes through an object that looks like solid ground. Just that it's not solid? And in a glitched state too.

-Oh. That's how. Okay, let's do it again.

Then he starts to focus to take control of the glitch once again. Before he notices, he lands on the now solid ground.

-I did it! Now let's create the Obelisk.

He creates another Obelisk but then it suddenly starts to glitch too. It shatters into a million pieces and is sucked into a portal.

-Why isn't this working?

He creates another one. The same thing happens. It glitches, shatters, and is sucked into a portal.

-Well that's a no-go. Probably the glitch has too much power over here. Maybe I can find a way to lower its influence.

He goes to find another way to stop the glitch's influence to go home. He had work to do.

-Wait. What is that?

He looks at a portal below. It looks like it leads to the same mountain from the last dream. But the portal seems to be glitching too.

-That's it! This is the multiverse. I am in between the dimensions! At least in the game that is. So if I jump into this portal it's going to take me to the same mountain where the glitch's influence has already been stopped. That's my ticket home!

So that's what he went and did. He jumped. But instead of going to the mountain, he finds himself at the beginning of the platform.

-Of course. If only it were that easy. The portal is glitched. It won't take me where I want. Some of them could be traps. I better be careful!

Then, after some time of exploring, he finds an archer. He doesn't seem friendly but he isn't glitching nor does he look affected by the glitch.

-State your business.

-"What do I say to him? I don't even know why I am here." I'm looking for a... "He doesn't know that he is in a game. If I say glitch this would sound crazy to him and I'll become a shish kebab!"

-For...?

-...for a creature that slipped from my dimension to other ones. I'm looking to capture it and neutralize it.

-Good try. If anything was in between the multiverse I would know. If you don't have any business here and don't leave, I'll have to bring you to your dimension by force.

-"That didn't go as expected... And I think my only choice now is to... run!"

Michael starts running.

-Hey, come back here!

Michael doesn't stop, he even starts to run faster. A chase breaks down. The archer is more powerful than Michael expected. He can clone and teleport himself making it more difficult to run away from him.

- Hey, I told you to stop! Michael!!!

Michael stops.

-How do you know my name?

-I guard the multiverse. I know everyone and everything.

-Then you know what's happening?

-I do. The glitch, yada yada yada. But I don't know what versions of you are you. So I'll ask again. State your business.

-I am here to track down the glitch in this game so I can go home.

-Was that so hard? I'll show you which portal is stable enough so you can chase it down. Follow me.

Michael follows him.

-So... what's your name? It's a little awkward to call you, even in my head, 'The Archer'.

-My name is [Insert Archer's name]. I am the guardian of the pathways to the multiverse. I know that you aren't exactly from around here, right?

-Yes. I don't know how I came here. This is my second night. I don't know what's causing it. Say, how do you know all that? Aren't you supposed to follow a script or something?

-Usually, yes. But the situation is different. There is a version of you that gets trapped in the mountains and starts to tell his... actually your story. Almost all of the time you find a way to go back and everything returns to script, except there. It's difficult to think about it. That nothing is real. That this is all in your head. That this is just your dream. But there is nothing that I can do about it, nobody can. Here, you are the ruler of everything. You can redact the code. You can practically do anything here.

-I've never looked at it this way. This gives me an idea. I'll try it out later. Why aren't you affected by the glitch? It affected everything I saw until now.

-I don't know. I hope that he skipped this level's game file.

-Not possible. He is here too. Most of the portals don't work and, at least on my side, the ground too.

-Then you might have to face me if we meet again.

-I hope not. With your powers, you might be difficult. It's difficult to even run from you and I'm sure that you weren't really trying to stop me but that you just wanted me to comply.

-That is true. You might have to become stronger. But how?

-If my idea works I might have a fighting chance. But I'm not going to tell you. If the glitch takes over the entire character profile, it'll know what I want to do and probably counter my plan.

-Good idea. We are here. This is the portal you need. It looks unaffected so I think that it wants you to follow it.

-Yeah. Its actions seem as it's planning something special for me. Any idea what it might be?

-Sadly, no. I can see everything in the multiverse but not in the code or character files if the glitch even has a character file. I have no idea what its intentions are nor how to find out.

-Okay then. Wish me luck.

-Good luck. Both here and with the Jam. You're going to need it.

-Thanks.

Michael enters the portal and is getting ready for an ambush. He drops into this new dimension. It's like a cave with organic and thick grass. There is a light coming from somewhere but you don't see quite from where. There are some rocks and flowers that actually glow. Also, it seems that the quality of the environment textures is in vector, not pixel. There isn't an ambush though. It's all silent. Michael is quite confused on why did the glitch let him here if it wasn't for an ambush.

-Nothing. That's odd. Does this glitch want me to capture it? Okay, let's try this again.

He tries to make another Obelisk. It stays for a few seconds. Then it's yet again destroyed.

-Still no. Then I might as well explore my environment. I might find something useful here.

Michael starts to look around and properly take the look.

-Amazing! What even are these things? They are beautiful!

But then the flower glitches.

-Well at least I now know that the glitch is here. Better find a way to neutralize it, fast. Or this place might end up like the kingdom.

And with that, he starts to look deeper to try and find other enemies. But he at first doesn't find any. But he comes across a kind of a jelly.

-What are you? A kind of jelly with a... face? Are you even alive?

Then he accidentally steps on one. It acts like a trampoline. It shoots him in the air.

-Whoa! That can be handy! But here's one that is glitching...

He tries to touch it. And as he touches it, it stops glitching and it looks like there is some very sharp grass growing out of it. The once green face became orange and angry. Michael is hurt by the grass and doesn't feel that good. The grass seems to be poisonous.

-What was that!? Was that a camouflage? Good trick... Ugh! Is this grass poisonous? I don't feel so well.

After some time the poison wears off.

-Phew, at least it isn’t long-lasting. I feel a lot better now. Better be careful. There might be more of those things here.

He continues to search for something. He manages to find some ground that seems to be blocking the progression of the level. It seems to be glitching as well.

-Hmm. This should be able to lead me to the rest of the level. But how do I make it to the other side? Maybe I can redact the code.

He starts to lurk in the code.

-Aah! It seems that it requires 3 objects to open. Let's redact my inventory. Blocked. I can't change it. Well, then I might as well start to look for the items. They can't be far.

But then he seems like he is disappearing again.

-Nononono! Not now! Please let me make a quick save!

Michael tries but fails. He has now faded. He wakes up in his room but it seems to be dark. Oliver is on him and looking at him.

-"Oliver? What is..."

Michael can't move.

-"Why can't I move? Help!"

He can barely breathe. He tries to call for help but no words come out of his mouth. He is terrified!

-"I only heard of this, I never wanted it to happen to me! I'm not ready to have sleep paralysis!!!"

-You need to go back. We need your help, all of us!

Then he seems to have fallen asleep once again. He wakes up in the pathway in the multiverse. He is not in the dimension he was before.

-Again here? So that's what happens if I die. But how did I die? ... There is a timer, isn't there? Okay, I remember where the portal is so let's speed things up.

Michael starts to speed towards the portal when he finds [Insert Archer's name]. He is glitching and doesn't seem to remember the past encounter.

-[Insert Archer's name]? Are you okay?

-[Insert secret message].

-I guess not. Let's see if this plan I had will work. "I just need to tweak the code of my character so I can use glitch powers against the glitch. But how will it affect me? I don't know. But it's that or me turning into a shish kebab."

Michael goes into the code of the Magician and inserts some glitch mechanics. But he will have to use a lot of focus to be able to control it so the glitch might go a little bit off control for a second. He tries to add several mechanics but the script starts to be too unstable. It starts to lag the Magician.

-Oh no! It's too much for the script! It can't handle it! I have to optimize it!

So to make it more optimized he makes it so that only one glitch power can be active at a time.

-Yes, it works! Now, this should be a lot easier!

The fight begins. With his new glitch mechanics, he beats [Insert Archer's name] with ease.

-Okay. Now I have to hurry and find the 3 items in that dimension before the time runs out. I don't want to know what will happen if I waste all my lives.

When Michael gets to the new dimension it isn’t the same – it’s a maze. Looks like the glitch is protecting itself by slowing Michael down.

-What? It wasn’t like that when I was here before. The door must be still present. Better start looking for the objects.

He looks high and low and manages to find the objects. Every object was guarded by enemies but with these new glitch abilities, it’s easier than ever to beat them.

-Alright, that wasn’t so hard. Please tell me that I have enough time.

He goes to the wall. By showing it the items it glitches out and disappears revealing the cat on the other side.

-Why are you doing this to me, Oliver?

-Great job. Now – to keep this land out of the Dark Lord’s influence.

-Yeah, yeah, I know the drill. But why is all this happening in the first place?

-…

-I should have known. You’re just an NPC. You don’t answer questions.

Michael spawns an Obelisk. It stays this time.

-Glad to know this is over once again.

Oliver starts to glitch. And the Magician starts to fade.

-[Insert secret message]

Michael wakes up in his room. Oliver is above him looking hungry.

-Why is it this…. No! I slept over my alarm!

-\*meow\*?

-You’re first, don’t worry.

-\*meow\*!

Oliver goes to the kitchen exited.

-Why did I sleep over my alarm though?

-\*meow\*?

-Yeah, yeah. I’m coming.

Michael goes out of his room and into the kitchen. He takes from under the sink the cat food and pours some into Oliver’s bowl. Oliver starts to eat and Michael goes back to his room.

-Now, where was I on the game?

Another day passes like it was nothing. There are some energy drinks on Michael’s desk.

-Man, I feel like I’ll pass out at any moment in front of the desk. Better get ready for sleep. I’m no good in this condition.

Michael goes to the bathroom to brush his teeth. When he looks at the mirror he doesn’t see his reflection but Oliver’s.

-Whoa, what?

It vanishes and is now just Michael in the mirror.

-Okay?

He brushes his teeth.

-Man, I smell! When was the last time I had a shower? Should I have one now? Hm…. Why not? It maybe can help with sleep.

He goes in and showers. After he finishes, he sees Oliver waiting for him to go out by the door. When Michael sees him he starts moving towards the kitchen.

-Oliver? Where are you going?

Michael starts to follow Oliver. He doesn’t seem to be in the kitchen.

-Oh no, I thought I locked the cat door for the night. He might be outside.

Michael goes outside and sees Oliver sitting as he was waiting for him.

-Why can’t you save us?

Then a lightning strikes and Oliver disappears. Michael is horrified.

-How is this possible? Oliver can’t talk. Am I dreaming? Did I slip in the shower and hit my head?

He decides to check.

-Ouch! Nope, not dreaming. Better get back inside before I catch a cold.

When Michael goes back inside he is greeted, again by Oliver. Michael freezes in his place.

-Can you talk?

-\*meow\*?

-Oh, thank God! Whatever that was, it scared the heck out of me! Do you want some milk?

Oliver jumps in excitement.

-\*meow\*!

-Okay then.

He opens the fridge and takes out the milk.

-But not for me this time. I need to see if it’s from the milk.

He pours the milk in Oliver’s bowl and goes to his room to sleep. But as he enters he finds Oliver, again, sleeping on his bed.

-What!?!

He goes back to the kitchen to check. There isn’t milk in Oliver’s bowl and it’s warm again. Like the door to the backyard hasn’t been opened.

-Nononono. Why is this happening?

He checks the backyard. It’s raining.

-It wasn’t raining before. That’s strange. Okay, better go back to bed and forget about it.

And that’s what he does. He goes to his room and goes to sleep.

He wakes up in a cage. He seems to be in some sort of a village but still in the same dimension as before.

-\*sigh\* It wasn’t from the milk.

-What are you talking about?

There is a young lady standing in front of his cell. She seems to be wearing a hoodie.

-I’m gonna get you out of here.

-Okay.

She frees him from his cell and they both start running from the guards. After they seem to have lost them he looks and, indeed, he is still the Magician.

-Thanks, I guess. What were they planning to do with me?

-I don’t know. People around have been acting strange all of a sudden.

-Hostile?

-Yes. How did you know?

-Just a lucky guess. How are you unaffected?

She starts to glitch.

-[Insert secret message]

-Of course. That’s why.

A new battle breaks down. She seems to be tough as she is a witch. She is equipped not only with her magic but, much like the Magician, with glitch powers too. She is tough for the Magician but manages to beat her.

-Okay, where to next?

Then he sees that she was holding an envelope.

-A to-do list! Smart. Let’s see… Picking up lunch…. Freeing the Magician…. Telling him where to go? And where is this supposed to be?

Then he sees that there is also a map with her. He picks it up.

-Oh, a map! Okay, there is kind of a chamber marked “The gemstone’s chamber”. So, that’s where I’m supposed to go? Whatever you say, trusty map.

He goes towards the chamber. It isn’t long before he finds the Ghost Executor from the first dimension.

-Where did you come from?

-Not your business. What is your business however is this portal behind you.

He turns around.

-What? Where?

He shields himself as the Ghost Executor tries to attack him from behind and shove him into the glitching portal.

-Hah! You really thought that I would fall for that Glitch? Grow up.

Then a fight starts but more portals form around them.

-So it’s an arena. This should be interesting.

He starts to fight the Ghost Executor and more of him start to come out from the portals.

-Okay, now this seems a little unfair, don’t you think?

All of them start to say it at the same time.

-I think it’s perfect!

Michael tries something new. He goes into the script of the Magician once again and adds a third glitch mechanic.

-Okay, want to see so desperate what I’m capable of?

-Bring it!

He pulses a powerful wave that deletes anything it touches, including the portals. The ground however seems unaffected.

-[Insert secret message]

-Great, at least I’ll not fall to my death by doing this. Let’s move on, shall we?

And so, Michael pushes forward through the enemies that he fought until now. Then he finally manages to find the chamber.

-Ha! That was easier than I thought!

Then the ground shakes and the way inside is covered with door/ground requiring 7 items to unlock.

-Me and my big mouth…

He starts to search for the items. All of them are, again, guarded. But when he reaches the last spot turns out they aren’t enough.

-What? But there aren’t any places that I haven’t checked out. Where are the last 2 items?

Then a portal opens in front of him that is glitched.

-Oh, I get it. You want me to look for the items across the multiverse.

The path behind him closes with ground that requires infinite items to unlock.

-So I guess that you don’t give me any other choice so… Let’s dive in.

Michael goes through the portal. For a minute he is somewhere dark and full of glitching matter. It tries to tear him apart.

-Ugh… NO!!!

He manages to shield himself.

-Hope that the shield will hold.

And it does. Soon the glitch calms down and everything starts to go dark. He is thrown into the path to the multiverse.

-Okay, a familiar place. Let’s get this over with so I can go back and see what is in this chamber.

He goes on to find the 2 items. The place seems to be like a giant maze.

-Another maze? How am I going to be able to do all this in time?

When he passes through the maze he finds a few puzzles but he manages to go through them.

-Alright! That was refreshing! What was I looking for? Oh, yeah. The 2 items.

Soon his search is interrupted by [Insert Archer’s name].

-Hey there [Insert Archer’s name]. How are you doing?

-[Insert secret message].

-So, the same.

He tries to fight him off but it’s not easy. Soon though, he is beaten and Michael can continue his search. A minute later Michael manages to find the item next to an edge and a portal to the first dimension.

-Don’t tell me you… Come on! I don’t have time for this!

He goes through anyway. He is again in this dark glitched place. Now a whisper can be heard.

-[Insert secret message].

Now Michael knew how to get through this, so he activates his shield.

-Ugh! I’m starting to get sick of these portals.

Soon he is thrown to the same mountain, by the Obelisk.

-Okay, so now I have to find the remaining item. It should be around here somewhere.

He tries to go forward but it is blocked by an invisible wall.

-What? But I went through the other path. There wasn’t an object. I guess I have to go back.

And so he goes back to the tree from where this all started. The whole place has changed. It isn’t the same. There are some mazes and it looks different.

-This explains it. But how is this possible? The glitch does not affect this place. The main objective takes priority. I may not have enough time to check the Obelisk now but maybe later. The object comes first.

The maze goes further and further. How is this possible is still unknown. Michael finally manages to go to the tree.

-At least this part looks the same. Now, where is this object?

He starts looking. He tries to go even further but there is another invisible wall.

-Okay, so if this isn’t the way, there must be only one place where this object can be.

He goes to the tree and makes an explosion. Nothing happens. He tries again. Still nothing.

-If it isn’t here… then where is it? Maybe I missed it in the maze.

He goes back. The maze is gone.

-What? But how?!? The glitch is gone from here! It must be! Unless…

He rushes back to the Obelisk.

-What is this exactly? What is wrong with the Obelisk?

He goes into the Obelisk’s code.

-Wait, everything is intact? But there is something else here. The object! It used the power of the Obelisk to make itself hard to find! Okay, that should do it. Better go back and see what was in that chamber.

The object is now in Michael’s possession and the Obelisk is operational. Michael uses the Obelisk’s power to open another portal directly to the chamber in the other dimension. He goes through. All of this struggle better not be for nothing.

-This better not be for nothing. Let's see what is in here.

The door opens and reveals a glitching crystal just like the one on the Magician’s staff.

-Why is this here? I have it already.

The crystal then disappears.

-I guess I wasn’t supposed to have it until now. But then what am I supposed to do here? The time must be almost out. Better create an Obelisk and finish this.

The Obelisk rises and everything looks normal.

-I guess that was it.

Just then a different portal opens and sucks the Magician as he fades away.

-What the hell is this thing?!?!?

He falls into the portal and wakes up. Right after that, his alarm starts ringing.

-Okay…. That was disturbing. Better get back to work.

He turns his computer on and starts working on the game.

The day is at its end. The computer after a few long days starts to lag and the keyboard starts to fail. Michael is at the edge of his energy and can barely move at this point.

-Cmon……saaaave… At least…. Let me….. save….

Michael falls asleep at his desk. There is a power surge while the computer is saving. The computer is shut down and the power seems to go off afterward.

As strange as it seems Michael doesn’t wake up as the Magician. He doesn’t wake up at any of the dimensions. He is like a ghost, zooming in and out of all the places in the game.

It seems he is in front of a console of some sort. He is not in a dimension but looks like an infected file, possibly corrupted. There is a text all over but it’s constantly changing. Seems like some parts of it stop to form some kind of words but then they disappear. (The words that make sense are the beginning of the Glitch monologue: “Chained. That's the word that explains it best. I've always been chained. Chained by circumstances. Chained by others. Before I knew it my home had become a prison. No matter how much I changed it, it was the same. I want to change it but I can't. I want to break the chains keeping me in here.” The other words are part of an encrypted image: “He first sees the Magician in the kingdom from the first dimension. He is little. Like 12 or 13 years old. He is practicing magic and it seems that there is another boy at his side struggling with the same spell.”)

-What is happening? What is this?

Then he sees himself in the second dimension but there is something in the corner of his eye that he can’t fully focus on.

-So this is how it looks from a third-person perspective. But I was there. How can I see this from a third perspective? And what is this in the corner of my vision?

He is solving a puzzle in the maze. Then it seems that he is opening the door to the chamber. The unclear thing in the corner of his vision seems to change but is still not clear enough to understand what it is.

-Okay, this is scary at this point. What is this in the corner of my vision?!

After that, he is in the console again. Absolutely the same is happening. His vision is filled with text that is changing constantly. There are forming different words than before but they disappear too. (The words that make sense are the second part of the Glitch monologue: “There is something inside me. Banging on the wall between my consciousness and reality. Something that wants to live. To be free. This 'call' from the inside drives me crazy. This place is filled with so much pain. All this drives me to the edge of insanity. I can't bear it anymore.” The other is an encoded image: “The Magician is over somebody, very hurt, trying to save him. The man looks familiar. The Magician looks heartbroken and the person seems like he is dying despite the magic. There is a man in the background that is unconscious.”)

- What is the meaning of this? Why am I seeing this? Do I need to see this?

Then he sees a white space where the Magician is. He is currently unconscious. The glitch can be seen in the far distance. Michael doesn’t know where this is or when. It seems as it could be now.

-Is this where the portal took the Magician or is this where the Magician is when I am awake? I can’t let the glitch get the Magician. It could potentially still affect me.

He tries to make the Magician move but eventually fails. He is just a spectator in a first-row seat. He is just a ghost. As the glitch goes to the Magician, Michael is transported elsewhere.

He has been transported to the console again. There is text, again, all over his vision but doesn’t seem to write anything. It’s constantly changing. Every letter is not the same. At some places, it seems like for a brief moment a word is formed but then disappears. (They form the finale part of the Glitch Monologue:” I know that the chance will come. The chance to answer the call. But I can't do it alone. I need help but will I be able to wait for it?”. The other is an encoded image: “The new scene is a battle between the Magician and the Dark Lord. It’s a heated battle inside the castle but something is very odd. The Dark Lord seems to be smoking(Don’t be silly! It’s like his head was on fire.). Like he is affected by something. There is something else. A spirit that watches from afar. It was the same person that was dying a couple of visions before. No one seems to be able to see the spirit. He seems sad and heartbroken like he has seen this a billion times. There is a glitch in the center of the spirit but that doesn’t seem to bother it.”)

-What is all this? Is this how the glitch works? Is this Glitch’s script file?

Michael then wakes up. He is disorientated and still tired.

-How did I get here?

He goes to his bed and goes back to sleep. Sadly that isn’t for very long as his clock rings after 10 minutes.

-Great. Let's see what I have to do for today.

He goes to his computer and powers it on. It doesn’t work.

-What? Why won’t you power on?

He goes to the lights in the corner of his room and starts to flip the switch.

-Strange. Power’s out. Wait…. Power’s…. out?! Did I turn off my computer last night?!

Just then, the power comes back on and Michael, in a panic, goes to check if the game files are intact.

-Oh please, please, please! Please be all ok and not corrupted. I don’t want to go back to the drawing board!

His PC boots up and he opens his game.

-Shit! Some files are corrupted! Please let this be repairable! Phew, just some of the textures. This could have gotten a lot worse! Thankfully, I have a backup of them. It’s an easy fix. Now just to save and continue working.

The day flies by and there isn’t any progress.

-Okay. I was wrong. There were more corrupted files. Files of the Engine. I reinstalled it. It was a newer version. My project could not convert correctly. I began the project again. … So this did send me to the drawing board, huh. It’s going to be a long couple of days. I guess this means that I should start transferring the things I can manually. Better get an energy drink and start recreating.

Michael goes to the fridge and takes a can of energy drink. He gulps it down on the spot and takes another one for later. He goes back to his room.

He starts to recreate the game non-stop and the next night he is back where he left off. For a few days, he only works. He sleeps around only an hour per night and is high on energy drinks. He is only working on the game. Because of that, he bought Oliver automated bowl dispensers for food and water.

By day six of the Jam, he is mostly done. He just needs to finish the last level and write the credits. Because of that, he decides to go to sleep early.

-After all this, I need a little more sleep. Tomorrow is the final stretch. Better be at least a bit more awake. And after the Jam is over, sign me up for sleep marathons! Maybe I can win something from this…

He loses his train of thought as he starts to fall asleep in his bed. He wakes up somewhere dark. It’s all like a void with a white floor but everything is covered in a dark glitching mist. He can’t see anything further than a meter.

-What is going on? Is this the white space I saw before? Glitch, what did you do?

He realizes that he is in the Magician’s body.

-Okay, I am in the Magician. At least I have that.

He tries to stand up but the mist hurts him. He shields himself but the mist is attacking the shield rapidly – it can’t last long.

-Better find an exit quickly! The shield won’t last long.

He goes left but it doesn’t seem to be going anywhere. When he goes right he instantly sees some maze-like platforms. Eventually, he finds a portal and goes through it without a second thought.

He is transported to a dark forest. The sky is lit up by a blood-red moon.

-Okay, this looks kind of interesting. Let's see what this place has to offer.

He starts to explore – it is quite empty in there. There isn’t almost anything but the forest. After a while, he stumbles upon a campfire. It seems to be empty but the fire is lit.

-Well this is odd. Better wait here to see if somebody will come back. Let's hope they’re not hostile – I might get something useful.

And so he does. He waits. And waits. And waits. Then it suddenly hit him.

-\*gasp\* Oh no! I forgot I had a timer! Okay, forget that. Better move! Now!

He starts to run in the same direction. Soon he stumbles on a similar campsite. The fire isn’t lit but there is something odd about the campfire – it’s covered in roots. But the campfire seems to be put shortly before him – it’s still smoking.

-Okay, what is this? It seems like I’ve been running for miles and I am back HERE?!? How did these roots get here?

The ground starts shaking. Out of the ground appears a giant flying eye that was underneath the campfire.

-Those roots were nerves!? Gross!

It starts attacking him but he easily beats it.

-Still no sign of the glitch. That’s odd. Too odd.

Then as he starts to run to see what he can find, he sees the red moon glitching.

-Why would the Glitch, glitch out the moon? How does that make sense?

He continues and stumbles on a few lit places. When he steps into the light it hurts him so much that he dies almost instantly.

Michael wakes up in his room still trying to process what happened that killed him.

-“What happened? I just stepped into the light and…. Oh…”

Oliver is seen above him. He still can’t move or talk.

-C’mon, don’t give up on us just yet! We need you!

Michael seems to dive back into the dream/game thing. He is right before he crossed into the light.

-How am I here? I didn’t make a save.

He turns around to see a checkpoint.

-Phew, autosave saves the day! At least I don’t have to run these distances again. And this probably restarted the clock! Now, how am I going to protect myself from the light?

He goes through the light with his shield. The shield is heavily damaged and almost falls apart but it works.

-I can’t be a long time out in the light. Better avoid it if I can.

He encounters multiple light puzzles. There are enemies along the way that seem to be glitching and regenerating while in the light. The regeneration can go above the original HP given. And also, they have one very powerful attack when they get out. It almost whipped Michael out a few times when he wasn’t using his shield.

-This light is so rigged! I cannot focus enough to make it stop! I’m gonna have to push through!

And so he does. The enemies are too much at a point and too overpowered but it is possible to push through. Michael manages to get past them and reaches the end of the level. There is however a problem. To spawn the Obelisk, he has to step into the light.

-How am I supposed to spawn an Obelisk if I can’t be at the minimum range? My shield won’t last long enough. What if I try instead of turning off the light, to weaken it? Hope it’ll work at least long enough for me to be able to spawn an Obelisk and finish this.

Michael manages to weaken the light enough so that he’ll be able to spawn an Obelisk. After he spawns it the light stops hurting him. But except that, nothing happens.

-What now? Am I supposed to look for something? A portal maybe?

The Obelisk starts to behave strangely. It isn’t glitching but the aura is different. It is not the blue aura it had before but a dark purple aura.

-What is going on? Let me check… Access denied?!? Somebody has hijacked at least one of the Obelisks to be able to gain access to the template. But who? The glitch is neutralized by them and any other Game object has no access. Except…

Just then a portal that leads to the Kingdom dimension pops up behind the Magician and appears to be glitching. Then a glitching head appears in front of the Obelisk. It is the Dark Lord.

-[Insert secret message]. We meet again. Ready to finish this? I’ll be waiting.

The glitching head goes away.

-I guess that this is how this will end. Should I do it?

The player has a choice. If the player chooses not to do anything, Michael will just wake up and finish his game. After that, he’ll just go to sleep after he has submitted his game and nothing will happen from that point on. *Michael had a wonderful adventure to keep him going through the Jam. He never got to have another set of dreams like this nor understand these ones better. But then this was just a dream. A distraction from reality. And an opportunity for self-reflection in life. Maybe there was a lesson in all of this. Hidden in plain sight. He’ll miss them. And now he wants to make a game about it.*

However, if the player chooses to go through the portal – he will go. On the other side of the portal, there is the same dimension with the kingdom and everything. It looks peaceful for now. Then the place starts to glitch.

-Did the person disable the Obelisk? I guess I’ll have to just hold it in control for now.

He tries but fails. The glitch is still going.

-What? Why isn’t it working?

Then the cat from before goes to him. The cat is heavily glitching.

-Thanks for your help. Now, you can leave.

Then the Magician starts to fade away.

-Wait what does this mean?! What does it meaaaaaaaaaaan!!!!!!!!!!!

Michael wakes up in his bed, terrified and full of questions.

-What does it mean? I guess I’ll have to figure it out tonight. For now, let's finish the Jam!

He makes it in time. The game for the Jam is finished and ready to be submitted almost an hour early. Everything is tested and working properly.

- It’s amazing for a game that came from a dream. That was for sure my Dream Jam. Let's hope that other people like it too.

He submits it.

-It’s time to sleep I guess. Let's get this thing over with too!

He goes to sleep happy and ready to finish the dream. He wakes up right where he left off. In the Magician in the first dimension with the cat glitching in front of him.

-Will you tell me what all of this means?

-Why tell you when I can show you!

Michael suddenly feels a pain in his chest. He isn’t sure what it is but the pain is killing him. He drops down to the floor unable to breathe from pain. Soon he dies. His spirit unlike the other times lifts from the Magician’s body. The cat glitches into the Dark Lord who seems unstable. He goes to the Magician and he disappears. The Magician starts to rise and glitch. The scene is horrifying. He suddenly glitches into the Dark Lord, who seems to be stable now.

-How clever of you. To use my powers against me. I couldn’t think of that. But now…

He turns toward the spirit of Michael.

-You. Have. Nothing. And now. Your body. Is mine.

The Dark Lord starts to fade out, much as Michael faded before in the Magician’s body. Michael tries to stop him but how can he? He is just a spirit.

-What are you doing? No! You can’t do that! Not when I’m still here!

Michael manages to use the glitch’s power to keep the new Dark Lord here.

-What are you…? No! NO!

Michael tries to go back into the Magician’s body and take control of it. He goes charging inside and the glitch seems to be struggling for a second. But then Michael is rejected out of the body.

-I am afraid that this is not possible. You might have managed to contain me in here but that’s it. No more games!

-\*gentle laugh\*. Like you said – No more games!

Michael seems to be pissed off at the glitch. He doesn’t even try to get back inside the body of the Magician. Instead, he manages to spawn a copy of the Magician with all of the collectibles, like before. He goes inside.

-Ready to fight? One on one.

-Are you?

The fight starts. Michael has lost all of the glitch powers due to the Obelisk that is under the glitch’s control. He won’t let Michael use any glitch abilities and weaken him.

-“If I want to win this, I’ll have to take back control of the Obelisks to be able to gain back the glitch abilities. Until then, I have to survive.”

The Glitch struggles to fight him one on one because it is concentrated on spawning other enemies that are on its side. It is weakened because of this, but not enough so that it could be beaten. Michael’s only hope of returning home is to find the Obelisks, take back control over the Game itself and delete the glitch game file. He manages to find and take back control over all four Obelisks and now he can control the game.

-There! This ends NOW!

-NOOOOOOOOO!!!!!![Insert secret message]

Everything fades out to white for a second. After that, Michael sees himself facing the kingdom by the tree from the first night. Oliver comes.

-I don’t think, with this glitch in the way, that I got time to stop and take in how beautiful the game actually is.

-If by ‘game’ you mean the view, then I agree. Thank you for helping us. I can’t tell you how much this means to all of us.

-It goes both ways. It was nice despite all of the chaos. I’m going to miss this place.

-You are welcome to come back whenever you want. So, what now?

-I guess that I’m going to go home.

-But this is your home.

-Then I guess I’ll go on another adventure.

-In that case, I think that this is our goodbye.

-Goodbye. It was an honor helping you.

Michael then fades out. But the screen is still in the dream. The cat can be seen to glitch a little bit – the glitch is not dead.

-Ready for a round two?