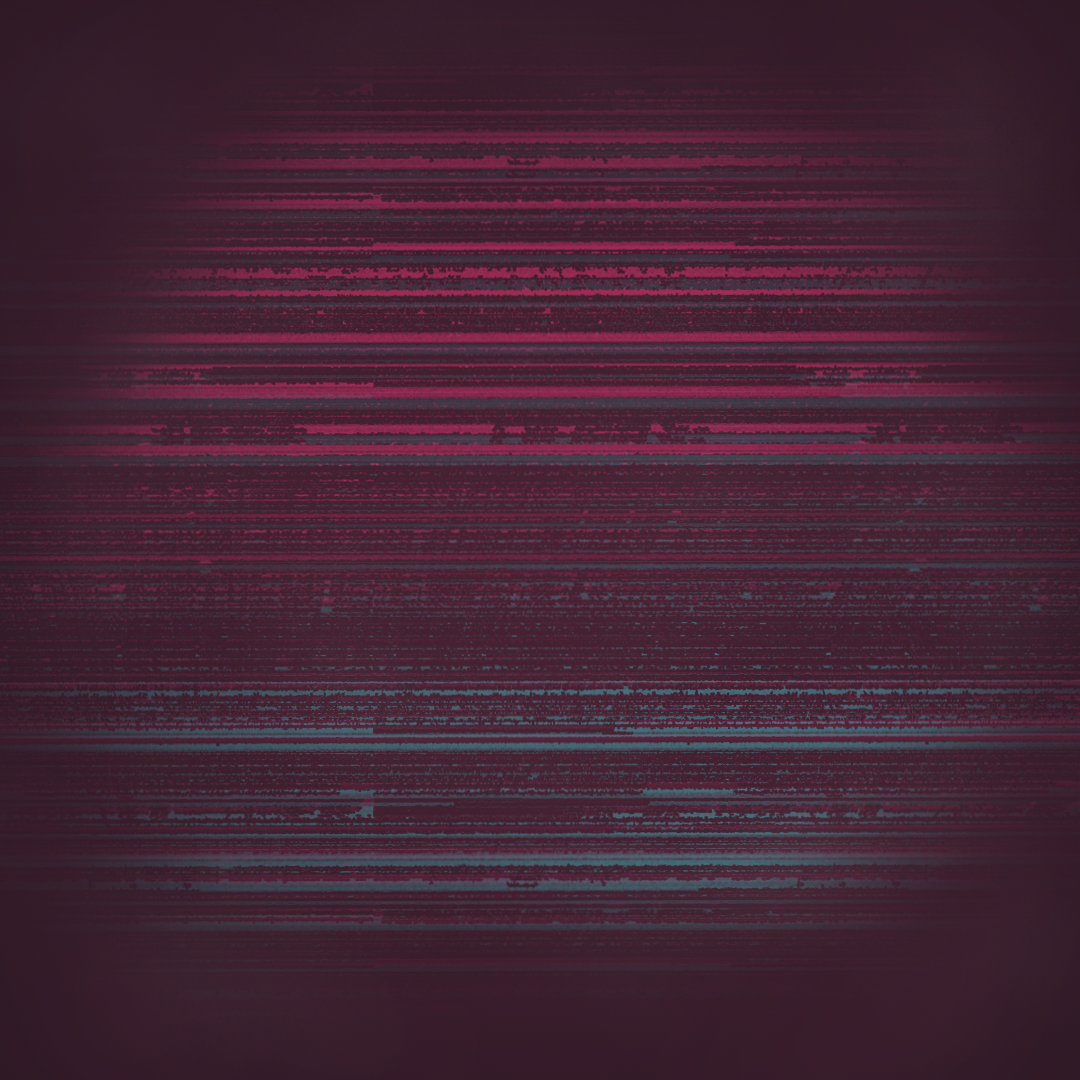




**Ars Amatoria**

***Game Design Document***

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Table des matières

[Base Summary 3](#_Toc175264330)

[High Concept 3](#_Toc175264331)

[Formal Information 3](#_Toc175264332)

[Overview 3](#_Toc175264333)

[Gameplay Summary 4](#_Toc175264334)

# Base Summary

## High Concept

A young man time travels back to a “checkpoint” just before talking to his crush, each time with the knowledge of the previous failed attempts.

## Formal Information

**Genre:** Interactive Fiction

**Type:** Text-based modified parser

**Players:** Single Player

**Game Length:** Undefined (based on player’s choices) – subject to change once the complete story is written.

**Platform:** Browser-playable game (keyboard input necessary) – itch.io

**Demographic:** Late teenagers-young men who grew with social media dating advice.

## Overview

In *Ars Amatoria*, a seemingly simple conversation with a crush, spirals into a disturbing exploration of manipulation and toxic dating advice. This first-person, text-based interactive fiction thrusts players into the role of a young man who, after every failed attempt to win over his crush, is sent back in time to a "checkpoint" just before the encounter. The game’s innovative parser system, reminiscent of Hangman and Wordle, offers word recommendations that subtly guide players, making it accessible to those unfamiliar with traditional text-based games.

What starts as an innocent attempt to connect with a crush quickly becomes an unnerving experience as the game forces the player to enact behaviours typical of misguided "alpha male" advice found on social media. The narrative, full of short, punchy segments, keeps players constantly typing, searching for the right words to progress, only to find themselves trapped in a loop of increasingly uncomfortable and morally questionable actions.

The minimalistic, modern UI enhances the eerie atmosphere, with ambient sounds and effects deepening the sense of unease. As the story unfolds, players must grapple with the realization that they are not just playing a game but are being manipulated into behaviours that reflect the darker side of societal norms.

*Ars Amatoria* is not just a game; it's a commentary on the toxic advice prevalent in today's digital age, making players question their actions and the consequences of following the wrong path. With its roots in Ovid’s pickup advice and influences from the game Aisle, *Ars Amatoria* subverts the dating game genre, standing out as a disturbing and thought-provoking experience in the world of interactive fiction.

# Gameplay Summary