

ASSIGNMENT: GAME DESIGN DOCUMENT

Advanced Game Design
GDI3300.1

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Table of Contents

Game Overview	2
Game Title	2
Summary of Storyline	2
Core Philosophy	3
Characters	4
Genre and Perspective	8
Target Audience	8
Influences and Market Competition	9
Target Platforms and Constraints.....	9
Game Engine/ Toolset.....	9
Gameplay & Mechanics	10
Goals	10
Rules.....	11
Boundaries	13
Challenges	13
Feedback	15
Accessibility.....	17
UI Elements	18
Game Lore	20
Game World.....	20
World Culture.....	20
World History	21
Power Dynamics of the World	21
Level Design	22
Flow Chart.....	22
Level Design Sketches	23
Game Level Encounters.....	26
The spine of the level	28
Golden Path of the level.....	29
Level Design Reference Images	30
References	37

Game Overview

Game Title

Souls of the Damned: The Rise Against the Undead

The name "Souls of the Damned" is meant to capture the dark and ominous tone of the game, as well as the central theme of the story - the loss of the souls of the kingdom's citizens. The addition of "The against the undead" emphasizes the player's role as Ethan and is the primary focus of the game's storyline.

Overall, "Souls of the Damned: The Rise against the Undead" is a name that would immediately capture the attention of players and convey the epic and exciting adventure that awaits them in the game.

Summary of Storyline

A boy and an old lady who had been shunned by society as witches, lived looking after each other in a cottage deep in the woods. Once every 2 weeks the boy comes to a village at the end of the forest to refill their ration stocks. It is from this village that the old lady took commissions for various ominous jobs to make a living for herself and the boy. As time went by the old lady got bedridden and couldn't take on jobs anymore as her body became fragile with her old age. One day a civilian from the village who had been giving jobs to the old lady came running to the cottage looking for the witch as they see the old lady to be, for help. As the civilian told the situation was an army of dead led by a demon wraith has been attacking kingdoms and castles around turning people into stone statues with a mere touch. No mortal army could stop them. But the witch refused this request as she couldn't move as she could before. Listening to the frustration in the tone of voice of the civilian, the boy asked the old lady that even with or without her help, he'd try almost everything he had learned from the lady to stop this army once and for all. Unable to stop the boy from going on his own the old lady agreed to help the boy with her psychic ability to look after the boy by using a magical globe for communication between the two. As the witch has told the boy, dead souls are weak against pure salt as pure salt is an extract from the sea. With all the preparation and the globe to communicate with the old lady, the boy whose name is revealed as "Ethan".

The boy went into a castle which got recently been attacked by the army of dead through its catacombs and for some reason an innate power within the boy was in the awakening phase as he could hear memories left with objects (Soul Bound) as well as could see soul imprints that are connected to objects (Soul Vision) as he progresses his way through to the demon wraith. Along his adventure, he finds out that this demon wraith was created by the hatred towards humanity, loneliness and despair which had been swallowing the old lady

which later revealed as the grandmother of the boy, who hated the people and officials who killed her son and his spouse labelling them as witches only to leave behind their son, the grandson with her. With time and seeing his grandson growing into a fine man, the old lady's feelings of uneasiness were subdued and she thought she wiped out the wraith which she had created with her negative feelings but failing to do so the wraith had become imbued with negative energy within societies he had turned himself to a form of a demon lord who was capable of raising an army of dead for his disposal and stole souls of people who he attacked while petrifying them. To undo her mistake, the old lady in the end sacrifices herself as the wraith was once created with part of the negative feelings embedded in her soul it was clinging onto life with the connection it shares with the old lady's soul which resulted in all the lost souls were returned to their rightful owners undoing the petrification curse which was cast upon people once their soul was taken by the demon lord. With his newfound prowess and his true identity revealed to him, the main character "Ethan" choose to help people in need and went on his own adventure to look for people like himself as people with powers can be looked down upon by society as misfits and can turn into the dark side as a result like his own grandmother. So as his parting gift for his grandmother, his resolution is to travel across the country and educate people like himself on the responsibilities that come with the baggage of their powers.

Core Philosophy

The story mentioned above shows how the old lady's negative feelings led to the creation of the demon wraith, which caused harm to many people. However, in the end, she takes responsibility for her actions and sacrifices herself to undo the curse and return the lost souls to their rightful owners. Additionally, Ethan chooses to use his powers to help people and educate them on their responsibilities, making sure that no one would share the path his grandmother had to go in their life. The story highlights the consequences of negative emotions and actions but also shows that it is possible to make amends and use our abilities for good.

Characters

Ethan (Main Character): Playable

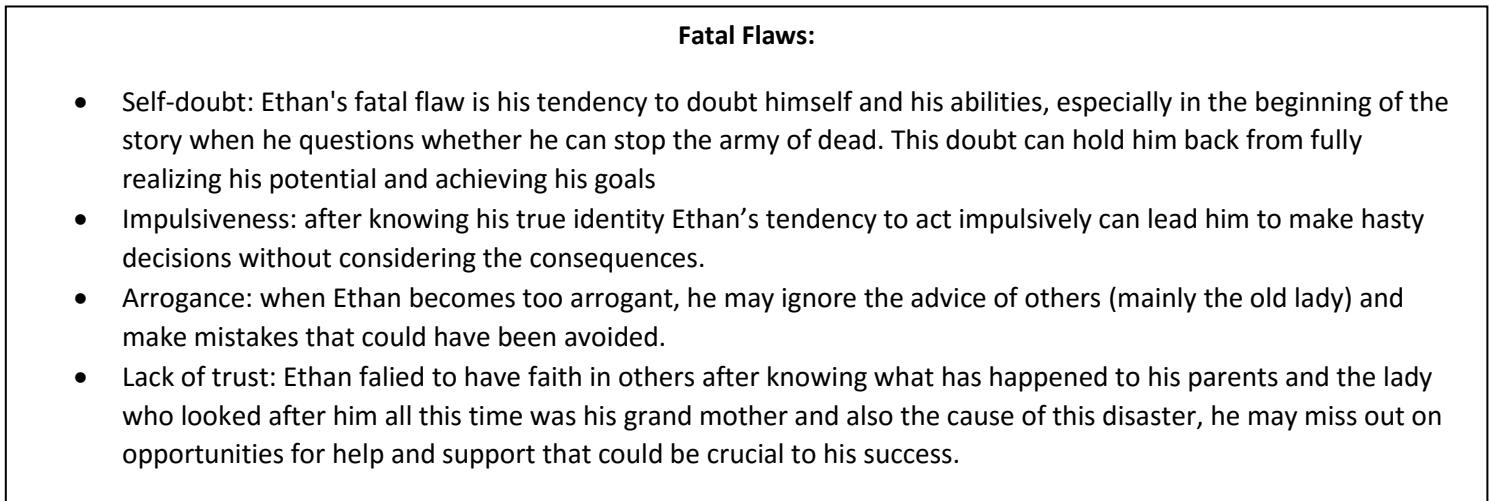
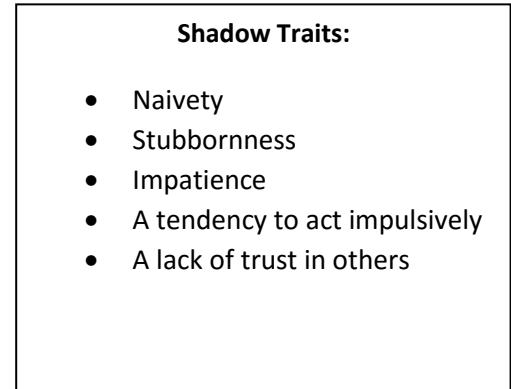
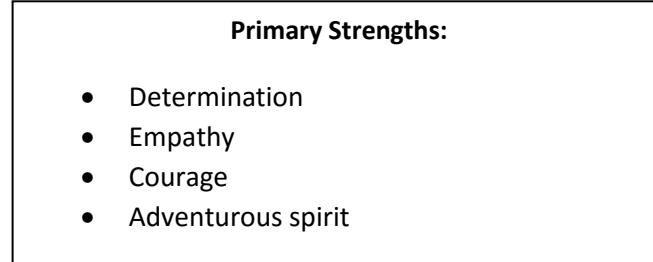
Ethan's character appears to be a young man with a lean build and a serious demeanour. He has dark hair and piercing blue eyes that reflect his determination and resilience. His clothing is practical and functional, consisting of leather boots, a long coat, and trousers that allow for ease of movement. He carries a backpack with him that contains all his necessary supplies for his journey. He also wears a pendant around his neck that once belonged to the old lady which was given to him as a protective charm by the lady when leaving. The pendant serves as a reminder of her sacrifice and motivates Ethan to continue on his path of helping others like himself later in the game. Overall, his appearance reflects his strength, resourcefulness, and unwavering sense of purpose.

General traits

- Brave
- Determined
- Compassionate
- Resourceful
- Curious
- Resilient
- Empathetic
- Intelligent
- Self-sufficient
- Independent



Character Diamond



Agatha (Old Lady/ Grand Mother of the main character): NPC

The name Agatha is derived from Greek and means "good-hearted" or "kind", which represents the old lady's caring nature towards the boy and her willingness to take on ominous jobs to support them. Additionally, the name also has an air of wisdom and experience, which fits well with the old lady's psychic abilities and her role as a mentor to the boy.

She is an elderly woman, with wrinkles and age spots on her face and hands. Moreover, she possesses long, wavy grey hair, tied up in a braid. She wears a long, flowing robe with earthy tones like brown, green, or grey while carrying a staff, decorated with symbols or jewels.

General traits

- Wise
- Strong-willed
- Protective
- Independent
- Psychic
- Mysterious
- Caring
- Resilient
- Creative
- Compassionate



Maelstrom (Demon wraith who became the Demon lord/ Main villain of the story): NPC

Maelstrom is tall and imposing, with an ethereal quality to his appearance. His skin is a sickly grey colour, with glowing red eyes and sharp, pointed teeth. He wears a tattered black cloak that billows behind him and carries a staff that crackles with dark energy. His voice is deep and menacing, with an otherworldly quality that sends chills down the spine of those who hear it.

General traits

- Ruthless
- Manipulative
- Charismatic
- Powerful



Genre and Perspective

This game primarily combines action and adventure game elements in it with RPG progression elements. The game will follow a third-person perspective which will further allow players to see the character's actions and movements as well as the surrounding sceneries and environmental designs and layouts which encourage the players to explore each game level. Moreover, game levels will follow a semi-open world platformer kind of layout similar to games like 'God of War', 'Tomb Raider' and 'Uncharted'. Character advancements and upgrades, where players must level up the main character, gain new powers, and upgrade their weapons, equipment and skills will include RPG aspects into the game where the players will have to choose what skills and equipment should be upgraded or dismantled to craft new weapons and types of equipment based on their gameplay preferences as material scattered throughout the game world would not be infinite. Moreover, there are puzzle-solving components combined with the explorations of game levels which can be seen as platforms in this game that players must complete in order to advance the plot or uncover hidden objects. The game graphics will mainly focus on fantasy style that follows a fantasy art style such as games like 'The Witcher', 'Skyrim' and 'Elden Ring' and will not focus on realism factors as much.

Target Audience

Based on the dark tone of the driving plot of the game as well as the combat elements and elements of horror and thriller which have been included in the gameplay, this game will be more focused towards a target audience who are above the 16 age category. The above-mentioned primary audience for the game will be gamers who prefer action-adventure games with RPG components. Moreover, this target audience will also enjoy the semi-open world platformer gameplay, the character and equipment advancement systems and the puzzle-solving elements of the game as well as every bit of exploration within the game. Appreciating atmospheric, immersive games like "The Witcher", "Dark Souls" and "Legend of Zelda", this community will find the dark, menacing tone and fantasy art style that soothes well with the gameplay of the game to be intriguing. Additionally, Players that appreciate following their character's actions and moves in the game environment while admiring scenery will find the third-person perspective of the game to pique their interest in the gameplay experience.

Influences and Market Competition

The game is inspired by action-adventure games with RPG progression systems like "The Witcher" and "The Legend of Zelda". The semi-open world platformer gameplay is also similar to "God of War" and "Uncharted". The game's horror and thriller and cryptic elements have been influenced by titles such as "Tomb Raider" while also influenced by fantasy art style game titles such as "Skyrim" and "Dark Souls"

In terms of market competition, other action-adventure games with RPG elements, such as "Assassin's Creed", "Tomb Raider" and "Horizon Zero Dawn" may compete. Other horror and thriller games, such as "Resident Evil" and "The Medium," may compete for the game's target audience's attention.

Target Platforms and Constraints

The game will be developed for both Windows OS and OSX while targeting all Playstation, Xbox and pc gaming platforms which cover all controller inputs as well as mouse and keyboard support.

As the game will be suitable for people of age 16+, the game will be needed to be certified as to the given age category. There aren't any other significant certifications for this type of game and depending on the releasing digital distribution platform such as Steam, PlayStation store, Microsoft store, epic or GOG there might be some prerequisite certifications for the platforms.

Game Engine/ Toolset

The Game will be developed using Unity 3D and will mainly use 2D sprites for graphical interfaces while player, NPCs and environmental elements will be made in 3D using Blender or Maya and will later import into the game engine to be used. Moreover, all the 3rd party assets that will be used in the game design that can be found in stores will be matching environmental layouts that go with the tone and vibe of the game plot and era.

Gameplay & Mechanics

Goals

Core Objective:

Progressing through the main story and defeating the demon wraith and his army with help of every support he can gain from the game world which includes NPCs (Old Lady and various other NPCs who will tag along in the journey), experience through world exploration etc.

Optional Objectives:

- Collecting resources and materials scattered throughout the game world to craft new weapons and equipment to use in combat.
- Discovering and exploring optional side-quests and missions that add depth and content to the game world.
- Experimenting with different character builds by levelling up and choosing different skills and abilities to suit different playstyles.
- Interacting with non-playable characters (NPCs) to learn more about the game's world lore and history.

Sub tasks:

- Defeating bosses and enemies to progress through the story and unlock new areas and content.
- Advancing the main character's abilities, equipment and weapons by exploring the game world, defeating enemies and progressing through the main story.
- Solving puzzles and overcoming obstacles to uncover hidden areas, items, and secrets throughout the game.
- Liberating castles which have been overtaken by the army of dead.
- Collecting Elven artefacts that have been lost in ancient ruins.
- Experiencing an immersive and atmospheric world that enhances the overall gameplay experience.

Rules

Designer's Rules:

- Weather and time of day mechanics affect the visibility of the game world as well as certain enemy behaviour (Explicit Rule).
- Environmental hazards such as traps or pitfalls that require careful navigation as well as the use of the player abilities like “Soul Vision” and “Soul Bound” (Explicit Rule).
- The character has a mana gauge that impacts combat effectiveness and special skill castings other than the Health value calibrations which both increase with the player level progression, consumables and the equipments used on the player which affects the above-mentioned values (Explicit Rule).
- Objects that are highlighted by the “soul vision” ability of the player will have different highlighted colours based on their relevancy as traps and enemies will be in red colour overlay, the main objective in gold colour, interesting paths or links in a white glow while collectables in blue (Explicit Rule).
- Players will only be able to save the game on selected points which represent as campsites through map levels where players will be able to access their additional collectables, weapon and equipment upgrades and crafting options (Explicit Rule).
- Enemy behaviour patterns that change depending on the player's actions (e.g. becoming more aggressive if the player uses a certain type of attack) (Implicit Rule).

Player's Rules:

- Players will need to manage their character's abilities, equipment, and stats by levelling up and upgrading their character and preferred types of equipment. This could involve making strategic decisions on which abilities and equipment to upgrade, and which to ignore and sell (Implicit Rule).
- Players will need to explore the game world to progress through the game and find hidden areas, secrets and items. They will also need to solve puzzles and complete challenges to unlock new secrets (Implicit Rule).
- Players will need to manage their resources, such as health, ammunition and supplies, to survive the game's challenges. This will involve scavenging for resources in the game world and making decisions on when to use them (Implicit Rule).
- Limited resources such as health, ammunition, equipment and supplies for crafting (Implicit Rule).

Game Rules:

- Players will need to learn the combat system, which will involve mastering different moves, combos and abilities as well as understanding enemy AI and weaknesses. This includes the

understanding of the enemy type and using the correct weapon types and skills that would deal critical damage to them while not using weapons and abilities that would make them go berserk (Implicit Rule).

- Different types of terrain impact movement speed and manoeuvrability (Explicit Rule).
- Enemy behaviour patterns that change depending on the player's actions (e.g. becoming more aggressive if the player uses a certain type of attack) (Implicit Rule).
- Limited ability to carry equipment, requiring players to make strategic decisions about what to bring with them on missions and when the player carries more than the allowed number of items in their inventory, the player will not be able to use running, will have his attack and movement speeds reduced while drowning when swimming (Explicit Rule).
- Enemies who have a physical form are weak against iron-based like Gollum and skeletons weapons while enemies who are spiritual based like wraiths are weak against silver-based weapons (Explicit Rule).
- As silver is a rare exotic metal, silver weapons are rare and small in size therefore have high attack speed and can be used for high combos while weapons made with iron are big in size, and have slow attack speeds but deal respectively more damage per shot than silver weapons when used on respective enemy forms (Implicit Rule).

Narrative Rules:

- Players will have to complete certain side quests to unlock certain abilities or pieces of equipment which will help players greatly in the early game (Implicit Rule).
- As the main story follows a linear flow, players will need to progress through an already set script which follows the narrative of the game (Implicit Rule).
- Furthermore, progressing through the story also unlocks the game world part by part for the players (Implicit Rule).
- players will have to follow the old lady's instructions and her journal which has documented additional information about certain enemies and collectables which keeps the consistency of the game world and the plot (Explicit Rule).
- NPCs offer quests and information on the game world that players must interact with too, to get a better understanding of the game world and player surroundings including hidden pathways, traps and items (Implicit Rule).

Boundaries

- Physical Boundaries: As a semi-open-world platformer-type level game each level has its area of the map defined that the player can explore while not allowing players to deviate that much away from the pre-defined paths using invisible walls. Additionally, areas, where players will not be able to explore, will be textured with low details so it is visible as different from the areas which are open for exploring to the player.
- Narrative Boundaries: The game world map is unlocked with the progression of the main storyline and will unlock different secret areas and paths connecting parts of the map through optional world quests.
- Access to certain areas will be locked behind puzzles, lock-pick mechanics or boss battles.
- Hidden paths or secret areas require careful exploration to uncover with help of again player's special skills "Soul Vision" and "Soul Bound" as well as player lock-picking skills.
- Players can fast travel to unlocked campfires throughout the map which serves as save points for the player while allowing players to access their entire left behind inventory, weapon and equipment crafting and upgrade options.

Challenges

- Puzzle-solving challenges that require the player to use their special skills and abilities, such as "Soul Vision" and "Soul Bound," to reveal hidden pathways, unlock doors with lock-picking skills or uncover secret areas which incorporate with lateral thinking, inference, memory and intelligence-based challenges.
- Boss battles require the player to utilize their combat skills in unique and challenging ways, such as dodging traps and overcoming environmental obstacles while fighting which falls under pattern recognition, psycho motor and special awareness challenges.
- Crafting and inventory management challenges require the player to carefully consider what resources they need to collect and how to use them most efficiently which balances the flow of the game.
- Stealth challenges require the player to avoid enemies by utilizing cover, hiding spots, and sound suppression techniques like crouching which test players' spatial awareness skills.
- Combat challenges where players will have to figure out the attacking patterns of certain enemies and deal with them based on the players' experiences using combo attacks, abilities, talents and types of equipment while certain actions can trigger rage enemy behaviours which again tests players' pattern recognition skills and general psychomotor skills.
- Based on the weather conditions and enemy information in the journal, players will have to decide on their approach when taking down certain enemies which incorporate real-world and game-world knowledge of the player which is a knowledge-based challenge that tests both intrinsic and extrinsic knowledge of the player.

- Survival challenges require the player to manage their limited resources including health, ammunition, and equipment to endure harsh environmental conditions and enemy encounters which again balance the flow of the game to the player while keeping the symmetry of the gameplay elements.
- Exploration challenges reward the player for venturing off the beaten path and discovering hidden secrets and treasures which test players' lateral thinking and spatial awareness skills.
- Dialogue and decision-making challenges allow the player to shape the way that they could interact with certain NPCs and affect the relationship of the player with them through their choices and actions in side quests. These will not be used in the main storyline as it's following a linear script which sets up a moral challenge on the gameplay walkthrough to the player.
- Time-based challenges and obstacle courses while evading certain enemies or crashing ruins that force the player to act quickly and efficiently which tests a combination of spatial awareness, psycho motor and inference skills based on imperfect audio and visual feedback which gives implicit feedback on the danger to the player.
- Climbing and platforming challenges that require the player to use their agility and mobility to traverse treacherous terrain and reach new areas which again test players' spatial awareness and lateral thinking skills with their intrinsic knowledge of the game world design.
- Lock picking challenge where players will have to spam a set of keys as shown in the HUD to jam the lock and carefully listen for the clicking sound after jamming the lock to break the lock which tests players' psychomotor skills.
- Challenges that require the player to use their special abilities in creative ways to solve problems, such as using "Soul Bound" to possess an enemy and use their abilities against other enemies in the later game which adds up a lateral thinking challenges to the gameplay experience.
- Players will have to decide which weapon types or attacks to use against certain enemies as such silver weapons are small in size and have fast attack speeds and are effective mostly against spiritual-based enemies while iron weapons are large in size and have low attack speeds and are effective mostly against physical based enemies. Various skills also have their own attack casting speeds which has a relation of any weapon or skills' attack value will be inversely proportionate to its attack speeds which sets a balance in the flow of the game while maintaining the symmetry of the gameplay.

Feedback

Visual Feedback:

Non-Diegetic Visual Elements -

- Visual representations indicating the player's character health and mana gauge such as health bar and mana bar which fill when the player eats consumables or performs combo attacks and stealthy takedowns (Explicit Feedback).
- The player level is on the left bottom corner of the screen beside the health bar which gives an idea about the difficulty of the combat before engaging in the combat to the players (non-diegetic).
- There will not be a mini-map in this game which break the immersion of the game therefore players will have a whole big map as well as a compass which will help to guide players around the world map using tracking (Explicit Feedback).
- Specialized icons to indicate primary and secondary weapon types which have been equipped by the player which covers iron swords, silver daggers and iron axe as primary weapons and salt darts, silver powder bomb and silver arrow bolts as secondary weapons (Explicit Feedback).
- Icons or text appearing on the screen indicating inventory or crafting updates (Implicit Feedback).
- An indication of the game world day-night and the weather will be available on the top left corner of the screen which affects certain enemy behaviours based on the time and weather (Explicit Feedback).

Diegetic Visual Elements -

- Character model body language and motion capturing on cinematics (Implicit Feedback).
- Having subliminal cues like blood, skulls and bones near trap sites (Implicit Feedback).
- Player save points will be indicated as campfires which allow players to fast travel, access their inventory, crafting and upgrade menus of weapons and equipment (Explicit Feedback).
- Bombs and magical skills will have particle effects which correspond to the effect of the skill or equipment (Explicit Feedback).
- Visual cues indicate interactable objects or hidden paths on the map (Implicit Feedback).
- Visual feedback for special abilities or skills (Implicit Feedback).
- When using “soul vision”, players will be able to identify the surrounding area becomes unsaturated colours and enemies outlined by red highlights, quest tasks in gold colour outline, soul links (interactable items) in white colour and collectables with blue colour (Explicit Feedback).

Spatial Visual Elements -

- Special indications for NPCs with quests and other points of interest with icons above them in the game world (Explicit Feedback).
- Breadcrumb paths leading the players to tracked locations on the map (Explicit Feedback).

Meta Visual Elements -

- Visual effects indicate a successful attack or defence, such as particle effects and screen shakes (Implicit Feedback).
- Animations and effects indicating character progressions, such as new abilities or equipment upgrades (Implicit Feedback).
- Environmental changes like weather patterns cycles will have different screen filters such as rain droplets on the screen when raining and after swimming (Implicit Feedback).

Audio Feedback

Zone Sounds

- Environmental sounds indicate weather changes, such as rain or wind (Implicit Feedback).
- Audio cues of NPCs which give feedback on the level settings, traps and collectables (Explicit Feedback).
- Environment settings which include waterfalls, forest ambience, etc (Implicit Feedback).

Effect Sounds

- Sound effects for enemy attacks and movements, allow the player to anticipate and dodge or block incoming attacks (Explicit Feedback).
- Unique sound effects for different attacks, skills, and abilities such as “soul vision” and “soul bound” (Implicit Feedback).
- Dialogue with NPCs, indicating the storyline and side quests (Explicit Feedback).
- Sound effects when the player is getting damaged or healing himself by eating consumables (Explicit Feedback).

Affect Sounds

- Background music changes based on the situation, such as a boss fight or exploration (Implicit Feedback).

Interface Sounds

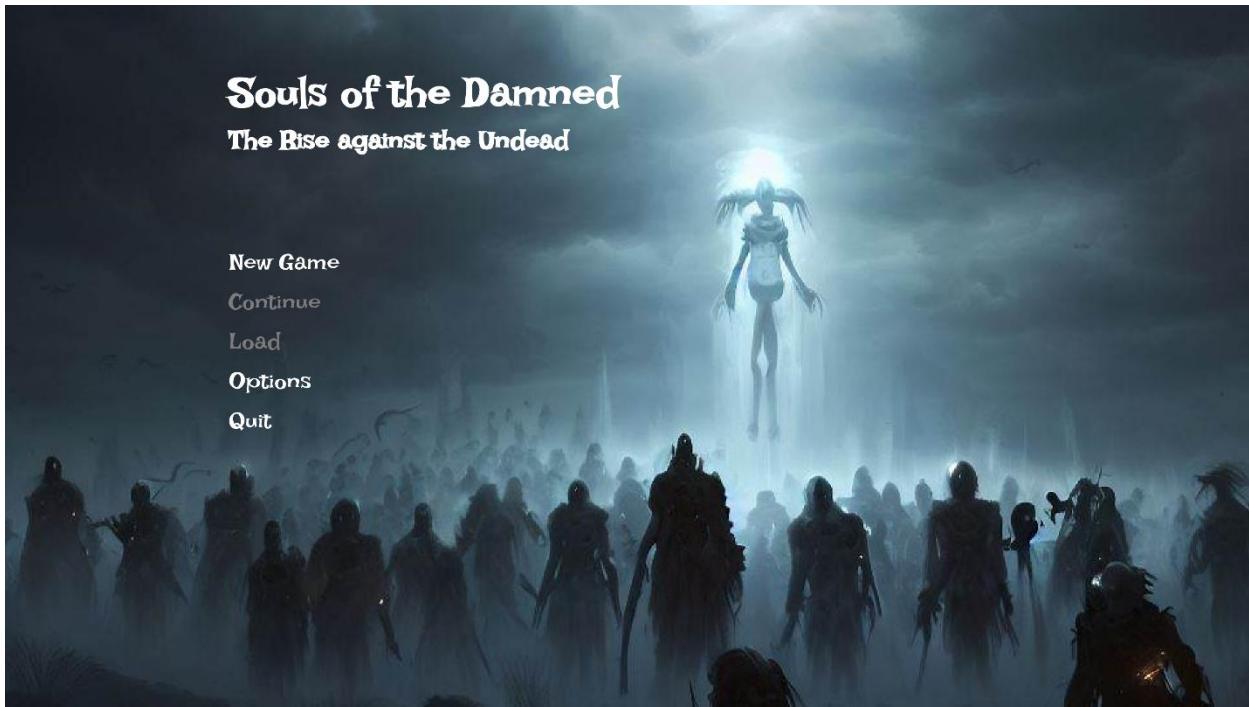
- Sound effects indicate player actions, such as inventory management or crafting (Implicit Feedback).

- Audio feedback indicates character progressions, such as level-up sounds or new ability unlock or upgrade effects (Implicit Feedback).
- Sound effects to register button clicks to ease the user experience with the UI of the game (Implicit Feedback).

Accessibility

- Subtitles: Adding subtitles to the dialogue can help players with hearing impairments understand the story and follow the instructions given by NPCs.
- Text scaling: Allowing players to adjust the size of the text can help those with visual impairments read the in-game text and interface elements.
- Colourblind mode: Incorporating a colourblind mode can help players with colour vision deficiencies to distinguish between different elements in the game that would otherwise be difficult to tell apart.
- Remappable controls: Allowing players to customize the controls to their liking can help those with physical disabilities who may find certain button combinations difficult to use.
- Assistive technologies: Adding support for assistive technologies like screen readers, eye tracking software, or voice recognition software can help players with disabilities access and play the game more efficiently.
- Adjustable difficulty settings: Offering adjustable difficulty settings can help players with cognitive, learning, or physical disabilities to customize the game to their abilities, and enjoy it without frustration.
- Tutorials and hints: Providing tutorials and hints throughout the game can help players with cognitive or learning disabilities understand the game mechanics and objectives more easily.

UI Elements





UI elements include minimalistic designs that do not break the immersion of the game world to the player while giving all the necessary explicit and implicit visual feedback. Menus screens have a minimalistic design layout that uses Irish Grover as the main font for UI while not using highlighting colours which contrasts with the tone and vibe of the game and its setting. Moreover, there will be hovering over animations and button click sfxs which will be implemented on the UI.

Instead of using real weapon icons to represent equipped primary and secondary weapons, there is an icon system which covers all major types of weapons such as Iron swords, silver daggers, salt darts, silver bolts and bombs etc.



Game Lore

Game World

The world of this game is a place of contrasts and contradictions, where the line between life and death, good and evil is blurred. The current game world where the plot unfolds had been set in a game world which was inspired by the mid 1600AD European era where it covers a lot of fallen ruins of ancient kingdoms and castles, dark forests bewitched by dark forces, scenic water bodies and mountain ranges with a huge diversity of creatures and living beings which are both allies and enemies of the player. Each area which covers the world map of the game has unique climates such as snowfalls on mountain ruins, heavy rains in forest areas, rain drizzles and misty climates around waterfalls etc. Creatures who live in these special environments (mostly like main enemies, not general mobs) have adapted to these special climates and environmental conditions making those effects in their favour. Therefore, players will always have to be aware of their soundings and environmental behaviours to expect enemy encounters.

World Culture

The game's culture is diverse and multi-layered in that it branches out to many races which have a core root with the four main races which dominate the game world. Elves are the magical race which gave birth to the concept of magic and use the power of light to fight against dark evil but in the current era of the game, the elf race has gone extinct from the phase of the world due to the escalation of dark forces which have been taken over in the game world which poisons the core of the life of elves which is light. Humans are the most popular race as stands in the current era with advancement over every other race with their adventurous and courageous spirit which serves as their core. Moreover, the dwarf race which is a rare sight in the current game era are master craftsmen who can craft higher-tier weapons and equipments that cannot be crafted otherwise. Additionally, other races which include wraiths, demons, bestiary creatures, orcs and gollums who share negative powers affiliated with negative emotions as their core are also can be found scattered within the game world. Anyone can be allies to the players or become an enemy which doesn't always affect with certain stereotypes for these races as the races who have negative cores can be more righteous than others in certain stories which adds a moral challenge to the gameplay experience. Moreover, with the abundance of these 4 main core races, races which have mixed traits from different races such as new mutants can be also observed in the game world which will have different combinations of traits other than the traits mentioned for the core 4 races.

World History

The world of this game has a rich history spanning back thousands of years. There are tales of ancient empires, long-forgotten ruins, and legendary heroes that have been passed down through the ages with various empires and kingdoms vying for power and influence while stepping on other minorities spanning across this game world. The world has seen many wars and conflicts, and the political landscape is complex and multifaceted. Some factions seek to use the powers of darkness for their gain, while others fight to protect the world from the dangers that lurk in the shadows. The Elven race has already gone extinct from the world while leaving powerful elven artefacts which has been imbued with pure light energy which attract creatures of darkness to these elven ruin sites. These powerful artefacts can be used as materials to craft unique equipments and weapons while also can uncover secret magical abilities left behind by the elven race deep in ruins. Due to the quality of craftsmanship of weapons and equipments of the dwarf race, the race has been attacked over the years to take as slaves for human kingdoms for their war and power struggling purposes which had led to the death of many dwarf master craftsmen to die in these puny war crimes leaving only scarce number of dwarfs scattered through different bigger kingdoms. Players need to navigate to these master craftsmen to craft unique high-tier weapons and equipment.

Power Dynamics of the World

The races of the world are diverse and varied, with each bringing its unique strengths and weaknesses to the table. Humans are the most numerous, but some elves are long gone extinct and were believed to be the race to first took control over the mysterious and supernatural enchantments and magical powers, dwarves who are mostly in the line of craftsmanship works, orcs and other demonic races who are embodiments of humans' negative stigma later served as generals in command for the demon lord wraith also sharing the power of their core with the wraith himself making him more powerful and self potent rather than needing to be fed with negative emotions directly from humans, and many other races that call this world home. Some are friendly and welcoming to outsiders, while others are fiercely territorial and suspicious of strangers.

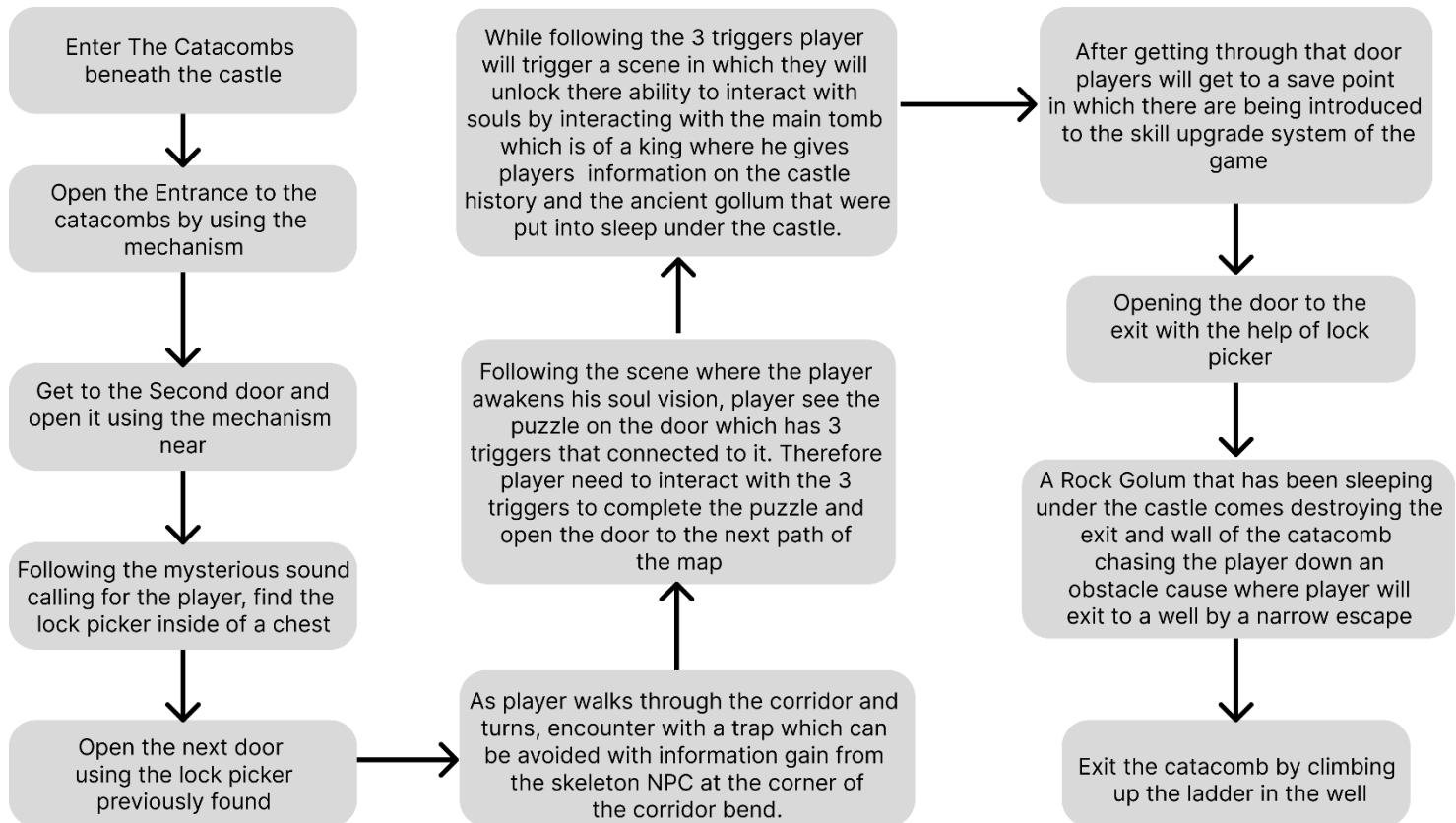
The races which have a core of negative stigma or feeling in their souls are afraid of things which are pure such as salt which is thought as the essence of the sea, ancient elf artefacts which can be used as useful types of equipment, equipments made up of silver or iron based on the supernatural being type such as spirit form beings are weak against silver and witchcraft abilities and orcs and other enemies who have a physical form are weak against equipments made up of iron.

Despite the many challenges facing the world, there is a sense of hope and optimism that pervades the land. People are resilient and resourceful, and there are always those who are willing to stand up against the forces of darkness and fight for what is right. And while the road ahead may be long and fraught with danger, there is a feeling that the world is on the cusp of something great, something that will change the course of history forever.

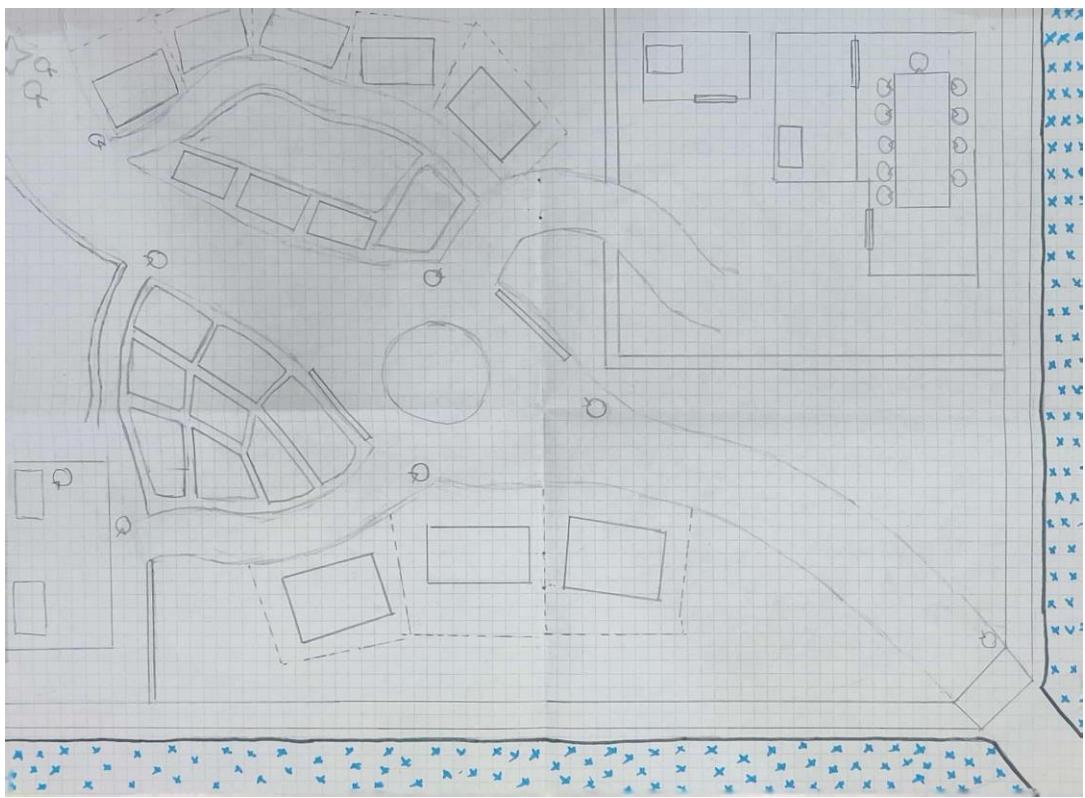
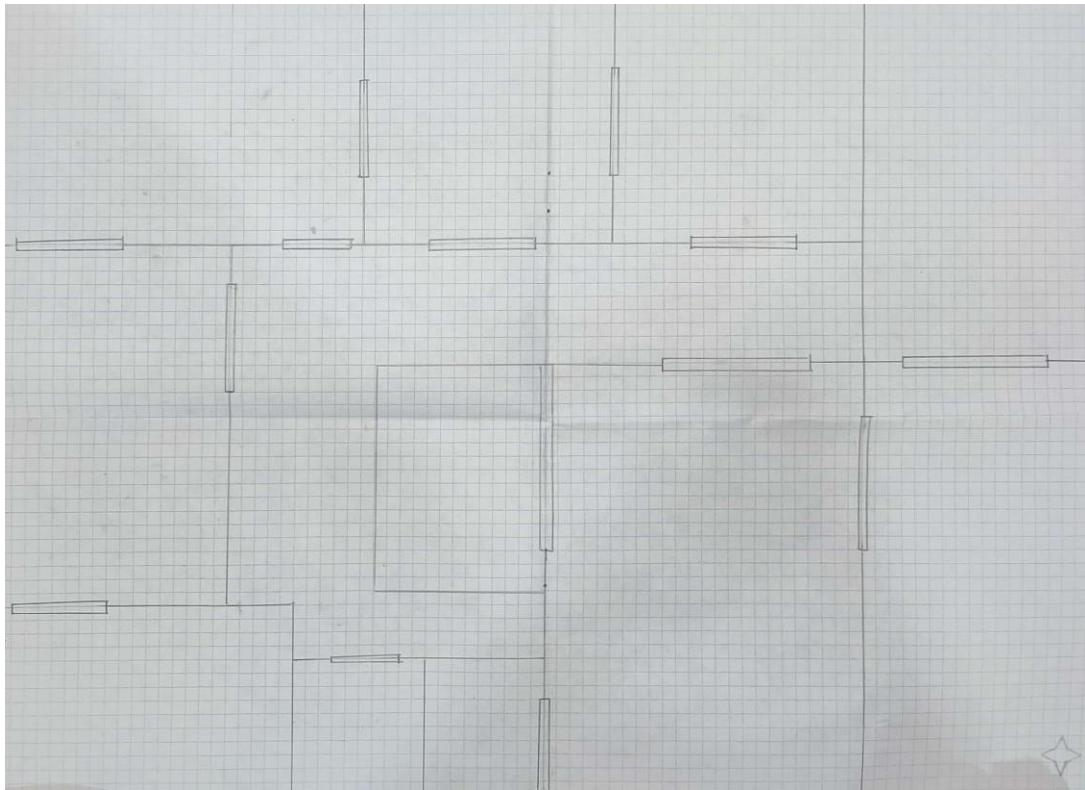
Level Design

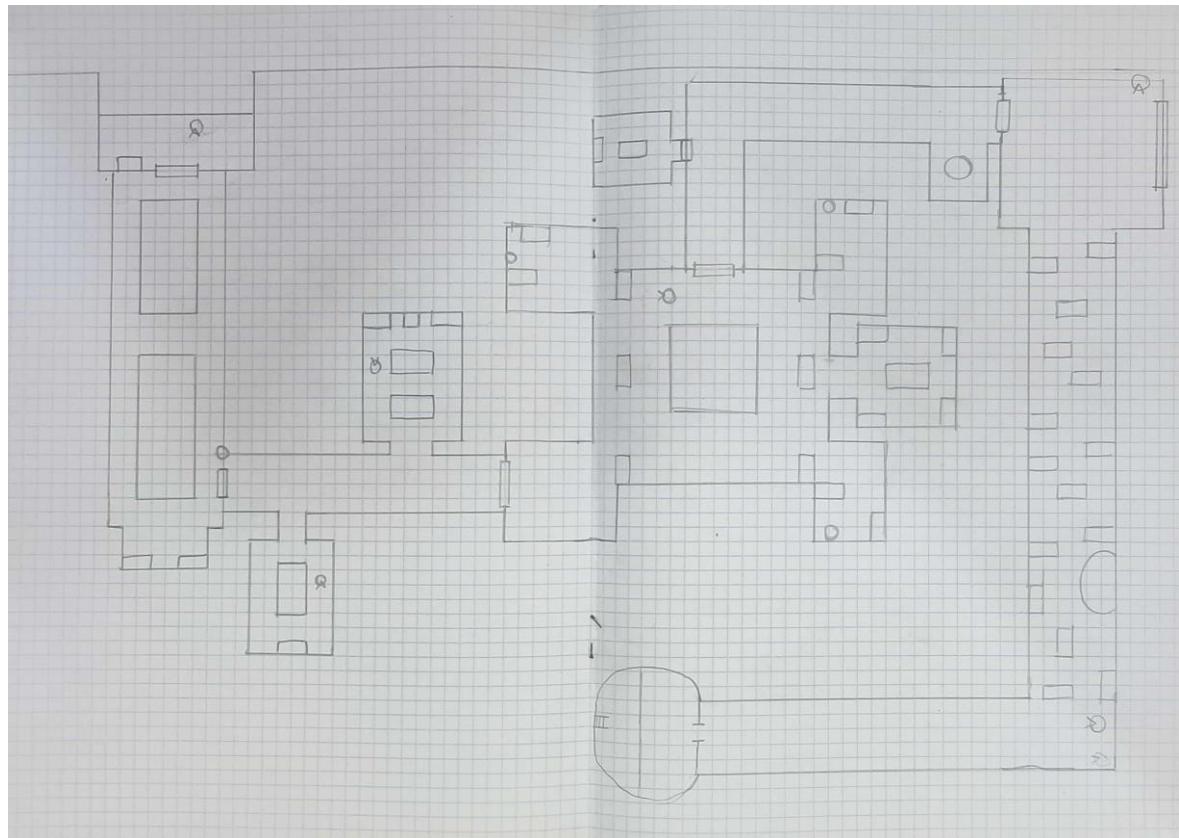
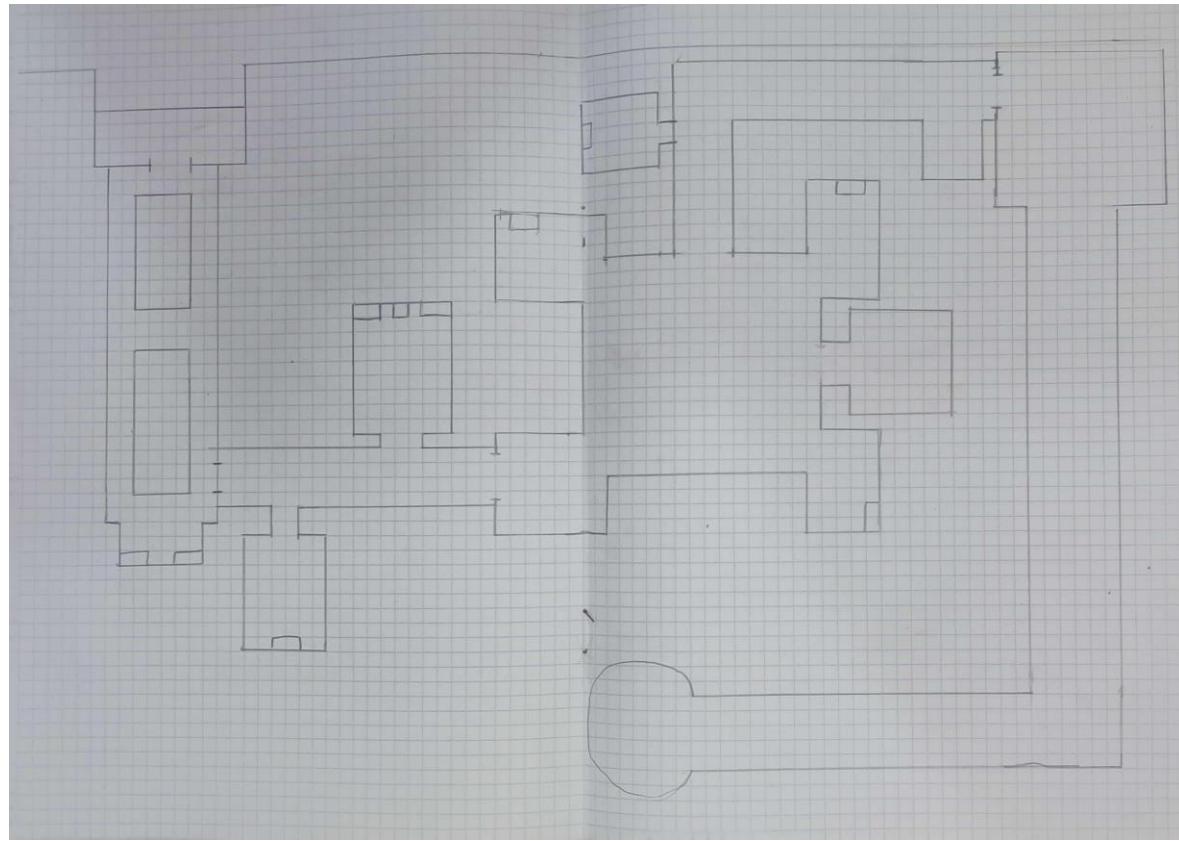
Flow Chart

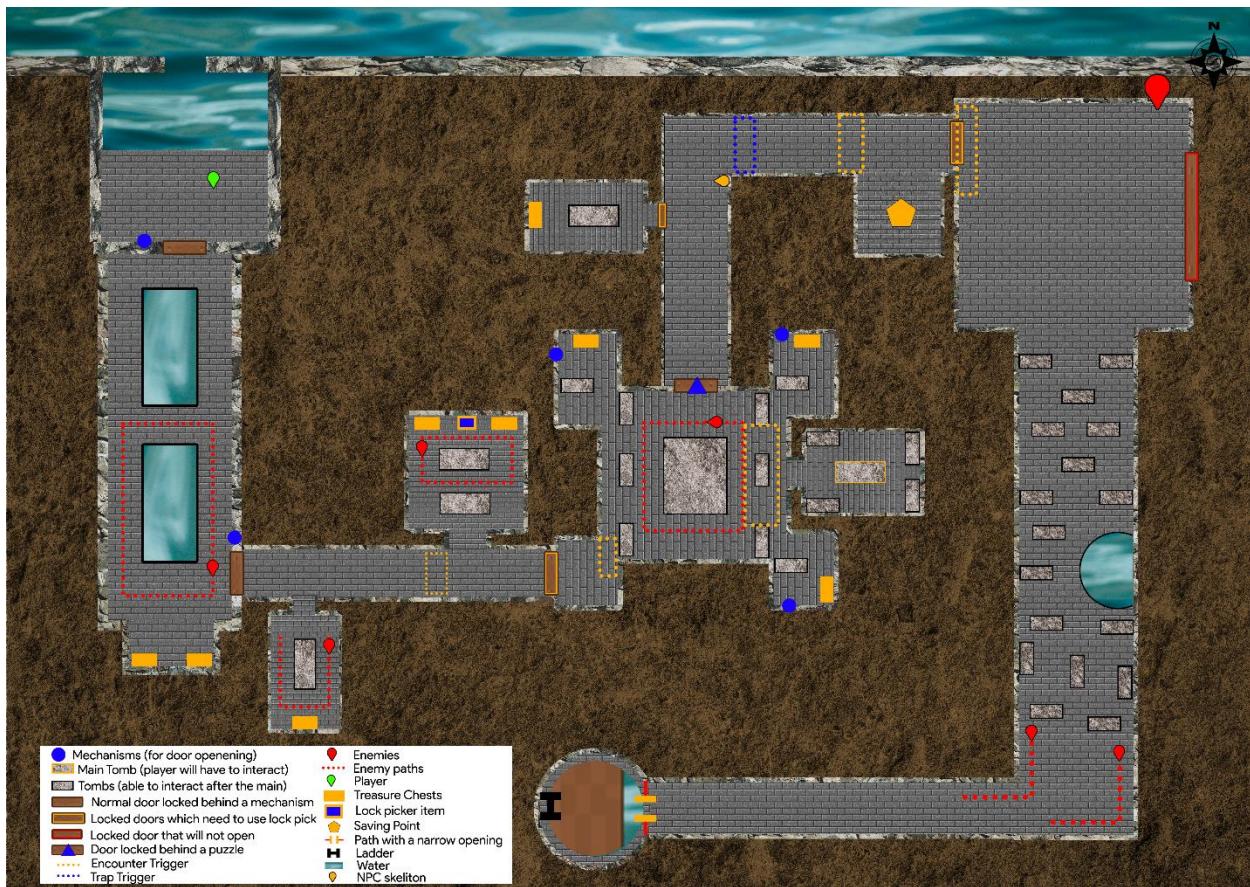
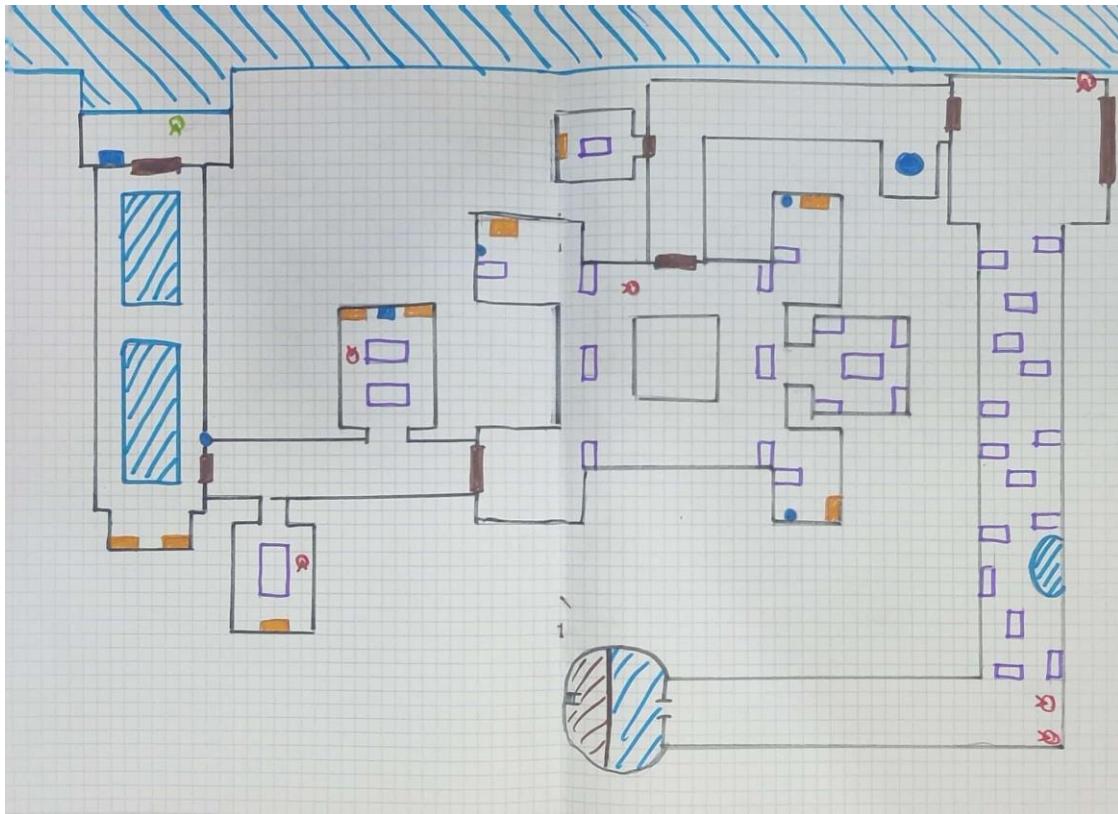
The below flow chart demonstrates how the game level will progress with a significant trigger point in the level. This will follow the spine of the game without focusing on additional stuff included in the level.



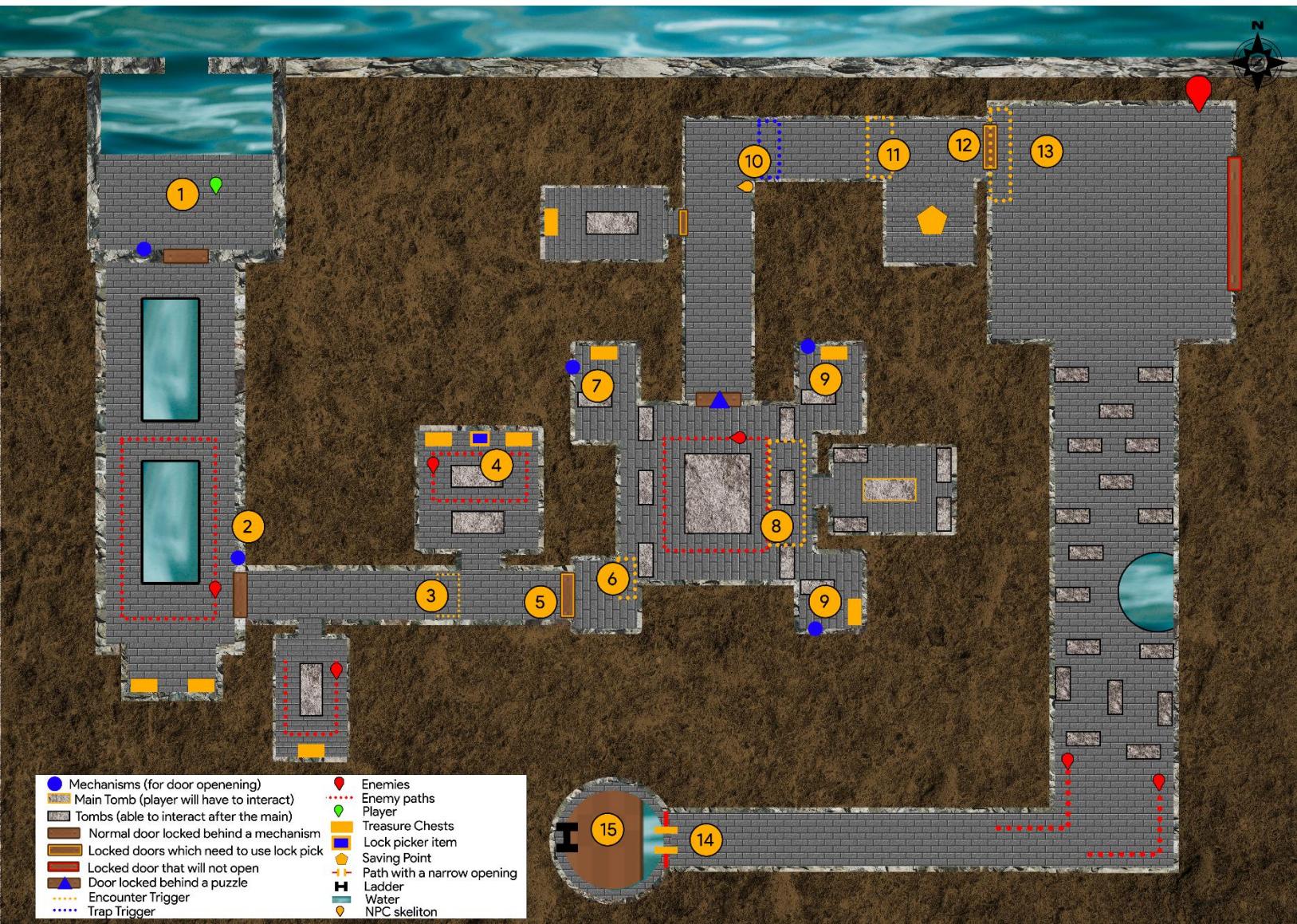
Level Design Sketches







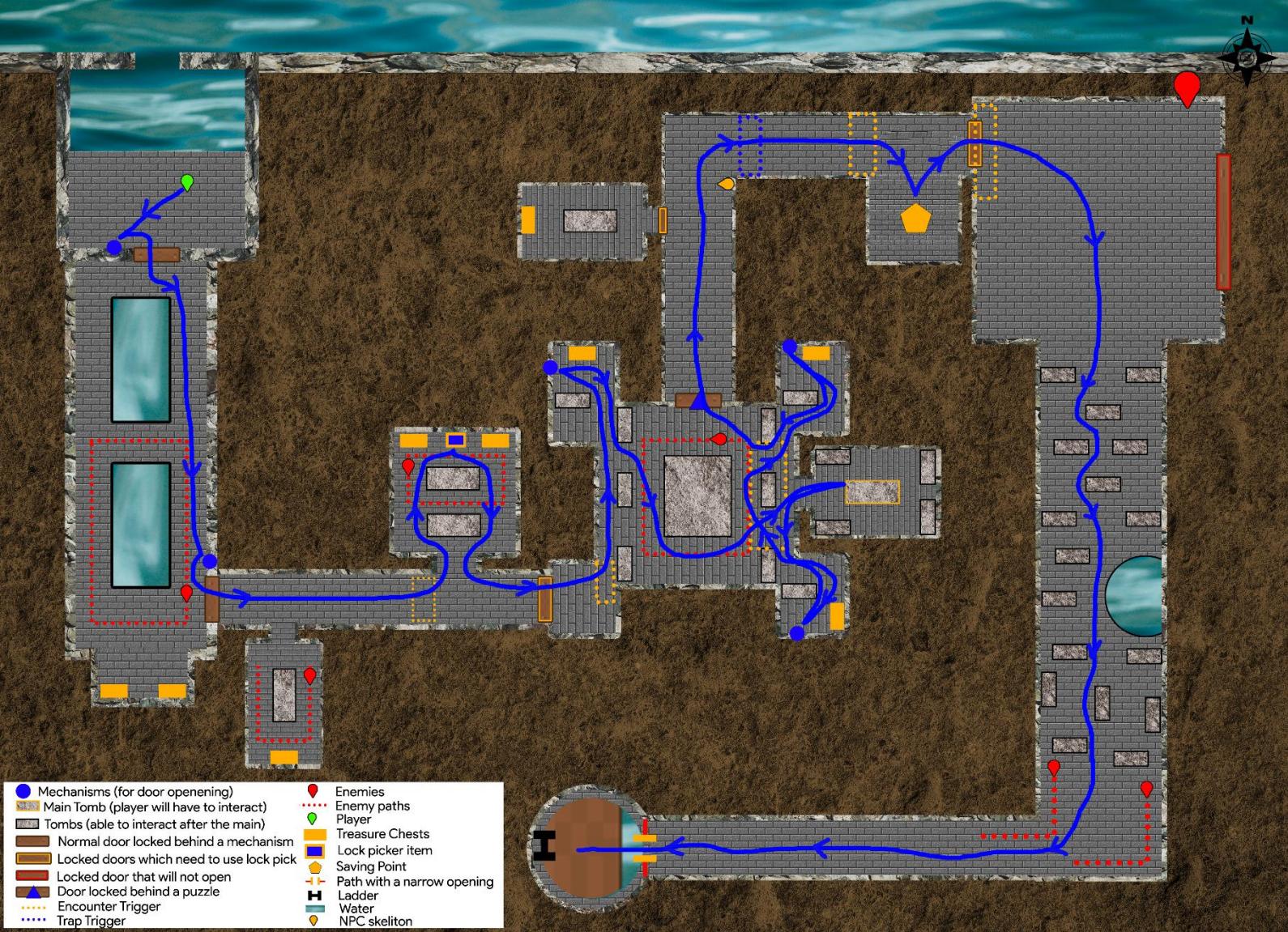
Game Level Encounters



1. The player will have to open the entrance to the catacomb by using the mechanism puller lever near it.
2. Players will approach the enemies stealthily while attacking with salt darts or either not exorcise them at all by distracting their attention by throwing rocks and opening the door using the mechanism near the door. Players can also collect the things inside 2 chests at the entrance before going through the door.
3. Passing this point players will hear a mysterious voice calling for the player and players will head over to the catacomb room where the voice came from.

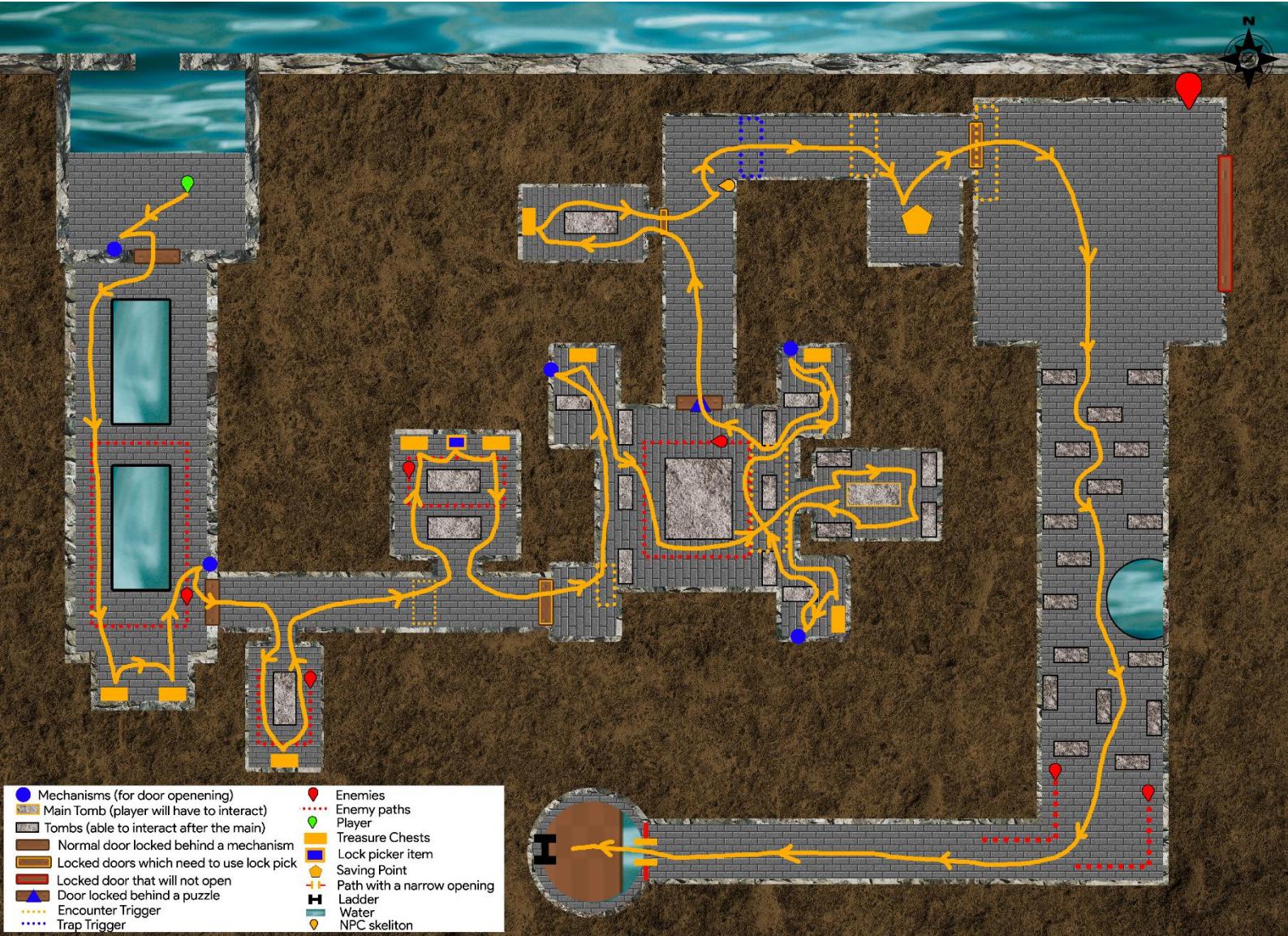
4. Following the voice, the player will collect the lock picker inside of the chest stealthily taking down the enemy with a salt dart or distracting its attention by throwing rocks. Meanwhile, players can collect other additional stuff from chests as well.
5. Opening the door using the lock picker that the player found previously.
6. Once crossing this point, players will trigger a cinematic where their latent ability to see traces of souls on physical objects. This will be triggered by the puzzle picture on the door to the hallway. Players will be able to see the surrounding environment blurred while highlighting points of interest in the field of vision of the level with contrasting and highlighting colours.
7. After taking care of the enemy roaming in the hallway player will be able to trigger the mechanism at the top corner of the map which will arrange the outer layer of the puzzle picture on the door.
8. Then when the player reaches to trigger next two switches which will lead players to this trigger where players will be directed towards the tomb chamber of an ancient king of this castle which gives players information on the castle and its history, information about a Gollum which have been sleeping under the castle foundation and about the treasure chamber which holds an elven artefact which becomes the objective of the player in the next level where player reach to the castle. Furthermore, the king gives information about a well that was built in his era which they used to dig up this catacomb. Afterwards, players will be able to interact with catacombs as NPCs which gives players information on chests, collectables and traps that have been laid around.
9. Afterwards, players can interact with the two remaining switches that have been linked with the puzzle on the door to recreate the correctly positioned picture on the door which will open up the door for the players.
10. At this point is a trap that triggers when the player passes through it. It will be a mechanism which shoots arrows at the players at their foot level which the players will be only able to avoid by jumping over that level. Players will be able to detect this trap with help of the subliminal clues around it as well as can gain direct information about the trap and how to avoid it from the NPC skeleton right before making contact with the trap.
11. At this trigger point, players will be directed towards a camping-like site where players will be introduced to the fast travelling and talent/skill upgrade system within the game and save the game at this point.
12. The player will need to again open this door using the lock picker.
13. Opening the door, players will trigger a cinematic where the player will see the exit to the catacomb and will walk towards it. Meanwhile, a big rock Gollum who had been sleeping under the castle foundation all this time had woken up because of the sudden stir of negative energy waves in the castle and come to attack the player while destroying the exit of the catacomb and walls. The player will be directed towards an obstacle cause rundown path where they'll have to outrun the Gollum.
14. Players will jump to a well from a tight opening in the wall at the end of the path which was mentioned by the King in his cutscene.
15. Players will use the ladder inside of the well to get themselves out of the well and into the castle level.

The spine of the level



As mentioned above in the encounters of the map, the spine consists of all the must-be-taken choices along the pathway to complete the level with the shortest route without having a significant loss.

Golden Path of the level



Compared to the path which has been mentioned in the encounter part, the golden path of the map includes all additional content which adds more in-depth value to the gameplay collecting all the materials scattered around in the level, interacting with NPCs (souls in tombs) which help for the immersion of the gameplay.

Level Design Reference Images

Paris Catacombs



Catacombs of St Callixtus



Ara Maxima in The Basilica of Saint Mary in Cosmedin Rome, Italy



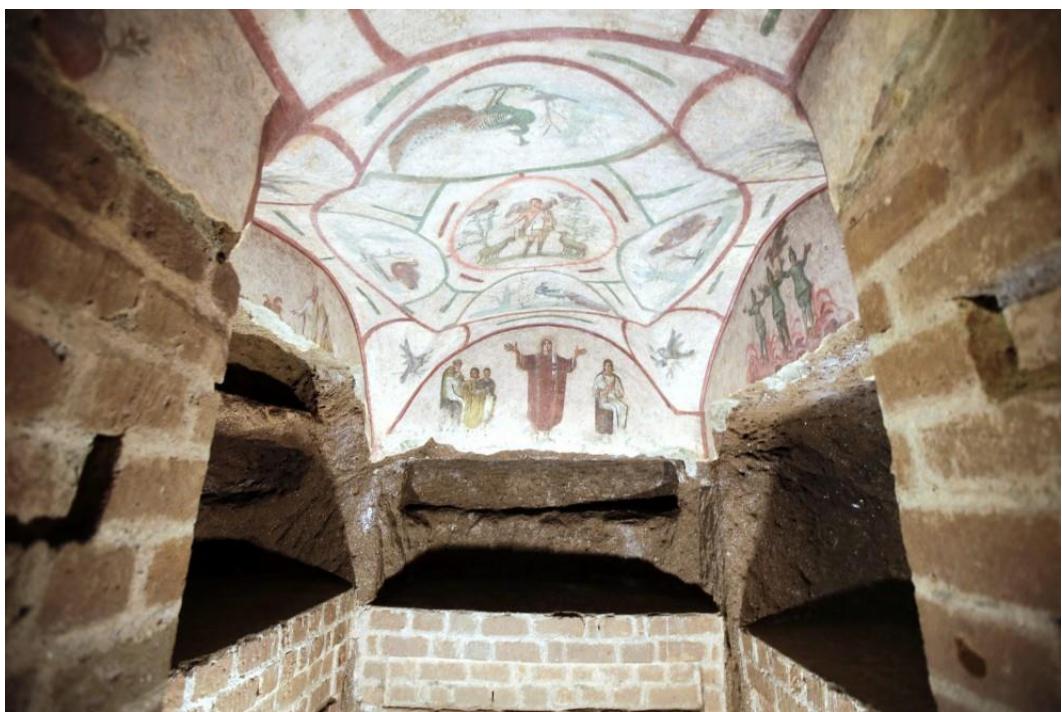
Paris Catacombs



Rome Catacombs

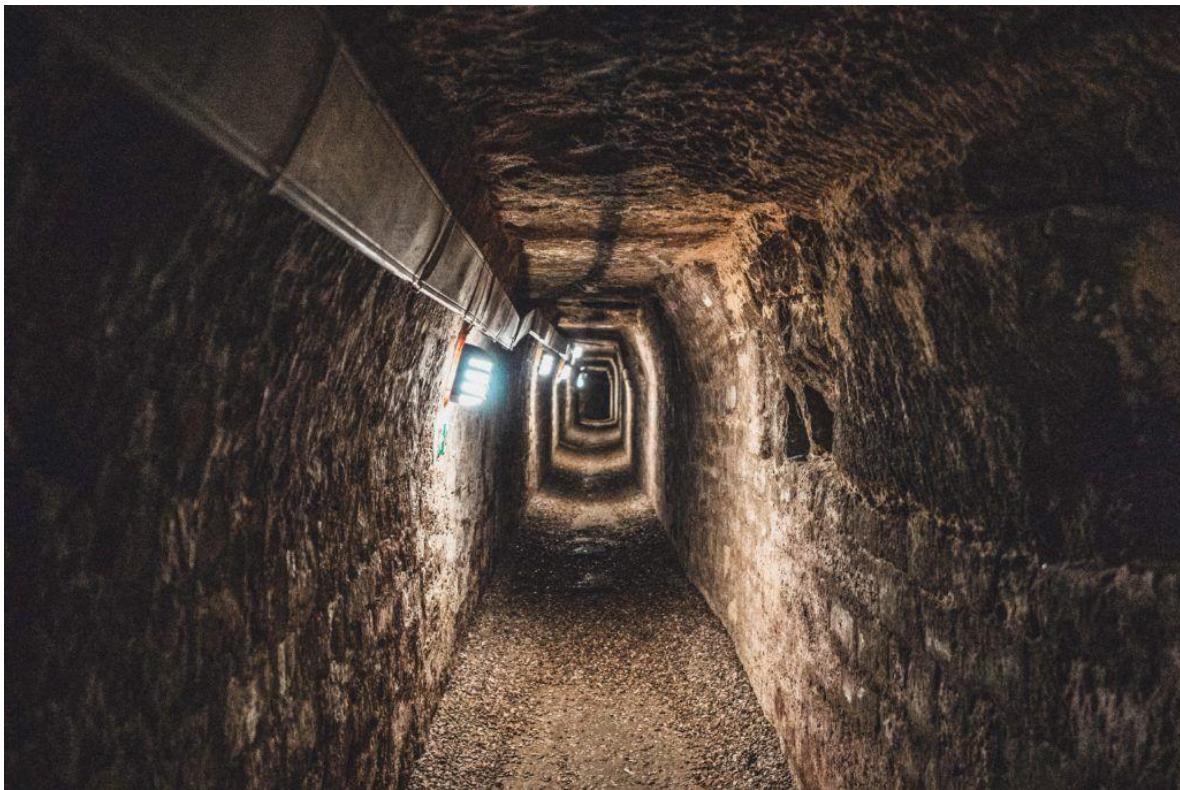


Catacombs of Priscilla in Rome



Catacombs of St. Domitilla, Rome

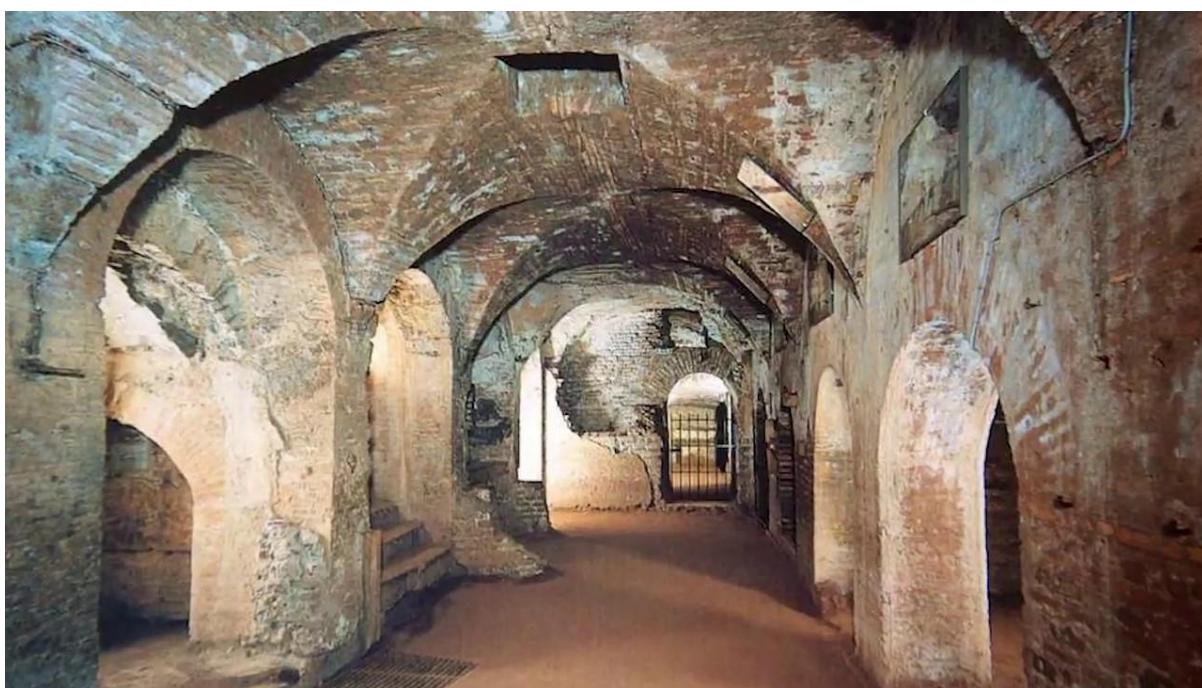


Catacomb of Paris

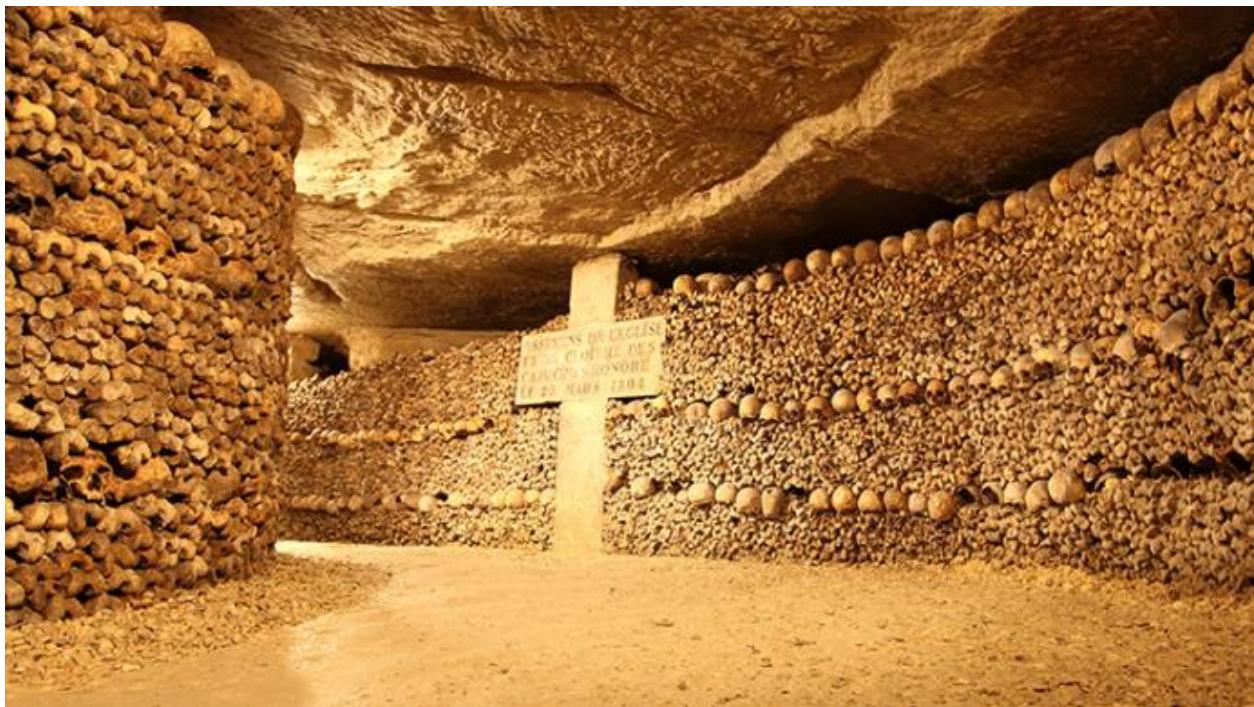
Plaque with Scenes at Emmaus



Rome underground Catacomb



Paris Catacombs



A Knight of the d'Aluye Family, French



References

(Have used Open AI's ChatGPT for brainstorming ideas for the project as well as DELL.E powered Bing image creator to create sample images for artworks.)

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