



Game Design Document

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1. Design History

Week 1 (2024.03.18 - 2024.03.24)

First meeting with the group. We introduced ourselves, our backgrounds and skills, as well as our ideas and expectations for the project. There was quite a clear division of roles with two programmers, two people with experience in visual design and one person with experience in sound and music.

Week 2 (2024.03.25 - 2024.03.31)

- It was decided to go in the direction of a traditional platformer game, with a unique story to make it stand out. The concept was defined further.
- First concept art was created.

Week 3 (2024.04.01 - 2024.04.07)

- The first playable sidescroller prototype was created, the prototype had jumping, wall jumping and dashing. It used public-domain placeholder art
- The first iteration of Cthulhu's theme was created
- Initial concept art was created about the monsters and the mechanics
- Initial concept art for the main character,

Week 4 (2024.04.08 - 2024.04.14)

- The first pitch of the concept was held.
- Pivot, in the character design, is no longer a knight.
- The owl masked MC, and art and animations were made.
- The hook mechanic was first implemented
- The first demo was created and presented.

Week 5 (2024.04.15 - 2024.04.21)

- Defined the target group more and created 3 personas.
- Business research was conducted and strategies were developed.
- The hook mechanic was improved upon to allow surfaces which behave differently when hooked to
- The remaining planned mechanics were added to the game
 - Feather fall
 - Dash
 - Shield bounce
- Added controller support
- Status update 1.

Week 6 (2024.04.22 - 2024.04.28)

- Big pivot in the design, went back to the original knight concept as that seemed to work better for the storytelling.
- Abandoned the idea of two different worlds into different art styles.
- Decided on pixel art style.
- Run cycle animation for the knight is made.
- Storyboard was made for the opening scene.

Week 7 (2024.04.29 - 2024.05.05)

2024-05-01

- First version of the original tilemaps added to the game.
- Spikes and respawning was added to the game
- Animations for the knight's movement and abilities were made

Week 8 (2024.05.06 - 2024.05.12)

- Status update 2
- Updated tilemaps to new version
- Sound effects added for hooking and falling on spikes
- Background music written and added to demo
- Tutorial hints were added to demo to help guide players with controls for the game
- Animation for Cthulu was made

Week 9 (2024.05.13 - 2024.05.19)

- New version of tilemaps added/finished
- Storyboards created for the two cutscenes in the demo.
- Checkpoint system added to the game
- Hooking mechanic refined further to be a bit more challenging
- UI elements were developed

Week 9 (2024.05.20 - 2024.05.26)

- Cutscenes complete and implemented in the game.
- Added dialogue system with animated monster
- Added end credits
- More sound effects were added for jumping and picking up items
- Village theme soundtrack piece written and added to the demo
- Added controller vibrations on death
- Items which can be picked up
- Animations for future monsters are developed

2024-05-27

Final demo complete!

2. Section I - Game Overview

2.1. Game Concept

Sir-lies a-lot starts off looking like any other pixel art platformer. A knight comes to a village and based on their appearance, the villagers rejoice and assume that they can help them slay the monsters in a nearby cave. After literally being thrown right into it, the game takes a turn into an unconventional metroidvania where instead of slaying the monsters, our hapless hero finds themselves solving their bizarre and often comical problems. Whether it's helping a rattling dragon fix their clacking tail or assisting a Lovecraftian monster in finding their favourite hat , the knight's journey is anything but ordinary. Each encounter reveals the monster's true, often humorous nature and earns them new abilities that help him delve deeper into the caves.

2.2. Genre

Platformer, Metroidvania

2.3. Target Audience

Our chosen target audience have previous experience with and enjoy platformer games. They like a challenge but also enjoy a compelling story that keeps things interesting. The intended player enjoys games like Celeste ¹, Hollow knight ²,

The target group is people between 15-35 which is a group that might have either a limited budget, fragmented time or both. They are looking for a balance between leisure and a challenge.

The average session is played on a PC or laptop in the player's free time, which may be limited. A typical session is a few hours long, thus fitting well into the user's day-to-day life and facilitating playing often as opposed to playing for a long time.

¹ <https://www.celestegame.com/>

² <https://www.hollowknight.com/>

2.3.1. Personas



Name: Brad
Age: 32
Occupation: Lawyer

Interests	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Gaming in his free time • Likes watching people play and talk about games on youtube • Likes watching fantasy TV series and movies • Collects game-related/nerdy stuff • Likes solving conflicts • He played a lot of games when he was younger 	

Pain points/frustrations	Challenges
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Doesn't have a lot of time for his hobbies as he's working 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Can't find enough time to game, most games require a large time commitment

Technology and social media	Game preferences/playstyle
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Gaming computer • Has had Steam from a young age • Youtube • X 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Likes story elements in games, wants it to feel a bit like watching a movie or reading a story • Shorter sessions



Name: Joey
Age: 22
Occupation: Student

Goals	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Find a new game to play an hour or so in the evening, or a few hours in the weekend to wind down from work • Find a new story to discover • Try something new, since he has already played a lot of games 	

Motivations	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Likes to feel like he has achieved something • Likes helping people 	

Needs and expectations	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Needs to be able to progress in the game within a shorter game session • He has quite a good pay, can afford to pay a bit of money on a game 	

Brands and influences/favourite brands	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Steam • Windows 	

2.4. Game Flow Summary

1. The villagers mistake you for a hero and throw you in a hole
2. You find Cthulu and befriend them
3. You go back to the village to get the hook sword (Wall climbing) and expand your movement options
4. You find Cthulu's hat and return it to them. Cthulu directs you to go and help the other options.
5. You explore the map and come across monsters in the order you want
6. You help the rattling dragon with its tail and you are given a dragon scale (Mid air dash)

7. You help the knitting sphinx and are given a wing feather (Parachute)
8. You help a stuck gnome and you get a shield (Hazard parry)
9. In the meantime, you can keep exploring different subsections and interact with monster and human NPCs.

2.5. Look and Feel

The visual style of the game is inspired by classic pixel art games such as shovel knight. The game also has two main areas, the village and the monster cave, which have different styles. The visuals in the village are medieval and western fantasy-inspired. In the monster cave the style changes depending on the level and the monster who dwells there. Different levels of the cave will have distinct visual and thematic designs such as a dark broken castle for the level with Cthulu and an ancient Egyptian aesthetic for the level with the Sphinx. However, the pixel art style will be consistent throughout all the levels.

The UI elements such as dialogue boxes, text and buttons on the main menu screen should also follow the pixel art visual style. In the current version, the dialogue system doesn't match this style but it is a future change that would be implemented.

2.6. Project Scope

2.6.1. Number of locations

There are currently five planned locations in the game, but this can be expanded as the game is developed further. The locations are as follows:

1. [The village](#)
2. [The cave:](#)
 - a. Lovecraft-themed area,
 - b. Egyptian-themed area,
 - c. East Asian-themed area,
 - d. Nordic-themed area.

2.6.2. Number of levels

The game has an interconnected map that covers a complex, world structure that resembles the intricate tunnels and chambers of an anthill. This design philosophy emphasizes exploration, discovery, and a non-linear progression where players gradually uncover new paths and areas as they gain new abilities and items.

2.6.3. Number of NPC's

There are currently 5 NPC's planned in the game, one connected to each area of the game.

1. [The village tavern keeper](#)

2. [Cthulhu](#)
3. [The Sphinx](#)
4. [Rattle Snake Dragon](#)
5. [Gnome](#)

There will potentially be more as the game expands, if new areas are added or a trader in the village.

2.6.4. Number of movement mechanics

There are four planned movement mechanics, one for each monster in the game. One is currently fully implemented and three are implemented as proof of concepts with no tweaking or testing done.

1. Hooking onto walls
2. Feather falling
3. Shield bounce
4. Mid air dash

3. Section II - Gameplay and Mechanics

3.1. Gameplay

3.1.1. Game Progression

The player progresses in the game by helping the monsters and talking to the villagers. Completing the monster's objectives will gain the player access to new tools that allow them to delve deeper in the cave.

3.1.2. Quest/challenge Structure

The general structure of each quest is as follows:

1. You meet a monster
2. They ask you for help
3. You navigate through the cave and complete the task they've given you
4. You return to the monster and gain a new item that gives you a new ability as a reward

The structure can vary between quests, as the things that the monsters need help with can be quite different from each other. For the first level, the player also returns to the village to gain a new item instead of getting it from the monster, since you don't have any items at the beginning.

3.1.3. Puzzle Structure

Jumping puzzles, some which increasingly require tools gathered throughout your journey.

3.2. Mechanics

The game is focused on 2D platforming, meaning that the primary mechanic is the jump. A more arcade style is used for the movement mechanics, i.e it's not meant to be realistic. The player has a lot of control of the movement, the character can move while in the air and control the height of their jump by holding in the jump button while ascending.

There are also secondary movement mechanics in the form of abilities which you unlock as the game progresses.

3.2.3. Hook

The hook allows the player to attach themselves to walls. Depending on the type of wall the player will either keep sliding when attached to the wall or fully stop. The type of wall is indicated by the tile map texture used for the wall, the demo uses vine textures to identify these rough surfaces which the hook can get stuck into.

While hooked into a wall which is rough the player can jump meaning that they can

scale walls and get across gaps which aren't possible to clear with a jump. This is currently the most fleshed out mechanic.

3.2.3. Feather

The feather allows the player to slow fall in turn allowing them to cross larger gaps, fall through tighter gaps etc.

3.2.3 Shield

The shield allows the player to bounce off hazards like spikes converting some of their downwards velocity into upward velocity. This would allow the player to cross long stretches of hazards.

3.2.3 Dash

The dash allows the player to dash once in mid air in 8 directions.

3.3. Game Options

As the game can require quite complex input patterns requiring multiple inputs at once and features like controller vibration it should have accessibility options to allow more players to play the game.

- Disable or lower magnitude of controller vibrations
- Different help modes which make certain parts of the game easier
 - A mode which uses the hook for you
 - Allowing some abilities to be toggled instead of requiring you to hold down a button
 - Disabling button mashing minigames

3.4. Easter Eggs and Hidden Dialogue

The levels will have some unique dialogue if you return to the monsters before completing the objective, and might then also give you some hints on how to progress.

In future versions of the game, the player would be rewarded for exploring each level thoroughly and also returning to previous levels by finding secret paths with hidden items that can only be accessed when certain new movement options have been unlocked.

4. Section III – Story, Setting and Character

4.1. Story and Narrative

4.1.1. Story and setting

The setting in which this game takes place is a fantasy village where the villagers have a strong hatred towards monsters. The village happens to be located close to a

cave where monsters dwell, and they are all convinced that the cave is a threat to their safety and peace. Very few of them have actually encountered the monsters themselves or ever been bothered by them, however, and their impressions mostly come from stories they have been told about brave heroes slaying evil monsters.

The Knight arrives at this village, unknowing of the supposed ‘monster problem’. As the story unfolds, the knight finds out about the true nature of the monsters and how they may not be the threat to the peace that the village thinks they are.

4.1.2. Cut Scenes and dialogue

4.1.2.1. Cut scene #1

4.1.2.1.1. Description

In this opening cutscene, the knight arrives at the village inn where the villagers are engaged in discussion about their concerns with the nearby monster cave. As the knight enters, the villagers immediately assume they are the hero they need and the knight has no time to respond as they keep interrupting. Based on this assumption, the village chief literally throws the knight right into the cave to help them slay the monsters.

4.1.2.1.2. Storyboard



4.1.2.2. Dialogue #1

5.1.2.2.1. Description

This cutscene dialogue happens when you first meet Cthulhu. He first believes you are there to try to slay him like all the other humans but quickly changes attitude when he sees that you have no weapon. He then instead gives you the objective to go back to the village and get a tool to help you get around, so that you can then return to the dungeon and help him find his hat.

4.1.2.3.2. Script

Monster: *WHO GOES THERE!?*

Monster: *Oh a knight? Another human coming to try to slay me while I'm just minding my own business.*

Knight: ...

Monster: *But wait, you don't have a weapon?*

Monster: *If you don't want to slay me, maybe you can help me...*

Monster: *My hat is stuck in the dungeon, could you help me find it?*

Knight: ...

Monster: *Oh! But you won't be able to get around like that.*

Monster: *Go ask the villagers, they might give you some useful tools thinking it will help you slay me.*

Monster: *Then please come back and help me find my hat!*

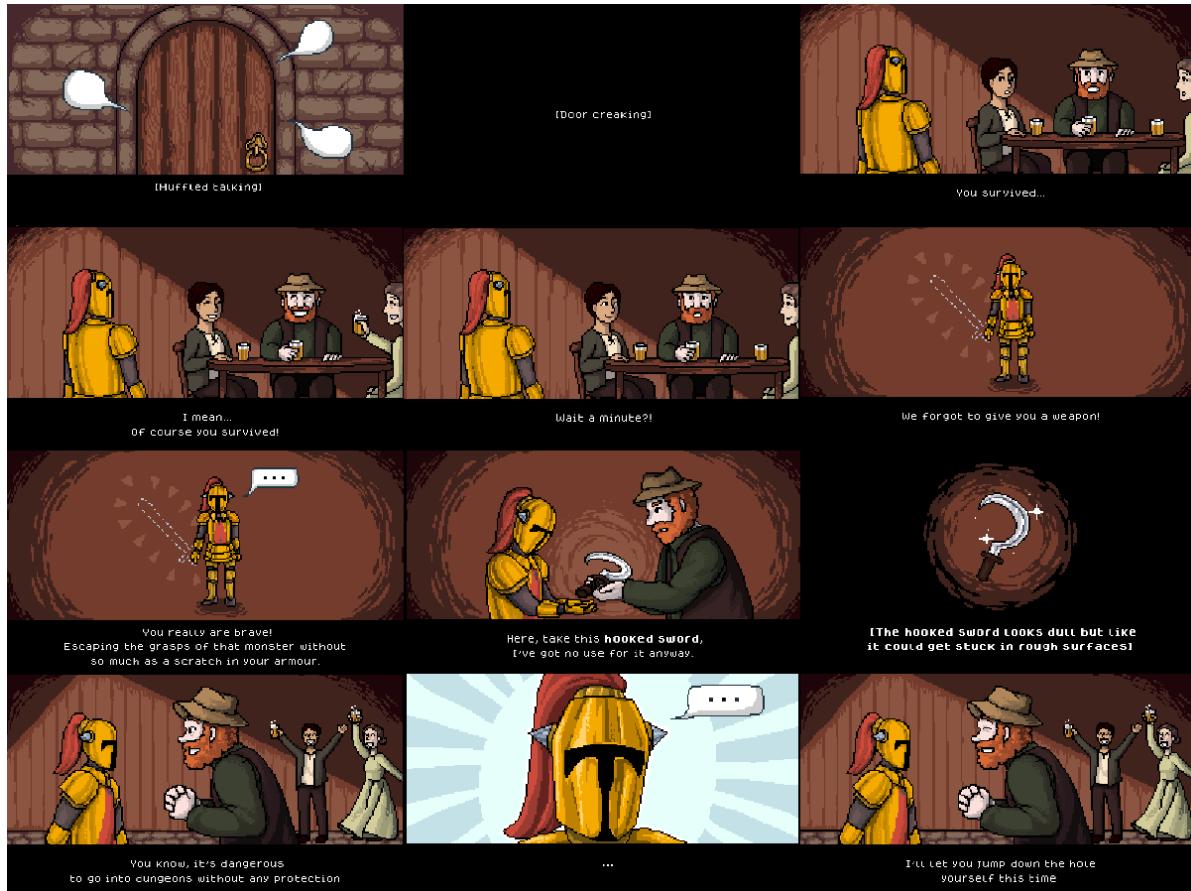
4.1.2.3. Cut scene #2

4.1.2.3.1. Description

This cutscene shows when the knight returns from the cave after talking to Cthulu, to try to get a tool to help them move around the dungeon. The villagers are immediately impressed to see the knight returning in one piece, and assume this is proof of their bravery. Before the knight can say anything, the villagers notice that you don't have any weapon, and give you a rather blunt hooked sword. The description of the sword give a hint

to the fact that it can be used to hook onto walls in the dungeon. The villagers then send you back down in the dungeon.

4.1.2.3.2. Storyboard



4.1.2.2. Dialogue #2

4.1.2.2.1. Description

This dialogue cutscene plays after you've found Cthulhu's hat and return to him. You give him his hat and he puts it on and thanks you. He asks you to tell the villagers that you killed him so that they stop bothering him, and also informs you that there are other monsters in the dungeon that could use your help.

4.1.2.3.2. Script

Monster: *You found my hat!*

Monster: *Thank you!*

Monster: *Let me put it on...*

Knight: ...

Monster: *You're different from the other humans who just want to kill me just because I'm a monster.*

Monster: *I have an idea!*

Monster: *Maybe you can tell them that you killed me, and they will finally stop bothering me.*

Knight: ...

Monster: *Also! I have friends deeper in the dungeon that could use your help, so please visit again!*

4.3. Characters

4.3.1. Character #1 - The Knight (main character)

4.3.1.1. Character description

Not much is known about the Knight in terms of who they are, their age, gender, where they come from, or even why they are dressed as a Knight but with no weapons. As for their personality, the Knight has a hard time getting a word in in conversations and other characters often speak over them. This entails that the Knight often gets themselves into misunderstandings where people make assumptions of who they are or what they want without actually asking. The Knight is also a bit of a people pleaser who has a hard time saying no to other people and doesn't want to fail to live up to their expectations, and therefore just goes along with whatever people (or monsters) tell them to do.

4.3.1.2. Look

4.3.1.2.1. Physical characteristics

Covered in golden bronze armour from head to toe, with a horned helmet with a ponytail that looks like a plumed Roman helmet. Their gender is ambiguous while fully suited up.



4.3.1.3. Relationship to other characters

The Knight is a newcomer to the village (as far as the player knows), and therefore doesn't initially have any relationships to the other characters. As the game progresses, the villagers and monsters both grow fond of the Knight, however, as they seemingly help both sides with their goals.

4.3.2. Character #2 - The village tavern keeper

4.3.2.1. Character description

The tavern keeper is a loud and talkative man who loves to tell tales about the monsters in the cave. He has always secretly wished to be a hero that saves the village from the monsters, but unfortunately he doesn't have the skills or the bravery to go down in the caves himself to face them. Instead he spends his days chatting to the other villagers about the monsters. The tavern keeper strongly believes that the monsters are a large threat to the village.

4.3.2.2. Look

4.3.2.3.1. Physical characteristics

The tavern keeper is a large, robust man who is easily recognized by his bushy red hair and beard, as well as his signature hat.



4.3.2.3. Relationship to other characters

The tavern keeper is very popular amongst the villagers, since he is a great storyteller and always has something to talk about. He immediately takes a great liking to the Knight as they appear to be everything he wants to be: A brave hero in shining armour who ventures down the cave to save the village from monsters.

4.3.3. Character #3 - Cthulhu

4.3.3.1. Character description

This character is loosely inspired by the fictional entity Cthulhu, created by H. P. Lovecraft for the short story *The Call of Cthulhu*³, with our own twist on the character. He likes to decorate himself with things that bring out his blue eye color, but has lost his favourite hat somewhere in the dungeon and doesn't quite feel his best without it.

4.3.3.2. Look

4.3.3.2.1. Physical characteristics

An octopus-like appearance, with tentacles and a large blue eye. Quite fleshy and frightening-looking. Dwells in the water and is merged to the dungeon wall as if he's part of the dungeon itself.



4.3.3.3. Relationship to other characters

Hated by the villagers. Friends with the other monsters in the cavern. Takes a liking to the Knight as they help him get his hat back and doesn't want to kill him like other humans he's encountered.

4.3.4. Character #4 - The Sphinx

4.3.4.1. Character description

Inspired by the Ancient Egyptian mythological creature. The Sphinx has a passion for knitting. Despite her imposing appearance, this enigmatic creature is known for her gentle demeanor and love for crafting intricate patterns with

³ <https://lovecraft.fandom.com/wiki/Cthulhu>

her fine thread. However, the Sphinx faces a dilemma—she's run out of yarn! Her exquisite creations have halted, and she's in need of a hero to assist her in sourcing more materials.

4.3.4.2. Look



4.3.5. Character #5 - Rattle Snake Dragon

4.3.5.1. Character description

In the echoing chambers of the Cave, an unusual dragon makes his home—a rattling dragon who adores playing music. Known for his melodic tunes that reverberate through the caves, this dragon's scales produce a symphony of sounds, delighting anyone who hears. However, lately, his music has turned sour. One of his rattling scales has overgrown, throwing his harmonious melodies out of tune and causing dissonance in his beloved compositions.

4.3.5.2. Look



4.3.6. Character #6 - The Gnome

4.3.6.1. Character description

Inspired by Nordic mythology. The gnome is mischievous, known for his knack for causing playful chaos, but has found himself trapped inside a magical jar. The jar, enchanted by ancient cave magic, has drained the gnome and now keeps him confined.

4.3.6.2. Look



5. Section IV – World

5.1. Game World

5.1.1. General look and feel of the world

The world in which the game takes place is a medieval and fantasy-inspired world. The village that you arrive at is a small village in the woods, built largely out of wood and stone. The cave part of the world is more mystical, with each level having a unique aesthetic tied to the monster that dwells there. This brings in some aspects of different mythologies to the world.

5.1.2. Area #1 - The village

5.1.2.1. General Description

The village is where the villagers live, and in the demo version of the game, it is only shown in cutscenes. This is where the player interacts with the villagers. The style of the village is inspired by medieval Europe, with lots of wood and stone materials. In the demo version of the game, the village is not directly connected to other areas, and can only be accessed when finishing a level or certain dialogue.

5.1.3. Area #2 The Cave

5.1.3.1. General Description

The cave is located beneath the village and is accessed through a well. In the demo version, it features an actual map and serves as the primary area for player activities. The cave's style is that of a classic dungeon. Within the cave, players need to solve various puzzles, using their items and abilities to complete tasks.

5.2. Level World: Cthulu (Demo level)

5.2.1. Synopsis

In the first level of the game, the Knight arrives at the village inn, where the villagers assume that he can help them with slaying monsters in the nearby cave. The knight then gets thrown into the cave and lands in the dungeon of Cthulu. Guided by the level design, you fall down and meet Cthulu who first thinks you are just like other humans and will try to slay him. But after noticing that you don't have a weapon, his tone changes and he instead asks you for help with finding his hat. But before that you have to get back up to the village and acquire some sort of tool to help you get around the dungeon. You return above ground and the villagers, impressed that you survived, give you a hooked sword. As you return to the dungeon, you are now able to use the hooked sword to

5.2.2. Introductory Material

The level starts with a [cutscene #1](#).

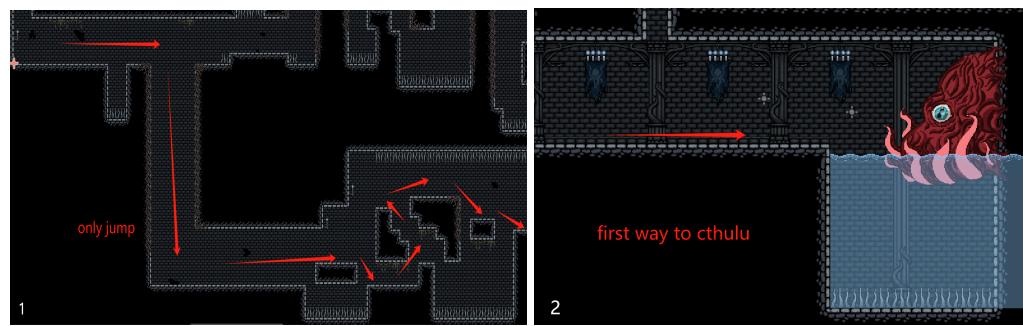
5.2.3. Objectives

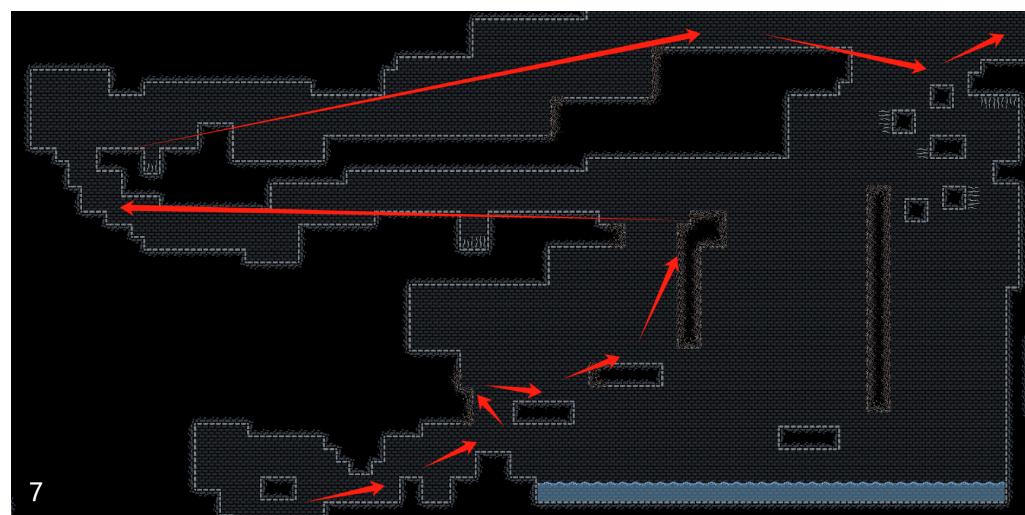
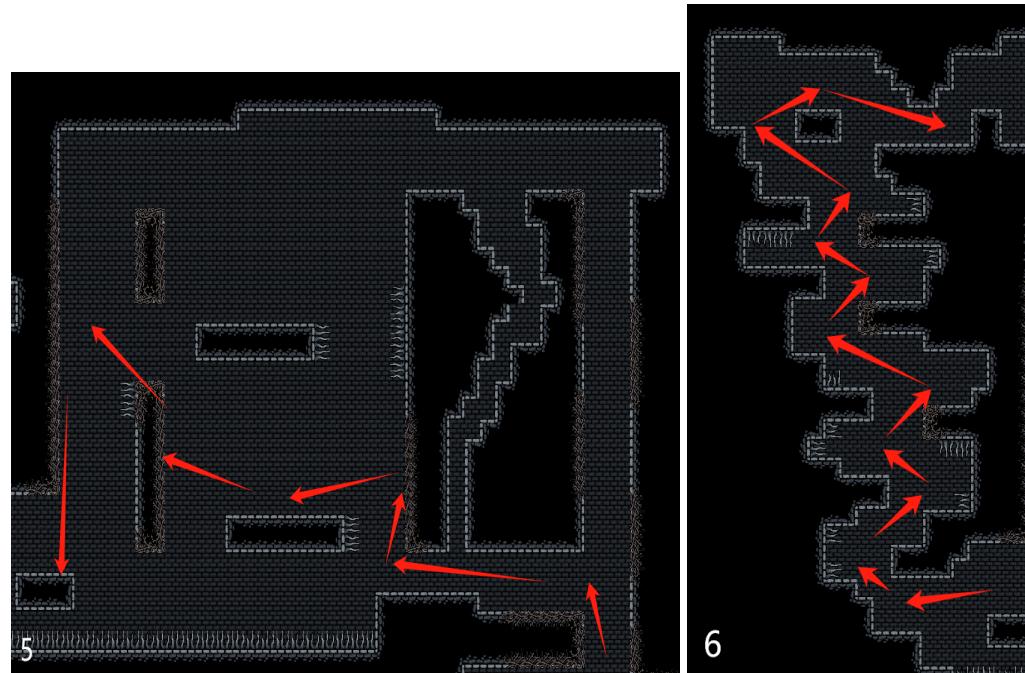
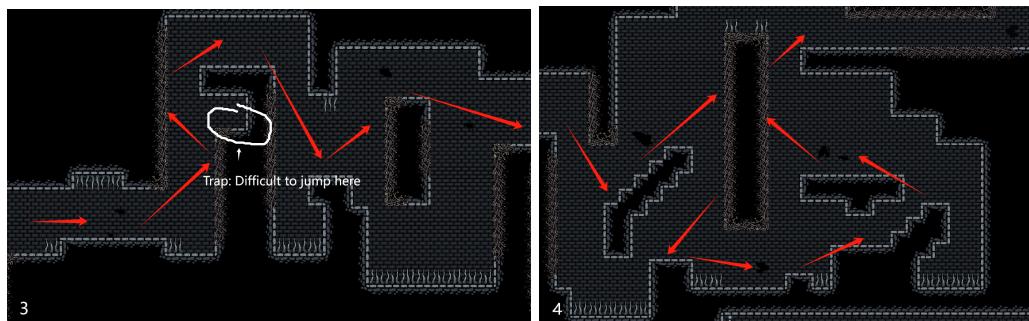
The objective is initially to find the monster in the cave and potentially slay it, since that's what the villagers told you to do and now that you're in the cave you see no other way than forward. When you encounter the monster, you gain a new objective of finding Cthulu's hat somewhere in the dungeon and bring it back to him. Before you can do that though, you'll have to go back to the village so that they can give you something to help you get around the dungeon.

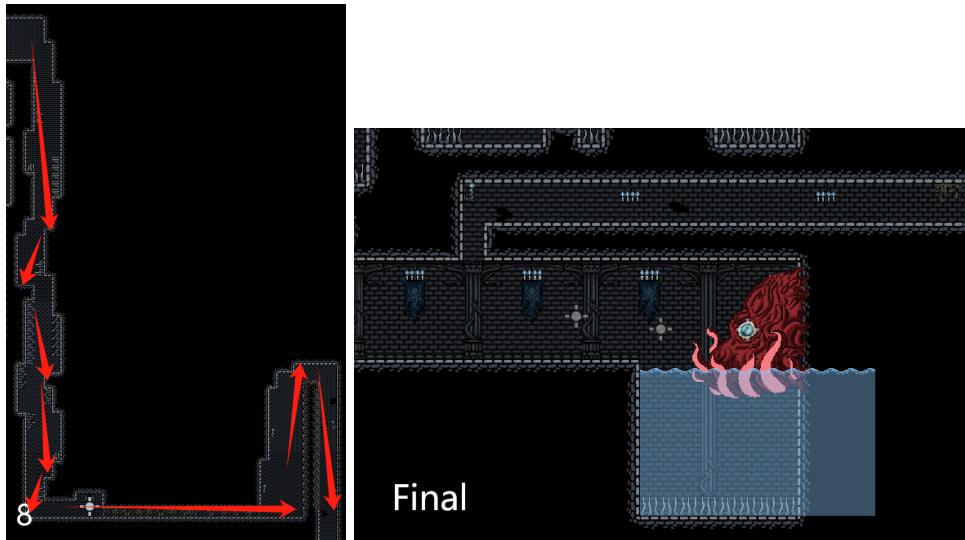
5.2.4. Map



5.2.5. Critical Path







6. Section V - Interface

6.1. Dialogue system

6.1.1. System

The dialogue system is quite simple as there aren't any dialogue options with branching paths as the knight doesn't talk (or get to talk).

6.1.2. Look



6.2. Input

The game focuses on controllers as an input method as the game doesn't need any precise control a mouse would be useful for and instead benefits from quick access to many buttons to activate the different abilities unlocked throughout the game. Keyboard is also supported as an alternative input method as the game currently only supports the PC platform.

6.3. Audio

6.3.1. Music

The soundtrack consists of three different pieces: one piece of background music which plays in the background during the main gameplay (see appendix 14.1.3.1) and two themes which correspond to different areas and characters (appendix 14.1.3.2).

The main background music and Cthulhu's theme both rely heavily on synth and are composed in the harmonic minor scale, which lends some tension and drama to the pieces. The two differ somewhat in energy however. The main background music is energetic, sporting a faster tempo and more dynamic bassline and melody, reminiscent of traditional video game music which aims to engage the player and get them 'in the zone'.

Cthulhu's theme however, is composed for scenes in which the player meets and speaks to Cthulhu, and is thus more cinematic in nature. Additionally, the small melodic movements, sluggish tempo and repetitive bassline vamp between the tonic

and the fifth all contribute to a sense of weight and stagnation. The occasional chromatic riff adds a strange, off-kilter mood to the piece.

The village theme on the other hand, is happier and more peaceful, and features Yueqin on backing and melody, and accents of flute throughout. The timbre of the Yueqin, similar to other lute instruments, brings to mind historical music, particularly within the European musical history context, which is invoked through harmony and cadence in the piece.

6.3.2. Sound Effects

The game includes a few different sound effects corresponding to character movement or player actions. For example, there are sound effects for jumping, using the hook sword and picking up items. There is also an on-click ‘voice’ sound for speaking to Cthulhu.

Unlike the music, most of the sound effects were not created from scratch (with the exception of the picking up items effect, which is a short melody that was composed for the game by us), but instead were based on, or simply used, existing sound effects. All audio assets which were not created by us were either in the public domain, or were licensed in such a way that we are permitted to use them for free, without credit or attribution, within our game.

Licensed assets are not permitted to be sold or redistributed on a Standalone basis, nor is it permitted to be used in an immoral, illegal, misleading or deceptive way, or as part of a trade-name, business name or service mark. Our use of the assets in question does not violate these terms.

7. Section VI – Technical

The target platform is currently PC but focusing on controllers as an input method with keyboard controls as an alternative. The game is not that performance intensive as it has quite simple graphics and doesn’t use any physics.

The game is made in the Godot engine and only using the godot scripting language to make it easy to export to the web and host on sites like itch.io.

8. Section VII - Management

8.1. Marketing Strategies

Marketing will be done through the following channels⁴.

⁴ [Twitchmetrics](#), [Cloutboost](#)

8.1.1. Social Media Marketing

Leveraging social media platforms is essential for promoting the game, engaging with players, and sharing updates. Regular posts on platforms like Twitter, Instagram, and Facebook keep the community informed about game developments, upcoming features, and release dates. Interactive content, such as polls, Q&A sessions, and live streams, encourages player engagement and feedback. Social media also serves as a platform for customer service, allowing quick and direct responses to player inquiries and issues, thereby building a strong, supportive relationship with the community.

8.1.2. Community Marketing

Building, nurturing, and engaging an active community is key to the long-term success of the game. This involves creating dedicated forums and social media groups where players can share their experiences, discuss strategies, and form friendships. Hosting in-game events, such as special challenges or seasonal activities, keeps the community engaged and excited. Encouraging user-generated content, like fan art, memes, and mods, enhances the sense of community ownership and participation. Regularly interacting with the community, acknowledging contributions, and listening to feedback ensures that players feel valued and heard.

8.1.3. Influencer Marketing

Partnering with influencers is a powerful way to promote the game to a wide audience. Influencers, such as streamers, YouTubers, and professional gamers, have dedicated followers who trust their recommendations. When these influencers showcase the game, share gameplay experiences, or discuss its unique features, it generates significant interest and credibility. This strategy leverages the influencers' reach, trust, and engagement to attract new players and sustain interest in the game.

8.1.4. Game Trailers and Teasers

Game trailers and teasers are crucial for building hype and anticipation. These videos provide a glimpse into the game's charming pixel art, humorous storyline, and engaging gameplay mechanics. They often include snippets of gameplay, hint at the narrative, and showcase the unique environments and characters players will encounter. Well-crafted trailers generate excitement and buzz, making players eager to experience the full game upon release.

8.1.5. Gameplay Videos and Live Streaming

Gameplay videos and live streams offer potential players a firsthand look at the game in action. Platforms like Twitch and YouTube, with their massive user bases, are ideal for showcasing live gameplay, providing tips and strategies, and creating a

sense of immersion. These videos allow audiences to see the game's mechanics, humor, and art style, and to experience the atmosphere of the game's world, all of which can entice viewers to become players.

8.1.6 Blogs and Articles

Creating blogs and articles related to the game provides valuable written content that can attract and engage players. These can include in-depth guides, tips and tricks, explorations of game lore, and behind-the-scenes looks at the development process. Well-written content enhances player understanding and appreciation of the game, fosters engagement, and drives interest by highlighting the unique aspects of the game and its world.

8.1.7. Social Media Interaction

Developers engaging with fans on social media platforms is crucial for building a loyal player base. Regularly answering questions, sharing insights, and teasing upcoming features or releases fosters a sense of community and direct connection with players. Active social media interaction shows that the developers are listening and responsive, which builds trust and enthusiasm among the game's followers.

8.1.8. User-Generated Content

Encouraging and showcasing user-generated content is a powerful way to expand the reach and appeal of the game. Content created by players, such as Twitch streams, YouTube videos, and fan art, generates organic buzz and engages a broader audience. Sharing and celebrating this content on official channels creates a sense of community and recognition, enticing new players to join in the fun.

8.1.9. Responsive to Feedback

Being responsive to player feedback is crucial for the ongoing success of the game. Regularly updating the game and addressing issues based on community input shows that the developers are committed to improving the player experience. This approach not only enhances the game's quality but also builds trust and loyalty among the player base, as they see their feedback directly influencing the game's development.

8.1.10. Support for Modding Community

Supporting a thriving modding community adds another layer of appeal and engagement for the game. By allowing and encouraging players to create mods, the game can offer endless possibilities and personalized experiences. Developer support for this community ensures a steady stream of new content and ideas, keeping the game fresh and exciting for both new and returning players.

8.2. Kickstarter Strategies

To ensure the success of our Kickstarter campaign, we can adopt and adapt the strategies used by successful campaigns like "Hollow Knight." Here's how we can implement these strategies for our game:

8.2.1. Personal Touch

Introduce the development team to the backers. Share our passion for creating this game and our dedication to delivering a memorable and fun experience. Personal stories and insights from the team can build a strong connection with potential backers.

8.2.2. Visual and Content Presentation

High-Quality Visuals: Fill the Kickstarter page with high-quality visuals, including concept art, early gameplay screenshots, and animated GIFs. Showcase the game's charming pixel art and the distinct environments themed to different monsters, like the Lovecraftian caves for Cthulu and Egyptian tombs for the Sphinx.

Engaging Video: Produce a well-crafted campaign video that provides an overview of the game. Include gameplay footage, developer interviews, and animated sequences to effectively communicate the game's atmosphere, mechanics, and humor.

8.2.3. Detailed Project Description

Gameplay Mechanics: Clearly detail the core gameplay mechanics, such as platforming, puzzle-solving, and interacting with friendly monsters. Explain how players will navigate the interconnected caves, solve unique puzzles, and assist the monsters they encounter.

Features and Stretch Goals: Provide a list of game features and potential stretch goals. Stretch goals could include additional levels, new monsters with unique environments, and expanded storylines, encouraging higher pledges and sustained interest.

8.2.4. Reward Tiers

Diverse Rewards: Offer a variety of reward tiers catering to different levels of backer support. Rewards can range from digital copies of the game and exclusive in-game items to physical merchandise like art books, posters, and plush toys.

Exclusive Content: Include exclusive content in higher tiers, such as backer-only items and early access to the game. This creates a sense of exclusivity and urgency, motivating backers to pledge at higher levels.

8.2.5. Community Engagement

Regular Updates: Post regular updates throughout the campaign to keep backers informed about progress, new developments, and stretch goal achievements. Include behind-the-scenes looks, developer insights, and sneak peeks at upcoming features to maintain engagement.

Interactive Comments: Actively engage with the community through the Kickstarter comments section. Respond to questions, feedback, and suggestions to foster a sense of involvement and community among backers.

8.2.6. Press and Social Media Outreach

Media Coverage: Seek press coverage from gaming websites, blogs, and influencers to reach a broader audience. Provide early previews and exclusive content to generate buzz and drive traffic to the Kickstarter page.

Social Media Promotion: Utilize social media platforms like Twitter, Instagram, and Facebook to promote the campaign. Share updates, visuals, and engaging content to attract followers and encourage sharing.

8.2.7. Collaborations and Partnerships

Indie Community Support: Seek support from the indie game community, including endorsements and collaborations with other developers and industry figures. This support can add credibility and expand the campaign's reach.

8.2.8. Transparent Budget and Timeline

Clear Budget Breakdown: Provide a transparent breakdown of how the funds will be used, covering aspects like development costs, art and design, music, and marketing. Transparency builds trust with potential backers.

8.3. Tier Rewards

Offering a variety of reward tiers is essential for attracting a wide range of backers and maximizing funding potential. Each tier should provide increasing value and exclusivity to encourage higher pledges. Here's a detailed breakdown of potential reward tiers for our game:

Digital Supporter (\$5)

- Backer Thank You: A heartfelt thank you from the development team.
- Digital Wallpaper: Exclusive digital wallpapers featuring concept art from the game.

Early Bird Digital Copy (\$15)

- Game Copy: Early access to a digital copy of the game at a discounted rate.

- Backer Credits: Your name listed in the game credits under “Early Supporters.”

Standard Digital Copy (\$20)

- Game Copy: A digital copy of the game upon release.
- Backer Credits: Your name listed in the game credits.

Digital Deluxe Edition (\$35)

- Game Copy: A digital copy of the game.
- Soundtrack: A digital download of the game’s original soundtrack.
- Digital Art Book A digital art book featuring concept art and developer commentary.
- Backer Credits Your name listed in the game credits.

Collector’s Edition (\$60)

- Game Copy: A digital copy of the game.
- Physical Art Book A high-quality physical art book.
- Exclusive Poster A limited-edition poster signed by the development team.
- Backer Credits Your name listed in the game credits under “Special Thanks.”

Plush Toy Edition (\$100)

- Game Copy: A digital copy of the game.
- Plush Toy: An exclusive plush toy of a friendly monster from the game.
- Physical Art Book: A high-quality physical art book.
- Exclusive Poster: A limited-edition poster signed by the development team.
- Backer Credits: Your name listed in the game credits under “Special Thanks.”

Collector’s Bundle (\$150)

- Game Copy: A digital copy of the game.
- Soundtrack: A digital download of the game’s original soundtrack.
- Physical Art Book: A high-quality physical art book.
- Exclusive Poster: A limited-edition poster signed by the development team.
- Plush Toy: An exclusive plush toy of a friendly monster from the game.
- Exclusive In-Game Item: A unique in-game item available only to backers.
- Backer Credits: Your name listed in the game credits under “Special Thanks.”

Developer’s Bundle (\$250)

- All Previous Rewards: Includes all rewards from the Collector’s Bundle.
- Beta Access: Early access to the beta version of the game, with the opportunity to provide feedback and help shape the final product.
- Developer Q&A: Access to an exclusive Q&A session with the development team.

- Behind-the-Scenes Access: Exclusive behind-the-scenes updates and developer diaries.

Ultimate Fan Edition (\$500)

- All Previous Rewards: Includes all rewards from the Developer's Bundle.
- Custom NPC: Work with the development team to design a custom NPC (non-player character) that will appear in the game.
- Personalized Thank You Video: A personalized thank you video from the development team.
- Limited Edition Print: A limited edition, numbered art print signed by the team.

Patron of the Game (\$1,000)

- All Previous Rewards: Includes all rewards from the Ultimate Fan Edition.
- Custom Monster Design: Collaborate with the team to design a custom monster that will appear in the game.
- Custom Area Design: Collaborate with the team to design a custom area that will appear in the game.
- Executive Producer Credits: Receive an “Executive Producer” credit in the game.

By offering a range of reward tiers that cater to different levels of backer support, we can ensure that everyone from casual supporters to dedicated fans feels valued and appreciated. Each tier should provide meaningful and exclusive content, creating a sense of excitement and urgency to pledge and be a part of the game's journey.

8.4. Case Studies



Case study of the game Celeste⁵⁶.



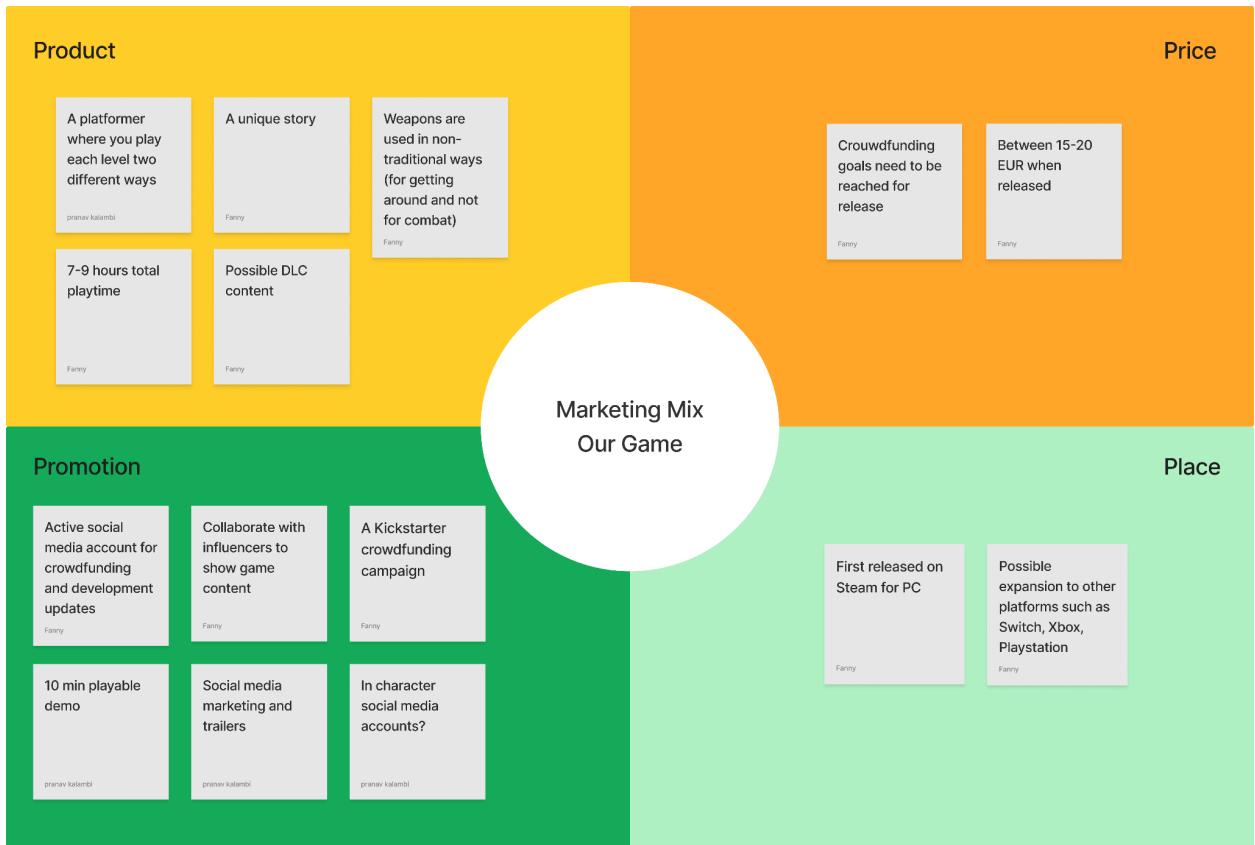
Case study of the game Hollow Knight⁷⁸.

⁵ <https://www.celestegame.com/>

⁶ [Celeste design Process](#)

⁷ <https://www.hollowknight.com/>

⁸ [Hollow knight design process](#)



Marketing mix for Sir Lies-a-lot.

8.5. Risk analysis

Developing and launching our game involves several potential risks that need to be identified and mitigated to ensure a smooth and successful process. One significant area of concern is technical risk. Creating a Metroidvania platformer with intricate environments, unique monster interactions, and puzzle-solving elements is inherently complex. There is a high likelihood of encountering unforeseen technical challenges that could delay development. To mitigate this, we will employ a robust project management approach with detailed planning and regular milestone checks. By using agile development practices, we can iteratively build and test the game, allowing for necessary adjustments and problem-solving along the way. Additionally, software bugs and performance issues are common in game development. Implementing rigorous testing protocols, including unit testing, integration testing, and user acceptance testing, will help identify and fix bugs early in the development process. Engaging a dedicated quality assurance (QA) team and utilizing automated testing tools will further ensure the game's stability and performance.

Financial risks also pose a significant challenge. Budget overruns can occur due to unexpected expenses, extended development time, or additional resource requirements. To address this, we will create a detailed budget plan with contingency funds for unforeseen expenses and regularly monitor expenditures against the budget, adjusting plans as necessary to stay within financial constraints. Another financial risk is insufficient funding. Our Kickstarter campaign might not reach its funding goal, or post-campaign funding might be inadequate to complete the game. To mitigate this, we will conduct thorough pre-campaign research and preparation to ensure a compelling and attractive campaign. Engaging with potential backers early and building a strong marketing strategy will maximize exposure and support. Additionally, we will have a plan B for alternative funding sources if needed.

The development team itself is a critical area where risks can arise. The availability and turnover of key team members can disrupt progress. To mitigate this risk, we will foster a positive and collaborative work environment to retain talent and have clear documentation and knowledge transfer processes in place. This will help mitigate the impact of turnover, and we will recruit additional talent as needed to fill gaps.

Market risks are another area of concern. The gaming market, particularly the indie game sector, is highly competitive. There is a risk that our game might not stand out or attract enough players. To differentiate our game, we will emphasize its unique premise, engaging story, and distinctive art style. Building a strong community and leveraging effective marketing strategies will create buzz and maintain interest. Additionally, player preferences and trends in the gaming industry can shift, potentially affecting the game's appeal. To address this, we will stay informed about industry trends and player feedback, remaining flexible and willing to adapt certain elements of the game to better align with player expectations and emerging trends.

Legal and regulatory risks must also be considered. There is a risk of infringing on existing intellectual property rights or having our own IP infringed upon. Conducting thorough IP research and ensuring all content is original or properly licensed will mitigate this risk. Consulting with legal professionals will help protect our IP and handle any disputes. Compliance with platform requirements is another concern, as different distribution platforms have specific technical and content requirements. Understanding and complying with the requirements of each platform from the outset, and engaging with platform representatives as needed, will ensure smooth submission processes.

Finally, scheduling risks can impact the development timeline. Unforeseen challenges or scope creep can lead to delays, pushing back the release date. To mitigate this, we will create a realistic and flexible development timeline with built-in buffers for potential

delays. Prioritizing essential features and being prepared to adjust the scope if necessary will help us meet deadlines. Dependencies on external parties, such as third-party tools, services, or collaborators, can also introduce delays. Maintaining good communication and contracts with these external parties, setting clear expectations and deadlines, and having contingency plans in place will address potential delays from these dependencies.

By identifying these risks and implementing appropriate mitigation strategies, we can better navigate the challenges of game development and increase the likelihood of delivering a successful and enjoyable game to our players.

9. Section VIII – Game Art

9.1. Concept Art

9.1.1. Main character

The first concept art for the game included the following, very generic knight design. This was meant to be a placeholder until the character design was developed further. The tutorial “Intro to animation” by Slynyrd⁹ was referenced for the frames of the walking cycle.



When looking over the design, these initial concepts were made for the main character.



⁹ <https://www.slynyrd.com/blog/2018/8/19/pixelblog-8-intro-to-animation>



Initial concept sketches included:

- Masked warrior in a feathered cloak and a themed mask with an Inner vest with fur trousers
- A juggling jester who works in the circus and only uses weapons for entertainment performances
- A smiley general who keeps up a fake facade to keep the peace.
- A stereotypical knight with a cape and a horned helmet

Initially, we went forward with the masked warrior, specifically the owl mask and started developing art for it.



The characteristics of this character were:

- An overlay pattern over the cloak with a sunny pattern
- An owl mask
- Jingling bells like ornaments

At this stage of the game, there were supposed to be two art styles for separate sections of the game. The real world and the puppet world. We developed art and animations for those art styles.



Idle and running poses for the real world.



Running and idle poses for the puppet world.

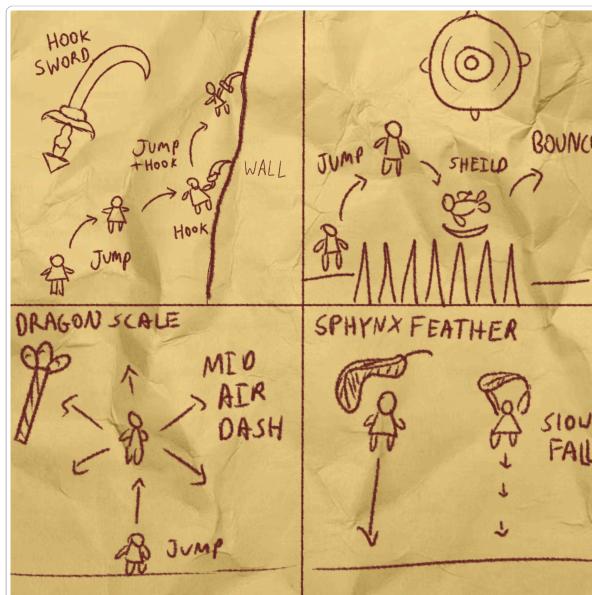
After implementation inside the game, we felt this character didn't match the setting we were going for, so we reverted to an earlier concept - the stereotypical knight.



The characteristics of this character were:

- A horned helmet
- Golden bronze armour
- A ponytail that comes out of the helmet and looks like a plumed Roman helmet
- Ambiguous gender while fully suited up.

9.1.2. Items and mechanics



Some concept art was made for the items you can gain and the movement mechanics they unlock.

9.1.2. Other characters

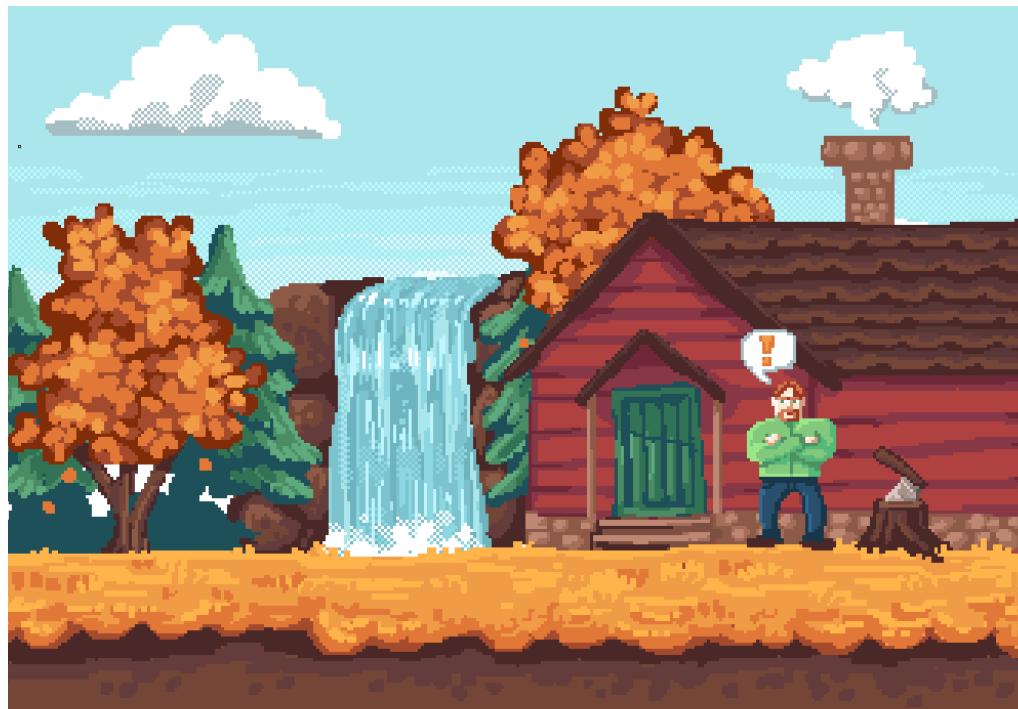


Some concept art was made for the monsters and what you would help them with to help you unlock new abilities.

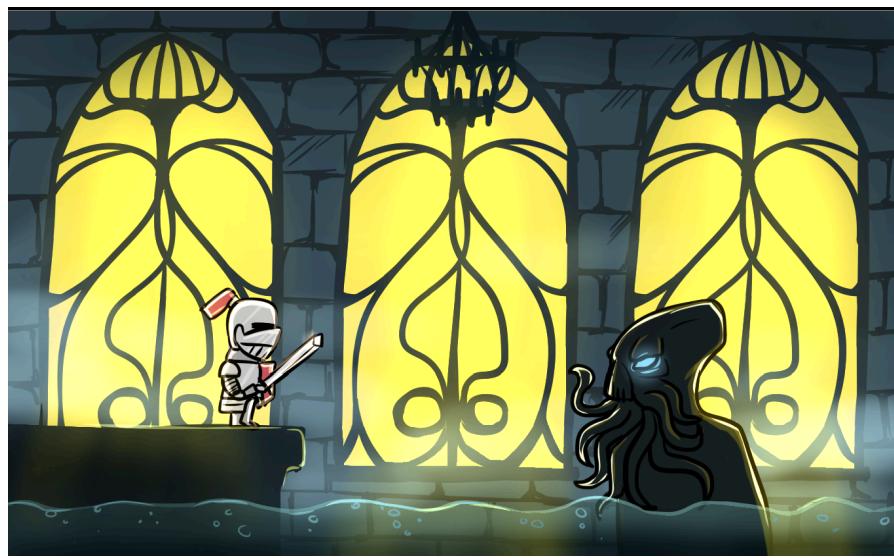


For the initial design of Chtulu, these concept drawings were made to show what the character could look like in different art styles. These were made before an art style had been chosen for the game.

9.1.2. Environments



First concept drawing for a potential look and feel for the game. This was made before deciding on a certain art style or concept, but some inspiration was still taken from it for the village and character designs in the game.



This concept art for Chtulhu's dungeon guided the design of the tilemaps for that area. This artwork was made before deciding on the pixel art style for the game.

A few iterations were done on the background tilemaps. The first concept looked like this.

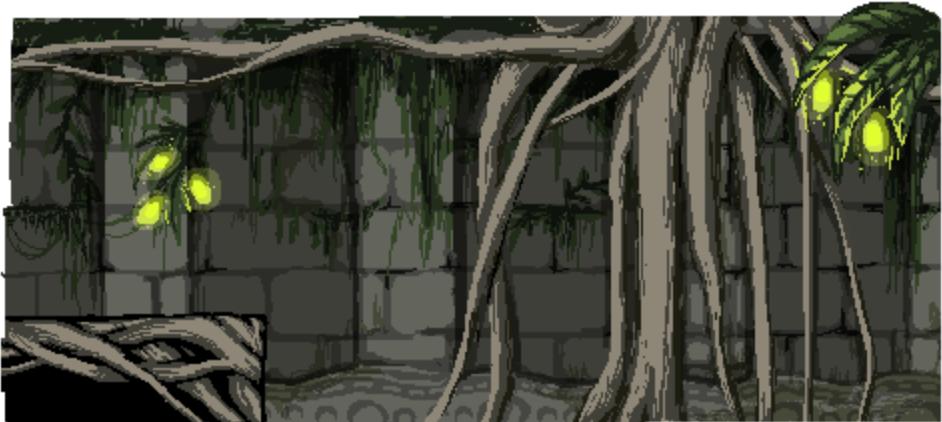


Based on seeing these tilemaps in the game, the textures were reworked into the final versions.



Concept art for the Sphinx's area. Inspired taken from the Rosicrucian Egyptian Museum's 360 online museum tour¹⁰.

¹⁰ <https://egyptianmuseum.org/360-museum-tour>



Concept art for the background in the Rattle Snake Dragon's area. Inspired by the Ta Prohm Temple¹¹ in Cambodia.

9.2. Style Guides

9.2.1. Tilemaps

The tile size used for the tilemaps is 32x32 px.

9.2.2. Colors and shading

Each area of the dungeon has a different color palette, limited to around 12 colors. Black outlines are generally used for background and foreground elements. For shading, one highlight color and one shadow color is used for the background elements. Below is the color palette for Cthulu's area for reference.

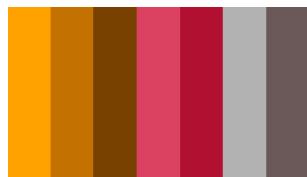


For the village, warm and earthy colors are mainly used. The village cutscenes use the colors shown below, but more colors can be added given that they are of similar hues and saturation.

¹¹ https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Ta_Prohm



The main character's colors are the following shades of yellow and pink.



9.2.3. Pops of color in animations

To highlight movements, the main character animations often include a pop of a bright color.



9.2.3. Cutscene visuals

The cutscene image size is 270 x 116 px. The images are placed at the top of the screen, and the rest of the screen is colored black. The font size in the cutscenes are 40px.

In the cutscenes, the characters have more realistic proportions and the shading has two shades, a dark shadow and a lighter transition shade.



9.2.4. Font

The font used in the game is Pixelify Sans¹².

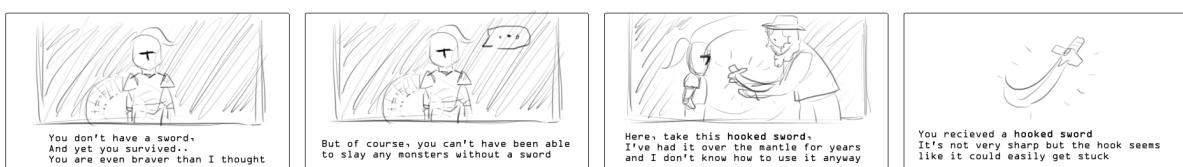
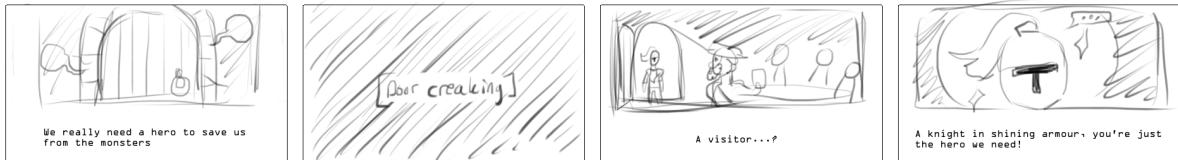
9.6. Cut scenes



Initial cutscene storyboard. At this point the cutscene included playable aspects and dialogue.

After iterating, the cutscenes were changed to static images with text. The storyboards were redrawn accordingly.

¹² <https://fonts.google.com/specimen/Pixelify+Sans>



10. Appendices

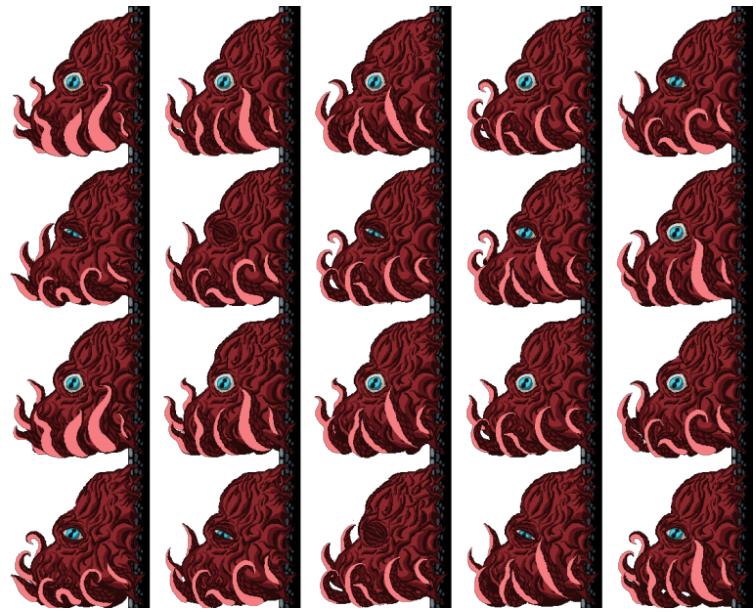
10.1. Assets

10.1.1. Art

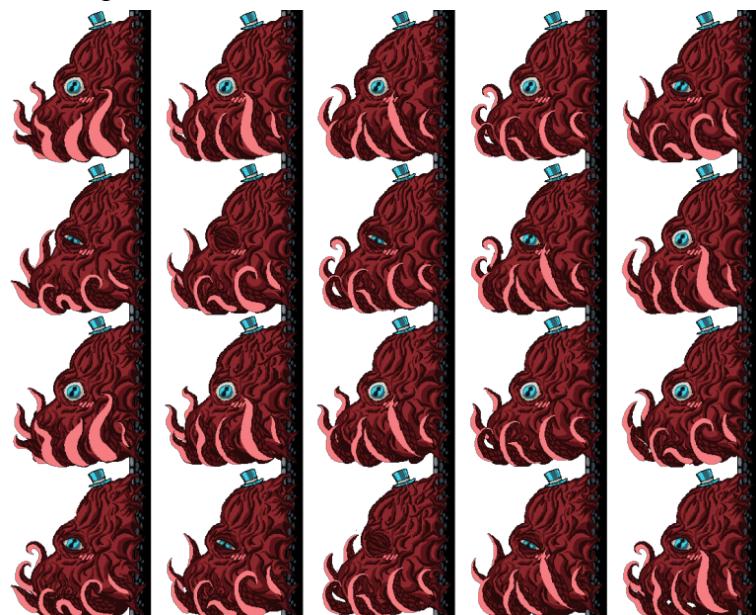
10.1.1.1. Character assets



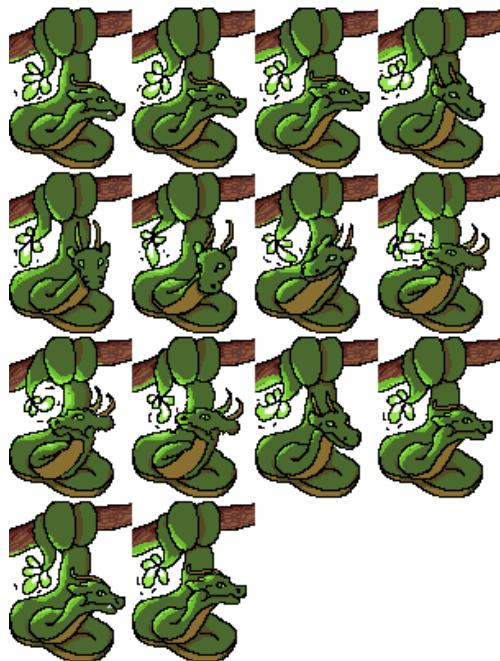
Knight Movement sprite sheet



Cthulu sprite sheet



Cthulu with the hat sprite sheet



Rattling dragon sprite sheet



Knitting sphinx sprite sheet

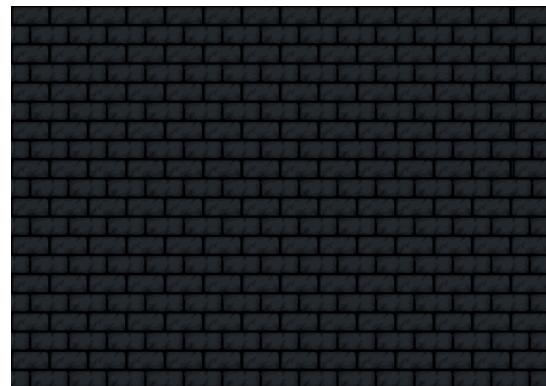


Stuck Gnome sprite sheet

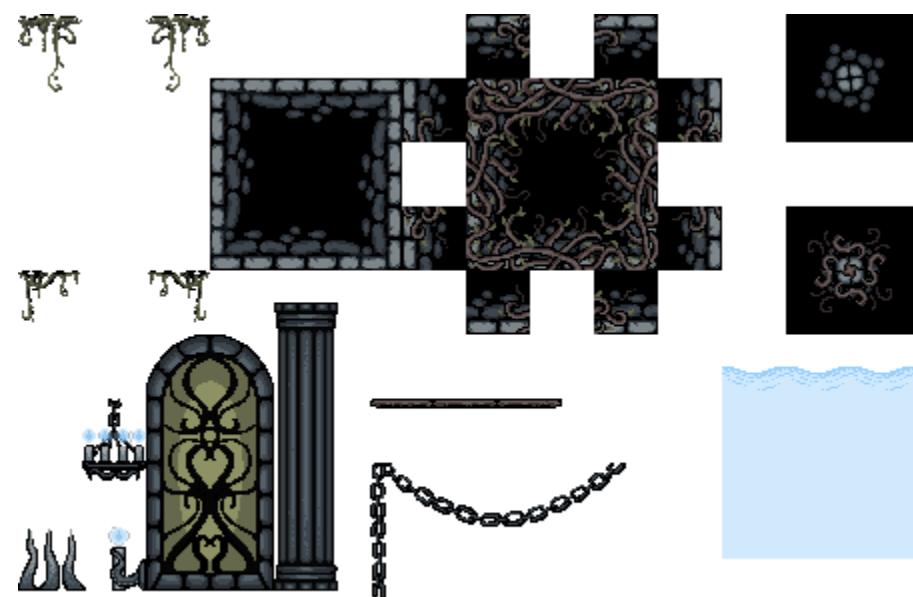
10.1.1.2. Environment assets



Hat sprite



Cthulhu's dungeon background assets



Cthulhu's Dungeon Environment tilemap

10.1.1.3. Animations



Knight movement animations



Cthulu base animation



Rattling dragon base animation



Knitting sphinx base animation



Stuck Gnome base animation

10.1.1.4. Interface Art



Character portraits for Cthulhu, the knight and the village tavern owner



Dialogue box for interactions



Logo for the game

10.1.1.5. Cut scene images

10.1.1.5.1 Cutscene #1 images





10.1.1.5.2 Cutscene #2 images



10.1.2. Sound

10.1.2.1. Environmental Sounds

10.1.2.2. Weapon Sounds

A few different sound effects and versions were created for the hook sword.

- The original sound effect intended for the hook sword:
 [█ Hook_sword_bright.wav](#)
- A less bright version of the first sound, in case the first was too grating on
 the ears: [█ Hook_sword_dull.wav](#)
- A sound effect for the hook sword being used on wooden textures as
 opposed to stone: [█ Hook_sword_wood.wav](#)

10.1.2.3. Interface Sounds

10.1.3. Music

10.1.3.1. Gameplay Loop Background Music

[█ VER 2 Gameplay background music.wav](#)

10.1.3.2. Themes

Cthulhu's theme: [█ In the Electronic Church of the Dreamer.wav](#)

Village theme: [█ Village theme.wav](#)