Terminus

***Basics***

Concept: a 2D puzzle/horror romp through a laboratory, similar to the original Resident Evil. The game will have a graphical style similar to that of Star Void, with the added benefit of color-coding things (player is white, enemies are red, etc.); plays into the Star Void universe.

Playtime & Content: may take around 3 hours initially, but then can be beaten in under 1 hour when the player becomes quick enough. Could also include extra minigames that mimic in-game puzzles which can be unlocked for getting certain achievements, or include an extra hard dungeon as an unlockable.

Map/Level Design: map should be divided into multiple interconnected areas, perhaps with submaps for each area. Each area should connect to anywhere from one to three other areas, and multiple paths and shortcuts are discovered as you continue further through the game.

Limitations: game should be limited to about 75 screens for quickness of development. Should have at least 10% of that be on-screen puzzles to solve.

Kickstarter: initial goal should be funding game on PC and Switch; stretch goals could include having a gothic art style like Symphony of the Night or Viviette or Resident Evil, exporting to Xbox and PS4/5, having an additional mansion, and a horde or mercenaries mode.

***Game Mechanics***

Water system: water can be redirected from one area to another when a pump is activated. The water level can be raised or lowered in certain areas, which can grant access to or block areas. Swimming is granted later which allows you to reach new areas in the water. Water can be used for other functions as well, such as watering plants, or removing water from dangerous plants.

Electricity and lighting: in many areas of the game, there is darkness unless electricity brings the lights on. You can use a lantern for temporary lighting, but those are limited and can often only be reached by accessing dangerous areas; long-term it is helpful to get the electricity working. Electricity is not only useful for lights, but it also turns on the machinery in various areas; however, it must often be routed to the correct areas with circuit breakers. It can also be used to electrify water.

Swimming: can’t be done until you obtain swimming gear, but once you do, you can go underwater for very brief periods of time to bypass basic obstacles. Once you get the Air Tank you can stay underwater for much longer periods of time as well. The only weapons you can use while underwater are harpoons, which are quite limited.

Crawl space and air ducts: used to navigate from one area to another. Can also be redirected to remove gaseous toxins from rooms (or put them into others).

***Game Systems***

Movement: player can run, climb ladders, stairs and other objects, and perform other contextual actions such as pushing objects. Combat is limited, with pistols, hatchets, and other weaponry. Additional movement, such as swimming underwater or gravitational rotation, may be performed later. You can hop down from certain ledges, but going from too high could potentially damage you. Gun can be aimed forward, upward, or downward.

Stealth: if enemies see you in their line of sight, they will be alerted to your presence. But you can climb objects and get out of their way to move past them.

Inventory Management: inventory space is limited and items must be managed well. When items are selected, it will show a description at the top and you can either use them or drop them if the item is droppable; dropped items will remain where they are. You can go to storage lockers to store and pick up items that you don’t want to use but may wish to later.

Dialogue: should have dialogue popups that display text and can be gone through.

Map System: opening your map shows a grid view of the area, with rooms colored differently depending on whether it has been opened at all, opened, or completely explored with all items obtained. There will also be icons to indicate things like doors that require a certain key.

Room Tracker Array: rooms should keep track of relevant things, including items in the room, enemies, or game events. If something happens in one room that affects another, it should trigger an event that affects the universal room array, which remains constant across screens.

Screen Scrolling: player character should stay in the middle of the screen for rooms that are taller or wider than a single screen.

Health, Ammo, Air: should have counters for health, ammo, and air.

Contextual Button: have one primary button that handles the majority of the game’s contextual actions.

Save System: figure out how to have multiple files and save their contents to them.

***Areas***

Offices: includes meeting rooms, cubicles, and restrooms. Also has a supply closet that contains unlimited supplies of Lamp Oil but is dangerous to use because of poison gas and tentacles. Should contain a high number of Zombies at their desks and on toilets, with multiple notes of goings-on in the facility, specifically with Lurk and the Cobra Moss. You can push around spinny chairs to reach places. Lots of emails between different people with office drama and details of experiments.

Specimen Holding: the main area in which rooms can be moved to reach new locations, justified by the ability for specimens to interact with one another. Many special creatures are located here. The moveable rooms can be used to access the Experiment Labs and Void Center as well, and configuring the rooms in a certain manner allows electricity to flow through and gather a Chess Piece. Many creatures here remain contained until electricity is restored, and some come through at the end when the lab is destroyed. You’ll see logs left around that describe the status of specimens stored in each container, and if they are transferred to the Experiment Labs for testing.

Experiment Labs: heavy use of the crawlspace/air duct system. Also many unique creatures here. The air duct system here connects the left side of the building (Offices, Labs, Specimen Storage, Rooftop) along with the Residential Area; it also affects the air flow of other areas. Some employees in other areas note that the AC is a little stuff due to poor air flow caused by people up in this area. You’ll see various failed experiments here, along with logs describing tests performed.

Residential Area: place where many unsuspecting victims would live prior to experiments. Includes areas with mirrors to solve puzzles and see invisible enemies, along with musical instruments. You’ll see many Royal Family members staying here, and multiple Zombies in fancy outfits in the ballroom.

Electrical: location where most of the control over the building’s electricity is accessed. It affects many areas of the building, but until a second generator is gained, only a few areas can be given energy at a time. It is noted that many creatures created had escaped into this area, so employee access had grown dangerous. Routing electricity here allows you to not have to use the Lantern to light most places.

Lunch Seating: small outdoor area where the well can be accessed through the nearby graveyard. Notes nearby claim that some of the Royal Family’s ancestors were buried here, but rumors claim that even some of those living in the facilities were stored and buried here as well.

Parking: many cars (and zombies) are located here, with some supplies stored in them.

Rooftop: lots of enemies up here, along with shortcuts. Radio satellite can be accessed from here. Some employees would come up here for smoke breaks or to get fresh air.

Basement: a place which connects various places in the laboratory together. This is the primary location where the water level affects things. After allowing well water in, the water level here can be controlled, and eventually used to flood the bottom floor of the Office above you. However, it also affects the life of the monstrous plant feeding off it too, and the water of the rest of the building. Some mutated bugs were noted to have escaped into the Basement, keeping the janitor busy.

Well: a short location which requires swimming gear and tests your planning, stealth, and endurance. Getting through it allows you to control the water level in the Basement. You’ll see the bodies of various Royal Family member here.

Void Center: the final area, where the Void is stored. Gravity-shifting happens here. You can manually increase the power of the void to affect gravity in nearby areas, including the Residential Area, Specimen Storage, and Electrical. One of the scientists who got trapped here notes the horrors of slowly dying due to the Void’s energy.

***Enemies***

Zombies: typical zombies who travel rather slowly but still pose a threat; they may shuffle towards you or crawl on the ground to grab at you.

Luna: a wolf-like enemy that is very aggressive and attacks quickly. It also has the ability to wake up Zombies, making your life more difficult.

Mutosa: creepy insects that can crawl along the walls to reach and attack you, and can shoot poison towards you. Once damaged enough, they will hide in their shell and transform into Sola later unless certain chemicals are used to destroy the shell.

Sola: a gigantic moth that is drawn to light. You can distract it with a light further away, but if there is light near you it will move towards you quickly. It will destroy any other Sola it sees.

Cloak: ghosts that can only be seen near mirrors or using flash bangs, they move in a sine-wave movement that makes them difficult to shoot unless they are made visible.

Moss Spore: a floating piece of moss that spews off toxic spore gas, and explodes dangerously when shot. However, this cloud can be used to hurt other enemies if used wisely.

Razor Leech: a giant leech-like fish with tentacles that swims underwater and can drain the life out of you if it catches you.

Carnal Amoeba: small particles that swim in simple patterns and cause minor damage if touched.

Cobra Moss: a gigantic plant whose tentacle-like vines spread throughout the facility, blocking paths or bringing toxic gas with it.

Skull Centipede: a gigantic centipede with a skull face on either side (from two humans cruelly fused together), it initially appears in a cocoon, encountering it soon after.

Clark/Lurk: a creature that can stalk you through certain portions of the game, like Mr. X. It will appear randomly in certain areas, and then chase you if it sees you (it can’t follow you past the room you find him in, though). It becomes a greater threat the further in the game you get.

Lurking Moss: a foul combination of Lurk and the previously weakened Cobra Moss, this final encounter in the game occurs as you are escaping. Eventually you will come across a powerful weapon which allows you to quickly destroy the Moss.

***Puzzles***

Swapping Roommates (Specimen Holding): must shuffle around nine different rooms to access different areas as needed. This is also used to provide electricity to certain rooms.

Planning Ahead (Specimen Holding): use the various chess pieces you’ve found and the clues in the room to position each piece in the correct place. Related to Clark/Lurk.

A Pieceful Lab (Experiment Lab): a room which requires you to move nine slots around to navigate to different parts of a single room and access other areas.

A Strange Way to Heal (Experiment Lab): four different body targets are shown shot in different areas of the body (Heart, Eye, Ankle, Leg), with the first letter of each body part used to spell a passcode (HEAL).

It Ain’t Rocket Science (Experiment Lab): you must use various vials, weighing scales, heating/cooling devices, etc. to create a vaccine.

Royal Seating (Offices): some zombies and a dog must be shot down from the ropes they are hanging on to fall onto various seats and other objects.

Ghost Map (Offices): maps out the places in the Residential Area where hidden ladders, platforms, and traps are located.

Fancy Inventory (Residential Area): must count out the pieces of various objects to input a code to open a door.

Bittersweet Symphony (Residential Area): a message sits near the piano which secretly tells you the notes to play on it.

Mirroring Reality (Residential Area): mirrors on the floor reveal hidden ladders and platforms that lead to new areas.

Circuitous Circuit (Electrical): you must move various breakers in a room to route electricity to the correct places.

Family Succession (Lunch Seating): in a certain place in the lab you will find a family genealogy, which indicates the order of the buttons on the graves you must push in the graveyard.

Modern Chariots (Parking): a hidden note describes five cars that must be opened in a certain order to access the contents of a nearby van.

Pins and Locks (Rooftop): must move around different limited pieces to remove the blockage like in that “traffic jam” game.

Level Heads (Basement): use various switches that affect multiple pillars to get all the heads on the same level.

Weighty Proceedings (Well): use the various skeletal parts on the scales to open up distinct areas using water gates. You’ll gain more parts as you proceed.

I Thought You Said West (Void Center): the five rooms must be rotated so that the statues in them match up with the description (e.g., mother looks west, brother looks towards heaven).

Addition by Rotation (Void Center): five different rooms must be rotated in different configurations in order to access different areas.

***Events in Order***

Wakey Wakey, Nice to Meat You (Specimen Storage): you wake up alone in a dark cell in Specimen Storage, and make your way out of there. You encounter Clark/Lurk crying in a room nearby over the body of his friend, with a picture of his family close by, which you pick up. There’s a brief poorly-written note from Clark mourning his friend’s death. You pick up a Lantern with Oil nearby, and then Clark’s family picture, which causes Lurk to burst into the room, where you must escape from him (note: this room has extra oil, but Lurk makes it difficult to escape without damage). Returning to your cell, you turn on the lamp and find a bunch of dead people nearby, along with a note from Truman describing his death, and feeling guilt for having involved Cliff because he has heard that he was captured as well, and praying for his family’s safety; he takes pleasure in the knowledge that Moira was able to escape to her hometown with vital information. While leaving this room you come across a Med Pill. You next find some Meat in a room and must lure Zombies from you in the next room. You can also find a Floppy Disk in this room as well if you lure them away correctly. You’ll be able to save in the next room at a Computer, and you’ll find some more Oil and some Rat Poison that you can use to poison some of the Zombies in the previous or next rooms, if you push some boxes to get up to a platform. You’ll also notice a door that can be opened with the Moon Key, but you can’t get that until later. You find logs describing first-hand accounts of people turning into Zombies, some of whom are criminals. You then move on to the Experiment Labs.

Sleeping Nightmares (Experiment Labs): here in the labs you come across multiple dead humans in one room, with a Human Bone hidden in a nearby drawer. Afterwards you move on and come across a cocooned Skull Centipede, showing two encased humans hugging. You then move on to a room in which there is heavy poison near the Cobra Moss, preventing you from moving forward. You’ll find a data log nearby describing the Mutosa experiments, and mentioning that the Skull Centipede’s cocoon is built similarly to the Mutosa’s. You’ll also discover a log that describes Lurk and his exceptional maneuvering, tracking, and fighting capabilities. Back in the Skull Centipede room, you will find a machine where nine pieces can be moved around in the puzzle “A Pieceful Lab”, which allows you to go into another room and grab its Sheet Music Piece and move onto the Office below.

Hatchet a Plan (Offices): in the offices you come across various Zombies that must be avoided, lured away, or poisoned; in the employee lounge you can find some Meat and Med Pills that will help. Making your way through, you find a Storage Closet Key in one of the desks at a cubicle, which you use to open a storage closet with a Hatchet, which you can use to more easily defeat enemies, along with some Oil. You’ll find a note around the office describing one man’s experience trying to train a Luna, and another co-worker’s mockery of him. Another note mentions that a co-worker claims to have been attacked by some kind of giant leech while he was on the toilet. One note comes from Truman and describes the nature of his work and his guilt and desire to tell someone about it or do something, while another describes rumors about Truman being kept as a test subject for breach of confidentiality. As you make your way around, you notice that Parking to the left is locked and requires a security key, the residential area requires a specific key, and the air vents cannot be accessed. Therefore you use your Hatchet and make your way down through a toilet to the Basement, which is mentioned to be where the janitor who holds some keys is located.

Bugs in the Basement (Basement): you work your way mostly unhindered through the basement, having to light the way with your lamp in a couple dark rooms; pick up the Titanium Bucket here and fill it with water. Once you finally reach the dead janitor, grab his Office Manager Key. You’ll find a note near him about cleaning up the “bugs” from the Basement, but warning you to make sure you’ve “cleaned them up” fully, or else something bad will happen. As you make your way back, you encounter some Mutosa and must avoid them in the complex basement system, before returning to the Offices.

Corporate Discipline (Offices): returning to the office, you use the Office Manager Key to open up the office manager’s room and solve the puzzle “Royal Seating”, which causes the king zombie to rise up and attack you; killing it yields the Screwdriver. You’ll find invoices here of funding provided by members of the Royal Family, along with notes of how the Royal Family is exceeding their reach. Returning back to where you saw an air vent in the Office, a Luna jumps through a window and another breaks through a previously locked door, which opens up the way to the entry way of the office. Ignore that for now and use the Screwdriver to enter the air vents, avoiding any Moss Spores and working your way into the Experiment Labs.

Clear Your Airways (Experiment Labs): you find yourself to the right of the poison gas and Cobra Moss you had seen earlier in the labs. A door to your right is locked so you work your way through the air vents above, but see Lurk below you as the air vent breaks, and you must escape from him. You escape into a room where you are able to control the air flow of the building; you can divert it to go away from the area you saw earlier, but you have to be careful not to bring it into your room, which can kill you immediately. You go to the previous area to find Lurk gone, but must lure the Zombies away from the ladder so you can drag it to where you need it. You can also drag a ladder over to go up the air vent to the right, which gives you Bug Killer and brings you to the hidden door for the Void Center, which can’t be entered now. Returning to the Cobra Moss area, you find that the gas has blocked up the vents you came from, but that the Moss is now gone and a Security Badge Lv. 1 is there. You’ll see notes about the Mutosa (bugs) getting in the airvents and being seen in other areas such as the Basement, along with notes about the Moss and its Spores getting into the vents. You move to the left to get to the Office again, seeing the Skull Centipede’s cocoon is growing and writhing inside.

Cold Reception (Offices): since the Luna had crashed through the door earlier and opened it up, you can now make your way to the entry of the office, where some stacks of paper can be moved to climb up on a file cabinet and grab a hidden Sheet Music Piece, and search the desk to find some more Bug Killer, which is perfect because a Mutosa crawling on the floor will attack you and can be killed after it goes into its cocoon. You’ll find a note on a cubicle nearby that describes how many co-workers feel about Lurk, as well as a photo of Clark and Truman together. You also see a poem on the receptionists’ desk which covertly describes the order that some cars must be opened in, before using the Security Badge Lv. 1 to go outside.

Sleigh Dogs (Parking): once in the parking lot you’ll see a Luna which attacks you, which you can either lure away with meat and avoid by going on top of a car, or fight using your Hatchet. Once it’s been dealt with, you can scavenge the open cars for various supplies, including the Handgun and Handgun Ammo (which you’ve been slowly accumulating, but are finally able to use). This triggers a pack of Luna to come and surround you, but you can take the high ground on the cars and shoot them from above, where it’s harder to reach you. You can then solve the puzzle “Modern Chariots”, which yields you the Gasoline. You then make your way make into the Offices.

Wake Up, Heavy Sleepers (Offices): as soon as you enter into the office, a Luna smashes through the security door, wakes up the Zombies nearby with a howl, and then leaves. Now that you have the Handgun you must defend yourself from a siege of zombies, climbing on desks and cabinets to avoid them, while pushing desks and another things to block doorways; they may also climb through the windows, but you can shoot them back out. Making your way towards the Residential Area, another Luna jumps through the window; if you kill it quickly before it can howl, all will be peaceful. However, if you don’t, you will have to fight past or avoid various Zombies. You’ll find a nearby desk with notes from and about Trinity Moss, the new and curious intern, along with notes describing a heated interaction with Moira Lucci. There’s also notes about the Cobra Moss starting as an office plant, and the owner missing it when it grows and is taken into custody. One note describes the terrible incident that happened with Clark turning into Lurk, while another mentions that one of their co-workers password is their license plate; use this from Parking to open up their safe, netting you an Item Case. Make your way to the right and use the Gasoline in conjunction with your Lantern to burn the dead mass of Cobra Moss and access the Residential Area.

Fancy Residents (Residential Area): You make your way to Room 2 in the Residential Area since it’s the first one that’s initially open, using your Lantern to light up the room. You’ll notice various unique objects of various kinds, and use them in solving the puzzle “Fancy Inventory” to open up the safe in the room (you may have to push around various objects to see all of them), which grants you Room Key No. 1. Navigate to the hallway and access Room 1 now, grabbing the Swimming Gear you see there and any Bug Killer and other items. This will cause the Zombie in the room to wake up however, so you’ll have to either escape or fight it. You’ll see notes of a resident noting that another resident claimed to have seen ghosts, spirits of their dead ancestors, reflected in the mirrors of the ballroom; yet another notes of the large sums of money their family has given, and that they should be permitted to know and explore more. You notice that there is poison gas preventing you from reaching the ballroom to the right, but that there is a sewage vent leading into the Basement, so navigate back to the Offices for now.

Busy Workaround (Offices 🡪 Experiment Labs 🡪 Offices 🡪 Basement 🡪 Parking 🡪 Offices): go to the Experiment Labs and use the device you had used earlier to divert gas away from the doorway in the Residential Area that was blocked. You’ll see once again that the Skull Centipede is growing larger and more inhuman, and it will prevent you from moving forward. Use your Titanium Bucket with water to feed the Moss above it, which will cause it to grow and get into a fight with the Moss, distracting it long enough for you to get by. You’ll also find a note describing an experiment and the test subject being put out of its misery, as the test was performed by Truman. If you go back to the Residential Area the gas will still prevent you from coming to the ballroom, but now the sewage vent could be used to go to it. So instead, go to the Basement and take a detour to the left where you originally found the dead janitor, lighting up the way as necessary. You will also face your first Sola here. Use the Swimming Gear here to go under some sewage water leading to the left, which will bring you up out into a car in Parking, where you find a Chess Piece. Fight any Luna that are here and work your way back through the Office to the entrance of the Basement.

Swimming Alone, No Lifeguards (Basements): use the Moon Key to open up the way to your right, where you will face multiple Mutosa in complex environments where you can either attempt to escape, lure them away, or fight. You’ll find a note nearby a dead Royal Family member describing their escape from systematic murder, but that with their injuries they won’t last long; after reading the note a Mutosa will crawl out of his chest. Use any Bug Killer you have to kill them in their cocoons, and light up the way with your Lantern as necessary. As you use your Swimming Gear to proceed further, you enter into a room with multiple cocoons, which all hatch into Sola and must be fought off before moving on. Then you move forward, having to dive underwater to avoid monstrous spiky tentacles, and notice the monstrous roots of the Cobra Moss in the water above; the janitor makes a note of the tentacles coming down, and not being able to clean because of it, although it helps with the bugs (you’ll see some Mutosa wrapped up). There’s a Generator Battery nearby here as well. You then must solve the puzzle “Level Heads”, which uses the Royal Family’s heads, to open up the sewage vent to the Residential Area above.

Ball of the Dead (Residential Area): now that you are past the gas, you can navigate to the ballroom on your right, where you will see multiple dead people on the ground. You can read the message “DEB <3 GABE” and play it on the piano to solve the puzzle “Bittersweet Symphony” and obtain Room Key No. 4, which is hidden inside the musical instrument. Going to the left, you can block the gas with a switch which allows you to go back to the hallway. Opening Room 4, you find a Sola feeding on the dead resident, when then flies at you and drops the Sledgehammer when killed. If you push around some boxes you can crawl under a crack into Room 3 next to it, and will access a seemingly empty room which only has the words “DEAD DANCE” (which can be used for the optional Puzzle “The Dead Dance”). Notes in the resident rooms note that the rough history between the Persovek and the Mtusopo, and that killing a mixed couple served as a catalyst to the events of the war and the Void being created, but they’re not sure of why it the war caused the Voids. Make your way to the Offices for a quick detour.

Let Family Show the Way (Offices 🡪 Residential Area 🡪 Lunch Seating 🡪 Residential Area 🡪 Offices): go back to the cubicle with the strange map you had seen earlier; a note beside it will say that it is for a certain resident, whom you noticed in Room 3; you’ll also find a note on the Sola. You navigate back to this room in the Residential Area and use it in the puzzle “Ghost Map” to obtain the Family Genealogy Book, which can be used later in the graveyard to the right. Proceed to the right and use the Sledgehammer to break down a collapsed door to Lunch Seating fighting any Zombies or Luna to get to the graveyard. You’ll notice names on the graves (along with brief descriptions of each) but not dates, which the Family Genealogy fills in (one notes that he was killed during an “accident” when a lab experiment escaped); however, you’ll have to get the power working to press the buttons on the graves, so push the headstone with no name and take the Security Badge Lv. 2. A note nearby expresses being spooked thinking that the labs funders lay underneath him while eating, and that their estate is supposedly through the nearby forest. Go back through the Residential Area, but you’ll notice various objects getting knocked over; this is a Cloak, and since you have no items to use against it, you must run away. Navigate to the Offices, and then to the Experiment Labs.

A Larger Puzzle (Experiment Labs 🡪 Specimen Storage): now that you have the Security Badge Lv. 2 you can navigate to a new room, which allows you to shift around the positions of the Specimen Storage rooms, to solve the puzzle “Swapping Roommates” and gain access to the Rooftop. You can also optionally place the rooms in order to solve “Where’s Nine?” and open a nearby closet and access multiple helpful items. You’ll also see a photo set accompanied by a data log describing the couple’s transformation. If you redirect the gas using another room from the laboratory, you can then access Specimen Storage from an air vent, but you’ll notice an empty shell where the Centipede was and that the Moss has been destroyed (which allows access to the vent). Now you must navigate through the various rooms you’ve swapped around, all the while picking up Shotgun Ammo and catching glimpses of the Skull Centipede moving between rooms. You can also use the Moon Key in a room nearby to nab an Item Case. There’s a notes from prisoners here, some of whom are poor, or knew too much; one of the notes is from two prisoners, a couple who is being held and will go to be experimented on together (the Skull Centipede). Proceed through the rooms to reach the Rooftop.

Double-Barreled Things (Rooftop): move across the Rooftop until you reach a point where you see the Shotgun. As you approach it, the Skull Centipede crashes through the floor and half of it blocks you off, forcing you to fight it with your existing weapons. Eventually after some fighting it staggers, which allows you to finally pick up the Shotgun. Now that you have this weapon you can damage its heart once it is exposed and kill the creature, splitting it in half. If you come by later you’ll see that one half is gone. Take a ladder down to Electrical.

Make or Break (Electrical): note that until you get the electricity restored, you will need to use your Lantern to light up many rooms; there is some Oil at the entrance, but if needs be you can just push down the ladder to Lunch Seating and find some Oil in areas. In one of the rooms of Electrical you’ll see a big switch that will route electricity to Lunch Seating and some other areas, but you will need to use the circuits from other rooms to route electricity from the generator into the switch, solving the puzzle “Circuitous Circuits” along the way. You’ll see various cocooned Mutosa as you proceed, some of which can be killed with Bug Killer, but many are on the walls or the ceiling and thus cannot be reached; none will hatch right now, however. After routing electricity to the graveyard, you will encounter Lurk and must escape from him, fleeing to Lunch Seating.

The Unknown Shall Come to Light (Lunch Seating 🡪 Well 🡪 Lunch Seating 🡪 Resident Hall): now that the electricity has been turned on in the graveyard, you can use the Family Genealogy Book to solve the puzzle “Family Succession” and be granted access to the Well, where you will find a Sheet Music Piece, but be unable to go underwater because you have no Air Tank. Backtrack to the ballroom of the Residential Area and use all of the Sheet Music Pieces to cause the mirrored floor on the ballroom floor to be revealed. Now the Cloak will reappear, but you will be able to see it in the mirror so you can finally kill it, which will grant you a Chess Piece. The mirrored floor will show various platforms and ladders nearby, which you can use to find and reach Room Key No. 5, solving the puzzle “Mirroring Reality.” You can also find an egg ghost to obtain the optional “It’s Egghost!” Use the previous key to open the nearby room and obtain the Gas Mask. A note in the room describes Moira Lucci, who had been rooming with them occasionally but always seeming aloof to everyone; he notes that she seemed to talk to Truman a lot. To get a secret ending, look below, otherwise skip the next step and navigate to the Offices.

Don’t X Y: (Residential Area 🡪 Offices 🡪 Parking): while you’re here, look at the names of the people in this room and the other resident’s rooms, and you can use the Family Genealogy Book, alongside the room numbers and the hint near a safe in another room, to open up said safe. Of note is the fact that some of the family members here are gone, since they are being used in the Basement for the puzzle “Level Heads.” Inside the safe is the Funky Key, which can be used in solving “You Have a Future… and it’s Funky” once you work your way to Parking. Graffiti on nearby cars spells out a combination of buttons that must be pressed to start the car (LAB X-RAY) once you open it with the Funky Key, and once you do, you blast off safe and sound!

Stuck in Check (Offices): there was a room that was previously inaccessible due to the gas from the Cobra Moss, so work your way towards it. On the way there you’ll encounter some Moss Spore, which you’ll have to be careful to avoid or shoot while far away. Use the Gas Mask to navigate past the gas into the office, where you will find a Chess Piece, and meet Trinity Moss, who has been hiding. This triggers a sudden influx of Zombies and Luna into the office, where you must survive a siege using all the weapons you’ve accumulated up until now; take advantage of the Moss Spores as well, since you have limited ammo, but be careful to protect Trinity. Once you survive the siege go up to the Experiment Labs above.

Gasmask Grind (Experiment Labs 🡪 Offices 🡪 Residential Area 🡪 Lunch Seating): continue up through the labs to reach a room that was previously inaccessible due to gas, and grab the Air Tank in the specimen disposal room (this was used to dispose of useless/dead specimens, in turn feeding them to other live specimens). However, this causes the room to lock down as the conveyor belt moves towards the meat grinder. You must run away from it while shooting Mutosa that come to attack you; their bodies eventually clog the grinder and allow you to leave the room. Going back through the Offices, you can also shoot the loose electrical circuits above the deadly fish in the Office, which will electrocute it and allow you to reach the Crowbar, which you can use near reception to open the closet and find an Item Case, and open up a boarded up filing cabinet nearby to obtain the Shovel before working your way back to Lunch Seating.

Rob From the Rich (Lunch Seating): while you’re here, lunch tables can be pushed around to reach items in trees or under the seats themselves. Shovel can be used to dig up items nearby, including some Family Jewelry from a Royal Family member; be careful, however, as the Zombie you take it from will wake up when you take it. Hop on down into the well once you’re done here.

Feeling Well in my Bones (Well): now that you have the Air Tank you can dive down into the water, and will have to go through a maze-like area where you must be careful to get enough air while avoiding Carnal Amoeba. Near the entrance you’ll find a large pile of dead members of the Royal Family, who were discarded here after their murders. After going through this linear area, you’ll reach an area with multiple gates and a Human Bone nearby, where you’ll work through the puzzle “Weighty Proceedings.” Initially you’ll have to avoid the Razor Leech enemies and gather more bones, but you’ll soon gain the Harpoons and be able to kill some of them. There’s some Family Jewelry nearby one of the floating corpses as well. If you found an extra hidden bone piece earlier, you can access another area to achieve “Magnum Power” and obtain the extra Magnum Gun and Magnum Ammo. You’ll eventually make it to the drainage area, where the Cobra Moss is surrounding the drainage pump, and you must fight it off with Harpoons. Once it is defeated you can use the pump, which will drain most of the water in the Basement; proceed there after draining.

Storm Surge (Basement): with most of the water drained from the Basement, you now have to raise and lower the water levels from each room in the Basement to navigate through different areas. The Carnal Amoeba and Razor Leech from the Well have followed you here and will bother you while in the water, while Mutosa and Sola will aggravate you on dry land; however, you can use the water level to suffocate the water creatures and drown the land creatures if you use it smartly. Your goal is to deprive the Cobra Moss root from water, which will cause it to shrivel up and lose its dangerous presence in the factory, removing many tentacles and the poison gas. It also causes the roots to shrivel up, allowing you to access the Security Badge Lv. 3 that was located behind it; however, as you are leaving it desperately stabs and poisons you.

Not Yet Approved (Basement 🡪 Offices 🡪 Experiment Labs): rush to the Offices above, picking up any Med Pills to heal yourself along the way, and avoid enemies or kill them quickly; you’ll have to kill a Razor Leech that follows you out of the toilet. Navigate your way through the Office, avoiding any Luna and Zombies or killing them quickly; you’ll also see some Razor Leech here because of the Basement’s flooding, so proceed upward to the Experiment Labs, using the Security Badge Lv. 3 to gain access to Med Pills and heal yourself as needed. In the labs you navigate yourself towards a room that was locked with Security Badge Lv. 3; you get chased by Lurk along the way and must avoid him, all the while picking up Med Pills and shooting weakened Cobra Miss tentacles to take shortcuts and avoid obstacles. Behind the secured door you’ll solve the puzzle “An Odd Way to Heal” to access the room with the ingredients, and must follow the instructions to grab all the ingredients in the room and solve the puzzle “It Ain’t Rocket Science” to create the Poison Vaccine, which will heal you. You can optionally solve the puzzle “Modern Alchemy” to create some Killer P, which you can use to kill all types of creatures instantly. The Security Badge Lv. 3 opens a nearby file with a note from Truman describing to Moira how she had been given level 3 access, and to take any of her notes to her Family’s estate in the nearby village. You can fill up the Titanium Bucket with acid from the ingredients room. If you return briefly to the Office you’ll find that a closet has now flooded, allowing you to reach some Family Jewelry; you can then return to the Residential Area to put the Jewelry in a box and gain another Chess Piece. You can now use the Security Badge Lv. 3 to finally enter the Void Center.

Increase to Decrease (Void Center): you’ll first come across the bodies of a bunch of dead scientists, before seeing some on the ceiling and being forced up into it by the Void’s pull. Working your way through anti-gravity areas along ceilings and walls, you will eventually fight some Zombies and Mutosa; you’ll also find some Flash Grenades along the way. Once you reach the Void itself, you’ll find a lock that prevents you from manipulating it, which must be undone by solving the puzzle “I Thought You Said West,” rotating the rooms around it to face a certain way. Now that the lock is off, increase the pull of the void, which will affect rooms nearby the Void Center. Scientist logs nearby note that the Void’s radiation is being tested for application in military and pharmaceutical areas, and that they might as well use it these ways since they are forced to have the Voids. Navigate back to the entrance of the Void Center, using the Flash Grenades to see any Cloaks and shooting the dead Zombie scientists that rise up; climb the vent into the Experiment Labs, but now you can go a different way due to the gravity.

Inverted Perspective (Experiment Labs 🡪 Offices 🡪 Residential Area 🡪 Electrical): make your way to the right, going along the ceiling of the Experiment Labs and the Offices until you reach the Residential Area. Here you’ll confront a number of Cloaks, so make sure you have plenty of Flash Grenades handy; once you defeat them move up to Electrical, where you’ll walk on the left wall and face a large horde of Sola, which you had seen in eggs earlier but now come to attack you; use Flash Grenades for these as well. Next use the breaker at the end to restore electricity to the radio on the Rooftop, and use the Titanium Bucket with acid to melt away a corroded metallic floor, which yields a Chess Piece; move up to the Rooftop.

Strange Pets (Rooftop): now that electricity is restored to the radio, open it up and solve the puzzle “Pins and Locks” to gain the ability to transmit radio frequencies. You must follow a note given to you earlier to play frequencies in a certain order, which will call a Mutosa over; kill it and take its Chess Piece, then navigate over to Specimen Storage.

A Long-Awaited Match (Specimen Storage): navigate back to where the chess board is, using all of the Chess Pieces to solve the puzzle “Planning Ahead”, which will grant you the Sun Key. As you leave, Lurk will attack you and you must fight him off; he moves quickly, so you must be sharp, using Flash Grenades and climbing ladders to your advantage. If Trinity is still alive, she can help you defeat him more easily. A note nearby shows the deterioration of Clark’s mental state, his relationship with Truman, and his increasingly desperate need to see his family. Once he is defeated, move down to the Experiment Labs.

Discontinued Patronage (Experiment Labs 🡪 Void Center 🡪 Specimen Storage 🡪 Void Center): proceed to the room where you can shift around the Specimen Storage rooms and get them so that you can explore new areas of the Void Center. Return to the Void Center and navigate to the left side of the center, rotating the rooms in the puzzle “Addition by Rotation” to return briefly to Specimen Storage and then back to the Center, where you can use the Sun Key to access a room that removes the lock on removing power from the Void. Near the Void you’ll find a note from a dead scientist cursing Truman for escaping his captivity and wrecking the facility, dooming them all; he claims that before dying, he alerted the authorities to eradicate any remaining Royal Familiy members in their own estate. Return to the Void and shut it down; as it loses power, an injured Lurk will appear suddenly and absorb its powers, causing massage damage to the laboratory. As Lurk goes on a rampage, you must escape the crumbling laboratory.

Up the Rabbit’s Hole: (Void Center 🡪 Specimen Storage 🡪 Experiment Labs 🡪 Offices 🡪 Parking 🡪 Basement 🡪 Well 🡪 Lunch Seating): work your way from the Void Center, fighting any creatures that come your way. In Specimen Storage, fight any creatures that have broken out of their cage to proceed to the Experiment Labs, where you’ll observe Lurk absorb the remaining half of the Skull Centipede before breaking a hole in the floor for you to go to the Offices. Fight any other enemies as you work your way to Parking, where you’ll see a bunch of monsters outside preventing you from escaping out the front; escape to the Basement from here, but upon dropping down into the black you’ll realize that you’re inside the linings of a strange creature.

Alone Together (Basement 🡪 Well 🡪 Lunch Seating): as you proceed through the Basement, everything is eerily calm, though you’ll notice a multitude of enemy corpses as you pass. Eventually you’ll reach the roots of the Cobra Moss just in time to see the Lurk/Centipede mix combine with it to form the Lurking Moss, which you must fight; the power of the Void makes it so that you rotate around it as you fight, and you must shoot Lurk’s head when it pops outside the Centipede’s mouth, all the while avoiding the tentacles. After this he’ll knock you away, which causes you to lose all your items. Navigating from the Basement to the Well, you’ll find your Shotgun initially, but then you’ll lose that; the same happens for your Pistol and then your Hatchet, until you must use Meat and stealth to avoid the tentacles. Eventually you’ll see a Chainsaw, but before you reach it the Moss grabs you; before it kills you, however, you drop the picture of Clark’s family, which distracts it enough for you to grab the Chainsaw and fight against it. You fight off the tentacles that come to attack you and cut the Centipede off from the Moss, and after fighting it you pull out Clark’s head from the Centipede’s mouth; he sees his family photo and passes away peacefully. You then proceed up the Well and out through Lunch Seating, mowing down enemies with ease; if Trinity is alive you’ll help each other escape through one route, while you’ll escape alone in another. As you pass through fence, which was destroyed by monsters, a cutscene shows Cliff revving his chainsaw as he sees monsters approaching through the forest.

***Items & Pickups***

Lantern & Oil: allows you to temporarily see a room or light certain things ablaze, but it requires oil to burn.

Med Pill: used to heal your character from any wounds.

Chess Pieces: gathered and used to solve a puzzle on a chessboard.

Meat: can lure many enemies towards it, allowing you to sneak/run by or kill it while it’s distracted.

Maps: the maps of different areas can be found as you go along; they may or may not reveal hidden areas.

Floppy Disk: can be used to save your game at computers that are turned on, but only come in limited quantities.

Rat Poison: a slow-working poison that will kill enemies if they consume it in water or in meat, but it takes time to take effect.

Sheet Music Piece: can be combined to show the music to play on a piano.

Hatchet: an axe that is useful for defense in encounters, and excellent at stealthy takedowns. Not particularly powerful though, and risky because you have to be close to enemies.

Keys & Cards: there are multiple keys that unlock different doors, some of which are area-specific.

Titanium Bucket: can hold and store liquids such as water and acid.

Bug Killer: a chemical that allows you to destroy the shells of Mutosa when they go into a cocoon, preventing them from turning into Sola. You can also instantly kill Mutosa with this.

Handgun & Ammo: contains a good amount of ammo but not particularly strong.

Swimming Gear: allows you to swim underwater for a very short period of time.

Generator Battery: used in Electrical to enable routing of electricity.

Family Genealogy Book: book on the Royal Family line, used in the puzzle “Family Succession.”

Item Case: increases the number of items you can carry at once.

Shotgun & Ammo: very powerful and has good spread, but limited ammo.

Gas Mask: useful for being able to withstand poisonous environments, along with Moss Spore gas.

Air Tank: grants the ability to stay underwater for extended periods of time.

Crowbar: can be used to remove blockages from various entryways.

Shovel: used to dig up various useful belongings outdoors.

Family Jewelry: various pieces of a Royal Family member’s jewelry, used in solving a puzzle.

Harpoon: the only weapon that can damage or kill underwater enemies.

Human Bones: the bones of a royal family member, each with different weight.

Poison Vaccine: cures you of the lethal poison of one of the creatures, making you immune to it forever.

Killer P: an almost instant-death poison that kills enemies that consume it in water or meat. Must be made using certain ingredients in the Experiment Labs.

Flash Grenade: very useful for distracting enemies (particularly the Sola) and makes the Cloak visible while it is active.

Chainsaw: gained at the very end of the game, this is used to destroy the final boss and tear through other enemies quickly.

***Story & Background***

Cliff van Horn: the playable character in the game, a father of five and an engineer who was working on a contract with the government before learning some sketchy secrets about the government’s Void project from a co-worker on the project, Truman Treyburne. To keep him silent, Cliff and his co-worker are both kept in the lab to be experimented on; he finds Truman dead later in a nearby cell. He’s a serious but goofy grizzled man, similar to Barry Burton, but with extra engineering skills.

Truman Treyburne: a primary scientist involved in studying the Void’s effects and usages and a man of conscience, he was stung seeing the cruel usage of the Void on humans. Telling Cliff about what he had seen as a backup in case he went missing, he then proceeded to plan a way to out the government, while sympathizing with those like Clark who had become mutated due to it. Cliff gives the files with this info to Moira Lucci, a rogue in the Royal Family who dislikes her family’s involvement with the Void. After being discovered and being told that the Void’s presence will be hidden from the world, he sacrifices himself to increase the power of the Void, killing those in the immediate vicinity and transforming the laboratory into a horrific place of death that would surely be discovered; he played chess with Clark and was killed by him before he could transform due to the Void.

Trinity Moss: a side character, a young intern who was hired to work in the labs and somehow survived the lab’s meltdown. You’ll encounter her various times in the game, sometimes to defend her and other times to receive help; she will live or die based upon your actions, although the canon ending involves her living and escaping along a different route through the forest to tell the world about the laboratory, while you fight off enemies with your chainsaw.

Star Void Connections: the most obvious connection to the Star Void universe is the Void itself. The game takes place following the war between the Persovek (French-Russian) and the Mtusopo (Swahili-Greek), in the first scientific laboratory dedicated to studying the Void. Criminals, the poor, and people who know too much about the government’s dirty work are all placed as specimens to be studied. Mentions are made as to the rough history between the Persovek and the Mtusopo, and that killing a mixed couple served as a catalyst to the events of the war and the Void being created. The government is testing out the Void’s capabilities to be used in whatever applications they can find, particularly in military and pharmaceutical endeavors.

Clark/Lurk: a sad character who was slowly corrupted by the void. The lab’s initial leader, he felt guilt because he had cheated on his wife shortly after finding out she was pregnant, and started isolating himself near the void, gaining the nickname Lurk from those in the office. As the company began to notice his mutation (which he viewed as penance for cheating on his wife and experimenting on humans), they placed him in Specimen Storage and conducted various tests on him. One of his friends still met with him during this time, and played chess with him during his time off. Eventually Clark’s mutation became severe and he killed Truman. When first found he is crying over the body of his dead friend. Near the end of the game the only thing that can stop him is the picture of his family.

Cobra Moss: one of the workers near the edge of the Office had a plant which slowly mutated because of the Void, and eventually was put into the Experimental Lab for testing. It started sneaking some of its vines through the air vents and killed some workers, and even reached into the basement for water.

Skull Centipede: two human specimens, a couple who sympathized with one another during their cruel experiments, became fused together to form a hideous two-sided centipede. Initially found in a slowly-growing cocoon where you can clearly see the outlines of two humans holding one another, it transforms into a wriggling mass with two heads. They are partially the outcome of experiments related to the Mutosa, as a cocoon is formed with both which facilitates their transformation.

Royal Family: one particular family made more monetary contributions to the laboratory than anyone else, in exchange for personal knowledge of their experiments and the ability to explore the laboratory at will. However, this family learned too much about the government’s experiments and were systematically murdered, with various areas around the facilities—the Graveyard, the Basement, the Well, etc.—being related to them. One family member is found dead, having hidden from the authorities, while another is missing (Moira Lucci) to be found in later games.

Moira Lucci: a member of the Royal Family who shuns her family’s means of wealth and success, and takes notes from Truman to learn the truth and hopefully present it to the world. She is smart and sassy, but very caring, and loving towards children in particular. Not actually seen in the game, but mentioned.

Sequel: the Royal Family lived in a nearby village, where they ended up being hunted down and used for experiments by the government after meddling too far in the affairs of the laboratory. Moira Lucci is one of the few surviving members of her family, and has the information from Truman that could out the government for their corrupt usage of the Void. The nearby forest, village and mansion are all locations to include in that game. Could have Moira as another playable character, whose campaign intertwines with Cliff’s.

***Secrets & Extras***

Where’s Nine? (Experiment Labs): if you arrange the Specimen Storage rooms in numerical order, you’ll get a reward.

The Dead Dance (Resident Hall): you find a message that says “DEAD DANCE” with the “N” crossed out. If you play the keys “DEAD DACE” on the piano, it will make all the zombies in a certain room start dancing while extra music plays in the background.

Magnum Interminus (Well): an unlockable magnum revolver (with ammo) that deals great power.

You Have a Future… and it’s Funky (Parking): if you manage to find the hidden key to a wacky car, you can escape from the laboratory in the car, which flies.

Modern Alchemy (Experiment Lab): you must follow the hints in a note early in the game to gather the various ingredients in a large lab to create Killer P.

It’s Egghost! (Residential Area): you find a friendly egg ghost in the corner of the Residential Area once the mirrors are turned on.

***Work Timeline - Total: 71 hours - Started: June 16, 2021***

Concept and Planning - Hours: 26 hours - Started: June 16, 2021

Player Movement & Animations - Hours: 45 hours - Started: July 14, 2021

* context button location, round to nearest pixel for movement, order of priorities for contextual movements, make code more efficient (merge left/right movement blocks where possible), ensure context button & drop collisions are created in player, any other movement bugs
* Pistol animations and shooting
* Analyze all the Gamemaker objects with notepad++
* Player Item Animations
* Swimming controls

Level UI

* Create text font with all needed alphanumeric characters
* Add in health, ammo, and breathing UI

Level Design (Overall & Room) v. 1