



The Enchanted Forest

The Entangled Kingdom

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Level Design Document – 30 / 04 - 19

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QUICK SUMMARY

OVERVIEW

CAMPAIGN

- Name: The birth of a wizard, the arrival of a Queen
- Prologue level for the main game

MISSION LOCATION

- The Entangled Forest
- Medieval fantasy setting
- Mostly outdoors

MISSION DIFFICULTY

- In Act1 the player will be introduced to the game, there is a possibility of dying if the player falls into the river but should be able to make it through without taking much damage. The layer will also be introduced to the level enemy character "The Wizard's Cape".
The pacing in this act will be calm and the player won't be forced to move very quickly anywhere, the wizard cloak will appear and do a health check on the player to see if they are full on health and if so he will shoot a bolt at them, dealing one damage. This is to make sure that they will pick up the heart and learns its functionality, players who avoid the bolt will most lightly understand its function without introduction.
- In Act 2 the player will be challenged a bit more, now they will be required to time their movement a bit more, moving from refuge to refuge in order to reach the top of the hill and stop the wizard cloak from spawning boulders out a cave at the top.
Pacing is rather calm here also, having a healing heart at the top to make sure the player isn't low on health in case they have taken damage from the boulders.
- Act3 serves as the main challenge and will scale in difficulty as the player makes it way across the act, the player will be introduced to a falling platform mechanic but apart from this, the player will only be faced with the mechanics previously introduced in different versions and tied together. This is the most difficult part of the level and has a total of 2 hearts and 2 checkpoints placed to help the player through the level.
The jumping rocks at the end also check if the player has died and will spawn more rarely for every player death.

MISSION METRICS

- Playtime through the level varies in player skill and knowledge but is estimated to not go over 10 minutes.
- Two new characters are introduced as it is the prologue. (The Queen and The Wizard Cloak)
- The level has the visual theme inspired by (Dyrene i Hakkebakkeskogen, 2016) and (The Black Cauldron, 1985). It is placed inside an enchanted forest that has grown over the queen's castle due to a magic spell set out by the green wizard over 100 years ago.
- There are collectible places all around the level for the player, currency in the form of coins with different values (bronze 1, Silver 2, and Gold 1). The player is meant to be able to unlock for example extra life or different cosmetics with the collected coins (not in the

game) and there are unique collectibles which are a set of collectibles the player can get for doing extra challenges throughout the level.

DETAILS

LEVEL ATMOSPHERE / MOOD

STORY

- The protagonist has innocently been trapped inside the enchanted forest and is approached by the queen, she is currently only a spiritual entity with very limited powers, the Queen is banished from her castle due to an enchantment set out by the green wizard. The Queen comes across as a noble and good Queen to the protagonist as she tells him/her of the evil green wizard. She then tells the protagonist that she/he has to make his way to the castle and pull the wizard staff which is the source of the enchantment out of the throne room floor to end the enchantment and give the queen her kingdom back from the evil wizard.
- The story that is told in the level is the protagonist's journey through the forest leading up to the castle, the protagonist will be challenged by the green wizard's cloak who is wielding a red staff, the player will get a small hint of the true nature of the queen as there will be placed a staff in the hand of the queen on statues placed throughout the level. The red staff currently wielded by the green wizard cloak is the queen's red magical staff, which is corrupted, forcing the wielder to only do evil spells.

MAJOR AREAS / VISUAL THEMES

KEY VISUALS THROUGHOUT THE LEVEL

LIGHTING:

Lighting is used both to create an atmosphere of being inside of the forest and to tell the player of prospect and refuge areas during challenges. The player will get a small yellow light in areas which is safe spots and a dim red light on the path where the player could be harmed by bolts from the wizard or Boulders spawned from caves.

COLOR:

As with the use of colors in the level in the lighting, I have a similar set-up for color usage on hazards, obstacles, walkable surface and so on.

I use brown, grey and yellow/green for walkable surfaces but also use them for obstacles, the way I differentiate these is by having the walkable surfaces lighter than the obstacles. (at the time of writing this is seen throughout the level apart from the grey surfaces)

The colors are all based on the color pallet set for the game, with different saturations and values in order to create diversity.

ACT 1

PART 1 (FROM THE BRIDGE TO THE JUMPING ROCKS)

The spawn area where the player enters the level is a very nicely lit up area for the player, yellow light is set to immediately make the player feel safe, the bridge that the player is a lowered bridge that is placed there to cause familiarity when the player next faced with the same model which serves as a gating mechanic.

From the spawn point serving as a refuge area, the player will need to walk into a forest which has darker shadows and this is meant to strengthen the dangerous feel of the forest, the jumping challenge at the end is nicely lit up and the player can see where they are headed right from the start.

Room for Improvements:

could possibly use a focal point of the main objective, it would be a nice addition to the design to have the castle clearly visible from the start enriching the denial and reward technique that I am already utilizing, right now the castle is barely visible at the start of the game.

PART 2 (START BEHIND THE ROCKS AND OVER THE RIVER)

This part has some forest banks next to the path, these were meant to be roots that came down a ledge, it did not serve as a good addition visually but because of the chosen cartoony \ stop motion movie art style I use I got away with it, but it would need to be improved upon. I also have stones and variations in the floor making the route leading up to the next part vibrant enough to not bore the player, the lighting is inspired by forest lighting pictures I have googled whilst trying to light it to the best of my ability, I need to focus more on this area to become a better lighter, since this was mostly just testing.

I have used red lighting here on the platform at the river to emphasize the danger it poses to the player, the route is quite narrow and fits the theme of the level very nicely

PART 3 (SMALL ROAD TO THE VILLAGE PORT DOOR FROM THE END OF THE RIVER)

The player reaches a castle port door, that leads to the road to the castle, there is strong yellow light coming through the door which is telling the player that it has reached its destination

THE REFUGE AREA

PART 4 (INSIDE THE REFUGE HUB AREA)

The refuge area is lit up with a point light in yellow, this is to tell the player that this is a safe place to be in, if the player takes a look around here they will be able to see the focal point tower on the castle, this is to more easily help the player navigate and get a sense of direction, they will also see a bridge that is not lowered serving as a gating mechanic but the brick road that leads up to the bridge is telling the player that this is where they should go, there is also a rope that leads into the forest from the bridge and a lookout tower that is placed behind the bridge to tell the player its objective.

There are not many trees now hanging over the player and has a more open environment with a waterfall and some green grass and a very nice feel to it in general. There is also a zip

line placed to peak the player's interest as the scout out the area, the composition of the view is enforcing the player to think that they need to get up on the mountain, and based on player feedback during playtesting it does the job quite well.

ACT 2

PART 5 (UP TO THE HILL TO TOWARDS THE RIVER AND WATERFALL)

This route that leads the player to the next objective is neatly framed in front of the player as they enter the refuge hub area, with a fence that is signposting to the player that there is a path leading up here. This will hopefully make the player recall this route when they decide to leave the hub area, making a better game flow.

When the player ventures up the hill they will be faced with no immediate dangers, in the first part of the hill they will be confronted with a strong focal point in the background which is the hidden challenge in the level, there will be a clearly visible unique collectible item on top, making the player more aware of this and causing an interest to find a path leading to it.

PART 6 (THE WAY TO THE TOP OF THE HILL)

Yet again the path becomes quite narrow as the player is forced to go into a side path from the already narrow forest path, they will again be faced with a quite dense forest around them as they have to make their way up the mountain, it is very clear for the player that they are now climbing and there are colored light telling the player of prospect and refuge areas, I am now also using green grass on some of the prospect areas in order to emphasize it more easy for the player to spot them.

PART 7 (THE MOVING PLATFORMS)

Making your way down the hillside will require the player to travel in moving platforms which I call ziplines, the first platform will take the player down to the lookout tower, this is nicely lit up with yellow lighting so that the player can feel safe when they enter this area, there will be a gated route to the other zip line that won't open up before the player uses the lever inside the lookout tower, the gated mechanic is some trees and to not tell the player that these disappear is based on a lecture by Alexander Ross where he showed us a movie that was very interesting in terms of how changes can be made in a scene without anybody noticing, and these changes can be quite big.

ACT 3

PART 8 (FROM THE BRIDGE TO THE FOREST)

This area is one of my favorite areas in my level, there are dead trees which has the color red to tell the player that they will die if they fall into them, placed in the pits. There are clearly visible platforms and a quite linear path going just head, the player is now still in the dense forest but given a better view, allowing them to see more of the terrain, trees upon hilltops and the lookout tower that they where previously in, there are boulders lying about insinuating that there has been a rockslide from the mountain that has caused the road to be in such a damaged state.

At the end of the path the player gets to see the final challenge area along with the tip of the castle gate, but there is no way for the player to get to this area yet, so they need to make their way through a side route on the forest which is signposted again by having a fence going up the hill, along with a statue of the queen to draw the players attention into that direction.

The lighting is also used to tell the player that they need to go this way as the other side is just overshadowed and not inviting at all.

PART 9 (THE TRAIL FROM THE ROAD AND UP TO THE RIVER)

This part is very similar to the design in part 6, the player is placed in dense forest terrain and guided in the same way that they are in part 6, it is a bit harder to make it through and is a more linear experience, but also a much shorter one. They will be greeted by a river with a strong current on the top.

PART 10 (THE RIVER RIDE)

The river ride is a quite direct route, while the player makes it way trough they can clearly see the cave in which the wizard cape is currently active in, spawning the boulders you just have just overcome, there are trees hanging out over the water and due to the use of the trees and the dark green color being a blockage for the player, they should immediately understand that they need to jump from rock to rock in order to make it through.

PART 11 (ZIP LINE RIDE AND THE LAST ROAD UP TO THE CASTLE)

The player makes it over the river and sees or hears the wizard leaving the cave, they walk past it and get to see a zip line ride, the trees are bent away and making a clear path for the zip line to go over to a ledge hanging over where the player entered the forest in part 9, this leads up to a refuge hub which is nicely lit up with yellow even if it is in the shadow of the forest. And whilst there they can see the road leading up to the castle, which has even more severely been destroyed by the rockslide, the level objective is also clearly visible from this refuge area, making the player very aware of the final challenge ahead as the wizards start to spawn rocks that bounce in a rhythm from stone to stone.

PART 12 (HIDDEN TOWER AREA)

The hidden tower area is meant to be intimidating, there is currently not as much gameplay here as I would like to implement but it still holds a challenge. The tower has a quite intimidating look because of the red colored foundation and details around the castle. The tower has a cone-shaped roof and the fence that goes around the castle base and top also has coned spikes on them, this is because spikes will seem hostile or dangerous to the human eye.

KEY MECHANICS USED IN LEVEL DESIGN FOR PACING AND FLOW

- Hearts to heal the player
- Currency for better game flow (breadcrumbs) and reward
- Checkpoints

MAP OBJECTIVES

- Reach the castle
- Reach the lever to lower the bridge
- Collect currency
- Collect all the unique collectibles
- Unlock the hidden challenge area

CHALLENGE HIGHLIGHTS

- The boulder challenge during act two, the player will have to time their movement and possibly jump over or go under the boulders as they make their way down.
- The small cutscene is a satisfyingly small cutscene and can be nostalgic as it is inspired by older games, this also helps the game flow by telling the player what happened when the lever I pulled
- When the player is introduced to the wizard during the start of act three, they will have to hide behind covers and time their movement across the platforms, this creates new and challenging gameplay out of already introduced mechanics.
- The river challenge is very different from the other challenges that the player has faced, they will have to intuitive and creative to solve this challenge and creates a refreshing experience to the level
- The ending challenge is absolutely a highlight considering that the player now can see the end of the level and has to use what they have learned to overcome a considerably harder challenge.

WOW MOMENTS

PART 3

- When the green wizard is introduced and talking to the player, and if the player is at full health, they might be given an extra wow moment since the wizard shoots a bolt at them before he retreats into the forest.

PART 8

- When the wizards shoot at the player and the player need to get from cover to cover and jump on platforms to get there, this is meant to be a tense moment in the game and have interesting gameplay because of the challenging level design.

PART 10

- the introduction to the river challenge, since it poses such a great risk to the player and introduces unique gameplay that is not seen anywhere else in the level

PART 12

- the tower is a unique scene and the challenge and is fully optional, the player will be greatly rewarded for finding the hidden path and overcoming the challenge.

OVERALL WOW

- The overall focus has been on level design, so I think the part's which has the most WOW factors will be the part's where there the mechanics in the level are combined. Creating their own unique challenges, this could be experimented with even further.

ACTORS

THE PLAYER

- The Protagonist
- Jumps and moves across the level.
- Starts after jumping down a cliff, in front of a bridge leading into the forest and towards the castle.
- The main objective: Needs to get to the castle to free the kingdom from the evil wizard's spell

KEY ACTORS

ACTOR 1

- The green wizard's cloak, which is the entity that makes out the green wizard
- Shoot's bolt out of staff and spawn boulders
- Objective: Stop the player from reaching the castle
- Follows the player throughout the level

ACTOR 2

- The Evil Queen
- Only has a narrative function in this level
- Objective: Manipulate the player to help her
- Will observe the player through the eyes of statues

USER INTERFACE

- Pre-Game Information
 - There will be a cutscene that set's the scene for the level and briefly introducing the game
- HUD Elements

- Currency Counter: keeps track of all the coins you have collected
 - Health Tracker: informs the player of how much health they have left
- Post-Game Information
 - There will be a sort of score sheet to inform the player of how many unique collectibles and coins they were able to collect, this is meant to lure the completionist player to come back to “catch them all” so to speak.

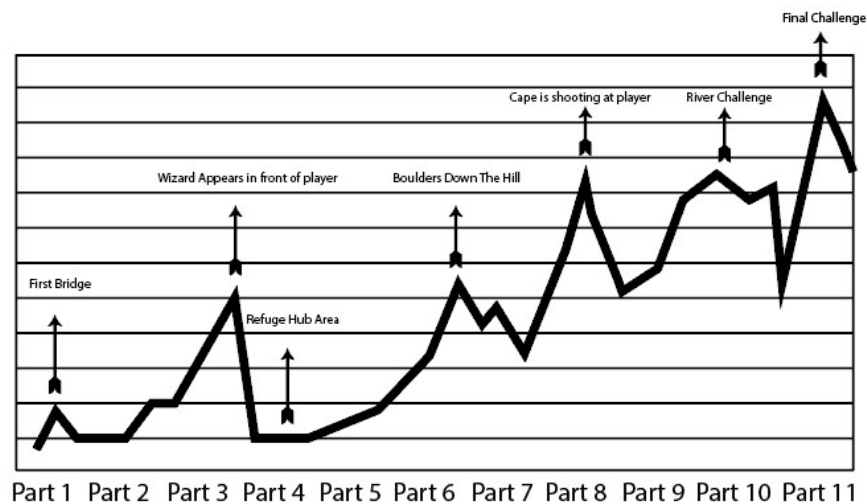
GAMEPLAY

GAMEPLAY MECHANICS

- Introduction to the core game mechanics
- Full game mechanics not yet introduced

LEVEL PROGRESSION CHART

- How the experience is meant to be felt throughout the level, thinking of flow, pacing, wow moment, challenges and objectives.



KEY

- The narrative throughout the level, make the player think the cloak is the enemy
- Teach the player the core mechanics of the game
- The Game should not be too hard, even if the penalty for falling will kill the player and spawn them at the checkpoints, put checkpoints accordingly
- Very linear level. Have opened for some player choice to not make the level feel too linear.
- Enemy AI
 - The wizard cloak should seem hostile and out of control
 - The challenges are similar and can be related to previous examples introduced to the player.

- Pickups
 - The coins serve as breadcrumbs and as a reward mechanics.
 - Bronze (Breadcrumbs, leading the player)
 - Silver (Small reward for reaching challenging areas or refuges that is hard to get to, signposting the refuge)
 - Gold is rewarded for overcoming a challenge or part of the game, these will be placed once the player has overcome a full challenge.
 - Unique collectibles
 - Side quests for the player to take on if they choose, will unlock cosmetics only attainable by collecting the unique collectibles.

DETAILED LEVEL DESIGN DESCRIPTIONS

ACT 1

PART 1 (FROM THE BRIDGE TO THE JUMPING ROCKS)



- The player is introduced to the game, inform of them there will be placed a checkpoint and some coins for the player to pick up. The green wizard's cloak also get a small introduction as it flies over the river and into a cave and starts to spawn rocks which flies over the bridge, causing a small hazard for the player, the wizard's cloak laugh with an evil laugh as he spawns or enters an area. This is to draw the players attention and making them aware of the wizard's cloak presence.
The player will make their way across the bridge hopefully unharmed, this might have been too soon to put the player into harm's way and could be better placed a tad bit later in act 1.

The main purpose of this part of the level is to introduce the player to the core game mechanics (running and jumping), they will not be able to get to part 2 if they do not.

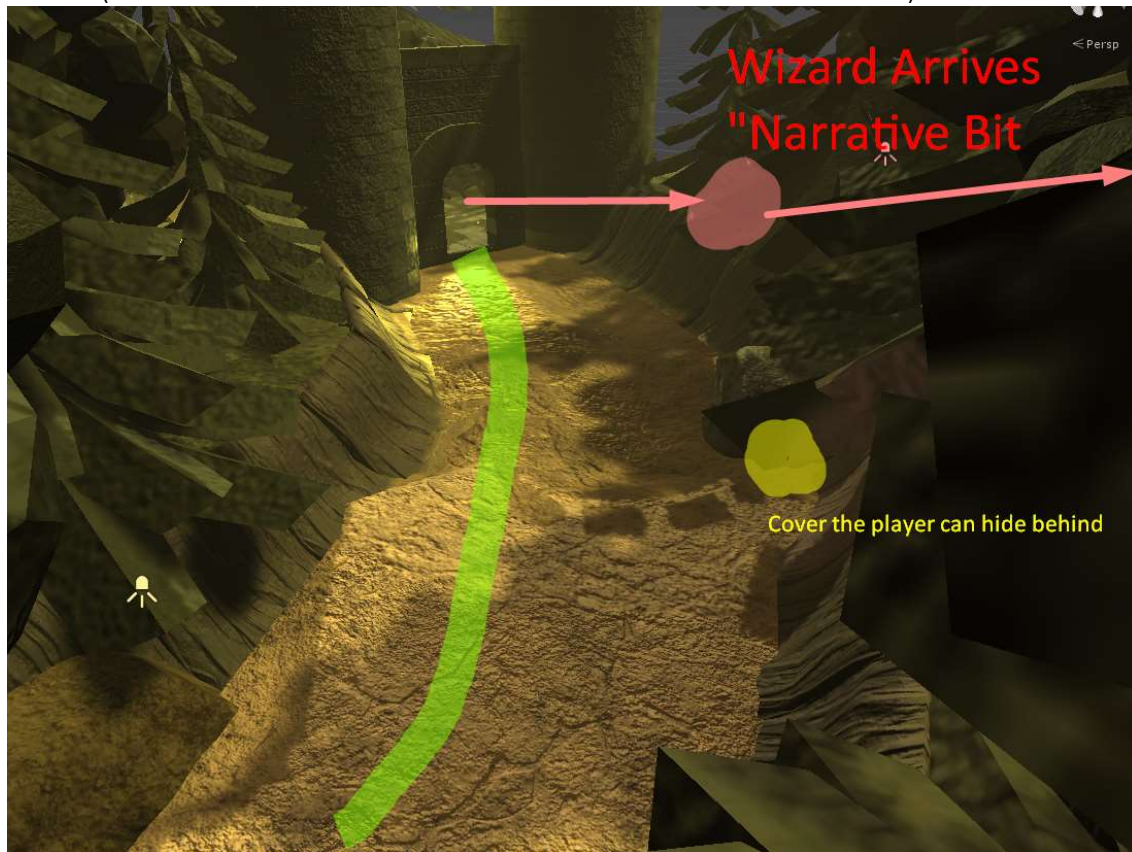
PART 2 (START BEHIND THE ROCKS AND OVER THE RIVER)



This part is rather empty and could be better if merged with part one, if this part would introduce the player to the hazardous red rocks it would create a bit better pacing in through the act and the player wouldn't immediately be put into harm's way, this was a mistake that happened because of the game design developing alongside the level design.

But even if this could be the part where the rocks from the cave is introduced to the player, it is being used to further introduce the player to the reward and breadcrumb system that I have in my game, having the bronze coin to show the way to the river and the silver coin for making the jump onto the platform.

PART 3 (SMALL ROAD TO THE VILLAGE PORT DOOR FORM THE END OF THE RIVE)



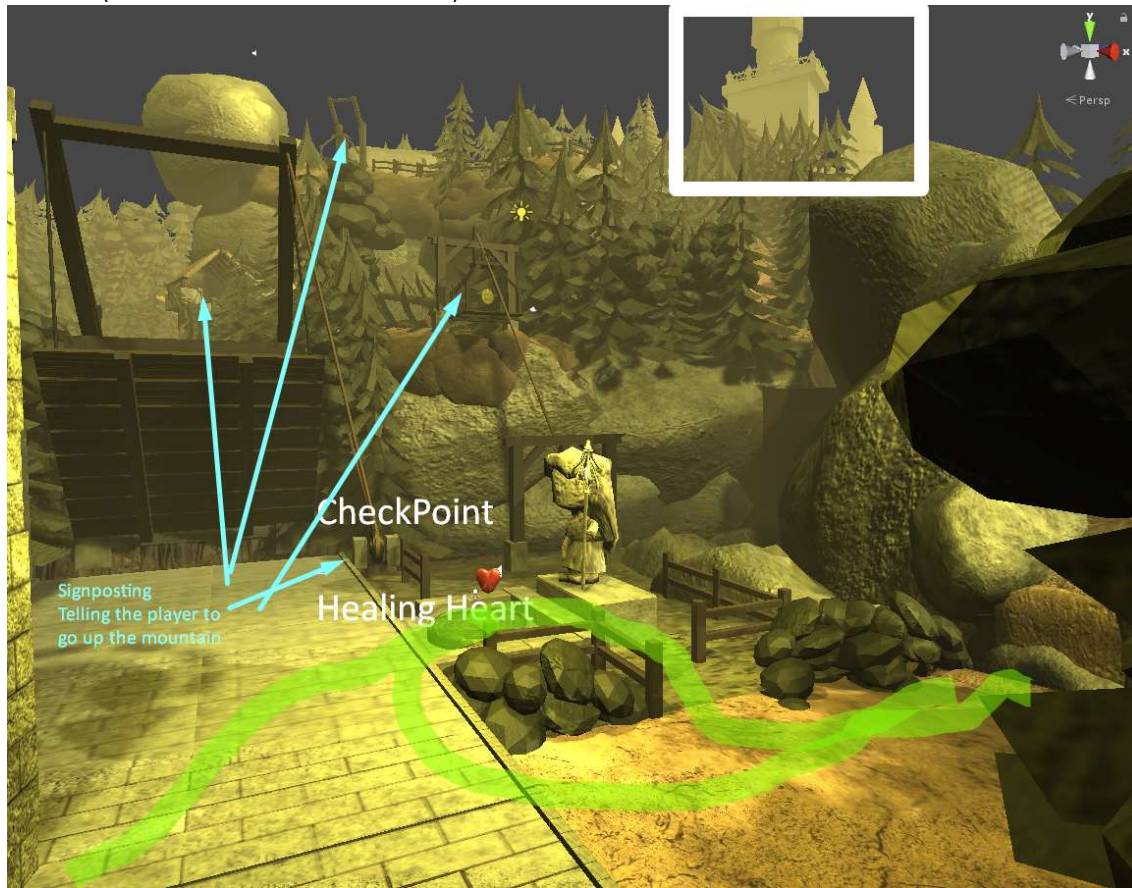
In this part the player is introduced to the first narrative event inside the level, the green wizard cloak come through the port door and stand in front of the player, telling him that he should turn back now. Then he does a health check (as I have mentioned earlier) and shoots a bolt at the player if it is full on health.

The player will now really understand that the green wizard cloak is hostile but since it is telling the player to turn back it is also meant to insinuate to the player that the cloak does not directly want to harm the player but will do so if it continues.

There will also be a strong yellow light coming out of the port entrance to insinuate to the player that going through here is safe.

THE REFUGE AREA

PART 4 (INSIDE THE REFUGE HUB AREA)



The refuge hub area is meant to be a safe haven for the player, it is a crossroad that holds 4 different paths (Back to act 1, up the hill to act 2, Towards the castle act3 (gated) and a hidden bonus area).

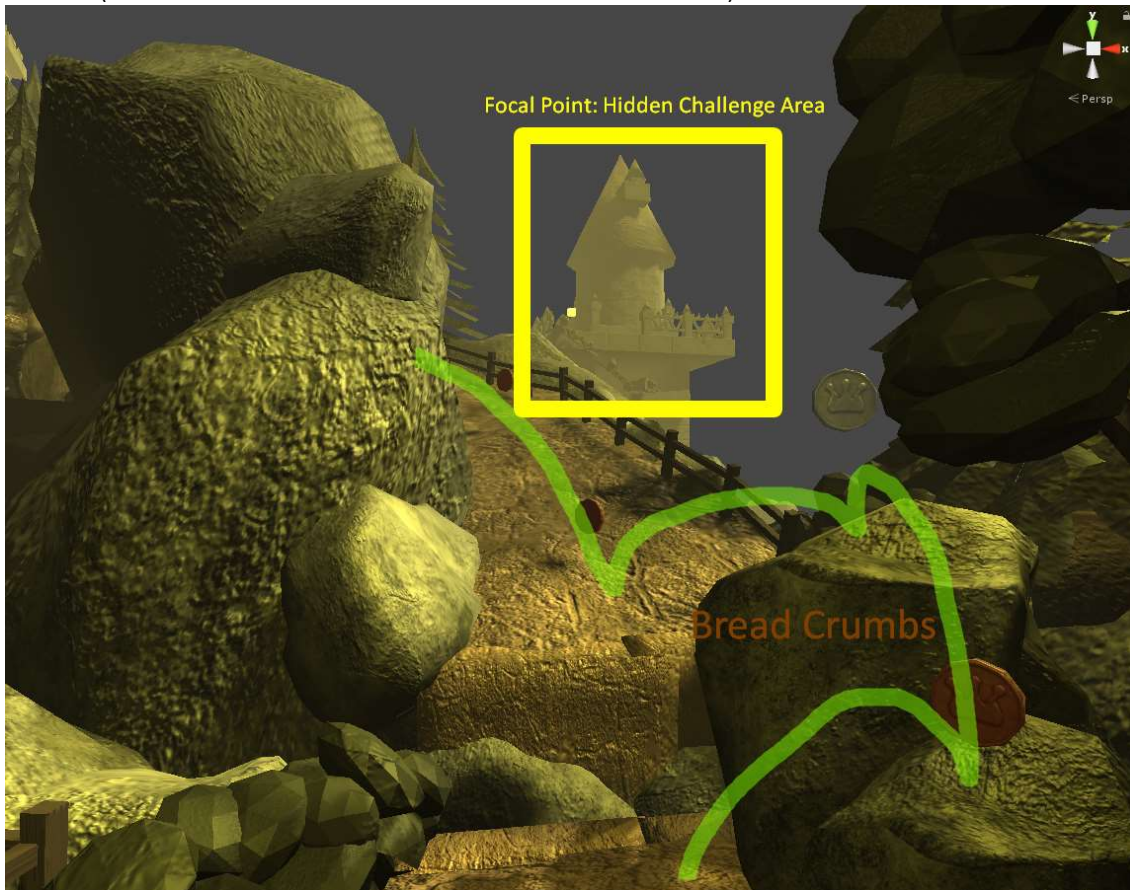
There is a statue of the queen that follows the player as they move around, insinuating the queen is watching you even if she can't enter this part of the forest.

There is a checkpoint placed under the queen statue along with a heart so that the player can replenish the health they most lightly lost during part 1-3, teaching the player the functionality of the heart.

the gated bridge for act 3 has a rope that goes up toward the mountains, signposting to instruct the player to seek out this mountain in order to lower the bridge, giving the player it's next objective.

ACT 2

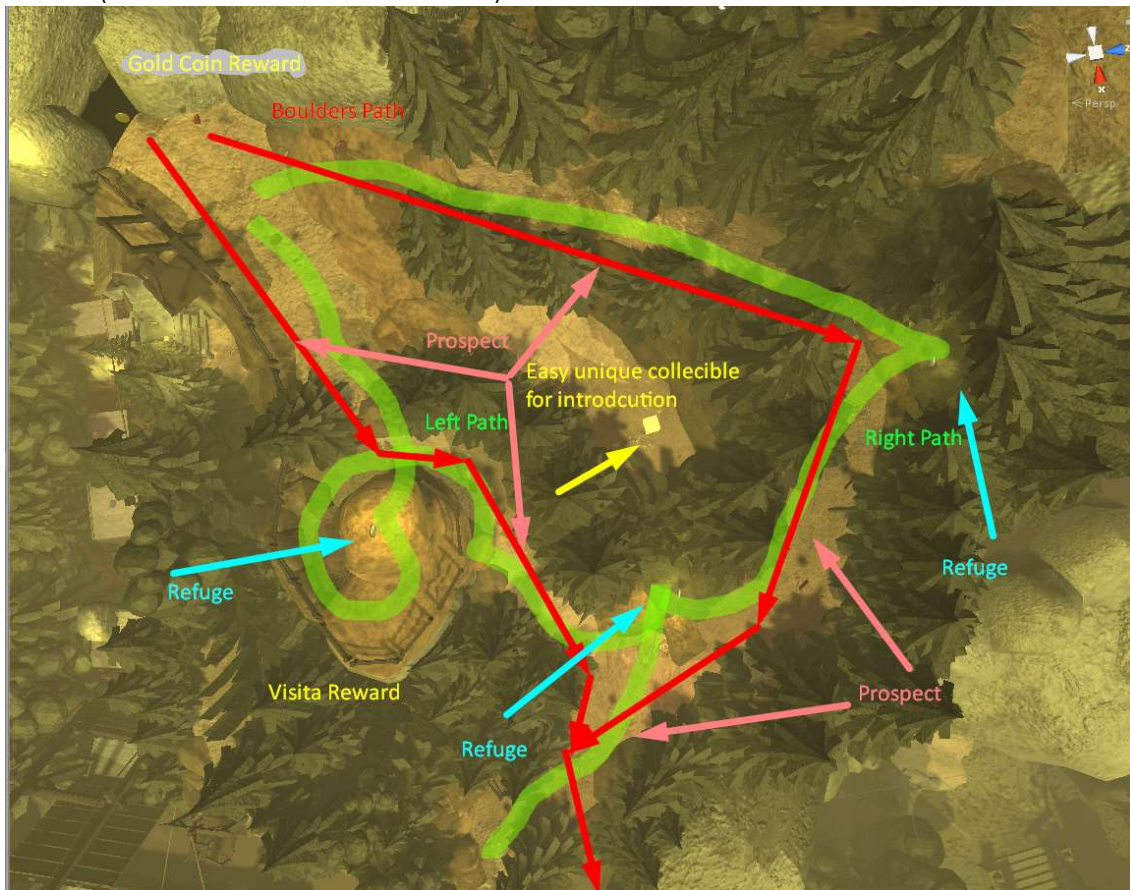
PART 5 (UP TO THE HILL TOWARDS THE RIVER AND WATERFALL)



When they get to about half way up this hill the green wizards will laugh as it flies by again, it will head up to top of the hill and into a cave, this is currently a bit slow and if the player runs through the challenge without stopping the boulders will spawn to late, the cave on the top could also be visible from the end of this part to better tell the player what is happening.

In the end if the player has not progressed before the boulders start to roll down the hill in the next part, they will see the boulders jumping out from a knocked over tree and onto a platform the player needs to cross to make it over to the next part, this is not a challenge since it happens so rarely, but is only meant to introduce the player to the challenge ahead.

PART 6 (THE WAY TO THE TOP OF THE HILL)



The player now needs to make it's way to the top of the hill, it is designed for the player to move form refuge point to refuge point having the prospect areas where the boulders are rolling down and could potentially hit the player, they will be able to see the next refuge areas from the current one they are in. It is also neatly balanced through changing the spawn rates of the stone and the animation speed. This will allow the player to make it to the next area just as the boulders are passing by, creating a sense of accomplishment for the player.

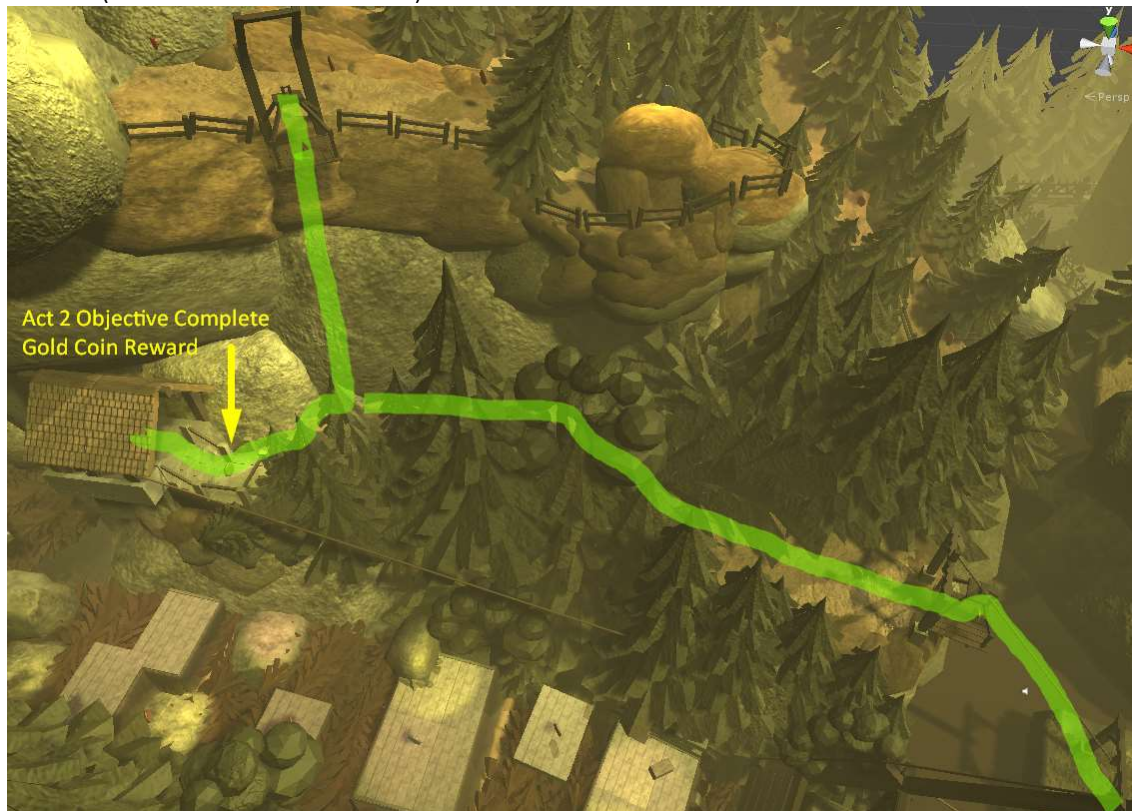
At the first refuge point in the challenge, the player is presented with a choice of either going right or left, they pose an equal challenge but has two different visual themes to them, the route to the left leads to a mountain edge area with a visitas reward and the road to the right is a deep forest where the boulder get's thrown into the air by a rock on the ground, allowing the player to go under the boulder if they choose to, this makes both routes serve the same function in regard to the interest curve during the act.

The first refuge area also has a unique collectible right in front of it, allowing the player to see the collectible but not collect it, this is to make sure that the player knows about the collectible and allow them to find it once they reach the top if they choose to do so.

The visitas reward on the left path again allows the player to see the tower with the collectible and to look out over the forest and the refuge area hub beneath.

At the top, the player is rewarded with a heart and a gold coin.

PART 7 (THE MOVING PLATFORMS)



The player is introduced to the moving platforms, there is the first one that goes straight down as the player steps onto it and retracts as they step off. This is framed right in front of the player as they make their way up the mountain from part 6. It takes the player down to a lookout tower that looks out over act 3 which also holds the lever you need to pull in order to lower the bridge to unlock the gate for act 3.

The player then needs to make it's way down from the hill and can do so by following the path down to the platform that was visible from the refuge hub, this is subtly gated by having some trees lying in the path for when the player makes their way down and unlocking once they pull the lever by just deleting the trees. This is not the best way to gate something and was mostly put in place after playtesting proved a problem where players would head down before pulling the lever and could be improved upon.

ACT3

PART 8 (FROM THE BRIDGE TO THE FOREST)



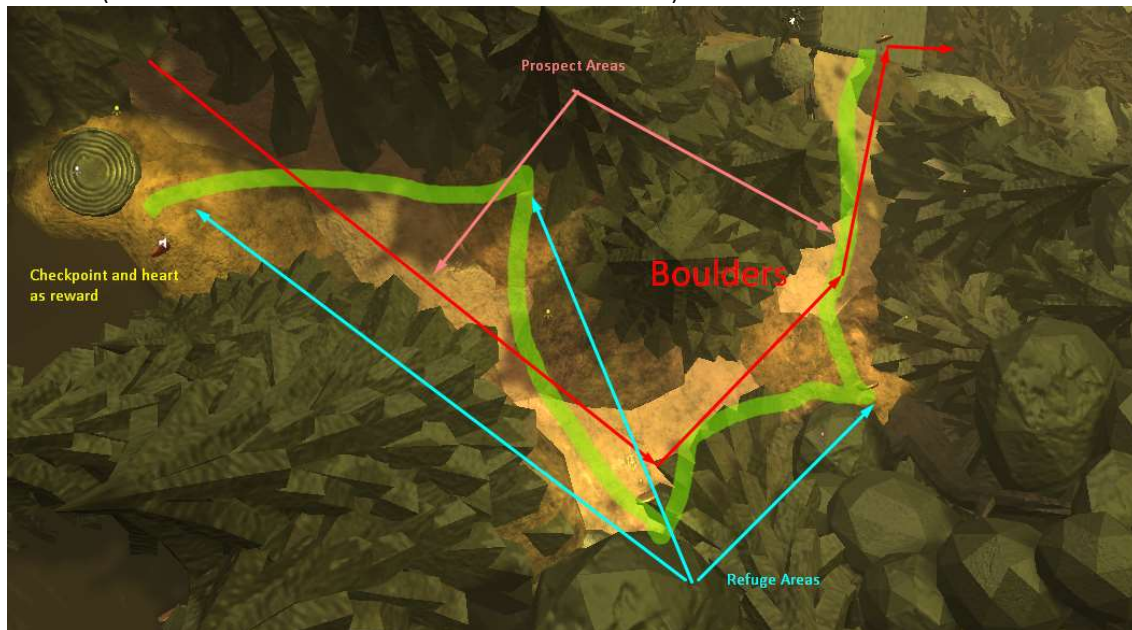
Here the player will yet again be faced with the wizard's cape shooting bolts at the player, they will be forced to hide behind covers to avoid getting hit by the bolts. It is meant to be a combination of the first bolt introduced in act 1 and the timing from act 2, although due to technical difficulties with the scrips, the wizard does not shoot unless the ray cast hit's the player and causes a problem with the intended gameplay.

The player is also introduced to a new mechanic which is the falling road platforms, this will scale in difficulty through the part, and will eventually have the player jump over 3 falling platforms in a row, unless they take the side route where the player can jump over some stones which have a rather hard difficulty due to how far one of the gaps is.

At the end of the part, the player will be rewarded with a heart and a gold coin.

The wizard is currently set quite high up in the sky, this was due to some problems with the bolt hitting triggers that it was not supposed to and fell to the ground, this has proven to be an issue and it should be placed further down so that the player can see that it leaves more clearly.

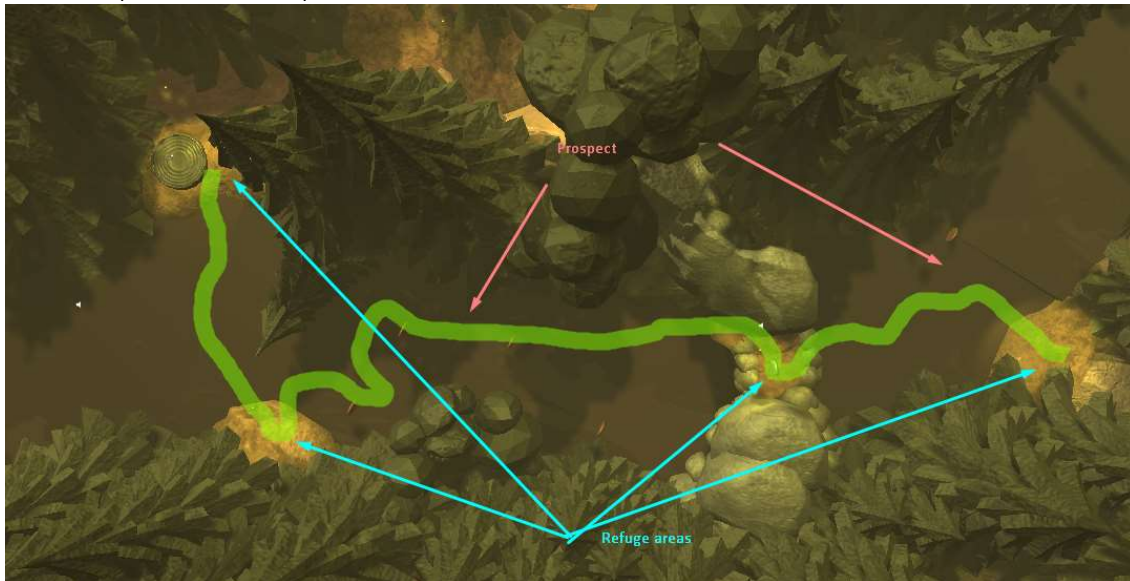
PART 9 (THE TRAIL FROM THE ROAD AND UP TO THE RIVER)



The player will be introduced to the next path by another Queen statue used as a focal point and a fence that leads up the mountain, this is also emphasized by the boulders coming down the path, this is very similar to the part in act 2 and is a stop and run pacing which the player already knows how to do.

At the end the player will be rewarded with a checkpoint and a heart, coins are placed in the refuge point to make it even more clear to the player that these are refuge points.

PART 10 (THE RIVER RIDE)



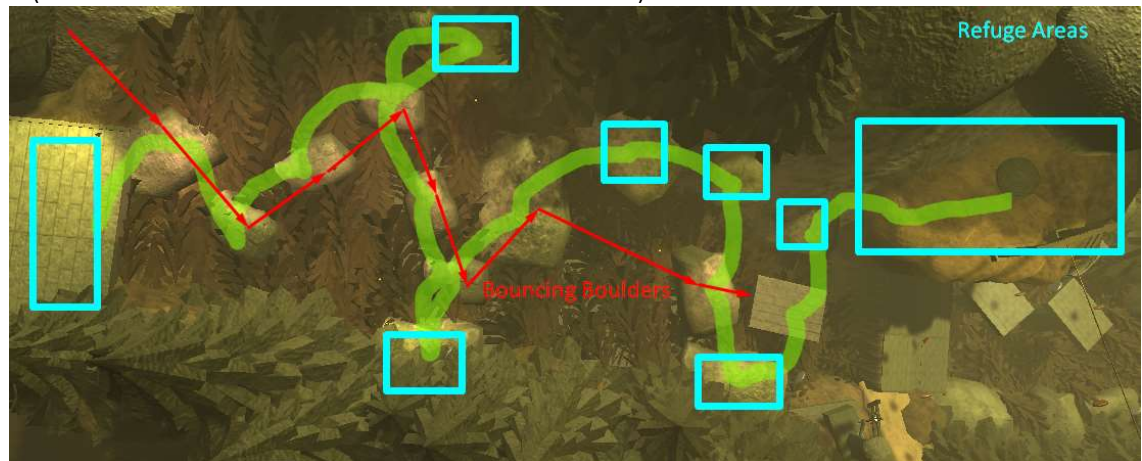
This part is introduced to the player by having rocks floating down the river and having a clear refuge point on the other side of the river to insinuate the player needs to make it across, the rocks are mostly used because I didn't have anything else and I didn't have the time to make tree stumps for the player to stand on as is the intended asset I would use here, I got the inspiration for this part from the old arcade game Frogger (Papas, 1981).

From the starting point in the refuge area, the player can see coins to the right leading up to a unique collectible, this is to point out to the player that it is there but is not accessible at this point. This easy to observe for the player since the stones are only going the opposite direction.

The player needs to jump from one rock to another in order to avoid trees hanging out over the river, knocking the player off. The difficulty is increased if the player wishes to collect all the coins, but this is optional. The end of the part is nicely lit up in order to clearly show the player where they need to head off, this is also emphasized by a cave in the end which does not fit the player. There is also a refuge point that allows the player to take their time to see the road ahead, I think this bit is interesting but has room for improvements both in functionality and in diversity.

This was a rather rushed design since it was made in the last week of production and I was not able to playtest it as much as I would like, but I managed to get some playtesting done with friends and found a game breaking bug which I believe was solved.

PART 11 (ZIP LINE RIDE AND THE LAST ROAD UP TO THE CASTLE)



The player jumps off the rock in the river and is and makes the wizard fly out of the cave where he is spawning the boulders that are rolling down the hill in part 9. After going around the corner the player will get to see the zipline which will take them to the top of a ledge in the mountain, allowing them to progress up towards the mountain. The player now triggers a new wizard spawn while on the zip line which enters the last cave in front of the castle bridge.

The player will now have to plan their movements as they are introduced to rocks that bounce from rock to rock in a 2 second interval, and like before the lighting used are to emphasize the refuge and prospect areas in the challenge, the player now needs to use the jumping mechanic along with the tactics to get to the top of the hill and enter the castle, making the player use every mechanic that they have been taught to use to their full extent, this is by far the most challenging part of the level and rightfully so since it is also the last challenge. This could be improved by also having the river flow through and possibly having the wizard shoot bolts at the player at some point.

The player will get coins if they make it to all the refuge areas within the challenge, and a gold coin is placed to reward the player for reaching the end.

The end of this path is also the route to the last unique collectible, the player can now jump down on the floating rocks and retrieve the collectible that was shown to the player previously, the player then needs to go through the river part and up to this last part again in order to reach the end, as a risk vs reward for getting the collectible item.

PART 12 (HIDDEN TOWER AREA)



If the player reaches the top of the tower, they will be able to collect a unique collectible alongside a visitas reward, a great view of the castle. There is also a cutscene planned to take place which would be a concurrent reward for completing a hidden challenge.

ASSETS AND MATERIAL CREATED BY ME:

Nearly all the 3d models were modeled, mapped and textured by me

The soundtrack is composed by me although I know I have heard that melody somewhere before, subconsciously stolen

Scripts are written by me both using C# and alot of playmaker.

ASSETS AND MATERIAL THAT WAS NOT CREATED BY ME:

Tree models are from the unity store and were free to download, I retextured these to fit my theme

I have bought a sound FX package (Universal Sound FX) which I used for some of the sound FX in my level, but I also recorded voice lines and some sound effect's myself

I have also got toony colors pro 2 installed in my project folder even though I don't use this asset very much in my level, or at all.

Character animation and rigging from Mixamo

This level design document has been based on a level design document created by Adam Reynolds which he made for the level Power Station in Quake 4

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