# Potential Price

## Game Model

* Base Game + DLC model: $14.99–$19.99 USD (aligning with games like Little Misfortune, Fran Bow, or Untitled Goose Game)
* Core game: 6-8 main levels
* DLCs or seasonal content packs add new locations, characters, or character skins ($2.99–$4.99 each)

Pricing rationale: lower upfront cost encourages curiosity-driven purchases, DLCs extend lifecycle without demanding a major rework of mechanics, pricing aligns with other niche indie games.

# Target Audience

## Primary Audience

Indie Puzzle/Horror Fans aged 16+: players who enjoy unique mechanics and emotional storytelling (*Inside*, *Oxenfree*, *Spiritfarer*)

## Secondary Audience:

Casual/Puzzle Gamers: players who prefer short, thoughtful experiences with light mechanics

## Tertiary Audience

Streamers/YouTubers: especially those who play quirky or heartfelt indie games with emotional themes and a horror-comedy angle.

## Player Profiles

### General Profiles

* “The Empath” – plays for story, emotion, and meaning.
* “The Explorer” – enjoys testing mechanics and finding secrets.
* “The Trickster” – enjoys the subversion of typical horror tropes.

### Sample Profiles

Player Profile 1: "The Empathic Explorer"

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| --- | --- |
| Name | Alex Rivera |
| Age | 25 |
| Occupation | Junior Graphic Designer |
| Gaming Style | Emotional immersion, narrative-driven choices, light puzzles |
| Motivations | * Enjoys games that evoke emotion and moral ambiguity. * Attracted to quirky, heartwarming indie games with strong aesthetics. * Loves uncovering small secrets and replaying to see different outcomes. |
| Games Loved | * *Spiritfarer* * *Night in the Woods* * *Little Misfortune* * *Oxenfree* |
| What would draw her | 1. The idea of helping scared people despite being misunderstood mirrors real-life experiences with social anxiety or being misread. 2. Puzzle elements appeal to her problem-solving nature without overwhelming intensity. 3. The emotional irony of a monster trying to be kind is deeply appealing and original. |

Player Profile 2: "The Whimsical Streamer"

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| --- | --- |
| Name | Taylor Chen |
| Age | 19 |
| Occupation | College Student/Part-Time Streamer |
| Gaming Style | Entertaining content, oddball humor, expressive reactions |
| Motivations | * Loves games that create funny or chaotic moments on-stream. * Drawn to games with unique mechanics and meme potential. * Enjoys sharing emotional moments with his audience. |
| Games Loved | * *Untitled Goose Game* * *Hello Neighbor* * *Don’t Starve Together* * *Poppy Playtime* (ironically) |
| What would draw him | 1. The fear meter makes for great, high-tension/funny content. 2. The chance to “accidentally” scare NPCs while trying to help = perfect clip-worthy moments. 3. Replaying it to get the perfect score |

# Competition Analysis

## Comparable Titles

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| --- | --- | --- |
| Game Title | Similarities | Differences |
| Untitled Goose Game | - Mischief-based gameplay- Object interaction- Silent protagonist | - Goose is intentionally annoying, not kind- Lacks emotional depth or narrative stakes |
| Spiritfarer | - Emotional core- Helping misunderstood characters- Wholesome with sadness | - Focused on death & farewells, not fear- Slower-paced and resource-management heavy |
| Little Misfortune | - Child-like perspective on dark themes- Juxtaposition of innocence and horror | - More linear storytelling- Heavier reliance on dark humor, less on puzzles |
| Hello Neighbor | - Suspense from NPC fear/alert mechanics- Environmental puzzles | - Adversarial tension, not empathetic- AI acts against player, not in need of comfort |
| Don’t Starve | - Horror-inspired art style- Indie appeal | - Survival-focused, not puzzle/narrative- Open-world sandbox rather than level-based progression |
| Inside / Limbo | - Silent narrative, puzzle platforming- Dark, emotional atmosphere | - Much more abstract and bleak- Lacks the empathy-driven player intention at core |

# Marketing Strategy

**Tone**: Whimsical + Spooky. Emphasize the ironic kindness of the monster.

**Channels**:

* TikTok & YouTube Shorts: Showcase “funny fail” moments or near-miss scares.
* Twitch streamers: Offer early demo keys to horror/puzzle game streamers.
* Indie game festivals: Submit to showcases like Day of the Devs or Wholesome Direct.
* Steam Page: Use animated gifs showing fear meter mechanic and misunderstandings.

# Risks

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| --- | --- |
| **Risk** | **Mitigation Strategy** |
| **1. Miscommunication of tone:** Players may expect a scary horror game and feel misled. | Use marketing language like “reverse horror” or “heartfelt horror”, emphasize emotional/puzzle aspects in trailers and Steam tags |
| **2. Niche appeal:** The concept might be too specific to attract a broad audience. | Lean into uniqueness for indie credibility, focus on streamers and festivals to build organic buzz, highlight universal themes like empathy and misunderstanding |
| **3. Short game lifespan:** Limited replayability could hurt long-term engagement. | Plan post-launch content (ex. DLCs with new levels/settings), include small collectibles or easter eggs for replay value, level stars to offer option to replay for the perfect score |
| **4. Fear mechanic frustration:** Players may struggle to predict what scares NPCs. | Implement clear visual/audio feedback when NPCs get scared, offer a gentle learning curve and optional hint system |
| **5. Difficulty balancing:** Puzzle difficulty may feel inconsistent or too easy/hard. | Playtest with varied audiences, include optional difficulty modifiers (e.g., “Chill Mode” vs. “Master Monster”) |
| **6. Visual inconsistency:** Art style might not communicate “benevolent horror” clearly. | Establish a consistent visual language, use UI and animations to convey friendliness |
| **7. Streamer retention risk:** Game might be a one-time play without ongoing content. | Add streamer-focused features (e.g., variable NPC reactions, Easter eggs), encourage community challenges or user-generated content later |

# Opportunities

1. Emotional storytelling: Potential for heartwarming narratives about misunderstood beings.
2. Merchandising: Plushies of cute monsters with spooky/cuddly aesthetic.
3. Expansions into other media: Short animated shorts or webcomics.
4. Cross-genre potential: Could inspire mobile versions, co-op experiences, or even educational spin-offs (e.g., teaching empathy/non-verbal communication).

# Development

**Team**: Adam Kelly, Aidan Melville, Freddie Johnson, Justin Gonsalvez, Leena Althekair

**Timeline**: April 27th 2025 – July 4th 2025 (10 weeks)

Week 1: Brainstorming

Week 2: Research and laying the foundations

Week 3: ?