COMP 3218: Coursework 2 Storytelling in Games

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How does your Story Engine work?

The narrative of the story is achieved by presenting the girl with 3 choices in each of the scenarios she faces, either Good, Neutral or Bad.

The player has agency in choosing which of these options to go for, the good option results in the player losing an ability and hindering their ability to progress through the world with ease, except for the first choice, in which the player is requested to heal a defeated foe (This is done through in game choices), for the rest of the game, this "good" option is decided through narrative / Dialogue choices). If the good option was not chosen, then the neutral option has no good nor bad effect on the player as they haven't done anything worthy of a game world reaction. The bad option grants the player bonus mana, which can be used in order to travel through the game world far easier as they are not affected by limits on their abilities as heavily.

The narrative is laid out as a series of split-joins in which the player has agency in order to change the world as she moves through it, as described in the above, these choices result in essentially a large sieve for the end depending on the player's narrative and game choices as they travel through the world.

The game world can be changed through the player's decisions, for example, when the player encounters the rabbit in the entangled forest, their actions with that rabbit in either the narrative or the game world (as if they choose not to give him their power, they may kill him for the mana), affect the scene to which the player is placed, they can either be thanked by the rabbits, discover a dead rabbit, or be offered the chance to learn from their previous actions and save a new rabbit (they don't have to learn from their mistakes).

The good/evil choices made by the player throughout the game resulting in them gaining functional transformation stones or broken ones. These stones, gained by being picked up in the game world affect the game's ending. For the case that the player decides to perform the neutral action, no transformation stones are given, and that neutral decision is forwarded to the player's choice in the final scene of the game.

In the final dramatic scene of the game, the player has the choice to defeat the wizard or to spare him, and this choice results in these neutral options being changed to good/bad, affecting the player's ending, through the gain/loss of the items they would've gained had they performed those options as good/evil along the way. This choice also affects the player's ability to save the mother from the wizard. However, if the player dies to the wizard's minions in the final battle, the ending results in the player being turned into a raven and remaining the wizard's pet for the rest of eternity, however for every working transformation stone obtained by the player throughout their journey, the wizard transforms that family member back into a human.

Feedback and Response

Mechanics out of tune with Narrative - We were told that the mechanics were out of tune with the narrative, so we altered the story so that the mechanics available to the player made sense with the narrative and led to a greater sense of immersion, specifically, we initially had a Pokemon battle system idea for our main mechanic, we completely changed this into our new magical abilities mechanics.

Explain Meaningfulness of Choices and Key Decisions - At first our choices and their gravity on the narrative were obscured from the player, they didn't know how much a choice could affect their storyline and outcome, this was altered to organically inform the player.

Choices of Action over Choice of Dialogue - Also feedback included that we had a lot of heavy dialogue based choices and that these were the main parts of the game, we acted on this by changing the dialogue choices to give the player a choice of action, so the dialogue ends and the player can decide whether to kill, leave, or heal an enemy, which is displayed to players through agency by flashing icons.

Skip Cutscenes - Our initial cutscene was very long and this wasn't skippable, the user was forced to watch every time they played. This was changed so the player can choose to skip each scene of the cutscene in order to improve their experience.

Narrative Affected Story Instead of the Player - Initially our game had the users choice at the start of the game affect their entire story and their ability to access certain endings, thus the gravity of the decision wasn't explained to the player and also a singular choice affected the entire narrative and the way in which the game can be experienced. We altered this

Asset References:

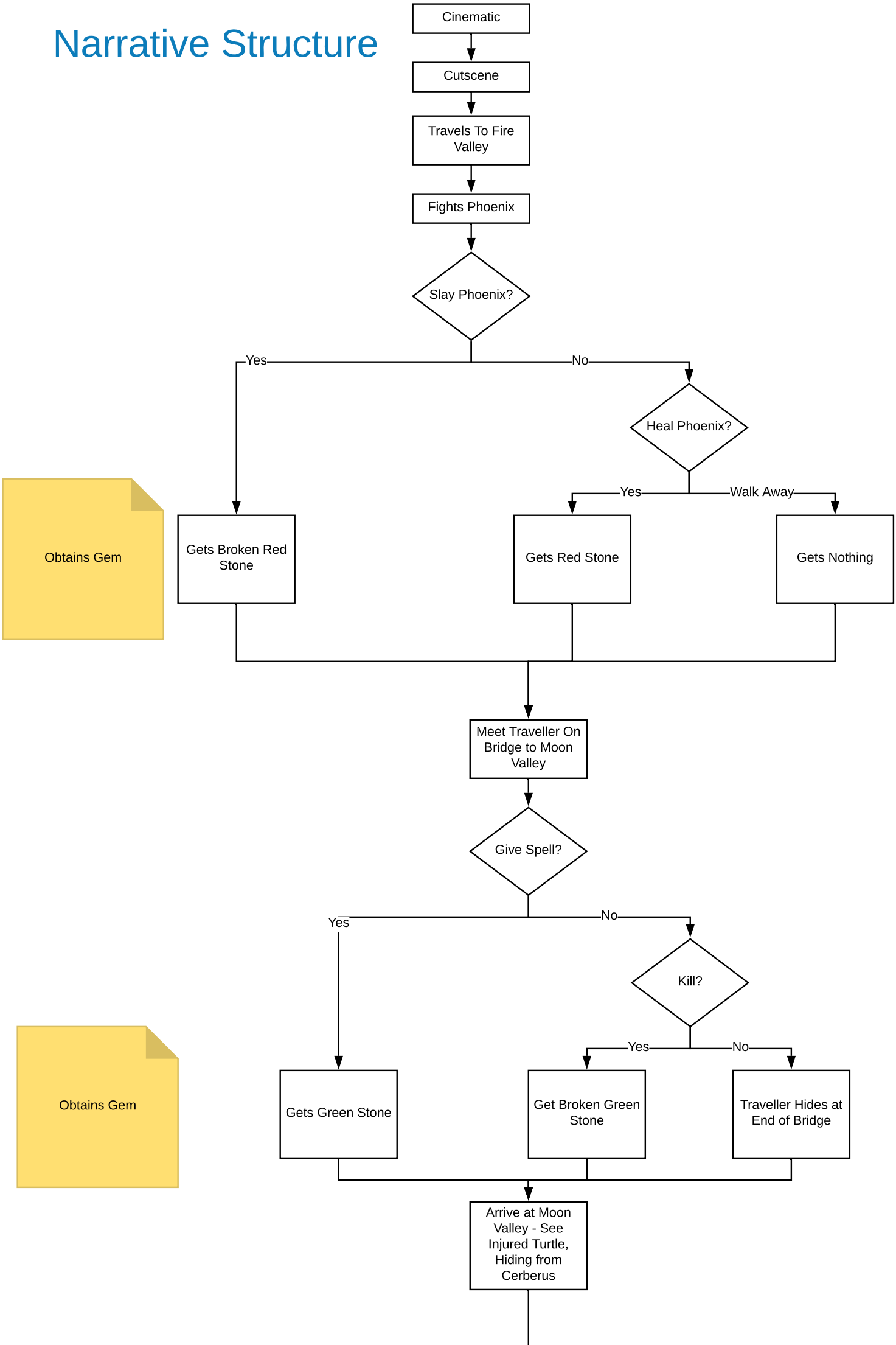
All the art for the in-game levels and character art where obtained from:

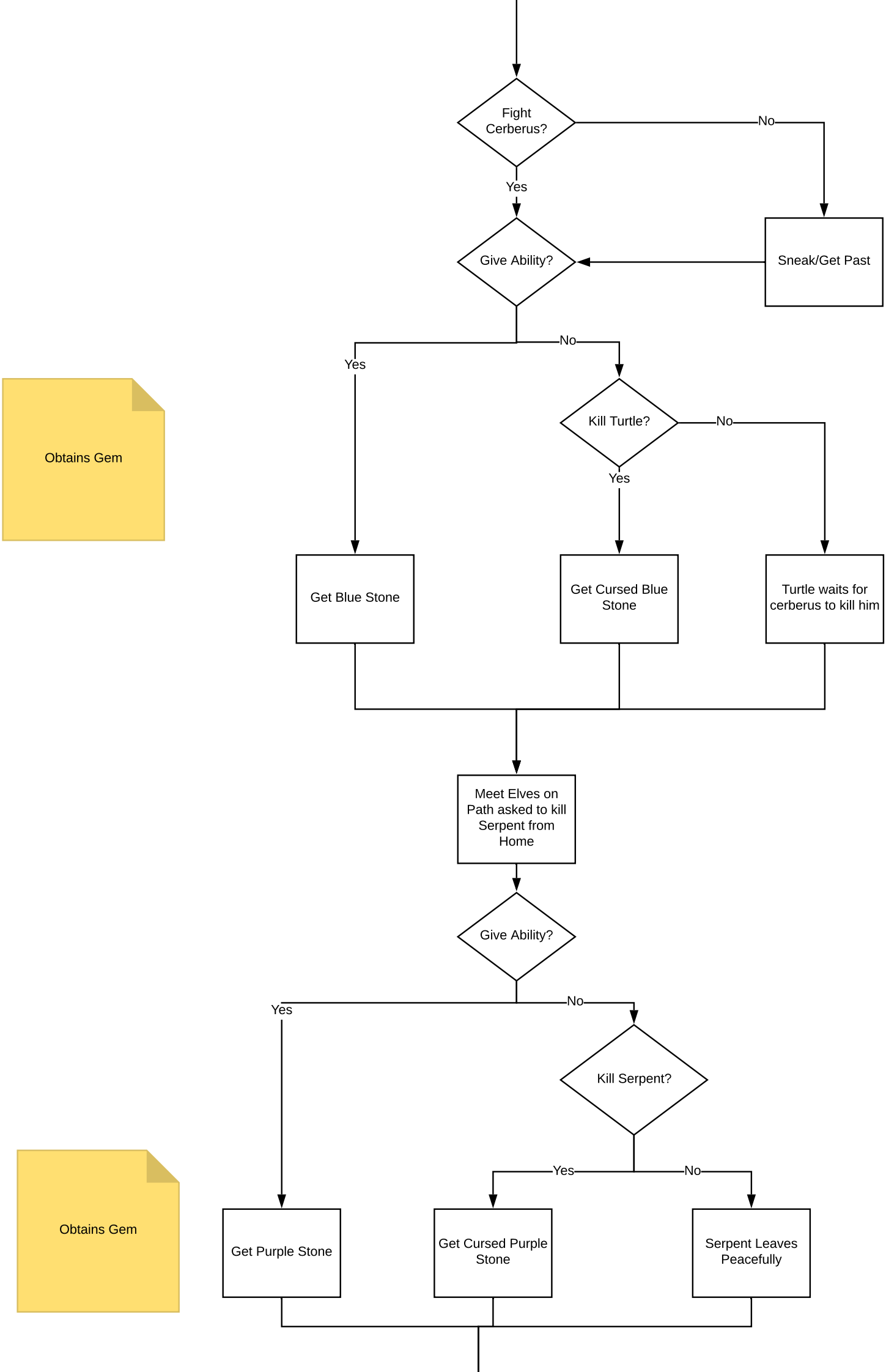
https://www.patreon.com/finalbossblues/.

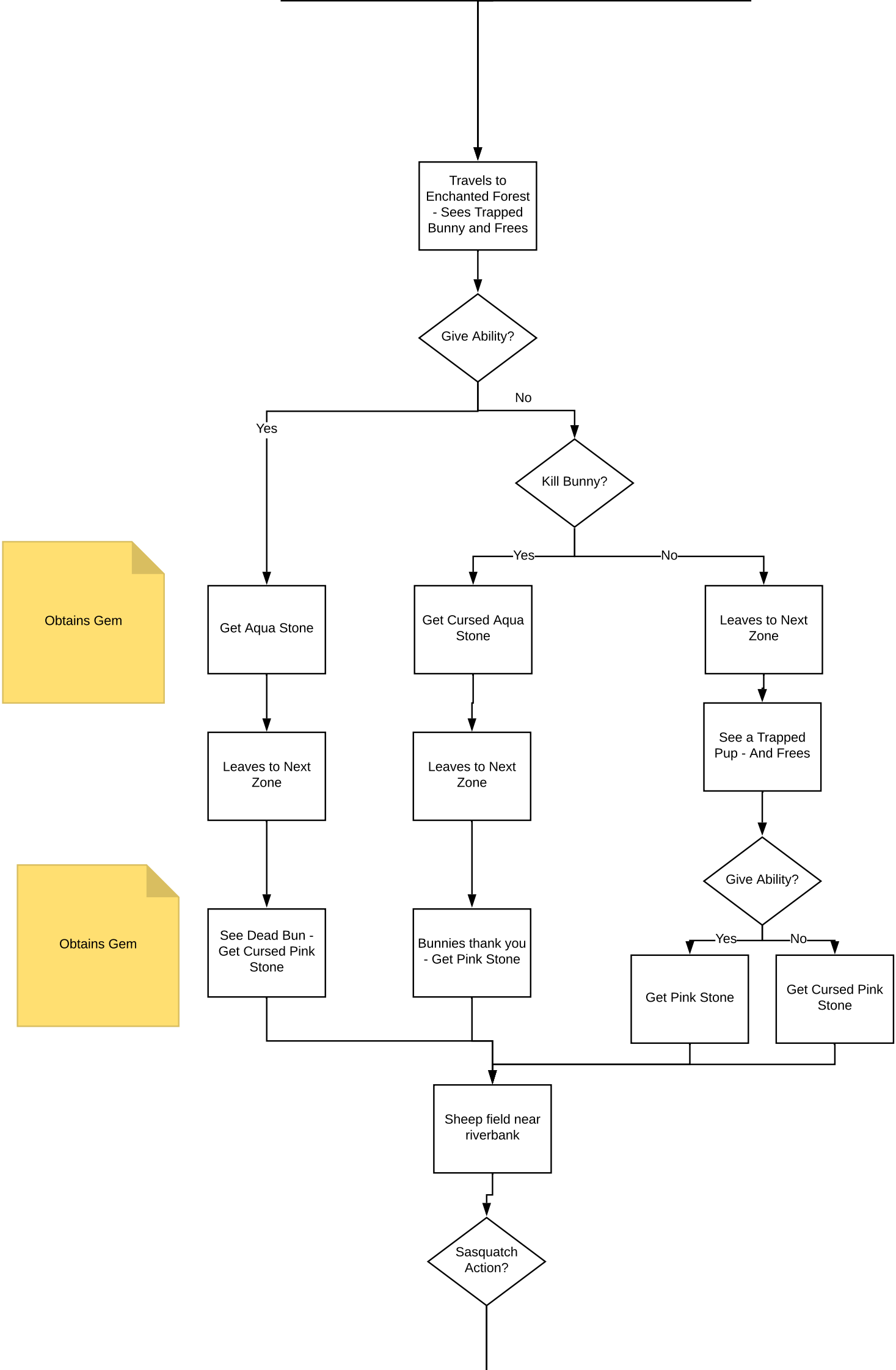
The audio for the game was obtained from:

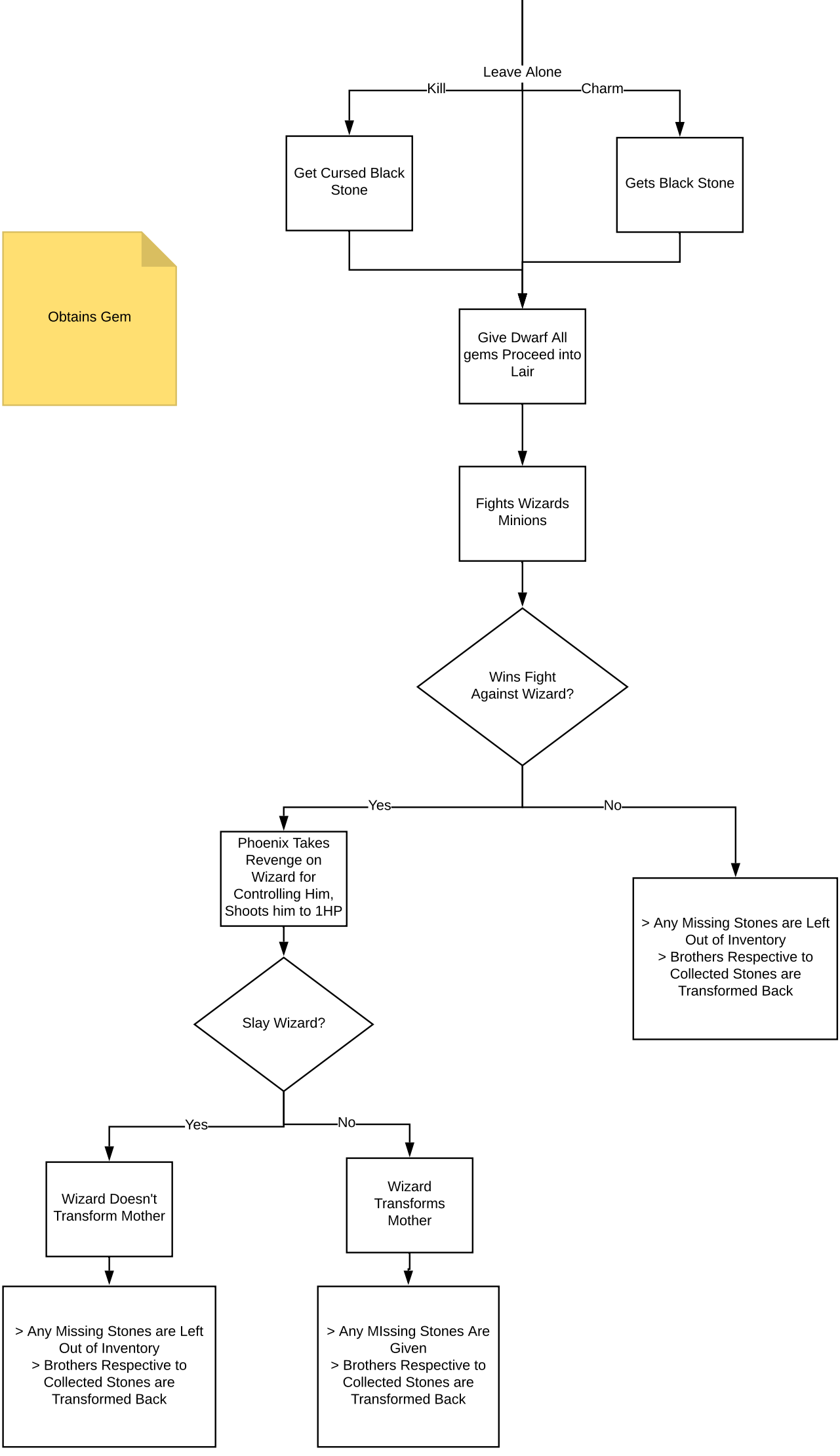
SFX: https://www.gamedevmarket.net/asset/pro-sound-collection-6169/

Narrative Structure




Fight Cerberus?
No
Yes
Sneak/Get Past
Give Ability?
No
Yes
Kill Turtle?
No
Yes
Obtains Gem
Get Blue Stone
Get Cursed Blue Stone
Turtle waits for cerberus to kill him
Meet Elves on Path asked to kill Serpent from Home
Give Ability?
Yes
No
Kill Serpent?
Yes
No
Obtains Gem
Get Purple Stone
Get Cursed Purple Stone
Serpent Leaves Peacefully


Travels to Enchanted Forest - Sees Trapped Bunny and Frees
Give Ability?
No
Yes
Kill Bunny?
Yes
No
Obtains Gem
Get Aqua Stone
Get Cursed Aqua Stone
Leaves to Next Zone
Leaves to Next Zone
Leaves to Next Zone
See a Trapped Pup - And Frees
Give Ability?
Obtains Gem
See Dead Bun - Get Cursed Pink Stone
Bunnies thank you - Get Pink Stone
Yes
No
Get Pink Stone
Get Cursed Pink Stone
Sheep field near riverbank
Sasquatch Action?


Leave Alone
Kill
Charm
Get Cursed Black Stone
Gets Black Stone
Obtains Gem
Give Dwarf All gems Proceed into Lair
Fights Wizards Minions
Wins Fight Against Wizard?
Yes
No
Phoenix Takes Revenge on Wizard for Controlling Him, Shoots him to 1HP
> Any Missing Stones are Left Out of Inventory
> Brothers Respective to Collected Stones are Transformed Back
Slay Wizard?
Yes
No
Wizard Doesn't Transform Mother
Wizard Transforms Mother
> Any Missing Stones are Left Out of Inventory
> Brothers Respective to Collected Stones are Transformed Back
> Any MIssing Stones Are Given
> Brothers Respective to Collected Stones are Transformed Back