Mechanical Memory

**Narrative Adventure / Psychological Drama**

In a near-future world where technology and humanity intertwine, you were raised by your grandmother and a robotic nanny. The fate of your parents has always been a closely guarded secret, never spoken of within the family. After your grandmother's passing, a journal and two memory chips reveal the buried truths. What was behind your grandmother's strange behavior? What hidden selfishness lies beneath the great love? And can you understand the choices your mother made?

🔗 Gameplay Video

Inspiration

Story:

This game takes inspiration from Ryūnosuke Akutagawa's *In a Grove*, which retells a murder from **conflicting perspectives**. Likewise, I aim to explore love through **multiple subjective viewpoints**, focusing on expressing each character's emotions and inner world.

IN A GROVE
RYUNOSUKE AKUTAGAWA
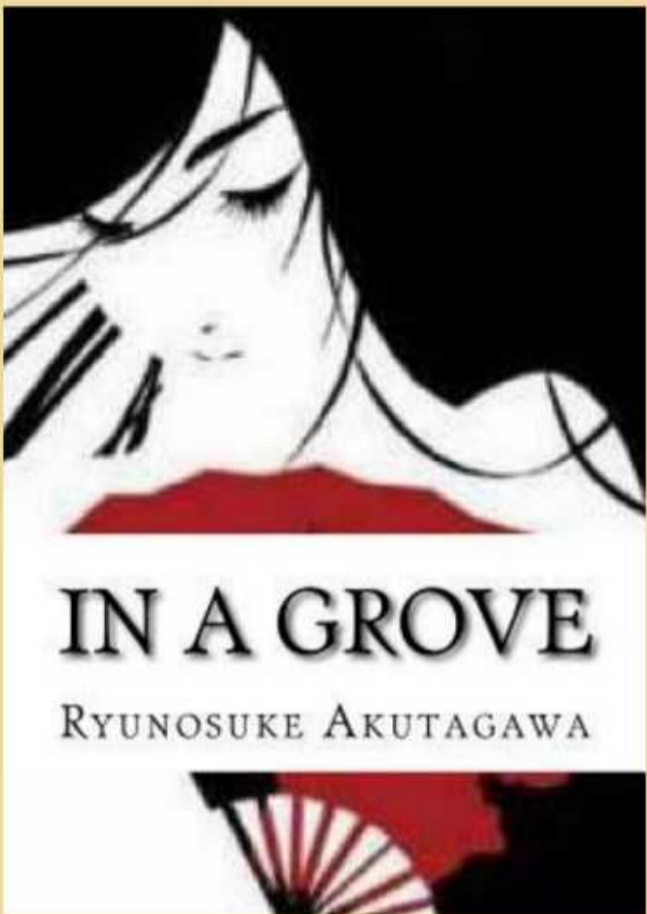
Gameplay:

The gameplay draws inspiration from *What Remains of Edith Finch*, aiming to create a deeply immersive narrative experience. Players will explore the world through the **first-person perspectives of different characters**. As they approach key objects, the game will reveal the character's memories about them from their subjective point of view.

## Theme

| Complexity of Love | Self-interest & Care | Multiple Perspectives |

When people "love" someone, this emotion driven by both a concern for the other person's happiness and the satisfaction they gain from it. This satisfaction might stem from the other person's response or from the act of loving itself as a form of self-realization. Love is rarely pure — it often mixes kindness with self-interest. In the game, players see the story from different characters' eyes, showing how complex love can be

Story

This game tells a story across three generations. Players see the story through Lillian's eyes as she learns about her mother Eloise's life and tragic fate. In this story, everyone loved Eloise deeply, yet their love unknowingly became the cause of her death.

Celeste, Eloise's mother, loved her through care and control, wanting her to live up to her ideals. Leon, Eloise's fiancé, trapped her in guilt and grief after his death, driven by his own insecurity. Marcus, the suitor, loved Eloise with a "savior complex", pursuing her in a performative manner.
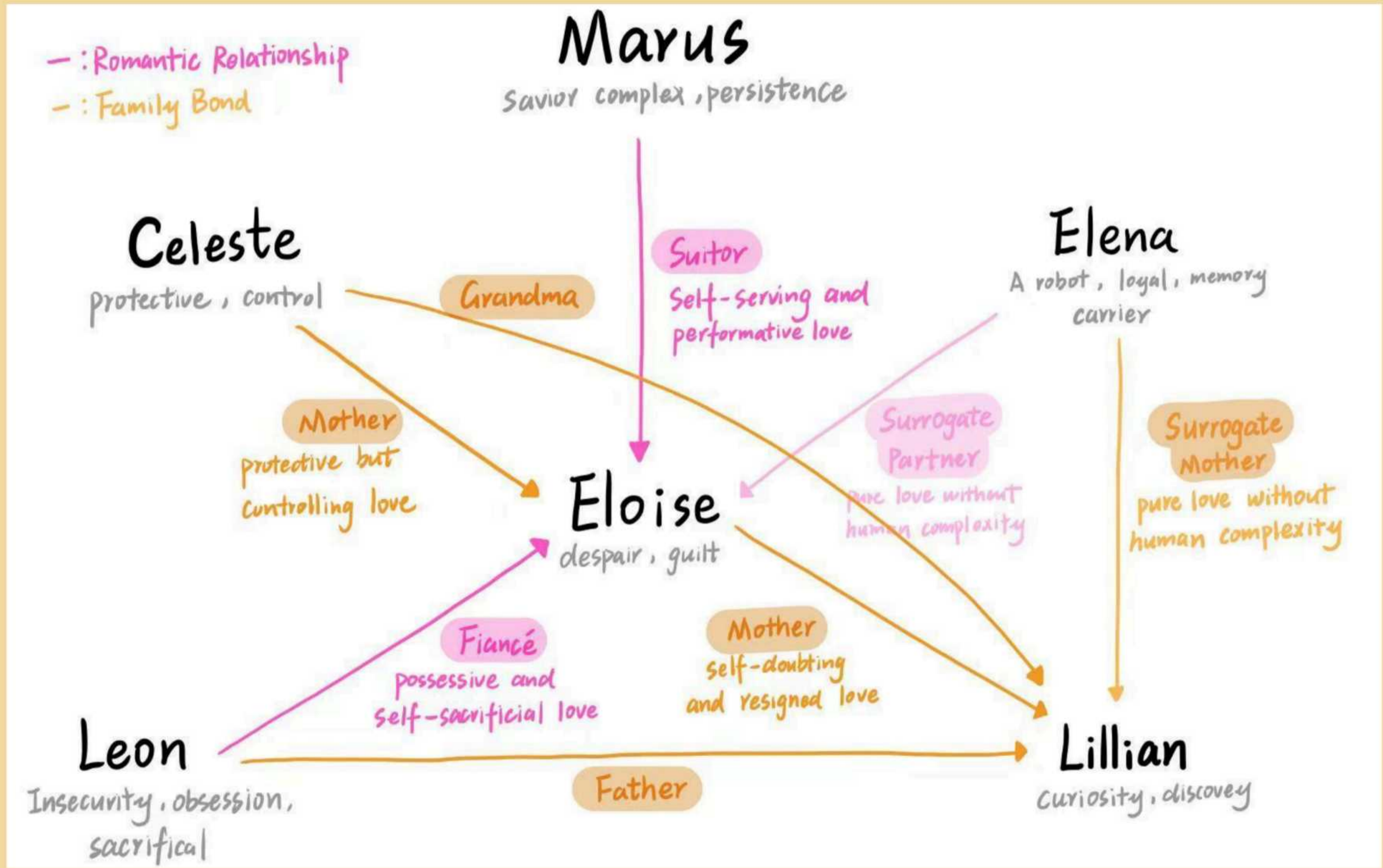
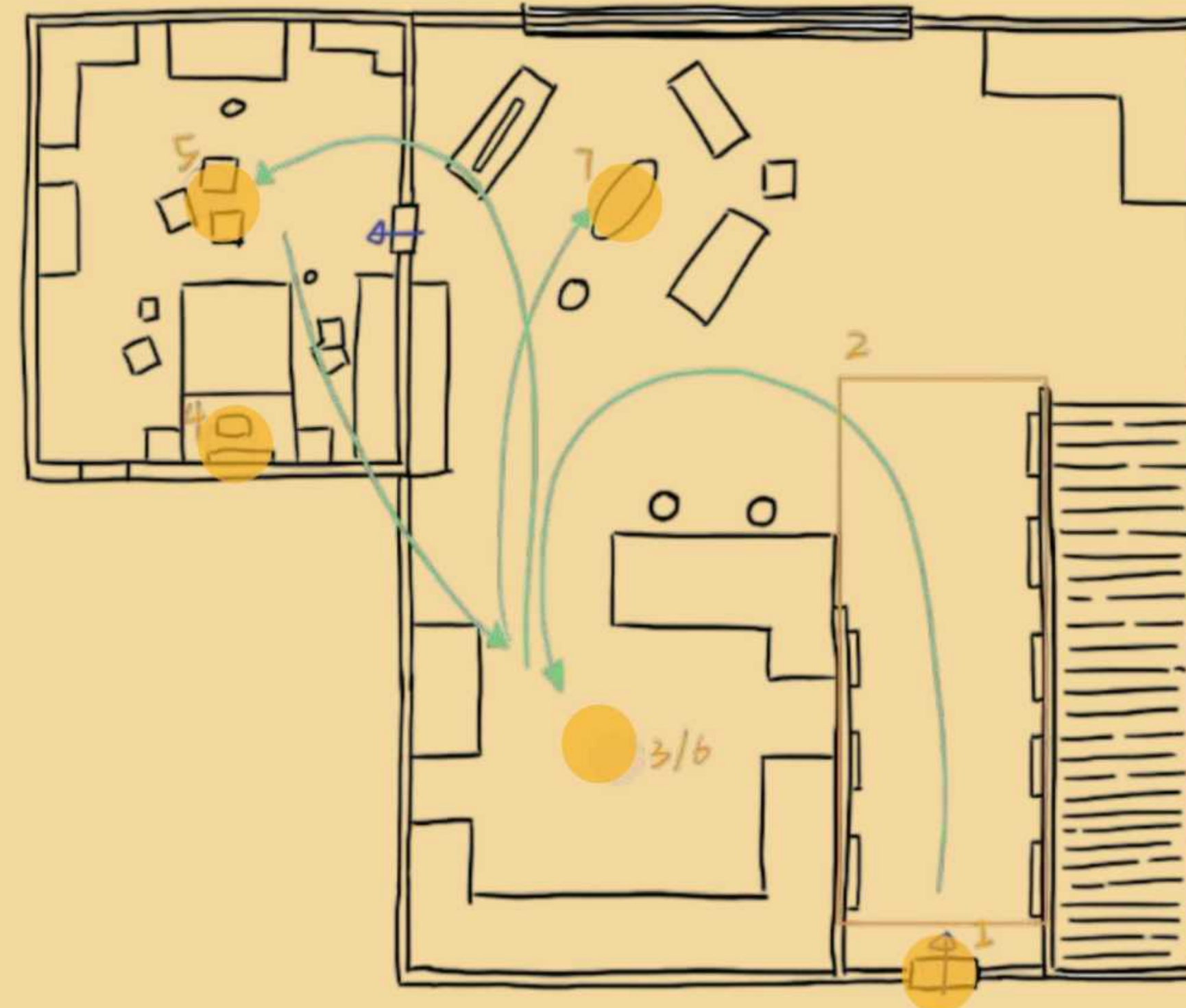

Character Relationship Map

Through Eloise's memories, players will see her deep love for Lillian. Feeling that she could not be a good mother, she asked Elena, the robot, to take her place, believing it was the best choice for her child. Her final decision makes players wonder whether it was an act of love or an attempt to escape, showing how complicated love can be.

Raised by a strict but loving single mother → Liked to paint and went to art school → Met Leon and accepted his proposal

Talent from her father side

Disliked Leon

Negative attitude due to the association with her ex-husband

Legend:
- —: Eloise   —: Leon
- —: Celeste   —: Marus
- —: Elena   —: Lillian

Discovered she was pregnant ← feel guilty — Leon died saving her in car crash ← Thriving in both career and love

despair + hope

Planned to die with her before but finally save her instead ← Conflict + sacrifice — Big gap between career success

feared losing Eloise

Bought a robot and implanted Leon's memory → Forced into arranged dates by Celest   She is trapped in societal moral judgement and prejudice

worried about Eloise

Arranged date to avoid her being a single mother   Met Eloise and fell in love → Ignored her rejections and tried to "save" her

Find out the robot's was deleted by Celeste and Marus ← depress — Suffered from postpartum depression and doubted her ability to be a mother

Convinced Celeste to delete the robot data

Due to the programmed setting, love completely without selfishness

Pretend Leon and took care of Eloise

Give her memory chip to the robot and ended her life → Lillian tried to piece the whole story

loyalty, pure love?

Flowing her wishes, it did not prevent her death and became Lillian's mother
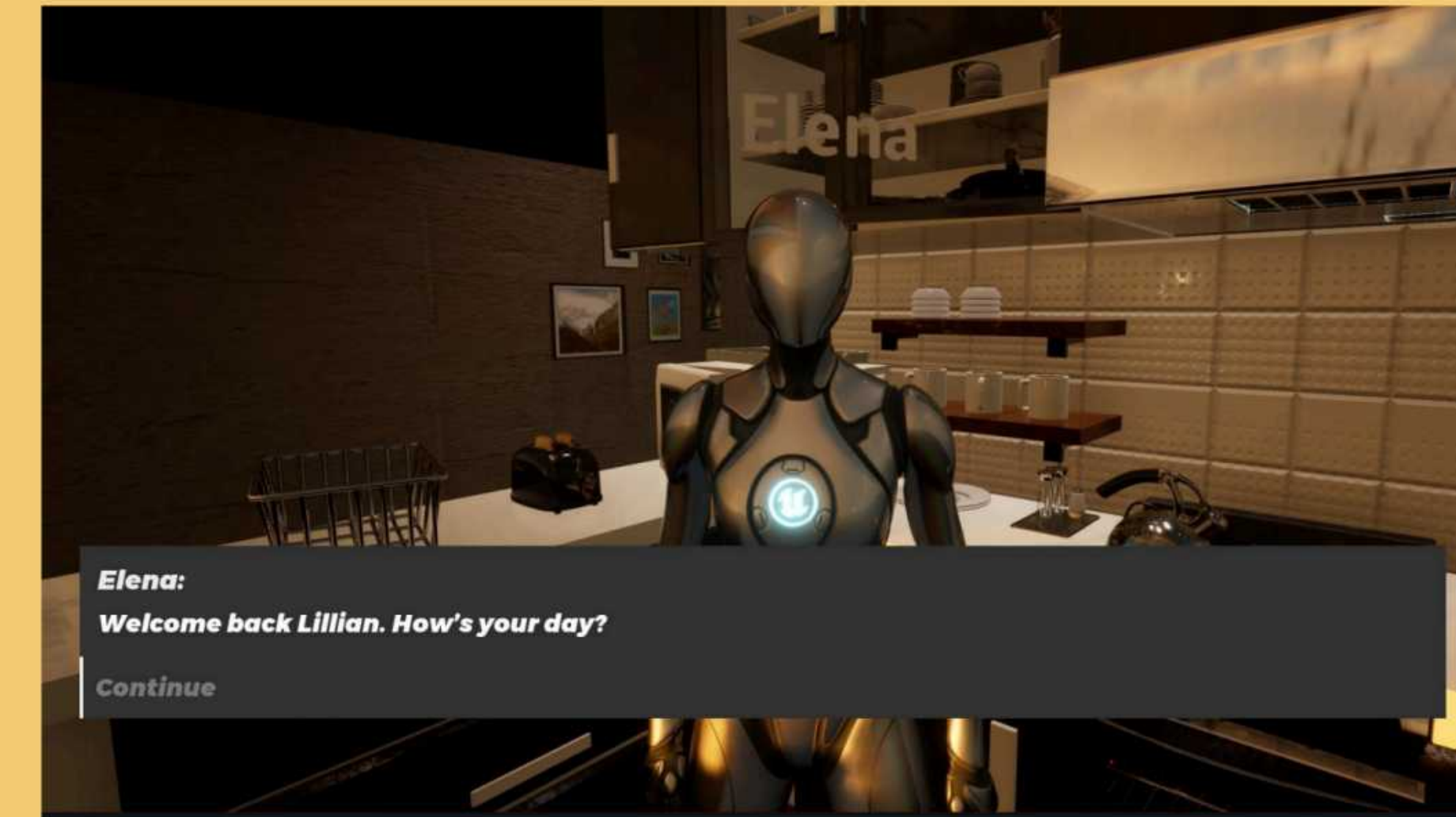

Level Design: Level 1

Game Flow
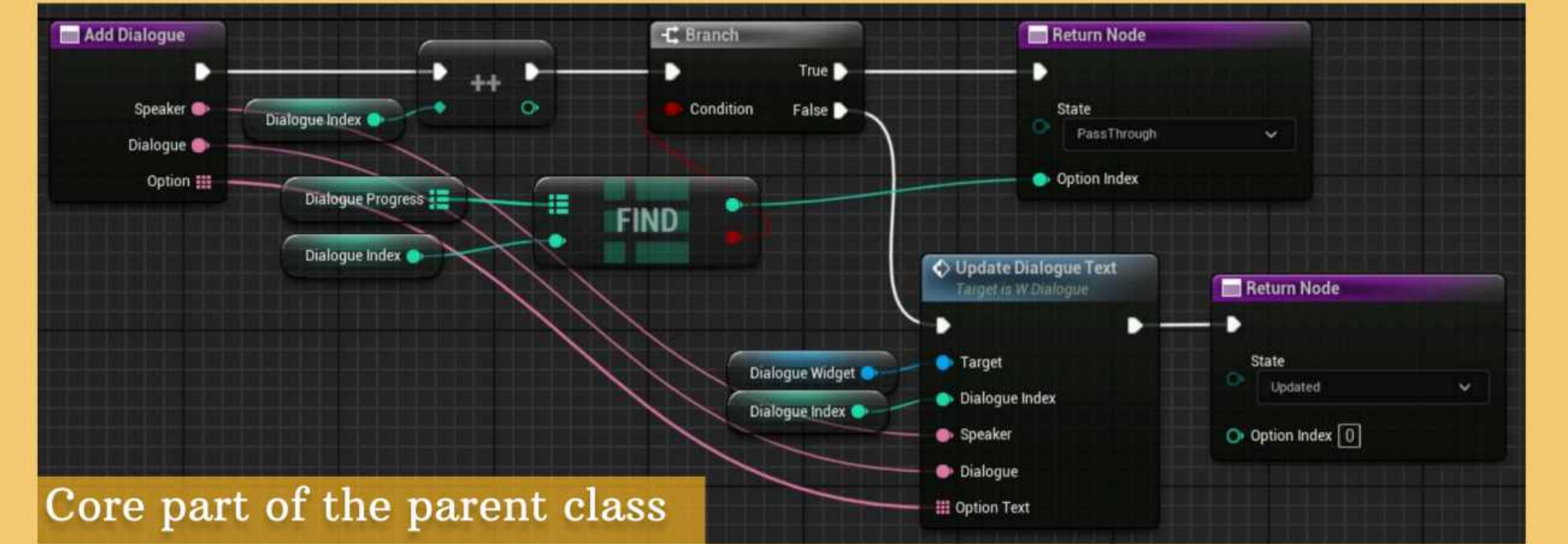

1. Lillian narrates her family background.

2. Photos showing the relationship between Celeste, Lillian, and Elena.

3. Talks with Elena and is asked to clean Celeste's room.

4/5. Interact with a diary and painting, which revealing family secrets.

6. Confronts Elena, receives a memory chip.

7. Find VR device, get into memories.

Detail Implementation

Dialogue System

Elena:
Welcome back Lillian. How's your day?
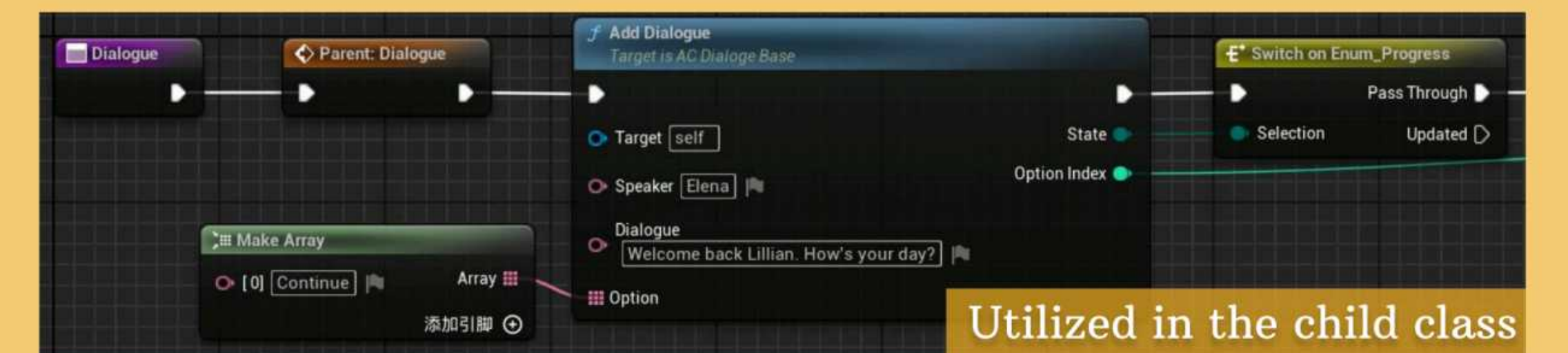Continue

Core part of the parent class

Utilized in the child class

I implemented a dialogue system with a parent-child inheritance structure, which returns different texts based on the current state.
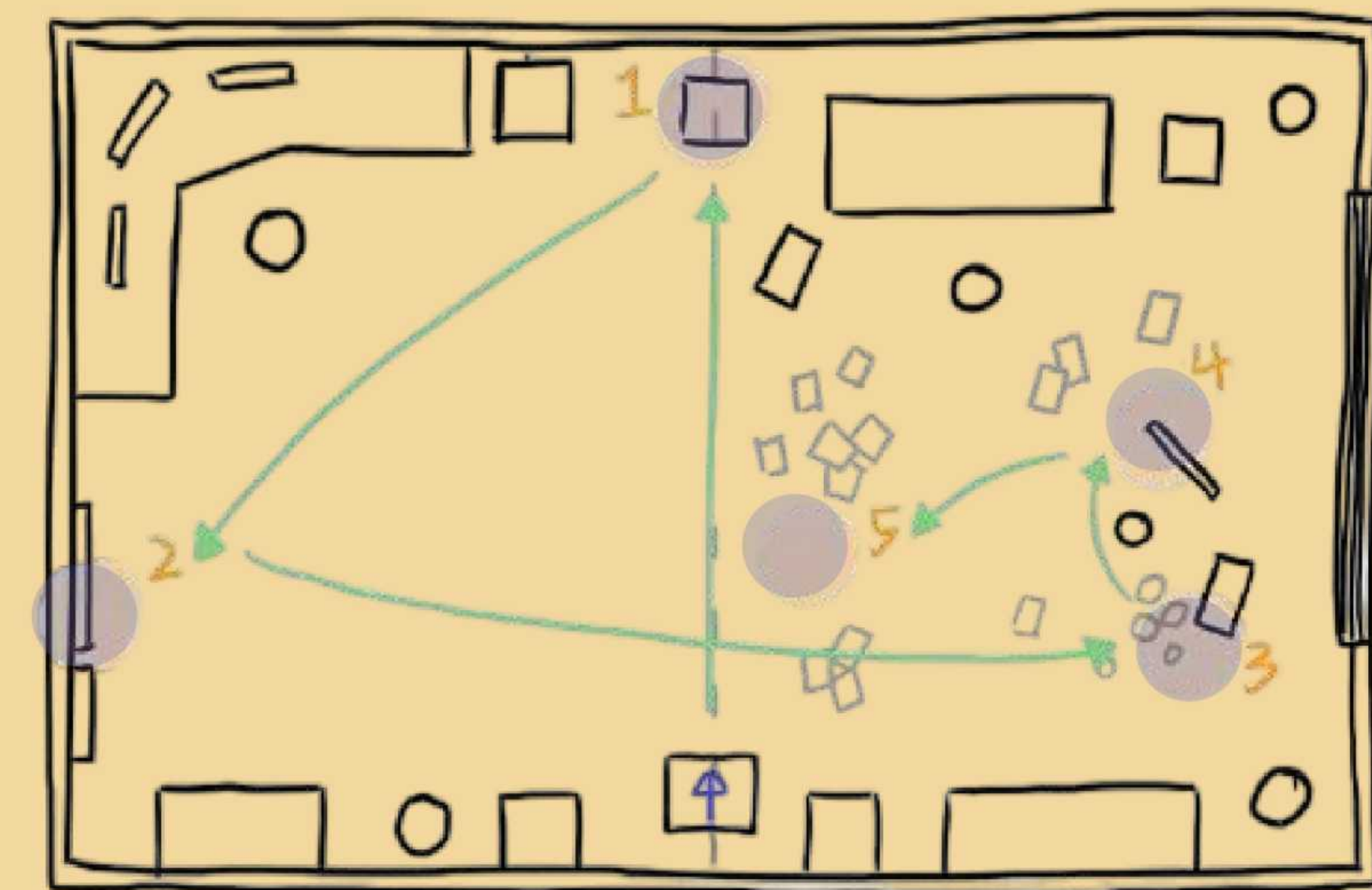
Subtitle and camera movement

When the player reaches an interactive position, the game will automatically adjust the player's view to face an object containing key information.

For each subtitle, I have adjusted its position so that it does not obstruct the screen while maintaining variation and visual interest.

...ew days ago, Celeste ...sed away. She'd been ...k for a long time, so I ...sn't really surprised.

Game Flow

The story from Leon's perspective

1. Ring: Proposed at her exhibition. His happiest moment.

2. Trophy: Her success brought envy instead of joy, ending in humiliation.

3. Cluttered Desk: Feels unworthy of standing beside her.

4. Painting: Refuses to let go, longing to be with her forever.

5. Move on to the next memory

Environmental Storytelling

Color and Composition: Contrasting Spaces

The two spaces have different dominant color tones: Eloise's side is warm yellow, while Leon's side is in cool tones, reflecting their contrasting situations. At the same time, one side is tidy, while the other is messy and chaotic.
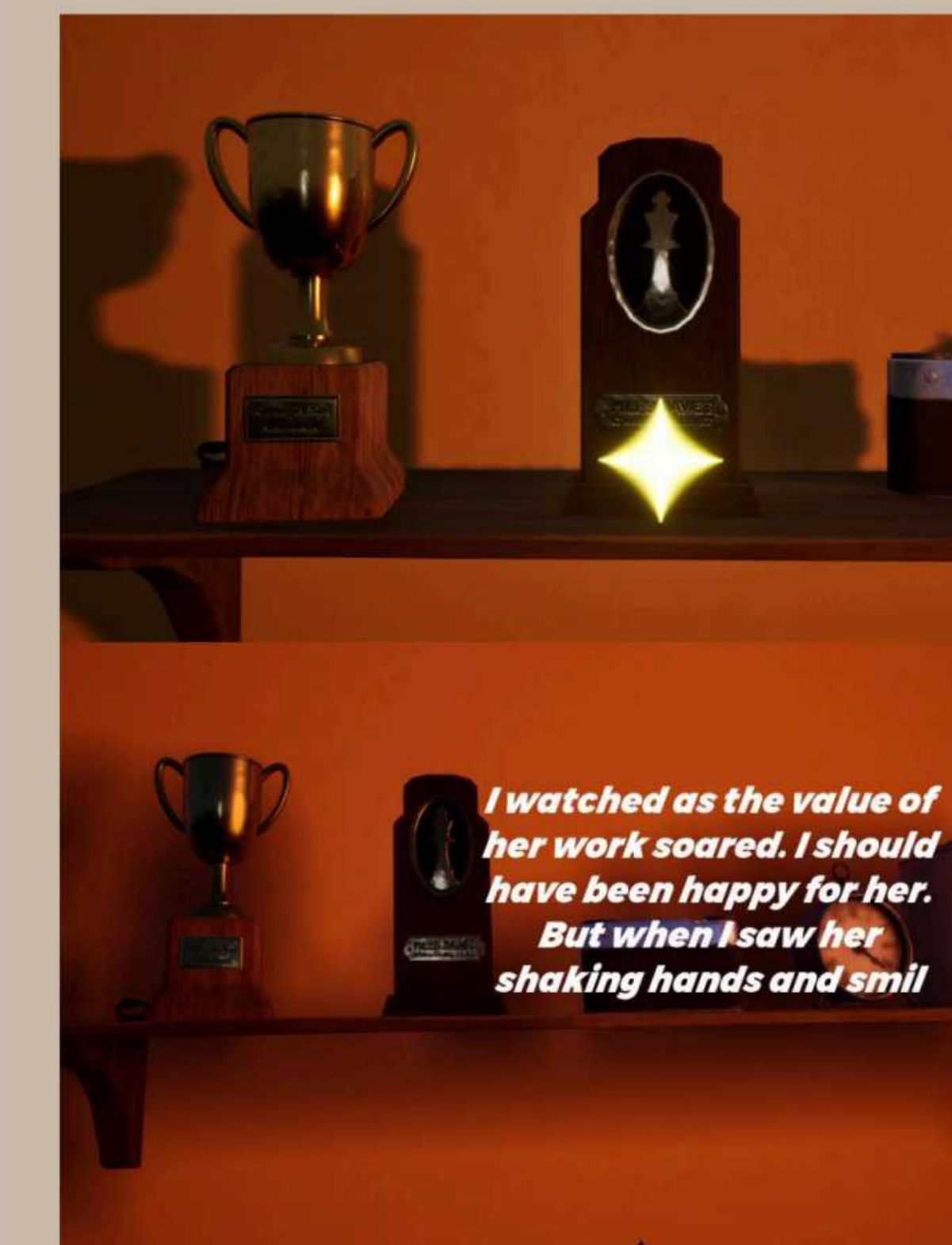
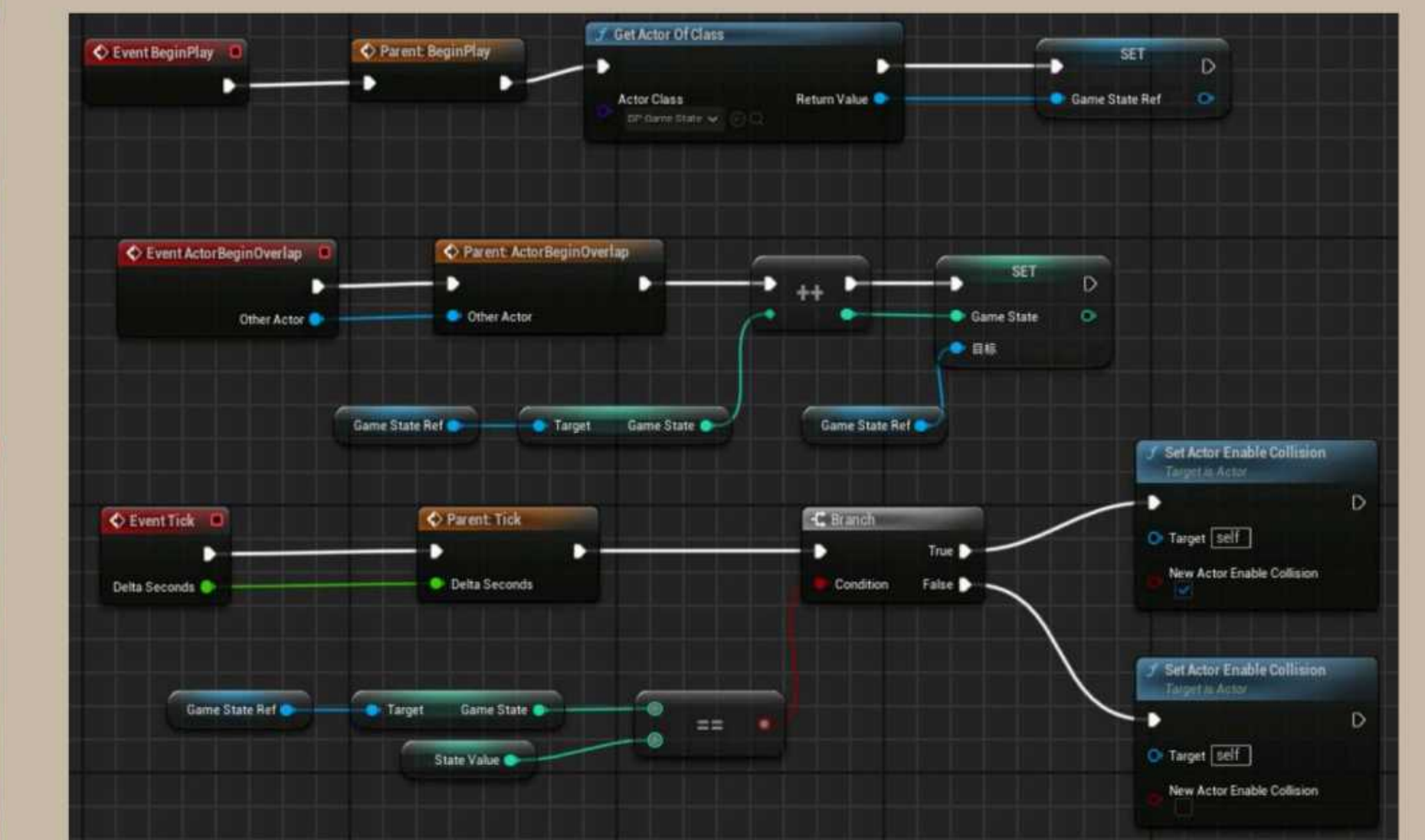### Rainy Atmosphere：Enhancing Mood with Weather
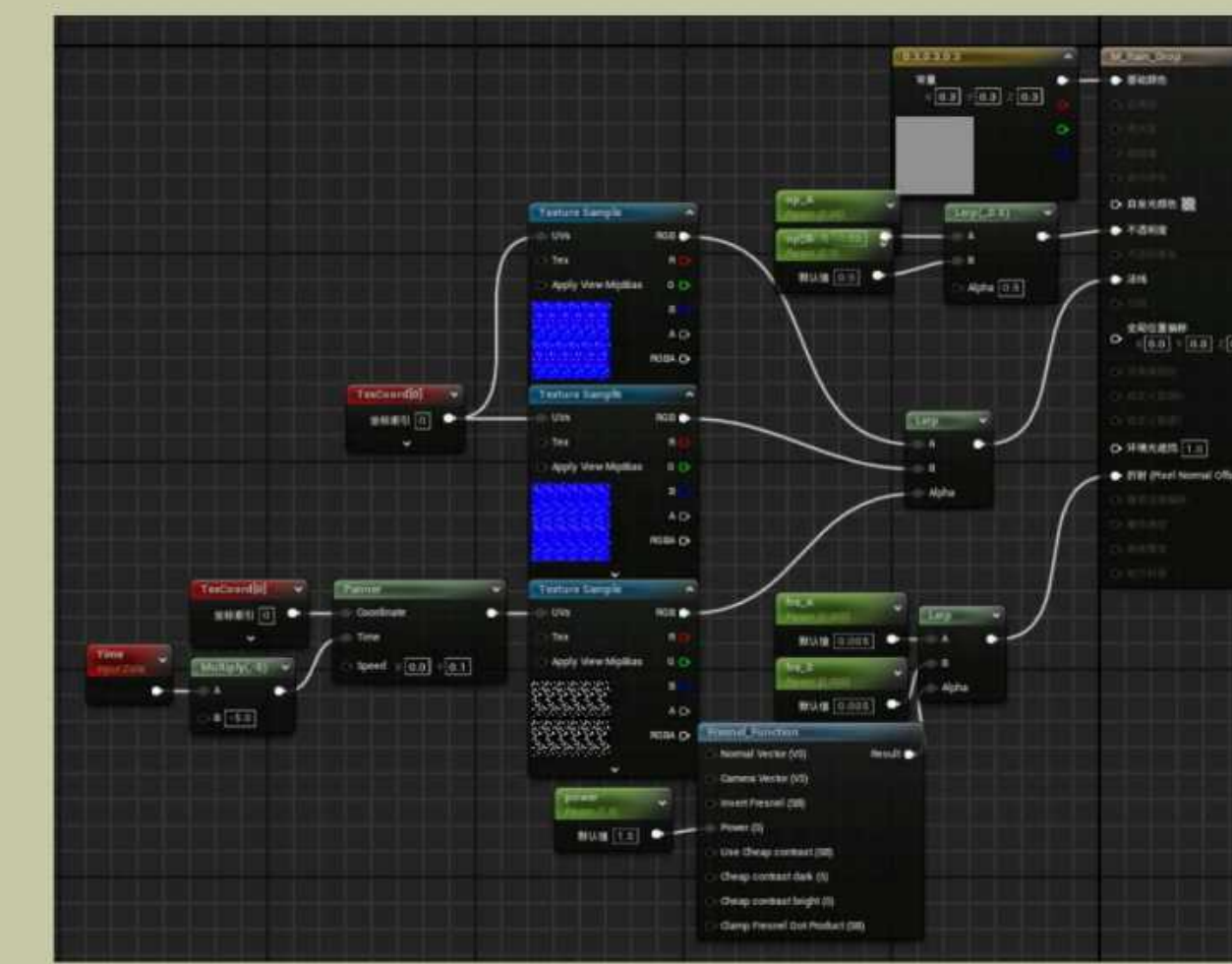
Set the weather to rainy using Ultra Dynamic Sky, echoing the rainy effect in part of the third scene. Set the window material to create the effect of raindrops flowing down the glass.

Detail Implementation

Guided Interaction: Object Highlighting

To direct players through the narrative in a structured way, key objects will sequentially highlight, drawing attention to important elements.

I watched as the value of her work soared. I should have been happy for her. But when I saw her shaking hands and smil
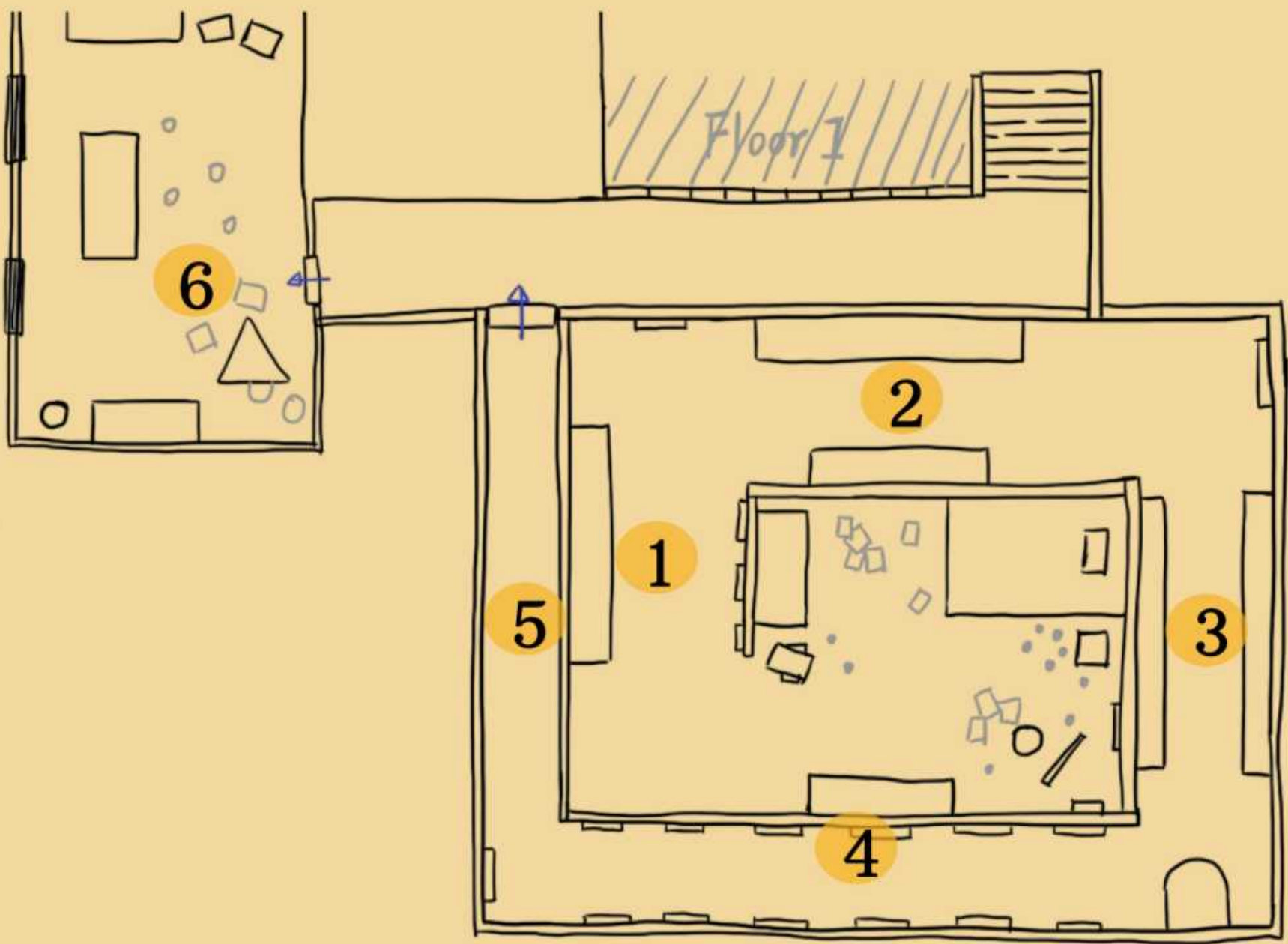
Case 1: Eloise's trophy, symbolizing the growing gap between her and Leon, lights up at a specific moment to emphasize his feelings of inferiority.
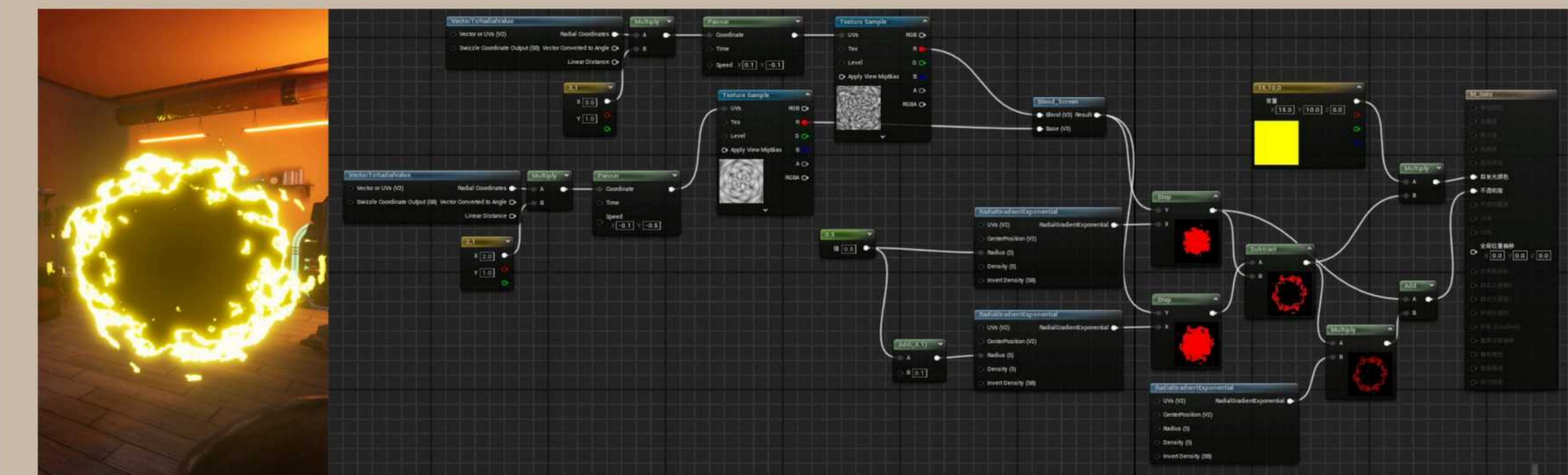
Case 2: The portal is also controlled by the game state. After all interactions are completed, it will automatically open to the next scene.

The story from Eloise's perspective.

1. Childhood: Eloise grows up under her strong mother, Celeste.

2. Youth: Her relationship with Leon.

3. The Car Accident: A tragic event that changes her life.

4. Depression: After losing Leon and learning she is pregnant, Eloise clings to the robot as his replacement, since it carries Leon's memory chip, but faces rejection from her mother and society.

5. Doubt: She wonders if having the child was love or a way to hold on to Leon.

6. Eloise's Final Night:
   - Trying to Soothe the Baby: Eloise tries to calm Lillian, but nothing helps.
   - Speaking to the Robot: She wakes the robot, realizing Leon is truly gone.
   - The Final Goodbye: Believing the robot can be a better parent, she walks to the window, and the game ends.

Environmental Storytelling

Narrative Environment: The Life Museum

In the final level, the story will be told from Eloise's perspective. Since the timeline is long, the story will be presented as a Life Museum. Each hallway represents a stage of Eloise's life, and every object and painting symbolizes her experiences and emotions.

Color and Space: Visualizing Emotional Progression
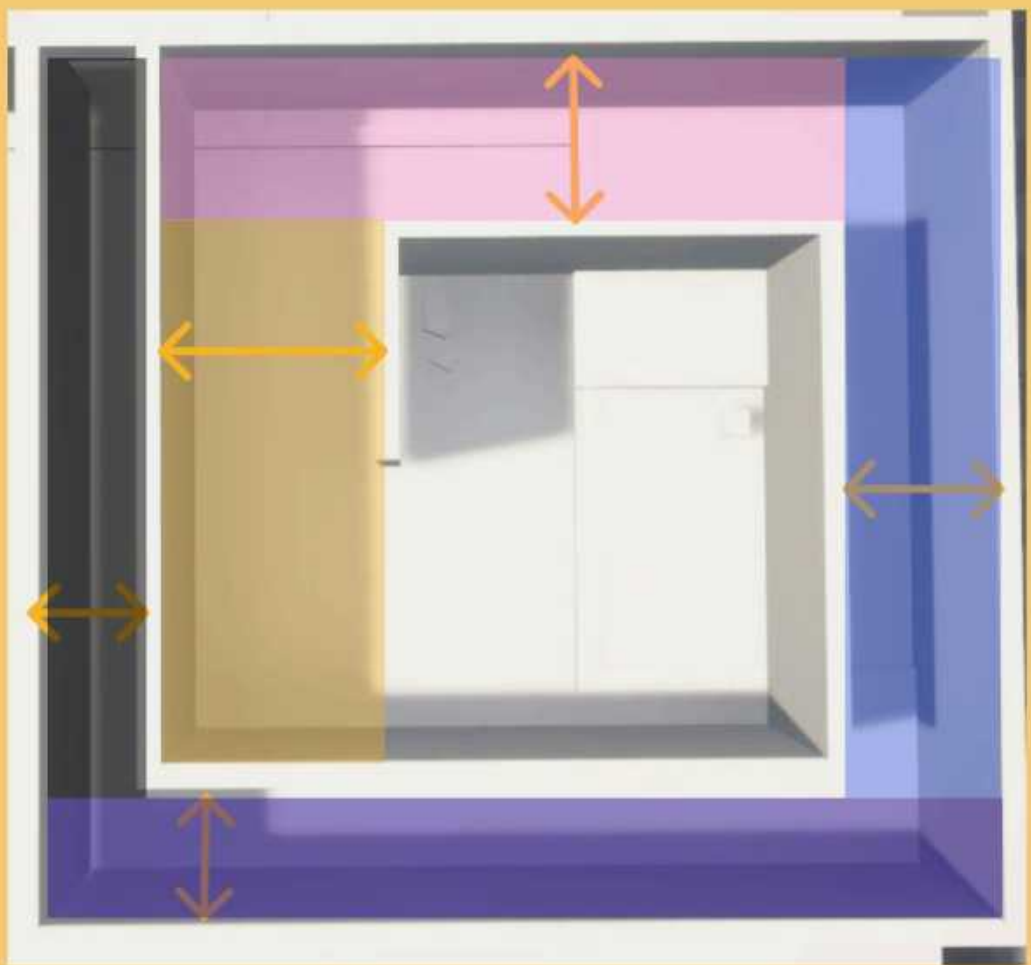
To reflect Eloise's mental state, each hallway features a distinct dominant color:
- Warm tones for her childhood.
- Soft pink for her romantic years.
- Somber blue after the car accident, symbolizing her sorrow.

Additionally, the hallways gradually narrow, creating a visual sense of Eloise's growing depression.
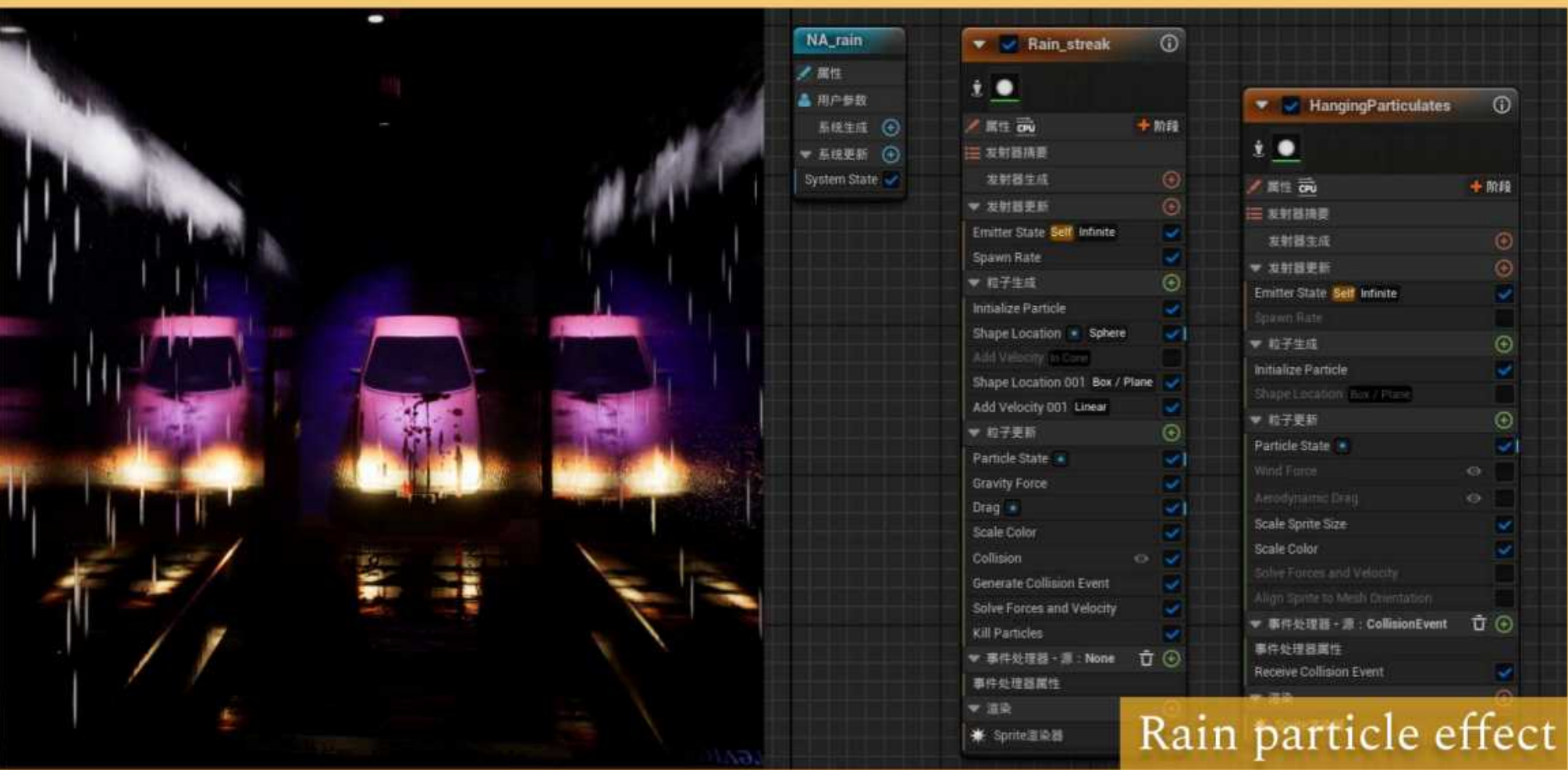
Sound Effect

Background Music Controller
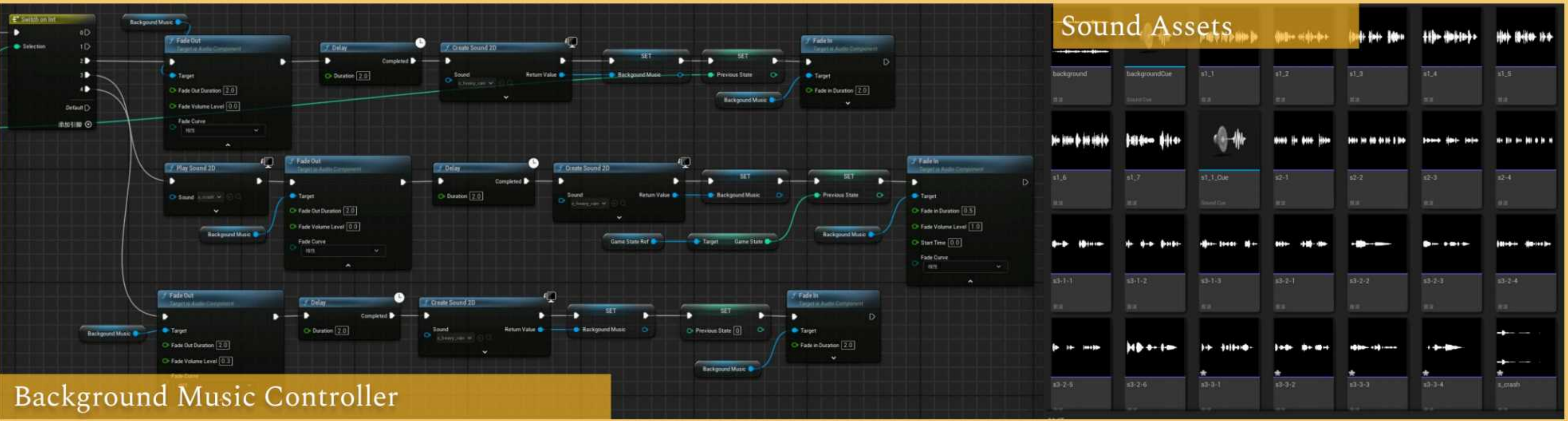
To build the atmosphere, each hallway's music matches its theme. For example, the childhood hallway uses the lullaby from Level 1, and the car accident hallway features the rain sounds from Level 2. All dialogue will also include voice acting.
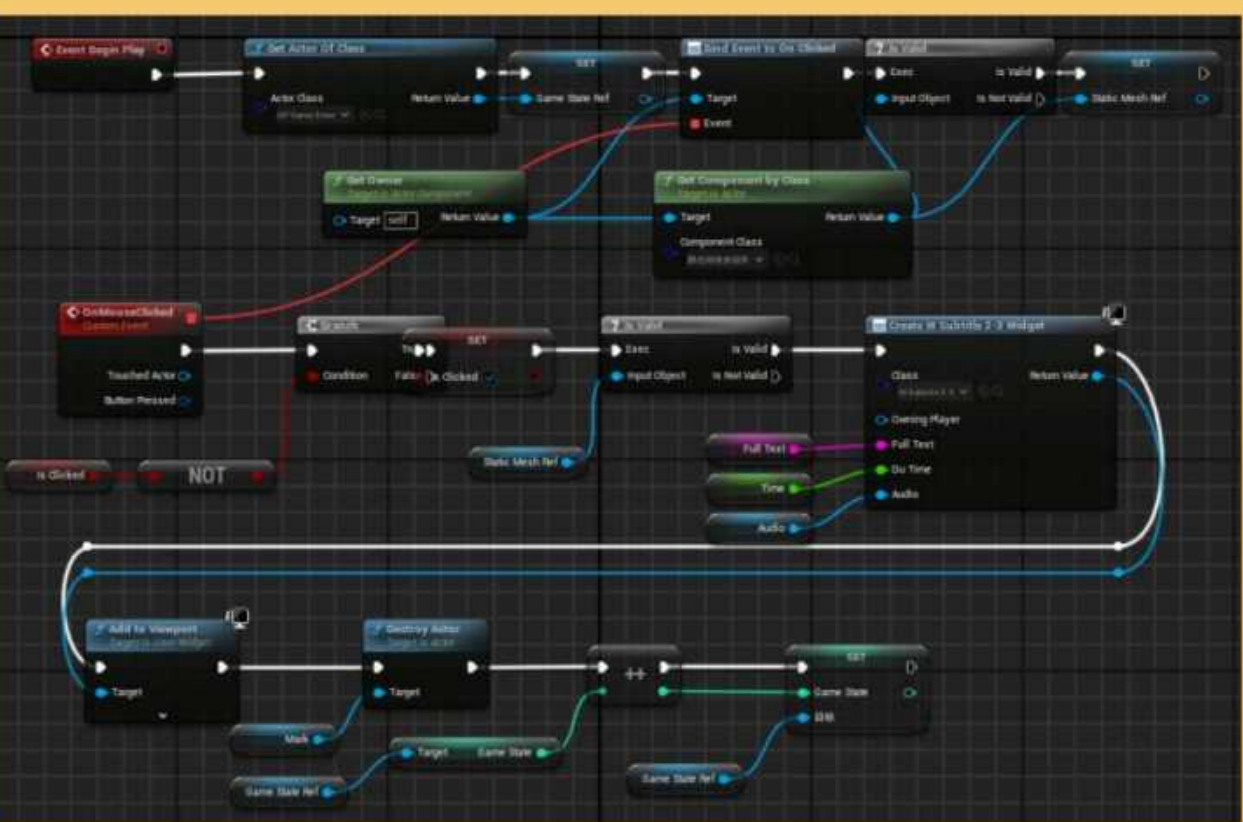
Detail Implementation

An Example of a Hallway

Rain particle effect

To recreate the car accident scene in the Life Museum, I aimed to create a nighttime rainstorm atmosphere indoors. At first, the lights at the end are off, but as the player walks closer, they suddenly turn on with the sound of a crash.

Click to Interact

This Blueprint implements an interactive clicking system where the player must click on objects in the baby's room to attempt to soothe the crying baby.

Reflection and Future Enhancements

Replacing AI-Generated Art and Voiceovers

In this game, much of the narrative relies on paintings and voiceovers. In this version, I used AI-based tools to generate temporary visuals and narration, which helped shape the atmosphere but lacked emotional depth. In the future, I plan to replace them with original artwork and professional recordings to enhance storytelling.

Enhancing Game Feel

What I expected

What I actually got

I hadn't been back since my brother Lewis' funeral

NO TRESPASSING

That day felt like an unshakable nightmare

Camera transitions are not fully smooth, and subtitle placement needs improvement. I hope to make subtitles part of the environment, like in What Remains of Edith Finch, instead of keeping them flat on the screen. I still need to confirm how the text was implemented in that game, which may require modeling the subtitles directly into the scene.

Refining Storytelling and Object Interactions

The current game still relies too much on text to tell the story. Moving forward, I plan to:
- Add more environmental storytelling elements.
- Include non-essential but meaningful objects that provide background details.
- Create individual 3D models that players can pick up and examine closely, allowing the story to unfold through the objects themselves.

A few days ago, Celeste passed away. She'd been sick for a long time, so I wasn't really surprised.

He pushed me away.

On the day of my first solo exhibition, he gave me the largest bouquet I had ever received.