The Barrier Closing In (working title)

The protagonist (who will henceforth be referred to as “you”) is a baker. That being, they make food with their hands.

You live in this small town which is only getting smaller. A barrier which separates the corporeal realm from a void-like realm beyond is closing in. As far as anyone knows, there’s no escape. People are losing family members, neighbors, etc. as the barrier inches closer. The people caught on the outside just seem to vanish. Never heard from or seen again. There’s also sightings of these strange creatures who peer over the barrier, palms pressed together in prayer.

On the day the game begins, you are awoken in the night by something. You crawl out of bed, head to the window, and see the young princess vanish beyond the barrier. Over the wall, one of the creatures that people have spoken about. You don’t know what else to do but stare. “Malignant,” it seems to say to you. But you aren’t sure, because its voice is so odd. Then, it leaves. You see, where it stood, a small hole in the barrier. You can investigate this if you like.

Fading to the next scene, it’s midday now, and the remaining townsfolk have gathered. They’re suicidally worried.

“Our princess is gone. She vanished last night.” says the de facto leader. “It’s too late. Whatever’s out there, it’s going to swallow us, whole.”

“I’ve lost my husband,” another says. “My husband, my daughter, my mother, to whatever that…thing is.”

“We’ve all lost people,” says another, “your grief is no more than any other.”

“The question isn’t who has lost more,” says the de facto leader, “the question is, should we not end it now?”

“What do you mean?” says the widow, “as in…”

“Suicide, yes,” the leader says. “Deny whatever it is the pleasure of consuming.”

At this point, you can say “yes,” or “no.”

**If yes**

“I think it’s for the best,” you say. “We die by the barrier, or we die by our own hands.”

“So there’s no hope? No hope to change anything?” says the widow.

“I don’t think so. No.”

“That’s what I thought, as well,” says the de facto leader. “Let us take this last night, and tomorrow, those who wish to leave this world can do so.”

“I can’t do it,” says the widow. “I won’t do it. There must be something. Something we can take back.”

**If no**

“I saw one of the creatures,” you say.

“The pray-ers?” the widow says.

“Yes,” you say. “It called me ‘malignant.’”

“Malignant?” the de facto leader says.

“It viewed me as some sort of tumor. I imagine it views all of us the same.”

“And what does this mean?”

“It means we can’t let something which views us as no more than tumors destroy our hope.”

“Thank God,” says the widow. “Someone with reason.”

“It’s foolish to believe the ant, given it has enough hope, will ever overcome the foot of an elephant. But fine, those who wish to perish by the barrier, do so. Those who wish for some agency in their passing, take this last night. We will congregate here tomorrow morning.”

Scene 3

That evening, you are in your home. You can’t sit on any furniture because it’s all too uncomfortable. You go to your chair, click on it. It says “rest in your chair?” If yes, you sit in the chair for a moment, then, “it’s not comfy,” you say. You can then try the bed. You do the same thing, and then it says “It’s not comfy.” You go to the window and stare for awhile, wondering if the creature will come back. After a while, you even open the window.

“Poiura,” you say. “I miss you.” A creaking, crackling sound blooms from behind the barrier, and the creature slowly rises above it to look at you again.

“Come,” it says.

Choice:

1: “Why are you doing this?”

2: “Are you doing this?”

If 1:

“Presumptuous malignant.”

“The others intend to die before you can kill them.”

“Cancer cells kill themselves. Now come.”

If 2:

“It’s happening.”

“The others intend to die before you can kill them.”

“Cancer cells kill themselves. Now come.”

Choice #2:

1: “What do I stand to benefit?”

2: “I’m not coming with you.”

If 1:

A deep rumbling growl reverberates from the creature. “Come.”

If 2:

A deep rumbling growl reverberates from the creature. “Ignorant malignant.”

A particle effect fills the screen, ending in a flash. The creature is gone. And control is resumed to the player, however, no matter what button they push, they are always walking the same direction, out of the house, down the street, to the barrier, and through it.

“Wait!” someone calls out behind you. You stand still next to the barrier. “What are you doing?” The de-facto leader approaches you. “Where are you going?”

Choice:

1: “I don’t know.”

2: “It called to me.”

If 1:

“Don’t give in to whatever this is. Perhaps this is how it’s killing all of us.

“What if it isn’t killing us?”

“What? Of course it is!”

“I spoke to it, again.”

“It’s tricking you.”

“I don’t think so. I think it’s helping me.”

“You’re a fool!”

“*You’re* the fool.” There’s a distant howl. It’s eerie and foreboding. “You hear that? That’s it, calling to us. Comforting us.”

“You cannot take comfort in that.”

“Ignorant malignant,” You say. And step through the barrier.

If 2:

“Don’t give in to whatever this is. Perhaps this is how it’s killing all of us.”

“Cancer cells kill themselves,” You say. And step through the barrier.

Scene 4:

You come to beyond the barrier, then immediately ask yourself, “What happened? Where am I?”

You see, next to a corpse, scrawled in blood, “It’s hunting us.”

With nothing else to do but explore, you set to searching for something to keep yourself safe. You see creatures pass by, but and while they seem threatening, moving toward you with intent, they seem to turn at the last moment, or vanishing into the void.

Eventually, you come upon the princess. She seems disheveled, insane even. You speak to her.

Choice:

#1: Princess! You’re alive?

#2: What are you doing here?

If 1:

She says: “Alive? No I’m not. It’s gone. All gone. The Raven has flown, cawing across the land. Terrorist Raven caws down to me ‘Princess. We need you.’

“What?” You say.

“The void is as warm as it is cold. Don’t you think?”

“You mean where we are?”

“Leave me alone.”

She will no longer respond to you.

If 2:

She says: “What is it doing here? What’s the difference? Life stuck behind the barrier is the same as beyond. The raven has flown, cawing across the land. A Terrorist Raven. Politically motivated. The town is dead.

“What?” You say.

“The void is as warm as it is cold, don’t you think?”

“You mean where we are?”

“Leave me alone.”

She will no longer respond to you.

You continue walking, thinking she must either have lost her mind or died and her tortured spirit haunts this foul void. Perhaps you are both dead? You come across an effigy. It looks like a smaller version of the beckoner you saw earlier. It hisses as you grow nearer to it. When you reach it, you can interact with it.

Choice:

#1: Touch it

#2: Leave it be

If #1:

The effigy makes a sound, but it is not threatening. “Poiura.” It says.

“What?”

“Poiura.”

“How do you know that name?”

“I *am* Poiura.”

“Tell me how you know this name. Where is Poiura?”

If #2:

As you continue walking, you’re stopped by something the effigy says.

“Poiura.”

“What?”

“Poiura.”

“How do you know that name?”

“I *am* Poiura.”

“Tell me how you know this name. Where is Poiura?”

The effigy falls silent. And in its absence, you hear a horrible gurgling. A creature, beyond description, approaches you from behind. It is not the beckoner, but something else. You have no choice but to run. You run away, though you aren’t sure where, until you come upon another corpse. It holds a weapon. You kneel to grab it.

“Loaded,” you say. And turn around to see the creature approaching. THIS IS THE INTRO TO COMBAT.

After defeating the monster, you take a breath. At least the threat is dealt with for now. But before you really get a chance to relax, a terrible, familiar growl and howl echoes around you. One limb, and only part of a face of the beckoner appear at the right part of the screen. You start reloading.

“You come beyond the barrier for your precious Poiura, Malignant? Or simply to diffuse into the void like the rest?”

“How do you know this name! What is this place!” You shout.

“The raven knows not for why it caws.” There’s a moment. It reaches a giant limb out toward you. “CAW CAW CAW.” You attempt to shoot it, but it vanishes.

“Such ignorance,” the beckoner says as it vanishes.

When you continue on the path, you encounter one (or more monsters) until you find the Princess again. She seems worse off than before, pacing back and forth.

“What do we do?” you say to her.

P: “Join the void,” she says with a sardonic laugh.

You: “You must know something else. Where are we?”

P: “This place is written about. It is beyond death. It is reserved for the willing.”

You: “How do we get out of here?”

P: “I’ve only heard of such things from the village elders. There are gifts. Small trinkets spread throughout the void. Bringing them to me could help. There’s a ritual. You can sacrifice the gifts. If you do, you can ask the spirits of the elders for a wish.”

You: “I will find the trinkets.”

P: “you will not.”

You: Where will I find you?”

P: “Oh, around. I’ll be around.”

You continue on, fighting occasionally, until you come across something. A small trinket. It looks exactly like the effigy you found earlier.

“Are you what I was told to look for?” You say out loud.

“Poiura,” it says.

“Foul trinket,” you say. You pick it up. (IF POSSIBLE, I THINK IT WOULD BE COOL FOR THE PLAYER TO HAVE TO BACKTRACK TO WHERE THE FIRST TRINKET IS FOUND.) As the effigy is added to your inventory, a terrible cry rings out across the void.

Upon finding the second trinket, the monster returns.

“That foul, false savior sends a humble baker to collect effigies on her behalf? How lazy and pedantic of the religious leaders.”

“I will defeat you.”

“She knows where they all are, you know. She could find them herself.”

Another dreg monster shows up behind you, while the beckoner stands before you.

“These little trinkets are nothing to me. False hope for a false people.”

You kill the dreg monster.

“Cancer cells kill themselves,” it says. You aim and fire at it. It vanishes without a word.

Collecting the effigy, you move on. Soon after, you run into the De-Factor leader from before. He is irate.

“You!” He screams at you. “You brought this upon us.”

“How?” you say.

“With your defiance of order. I needed your help back in town, and you deliberately disobeyed by going beyond the barrier!”

“How did you come here?” you say

“I was lured like you. Brainwashed. You’re insolence made me weak. We were to end it on our terms, and you ruined it!”

A monster appears behind the De-Facto leader, slowly moving toward him.

“Look out!” you say.

“I trust nothing which comes from your foul mouth. Wasn’t it your Poiura who first disappeared? Perhaps you two are what caused all this!”

“Watch yourself.” You say. “This has nothing to do with us.”

“Says you.”

“Poiura was near dead of cancer, not a minion of the void.”

Choice:

#1: Take aim at the monster.

You can take aim, but if you do, he says “I knew you were a traitor,” and you cannot fire.

#2: do nothing.

Either way, the monster grabs and kills the defacto leader. You shoot the monster.

You continue on until you find the Princess again. She’s practically dead.

“Princess, I believe I’ve found the last effigy,” you say.

“Spoiled wastes. Cleanse the aftermath.”

“What?”

“You think I wanted this? Deification. Beyond the world there is nothing.”

Choice:

#1: “Faith takes value beyond the reward of afterlife.”

#2: “Come on, Princess, we have to try the ritual.”

If 1: “Then what good is it? The void takes you either way. Off to the land of little birdies cawing. Caw Caw Caw.”

If 2: “I am finished. But if you care so much to live a minute moment longer, give them here.” She takes the effigies from your inventory and prays. “Oh Elders, who are liars. Nasty, awful liars. Make up for your past misgiving’s and use these little trinkets to excise us from this hell.” A small light emanates at her feet.

“It’s working,” you say.

“It’s not. This is the void tricking us.” She says. Then continues. “It is you who led your people astray with your false promises and ill-preparation for the end-of-life. We still fear, and we need more time to come to terms with it.” The light grows brighter. Wings flap in the distance. A hum reverberates. “My faith has been tested, and it failed. Do me this last favor. Save this baker.” A portal opens. “Oh my god!” she says. “It worked!”

As you two approach the portal, the princess explodes. An arm snakes from the portal. The voice of the beckoner.

“Malignant,” it says. “Join me.”

Choice:

#1: Join.

#2: Refuse.

If #2: “No, you say.”

“Then join your precious Poiura.” You explode, and the game ends.

If #1:

“I don’t fear you,” you say.

“You ought to,” it says.

“But I don’t. You are a manifestation of the void. You are an earthquake, a black hole, a super nova.”

“Come.”

You enter the portal. Just before you are through it, though, you toss your gun to the side.

Beyond the portal is only darkness. You can only see the avatar of the baker.

“No weapon?” it says.

“No need,” you say.

“Then how will you defeat me?”

“I can either end my own life,” you say, “or have a cup of coffee.”

“Poiura.” It says.

“I choose the cup of coffee.”

There’s a flash of light, and you are back in your apartment. A steaming cup of coffee rests on your table. You can approach the window, and when you do, the barrier is gone.

“Good bye, Poiura,” you say.

END