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 outside, and see, 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.

“We’ve put this off for too long, now,” 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 prayers?” 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 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.”