

THAT TIME I GOT REINCARNATED AS A PHAT CAT

OR THE NON-LINEAR LINEAR PATH TO REVENGE



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1 Summary

1.1 Description

That Time I Got Reincarnated As A Phat Cat (or just *PhatCat* for short) is a game where you play as a ghostly feline out for revenge. Taking control of *PhatCat*, you'll sneak into the homes of his former owners to hunt them down and make them pay, all while facing countless obstacles along the way. But there's a catch: having escaped from the underworld and broken its most sacred rule, never return to the living world or interfere with it, he's now being hunted by otherworldly forces determined to drag him back to where they believe he belongs

1.2 Genre

Dungeon Crawler 2D Top-Down, with elements of Bullet Hell. Single-player experience.

1.3 Platforms

PC, Browser.

1.4 Target Audience

Casual gamers, teenagers, grad students of CS

1.5 Setting

PhatCat had always been a narcissistic and mischievous cat, which often made him a nuisance to his owners. Time and time again, the same story played out: they'd grow tired of him, and instead of giving him another chance in a new home, they'd choose to end one of his lives in the cruellest way imaginable.

They are now in Hell because when the Judgement came, the jury found them not to have behaved particularly virtuously in each and every of them. But one day they meet another old and rusty dog called Virgil, who apparently had been vacationing there for quite some time. They met suddenly while they were both being made to work on a new throne for one of the Guardians of Hell. Of course, they were not able to interchange many thoughts, but Virgil, who has seen a lot of eyes, did not recognize their eyes as a guilty one.

Thus after some time had passed, and they suddenly meet once again, Virgil, unveils to *PhatCat* an old forgotten secret that few animals know to this day, that is, if one is truly innocent, to free oneself from the chains of Hell one must take revenge of their owners, for it is believed that vanishing evil owners from the Earth's surface is a heavenly act. And, without any doubt in their mind, they start to plan a way to escape, to carry out the revenge that will suffice to free them at last. So on the day that the boats arrive with all the naughty cats through the river of flames, he decides to hide in one of them after it had gotten emptied. The Guardians were so occupied with the new flesh that they had even forgotten of *PhatCat*'s existence. Therefore on the next day, when the boats returned to Earth to wait for the next round of sinners to arrive, *PhatCat* managed

to escape and was now heading straight to where their first owner resides.

Nonetheless, almost immediately, the Guardians of Earth took notice of the cat wandering as if they were up to no good and decided to observe them. Only to realize after a while that it was no regular cat, it was a Soul. And it is only allowed for living beings with both somatic and psychic faculties to wander on Earth. So they will do anything in their power to apprehend beings that do not fit that description. They will even go so far as eating Hawaiian Pizza if it means capturing a fugitive.

Hence, as *PhatCat* goes through their journey of revenge they will meet resistance as the Guardians try to bring them back to where they belong. *PhatCat* will visit all they ex-owners houses, whether it's a hoarder's house or Hell itself.

1.6 Main features

- Move *PhatCat* around to explore rooms and take out all the enemies.
- Dodge different enemies by moving or using your *Dash*, and eliminate them with your shots or special ability.
- Explore multiple houses belonging to former owners, each with unique atmospheres and a variety of obstacles to avoid, not to mention the enemies.
- Interact with a cast of NPCs, each with their own story to tell by a dialogue system. Help them out to move the story forward, or make things even more complicated.
- Featuring hand-crafted pixel art, lovingly created by our art team.

2 Gameplay

2.1 Game's goal

Get revenge from all ex-owners and escape from Hell!

2.2 Core loops

Core loop. Explore -> Shoot -> Talk -> Collect -> Explore.

Game loop. The player shall explore several dungeons until he's able to fight the final boss and reach redemption.

Objectives and goals. Standard level design: to explore the dungeon and finish it the same way (killing/defeating the ex-owner).

3 Mechanics

3.1 Player Stats

Life points. Life will be discrete, starting with 3 full hearts, representing 6 lives. So, each

instance of damage will reduce it by half-heart.

Stress level. A continuum bar that fills each time the cat suffers damage, when it gets to its maximum (2 damage takes), it will unlock the *Jump Scare*.

Ammo. Initially, 7 hairballs per reload.

Stamina. Avoids overusing *Dash*, as it consumes one bar of *Stamina* each time it's used. You have a total of three bars, which gradually regenerate one at a time.

3.2 Player Movement

Classical horizontal and vertical movement using WASD. Space Bar to use Dash, which dashes (making the player faster) at the movement direction, with full invulnerability for 0.3s.

3.3 Player Combat

Shooting. Point and click to shoot in the direction that the mouse is pointing. Left click to spit hairballs and R to reload.

Jump Scare. Using Q, executes the Jump Scare. If a certain level of stress is met you can dash across the room like a cat would. It gives invulnerability to the player while being performed and does damage to all enemies in the room.

Power-Ups.

- a. Can of Smelly Tuna (or TripleShoot): shoots the hairballs at once.
- b. Azalea flower (or SpeedBoost): makes player faster.
- c. AmmoUp: increases player's maximum ammo.
- d. Ice cube: shoots snowballs to slow down enemies for a few seconds.
- e. Chili: shoots fire bullets to burn the enemies up to two stacks.
- f. Bowling ball: shoots a bowling ball that pierces through the enemies.
- g. BigShot: every three bullets, the third one is a bigger shot that deals double the damage.

3.4 Player interactions

PhatCat is able to interact with multiple NPC's using E. It starts a dialogue that can include decisions to make.

3.5 World mechanics

Special Tiles.

- a. Hole: the player can fall inside the hole and suffer one instance of damage.
- b. Fire: the player can get burnt and suffer one instance of damage. There are moving fires, same as Fire but it moves.

Items. Each item can serve two purposes: change a player mechanic or collect it to the players inventory. The first one is the way to collect power-ups, enabling its use. The second one will work as a way to check level conditions. Some areas/actions will be restricted to the items currently on the inventory, for example, *Boots* are needed to get into the first boss.

4 Interface

4.1 Controls

Controls are made just for keyboard.

- WASD: movement.
- E: interaction.
- Left-Click: shoot.
- R: reload.
- Q: *Jump Scare*.
- Space: *Dash*.

4.2 Camera

Static camera that displays the entire level, each room.

4.3 HUD

HUD has information about:

- Life remaining, represented by hearts.
- Maximum life, represented by lost hearts
- Current bullets, represented by hairballs.
- Maximum ammo, represented by used hairballs.
- Stress level, represented by blue arches.
- Current power-up, or lack of it.



4.4 Menus

There is just one menu cycle. Loading Bar -> Start Menu -> Game -> Start Menu.

Loading Bar.



Start Menu



And every room in the game.

5 Game's World

5.1 Characters

5.1.1 PhatCat



PhatCat is the playable character. This fat ghost-cat seeks redemption, help it to achieve it.

5.1.2 NPCs

There are various NPCs that *PhatCat* can interact with.

5.1.2.1 Virgil



Old and rusty Dog that gives *PhatCat* a chance to seek revenge.

5.1.2.2 Cheezers Family



This rat family helps you throughout the first house! Find their fled son and they will thank you with information.

5.1.2.3 Johnny



The Cheezers Family's son. A rebellious rat who doesn't want to go home.

5.1.2.4 Bugs, the Bunny



Evil and sociopathic rabbit who also hates its owner. Help each other to kill the rich man.

5.1.3 Enemies

There will be three types of enemies. Each type will have modular variable parts that will offer different mechanics.

5.1.3.1 Angel



Movement. Simple AI that tracks the position of the player, goes towards it and attacks it.

Basic Attack. Melee attack that, if hit, gives 1 instance of damage.

5.1.3.2 Ophanim



Movement. Not so simple AI that tracks the position of the player and shoots a projectile towards it. If the player is too near, it goes away; if the player is too far away, it goes towards it; if neither of those, it maintains position. It also escapes from walls.

Basic Attack. Shoot a linear projectile that, if it hits, gives 1 instance of damage.

5.1.3.3 Seraph



Movement. Constant fast movements that try to avoid player shots.

Basic attack: heals every enemy on the room so often.

5.1.3.4 Sword



Movement. Doesn't move, but does aim towards the player.

Basic attack. Saves the player position to charge against them.

5.1.4 Bosses

There is one boss per room, the ex-owner of each house and life of *PhatCat*.

5.1.4.1 The Hoarder



An old-school gamer who'd rather keep breaking records in forgotten games than clean up the mess around his house or feed his pets. Don't make him mad, he'll start spawning holes for you to fall into and fire more and more bullets your way.

5.1.4.2 The Rich Man



A high-profile businessman living in a mansion so massive it literally has hundreds of rooms. He has no idea what's going on at the other end of the house, it'd take him days to find out. With his pants on, he's not much of a threat... but once they're off, he starts spawning holes in unpredictable patterns and moves and shoots faster, and a lot more.

5.1.4.3 The Devil



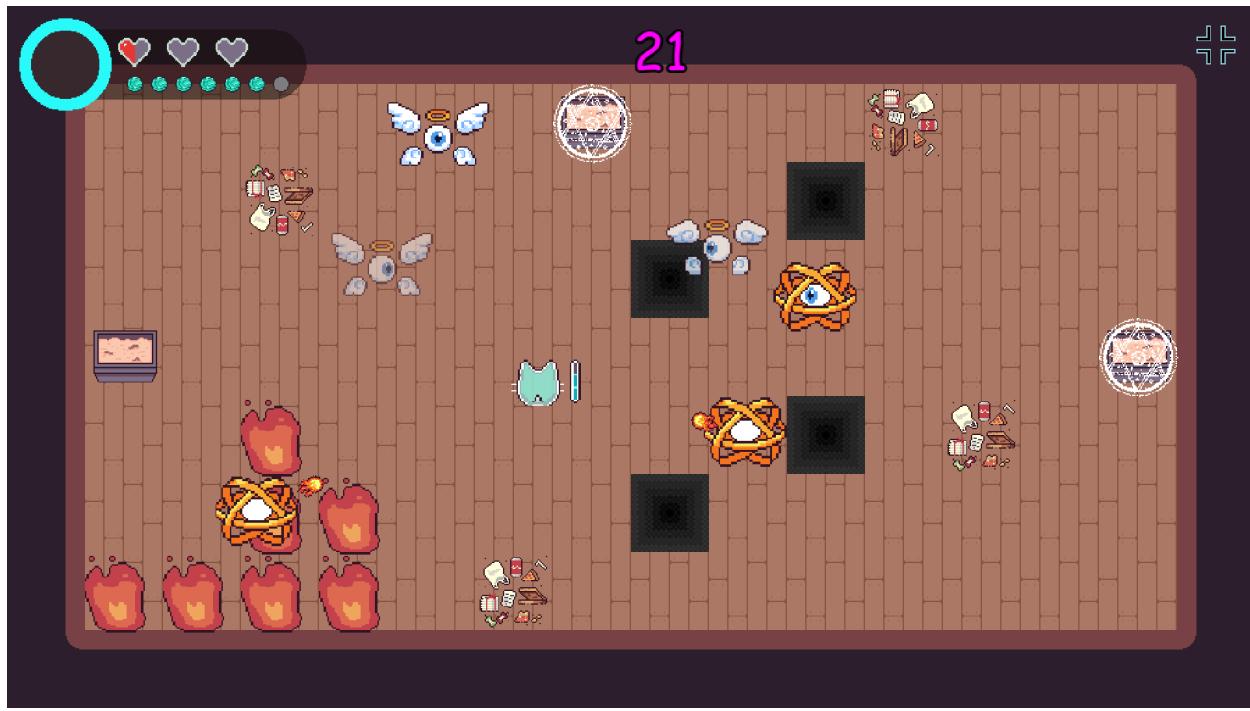
"The devil itself. Don't be fooled by his angelic appearance, once enraged, he'll start spawning enemies to hunt you down. It's the final boss. Defeat it, and your revenge will be complete. At last, you'll be free from Hell... and from your punishment.

5.2 Levels

All levels take place in the homes of former owners, except for the final one, which unfolds in Hell itself. After all, the demon is, in a way, the cat's last owner before he can earn his freedom.

Each level is designed in Tiled, with tiles measuring 64x64 pixels, arranged in a 16x9 grid — which is also the game's resolution. Every tile is hand-drawn, maintaining a consistent direction and cohesive artistic style.

The first house belongs to the Hoarder, as the name suggests, a trash hoarder suffering from Diogenes syndrome, living in a cluttered, garbage-filled apartment. It features a distinctive wooden floor.



The second house is that of the Rich Man, an actual mansion. Unsurprisingly, it's extremely luxurious, filled with golden statues and ancient columns. Its floors are covered in richly patterned carpets.



And finally, Hell. Not much to explain: fire, lava, red sand... It's Hell.



6 Art

The art direction has remained consistent throughout the game's production, aiming to follow a cohesive pixel art style that resulted in a visually appealing final product. All the sprites shown earlier, along with the map tiles and other artworks, were hand-drawn.

Below are various artworks, including in-game sprites that haven't been shown yet or are organized differently, sprites that were ultimately unused or discarded, and other drawings that helped solidify the artistic vision before translating it into pixel art.

6.1.1.1 Some initial PhatCat drawings



1.

2.

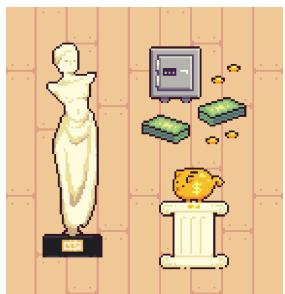
6.1.1.2 First level color palette



6.1.1.3 First level obstacles



6.1.1.4 Second level obstacles



6.1.1.5 Some used and unused items and power-ups



6.1.1.6 Unused NPC



6.1.1.7 Alternative portal



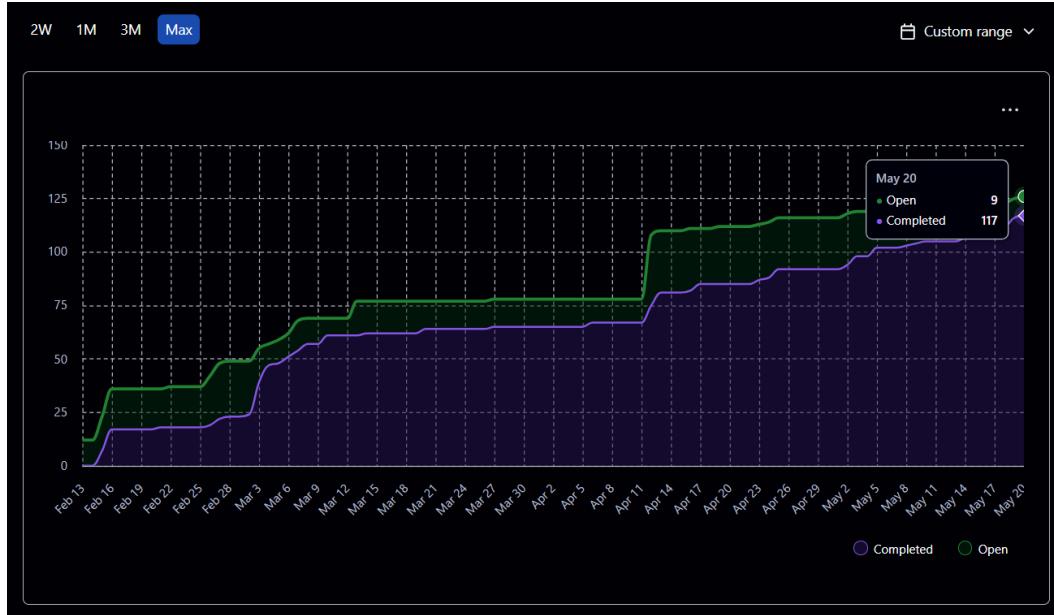
6.1.1.8 Final tileset



7 Production

The entire production was managed through the GitHub Projects board linked to the game's repository. It was maintained throughout the development process, with all completed tasks being tracked and recorded. Labels, milestones, assignees, and other organizational tools were used to ensure optimal workflow.

Below is a small image of the burndown chart generated via GitHub Pages.



It's worth noting that all members of the development team contributed equally to the project.

There have been some production contents that have been made but are not implemented, as there were some artworks suffering the same situations.

8 References

There have been two big references.

Gameplay reference: The Binding Of Isaac.

Art reference: Turnip Boy Commits Tax Evasion.