# Of a Feather Design Document

# Overview and Vision Statement

* The story of two friends struggling with different mental illnesses told through a walking simulator and various mini-games.
* The game starts as one friend descends back into the basement, reminiscing about the friendship. The story then proceeds to go through different iterations of the basement wherein the player can pick up various items that are of importance to the character and her friend. Each of these items reinforce the mood of the level and push the mood of the mini-game that was correlated to that level.
* Basement 0 (modern-day) is full and has cracks. Nothing is intractable yet. This level is timed before it flips into Basement 1 because everything in Basement 0 will be intractable throughout the game and therefore doesn’t need to be interacted with now.
* Basement 1 is Before the friendship. It should be mostly empty, cold and lonely. It is up for debate whether the furniture is even in the room, however I believe so. I think the things that represent solely the friend (art on the walls, family/her personal computer) and joint items (notebooks) are missing completely. Things that one would think should be in a family basement, such as board games or a TV are even missing at this point. There are the shoes, which are interact able. Homework is there along with a ton of books and a pill on the floor by a water bottle (maybe right by the homework).
  + The stage one mini-game is activated by a pair of ballet shoes and is a rhythm based game. The player is encouraged to hit arrows (or other keys) to the beat. However, the animation of the player character and the friend character are tied together and will always be a half beat or full beat off while the rest of the dance class is on beat.
    - The theme of this level is an Us vs. the World feel which is also reflected in the title.
    - The mental illness theme is hinted at in the basement level tied to this mini-game, maybe with only one pill and a narration of, “Oh shoot, I forgot to take that.”
* Basement 2 focuses on the friendship and more of the Us. Vs the world mentality. This is where the inner world is built even more, and perhaps where we start to show some cracks in it. There is an old school flip phone or sliding text phone. The family desktop should be replaced by two laptops, one on the desk and the other on the floor. There should be a tablet hooked up to the one on the desk. The notebooks are all over scattered and full of notes.
* Preferably, something in Basement 2 should just trigger a transition into Basement 3. Basement 3 has to be extra full of things. Some of these could be an extra long fluffy body pillow, a quilt, headphones, alcohol bottles, various pill bottles and sweat shirts/pants. The notebooks and artwork of the friend are around. There are cracks in the walls and in as many surfaces as possible. This is when you are falling a part from the inside out. This is where the mental health has pushed away everyone.
  + - there needs to be a discussion of Basement 3 not being a basement at all but a small dorm room. Small like 4-walls and a bed. That would fit more with the theme of the second mini-game. This helps to show that the characters are growing up and apart along with showing that the friend is gone because you aren’t in her parent’s basement anymore.
  + The stage two mini-game is activated by either a single ballet shoe or a large body pillow or a pill bottle. This mini-game echoes the ballet mini game but now there is no friend to be off beat with and you are on a stage instead of in a class. This time no matter how on beat the player hits the keys the character can’t move properly with the rest of the sprites on the stage. There is a spotlight on the character sprite and the darkness starts to close into highlight the sprite more. The screen starts to shake and before the character is collapsing into a heap. Screen goes dark.
    - The theme of this level is about the absence of a friend. How sometimes absence causes such a breakdown in communication that the inner world the two friends built together crumbles. This is the stage where Us lost to the world. This stage is about the loss of that inner world, that safety.
  + The basement for this level (Basement 3) is chaos because of the turmoil in both the friendship and the mental state of the characters. The level design should be representative of the friendship and then certain items should be indicative of the mental states that affect said friendship.
    - * How to show that the mental states affect the friendship in the basement levels in a way that is in scope? This is a mechanic that could use some suggestions.
* Basement 4 still needs to majorly cracked walls but not as bad as Basement 3. Basement 4 could have Lava coming through those cracks… not basement 4. Basement 4 you can still see the cracks, but they are starting to be fixed. There aren’t as many chemical substances littered around Basement 4 besides 2 pill bottles and 1 bottle of alcohol. It has been simplified down to a server book, a backpack, a laptop and some car keys. Maybe a smart phone. The theme here is recovery. Recovering the friendship. Recovering your mind. Even if that means becoming a robot for a bit XP.
  + Mini-game three should be the fixing the computer/ps3 mini-game that involves piecing together these greyscale pictures or lines of code into a puzzle that fits together. When two pieces fit together, they either have a glitter effect that moves up the screen, change to color to represent that they are locked into place or both.
    - The theme of this level is repairing what is broken. Fixing lines of communication and rebuilding the inner world. It is like tentatively dipping a toe back into the waters of us vs. the world but being afraid of hurting and being hurt again.
    - On the mental illness side, this is where life is getting back under control.
  + Game ends back at the modern-day basement (Basement 6 = Basement 1) with items from throughout the friendship to explore again. The taglines now have a fondness of someone reminiscing. This is where the player can choose to go up the stairs again or choose to play any of the mini-games from again. There are some new items as well, indicating different relationships that the main character is able to pursue due to experience with the friend.
    - Yes David I’m talking about Jin.
    - If we went with a dorm room idea for Basement 4, then my current room in Kelly’s home could be Basement 5 and then Basement 5 =/= Basement 1 showing how things change from how you expect them to turn out at the beginning. However, this is up for major debate.
  + **Throughout the game, the emphasis is on the emotions of the theme of each level.** The mental illness plays into this (in my experience) because it amplified an already intense experience. Being ripped from your sanctuary into reality because you are growing older is hard. Your emotions exploding and your brain suddenly seeming to fail makes it harder. Your sanctuary being a person you can’t connect to as easily for whatever reason suddenly on top of it is emotional.
  + The 3D should be mostly realistic with the 2D being sketch based. The 2D sketch base goes back into the artistic basis for the relationship. Lighting can be used to match the moods needed for each area, ex. Darker for the messy Basement3.

# Audience, Platform, Marketing

Target Audience: I want to reach young adults (18-30) that may or may not have a similar experience with either friendships or mental illness. I don’t think gender should matter and I want the game to be as accessible as possible.

Platform: PC and maybe Mac? They are the most common platforms.