

A Plague Tale: Innocence

Notes of the first chapter

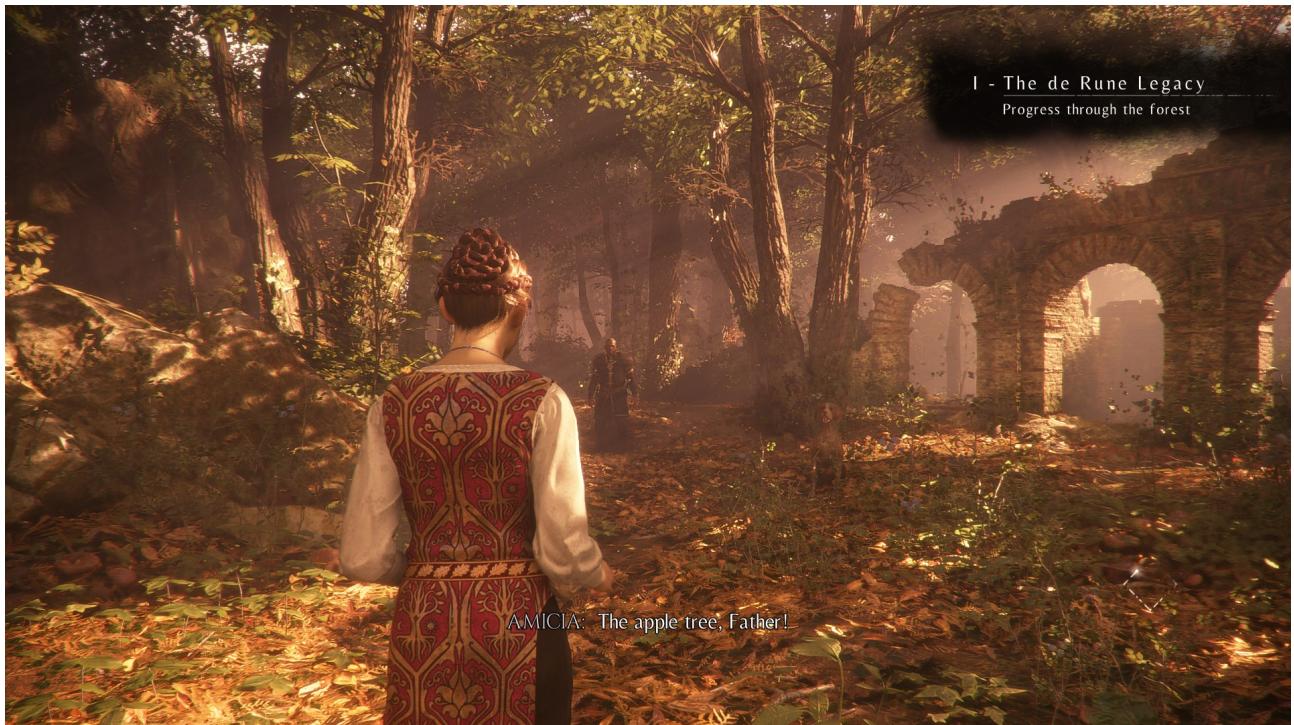
CHAPTER 1: THE DE RUNE LEGACY



I - THE DE RUNE LEGACY

The game starts with a cutscene of the speech between Amicia (playable character) and her father. The camera starts from an overview of the environment and ends behind Amicia for an in-game view.

The dialogue helps us understand the relation between the 2 characters, and also the personality of Amicia.



Then, the player is invited to move to start controlling his/her character. The dialogue explains the current situation of the family, and the relations they have with each other. A feature is shown for the first time: Press E to look at a targeted point. This feature helps the player to know where to look to get information.

During the move, the different pitch lines and the walk of the NPC are driven by triggers in the environment.



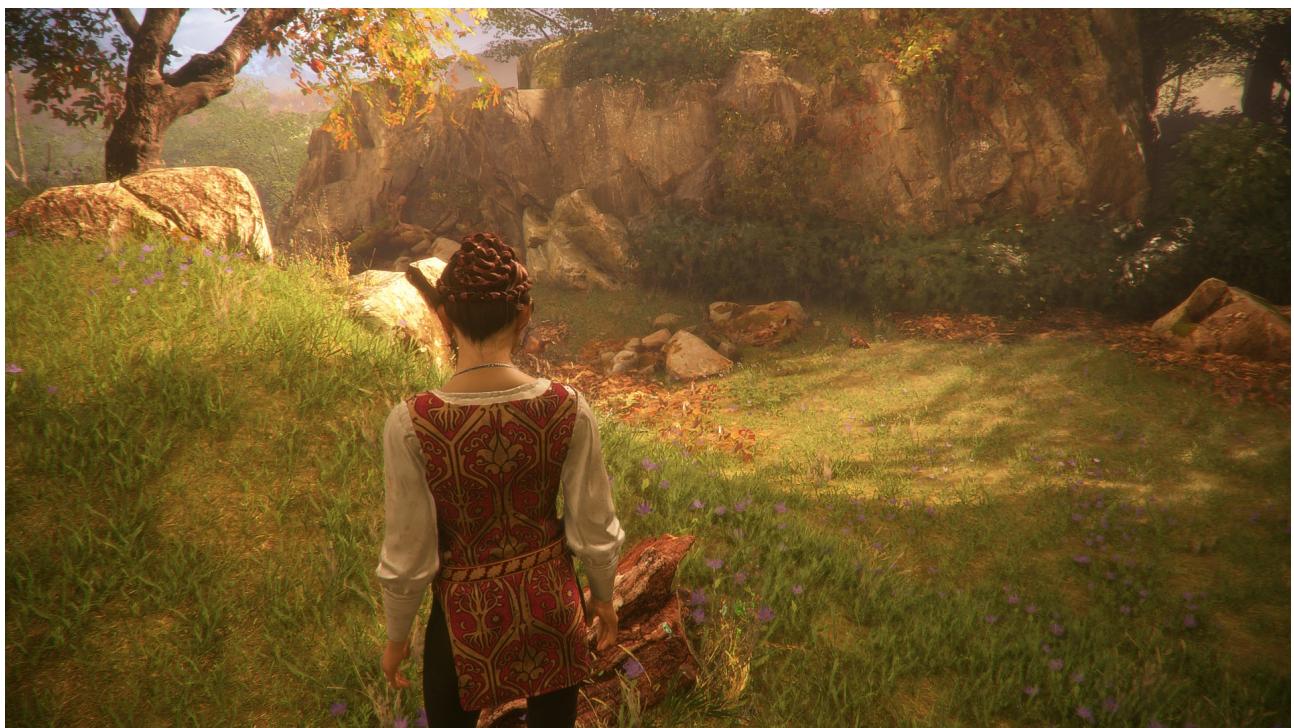
When Amicia and her father reach the apple tree, the main feature of the game is taught: the use of the sling. This would be the main weapon of the player through the game. The munitions are highlighted in the world to indicate their interactivity.



Then, Amicia must take a challenge to aim and shoot the apples. The instructions are written in the middle of the screen to explain it to the player. As the father counts to 10, the player feels in a hurry to fire, and this would be a useful training to defeat enemies afterwards.



When the challenge is completed, it activates an action from the other present NPC, Lion. The dog would start to bark, and the player is invited to look in its direction. This would lead the way to the next path to follow. During this scene, the sound, the camera and the dialogues are used to show where to go.



Amicia follows Lion in a given path (led by the sounds made by the dog and the level design) and the player would have to control the character through different obstacles to learn how to make her move efficiently (can crouch and climb obstacles).



When Amicia reaches Lion, this would activate a trigger that would bring her father back and starts the dialogue for the next challenge. The player has to hunt a boar with the sling (as shown previously with the apple tree) and also learn how to hide in the grass, another very used feature. Both the dialogues and the instructions in the middle of the screen help the player in this task. He/she has to hit the boar in the head, and when he/she fails, he/she is helped by the dialogues, giving additional tips. When the task is completed, it activates the next cutscene and task.



At the end, the boar leaves and so does Lion. The player must follow them. At this moment, the environment radically changes and becomes worrying and terrific. The music becomes stressful and the player understands something serious would happen.



During the run to reach Lion, Amicia would pass through different kinds of grounds, including some mud which slows her. She talks about that when she crosses it, to inform the player the reduction of speed is normal and caused by the mud.



First, Amicia finds the boar half-eaten and half-rotten. A small cutscene is triggered at the moment of the discovery to highlight the dead body and the speech lines explain the thoughts of Amicia and her misunderstanding of the situation.



AMICIA: It's... It's the boar... But how...?

Then, the player continues his/her path to Lion and another cutscene is triggered, showing the dog in a very bad state. During the cutscene, the father comes back and Lion is taken inside a hole, presumed dead. This is a strong scene where Amicia and her father panicked and so the player understands how wrong the situation is.



At the end of the cutscene, the father tells they have to go back to the castle. The title of the game is displayed, and so the player understands that this was the triggering factor of the game.

A PLAGUE TALE

INNOCENCE

At the end of the cutscene, the player is located in the castle of the De Rune family. Amicia's father gives the instructions of the following quest, asking to find Amicia's mother. Then, the player gets time to explore the courtyard while reaching Beatrice's quarters. The courtyard is more open, the player can move freely in this area, activating the pitch lines of the different NPC when he/she gets close to them. There are also collectible items highlighted and accessible in the environment, such as stones for the sling, spices or tablecloth.





LEA: Mmmmm...

AMICIA: The smell of your cooking warms the heart...

The player is guided through Beatrice's quarters by the different pitch lines. When he/she approaches the correct areas, the NPC confirm that the player goes in the right direction with their dialogues.

A cutscene is activated when the player opens the right door.



The cutscene shows the relation between Amicia and her mother, and lets the player feel the frustration of the main character when Beatrice does not care about what her daughter is saying.

It is also the time when the new perturbation arises. The player can hear strange sounds coming from the outside, and Beatrice is disturbed by them. It seems that something serious is happening, and so the player is left alone. The mother gives the instruction of

the next quest: finding Hugo, and let the player alone, asking to keep the door locked in any case.



On the way to find Hugo, the player can explore the different rooms to understand better the context. He/she learns that Hugo never left the current place. The player is guided by Hugo's voice.

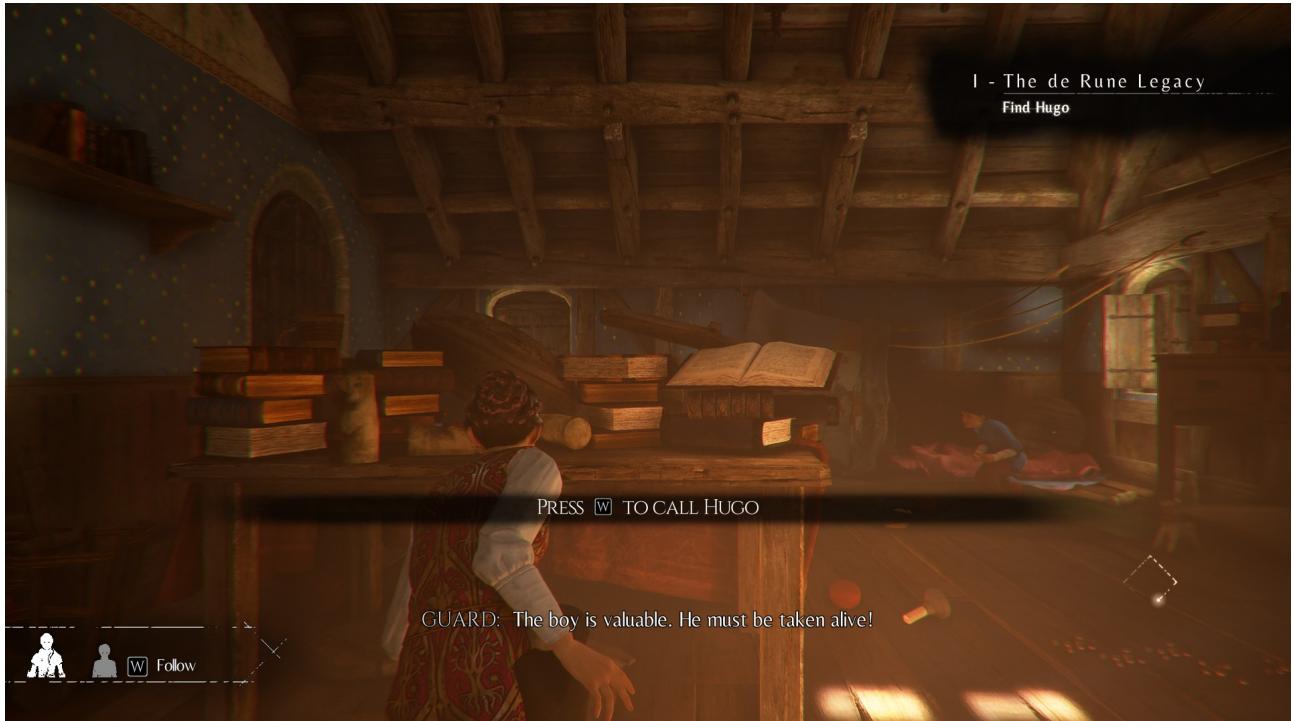




When the player finds Hugo, it triggers a cutscene with some dialogues to explain that the two of them do not know each other well. Amicia is also disturbed by noises coming from the outside and takes a look through the window. She sees her father being executed after some knights and a man called Nicholas asked him where they can find Hugo. At this moment, the player understands that the little boy is really important, and maybe he is the key of the game. He/she also understands that Hugo must be protected at all cost. After the father is killed, Amicia panicked and Hugo does not understand what is happening. At the end of the cutscene, the player must react as the knights are coming inside the castle.



After that, the noises and a close up to the locked door indicate that the knights are coming into the house where Amicia and her brother are located. It gives a feeling of emergency. Amicia suggests that the two of them should leave the house and a new feature is displayed to call Hugo close to the player.



The player must leave the house with Hugo. Different processes are used to guide the player. Amicia says they have to leave and gives instructions about the path to take. The level design contains items to hide behind. The knights are placed at key positions to block some doors or to indicate that the player must pass behind them. Sounds and voices are played to indicate that an area is occupied.

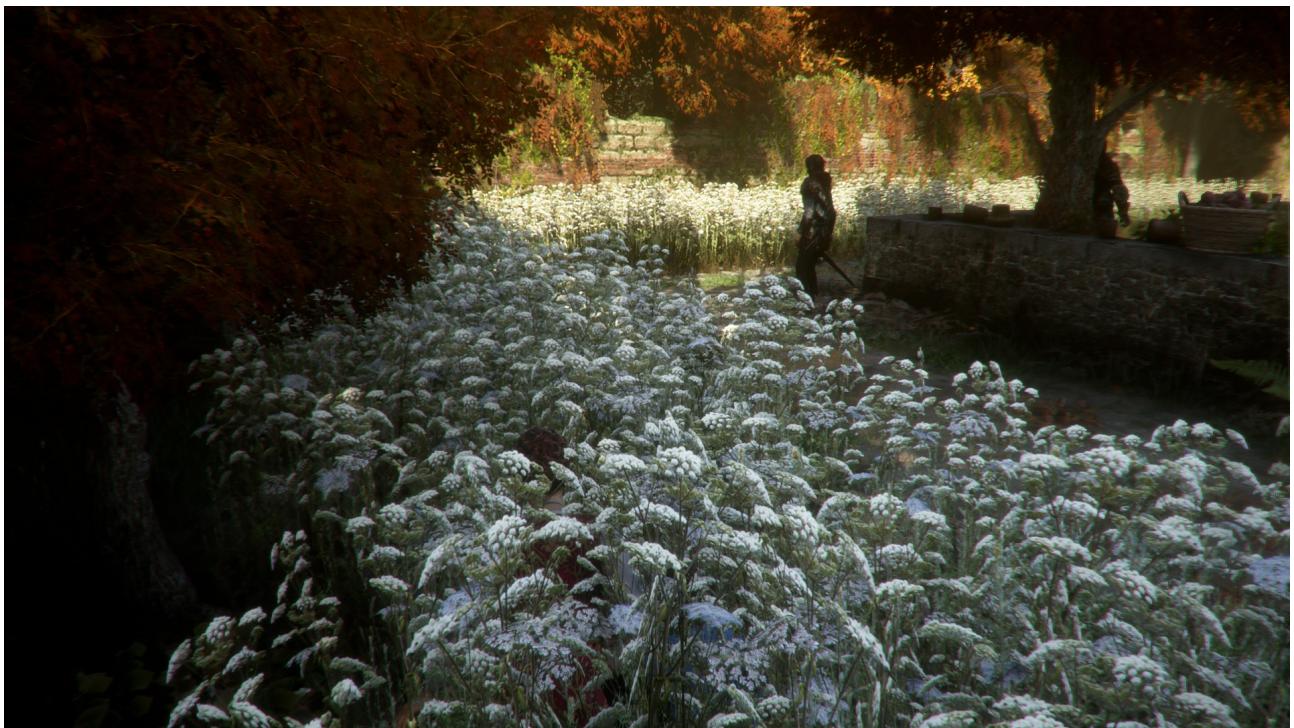


When the player opens the right door to leave the house, a cutscene is played staging Beatrice who takes the lead of the path leading out of the courtyard. As the place is bigger and opened, the player must follow the NPC.

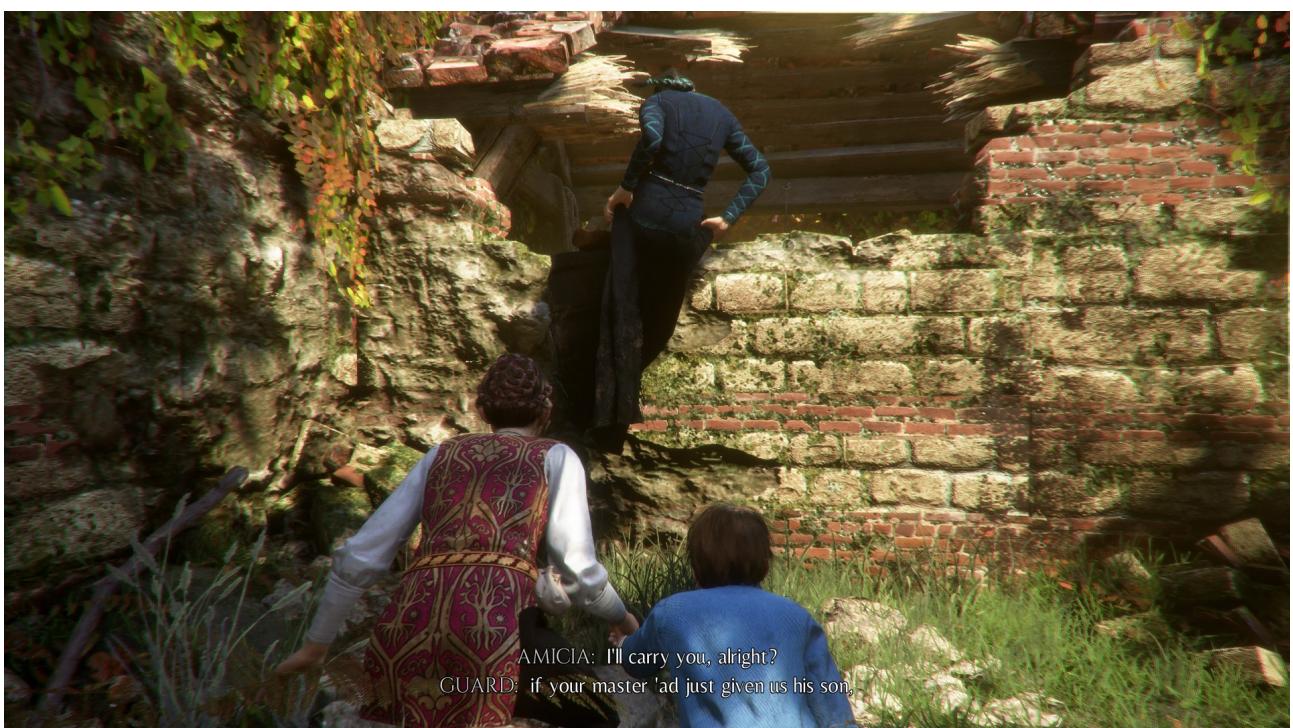


The NPC passes through key points, following a given path. As she leads the player through different areas, he/she can learn new features. The path is displayed by the NPC, the position of the guards, the sounds of the struggles or dialogues and the level design.

The player can reuse what he/she had learned while hunting the boar to crouch in the grass to stay hidden.



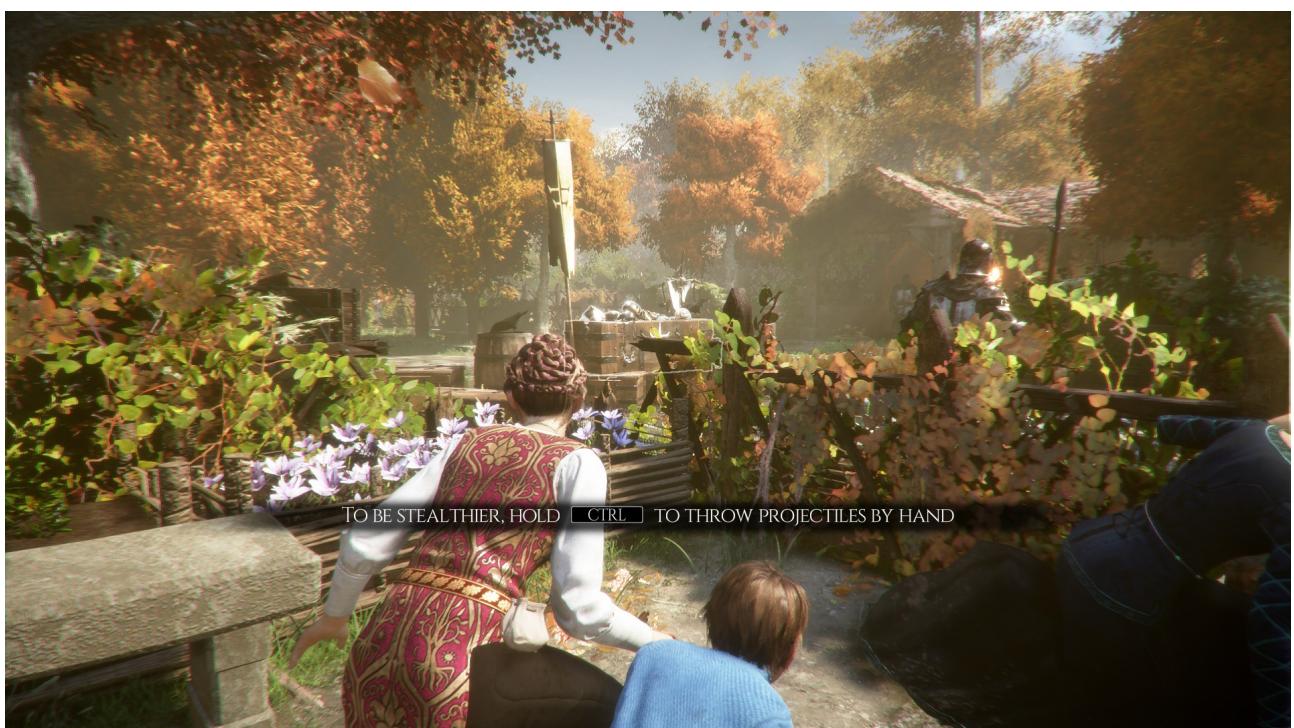
When the player reaches some areas around the knights and servants, their dialogues are activated to explain the personalities of the villains and the loyalty of the people in the castle. The player continues to follow Beatrice.



At first, the player had to follow the rhythm given by Beatrice and the knight's moves. But after few locations, the player encounters static knights who talk together or protect a given area.

This situation teaches the new feature of throwing objects to distract the NPC. The player can throw stones on highlighted iron items to attract the NPC to that object. He/she can also throw pots on a chosen area to attract the NPC there.

The instructions are given in the middle of the screen by the UI and also by the dialogues of the characters who think loudly to guide the player.



A red alert message is displayed when the player is doing something that can make him/her loose. In this case, the player cannot use the sling as he/she had learnt before because it makes too much noise and could attract the knight's attention. He/she should throw the projectile by hand instead. The instruction is given with the alert message.



When the player succeeds in his/her action and was able to distract the NPC, few processes are used to alert him/her. The UI displays a drop on top of the NPC. The pitch line of the knight indicates he is checking the noise made by the projectile. Beatrice moves to the right direction and the group talks about moving.



At a moment, the group arrives before a locked door and the environment (level design and camera) shows a clue to resolve it. A hole is visible in the wall, and the size indicates that only Hugo, who is smaller, can go through it. The dialogue suggests that the little boy lets go of Amicia's hand to open the door from the other side. And so the player learns he/she can release Hugo at some moment if needed. This feature would be

used again in the game. When the player decides do this action, the NPC are playing their part and the player must wait for the door to get open before continuing.



The second part of the path is more cadenced by the NPC actions. The player should wait while hidden that the knights pass to move. A trigger behind the previous door activates the actions of the knight and as the player waits, he/she can listen to the dialogue.



The group reaches a house to hide inside while Hugo is having an attack of his sickness. The player learns that the sickness is weakening Hugo but as his/her knowledge is the same as Amicia's, he/she cannot understand what is truly happening to the boy. During

this cutscene (triggered when the player enters the house), Beatrice is helping Hugo to recover. When it ends, the player can continue, aware that a sudden attack can happen and that Hugo needs to rest sometimes.



The next key point is a road with a patrolling knight. When the group arrives, it triggers some dialogues to explain how to go through this level design. The instructions are given while the three of them are hiding in the grass.

The player should ask for the NPC to stay where they are, go to the other side, distract the knight by throwing a pot, and call the NPC to reach him/her.

The constraint here is the rhythm of the guard's movements. They are repeated at regular intervals, following a given pattern and timer, and the player must wait for him to draw away before starting his/her action.



When the player succeeded in distracting the guard, he/she can call Beatrice and Hugo to meet him/her. Before being called, the two NPC are just waiting where they are. The action made by the player (pressing a key to call them) activates their change of state, and makes them cross the road to reach the player. The pitch lines of the knight indicate he was well distracted.



When the player finally gets close to the door that leads outside, a trigger activates a cutscene where a servant calls the group and helps it to escape. Beatrice asks Hugo to hide and gives the next quest to the player: finding the doctor Laurentius who helped Hugo previously. This confirms that Hugo is the key and that the player must protect him. As Amicia is a child, she does not want to leave her mother, but the NPC closes the door and a bloody sword going through it suggests she was just killed. This is the triggering factor that makes Amicia and Hugo run to their next quest.



The player has to run continuously to escape the overwhelming knights coming from everywhere. The path is shown by the level design, the sounds of the shootings and the placement of the enemies.

This scene gives the feeling to get lost in the wood and to have nowhere to be safe. This feeling is accentuated by the pitch lines of Amicia who says she does not know where to go nor what to do, and the ones of Hugo who needs to stop and does not understand what is happening. The UI is also full of red markers to indicate enemies or danger and the sound is quick and stressful.



When the player reaches the end of the path, which is the edge of the forest, a cutscene is played, showing Amicia and Hugo jumping into a river. This scene concludes the first chapter.



AMICIA: Take a deep breath!