

A Plague Tale Innocence

Case Study

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CONTEXT

Full Game -

During the Middle Ages, Amicia, the daughter of the DE RUNE family must take care of her little brother Hugo, who is affected by a strange illness. Hunt down by the Inquisition, they would have to face both the plague and the religious order.

Act 1 -

The player incarnates Amicia who just lost her dog Lion, killed by an unknown enemy. But when she goes back to the castle, the family is attacked by the Inquisition. Amicia must protect her brother and leave the area with him.

ACT 1 - THE DE RUNE LEGACY

Amicia and her father hunt in the woods.

- Introduction of the characters and their relation
- The player learns how to **move**, crouch, go through obstacles, etc.
- The player learns how to use the **sling**, collect objects, and hide

Lion is killed, Amicia and Robert go back to the castle.

- Triggering factor (suggested plague)

Amicia looks for Beatrice to tell her what just happened.

- Exploration of the courtyard and pitch lines of the NPC
- Collect few objects

Amicia stays with Hugo while her mother check noises outside.

- Information about the family situation, the relationships, the state of Hugo
- Exploration of the rooms where Hugo and Beatrice live

The family is attacked, Amicia and Hugo must leave the house.

- The player learns how to hide behind objects and call Hugo next to him/her
- The pitch lines give information about the different characters

Amicia, Hugo and Beatrice must leave the area through the garden.

- The player learns the throwing system (stones, pots)
- Moves cadenced by the enemies while listening to their dialogues

Beatrice is presumed dead and her children run to escape the knights.

- Final tension, the player must run continuously

NARRATIVE SYSTEMS

- Cutscenes
 - Dialogues
 - Triggers
 - Camera
 - Timer
 - Environment
-

Cutscenes

The cutscenes are often used to display key information, to attract the attention of the player on given details or to stage a triggering factor.

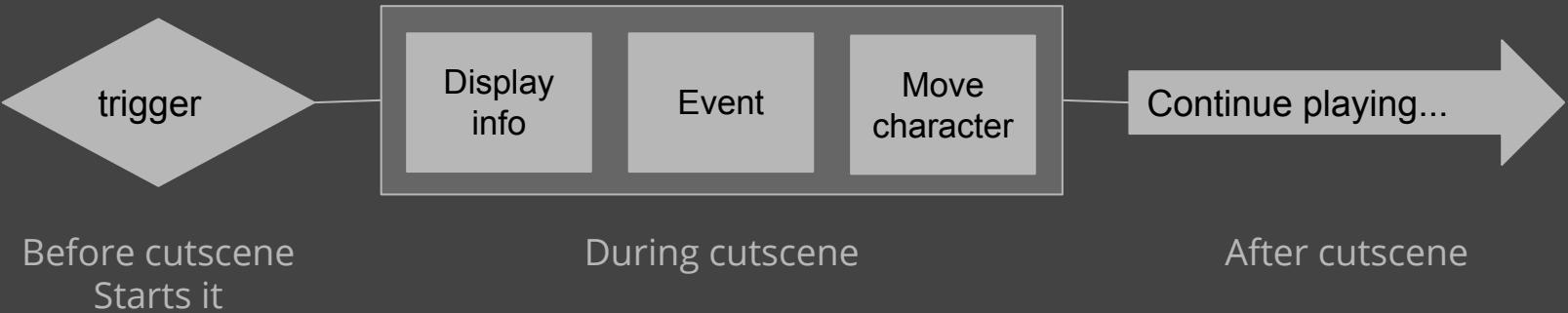


The cutscenes are often full of emotions and give information about the story and the characters.

Many short cutscenes focus on a given important detail, such as the beginning of the next path to follow, collectible items, actions of an NPC, etc.

Many cutscenes follow the same pattern:

- **Trigger**: triggering factor (player's action or player arriving in an area)
- **Display info**: focus on a narrative point (often the one that had started the cutscene)
- **Event**: sudden perturbation, narrative key event
- **Move character**: the playable character and NPC can be moved to the next key place



Dialogues

The dialogues can be triggered in 3 main ways:

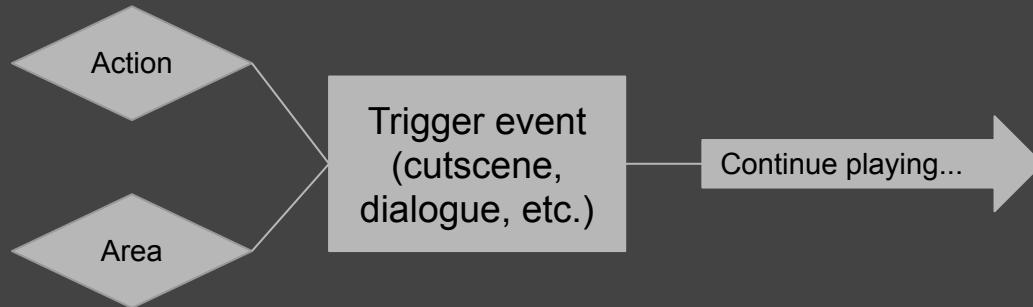
- by player's actions (press a key, hit an object, collect an item, etc.)
- by player arriving in an area
- by a timer (often for a sequence of pitch lines)



The dialogues give information about the characters, the relationships, the feelings of the people, the perturbations and so on.

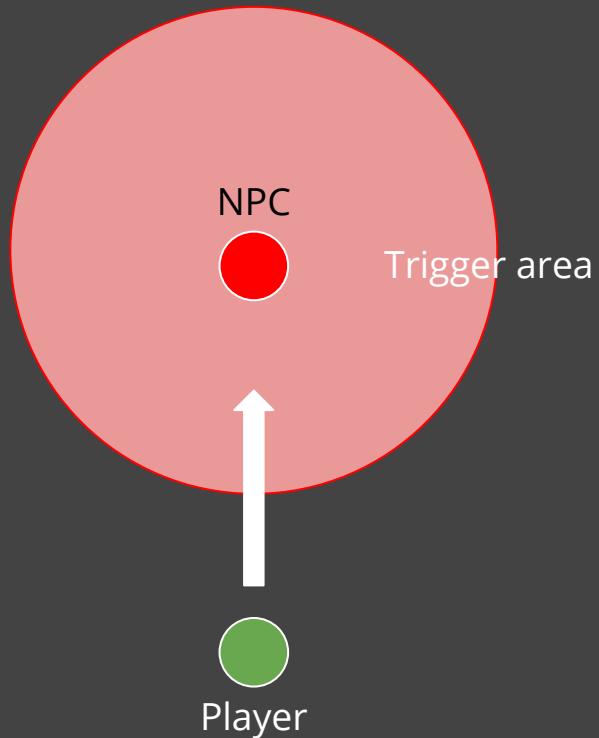
Triggers

The triggers are the main narrative system. They are used to start cutscenes, dialogues, actions, etc. Most of them are positioned in the environment.



When some dialogues or NPC actions are triggered, they are played at normal speed, assuming the player is executing his/her actions normally. But if he/she waits, the NPC wait as well.

The trigger areas are placed around key points or NPC.



Camera

Close ups are used to show important areas, items, events or characters. When the player enters new areas or discovers something, the camera is placed at the right position to stage it efficiently.



To attract the attention of the player on important elements, the UI invites to **press E** to look at it.

Timer

In this level, timers are mainly used to give rhythm to the pitch lines. But it can be used to time the actions of the NPC, and so the player should wait for the right moment to act.



Environment

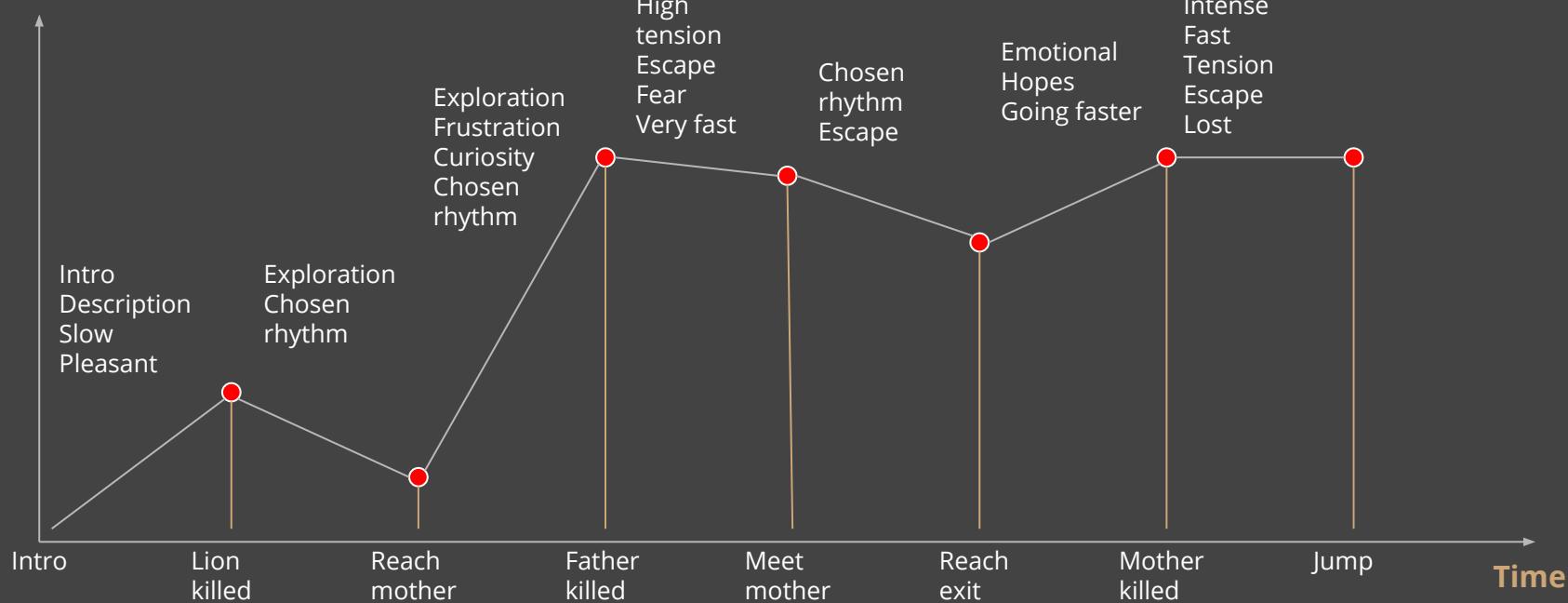
The environment also gives information about the story and the universe.



Use of the atmosphere, blur, lights, level design, design of the assets, etc.

RHYTHM

Tension



CHARACTERS

- Amicia
 - Hugo
 - Beatrice
-

Amicia



Innocent

Responsible

Amicia is the **playable character** and the daughter DE RUNE. She is a teen, **innocent**, playful and frustrated by her relation with her parents.

Amicia changes through the different **challenges**: her parents die, servants are killed, the house is attacked, she must take care of Hugo.

Hugo



Overprotected

Exposed

Hugo is Amicia's brother. He is sick and stays inside his room all the time, with his overprotective mother. As he is very young, he does not understand what is happening.

He changes as he leaves the house for the first time. He meets more people, is separated from his mother, must act (climb, open doors).

Beatrice



Protective

Trustful

Beatrice is Amicia's mother. She has dedicated her life to find a cure to Hugo and is not present for her daughter. She is strong and rational.

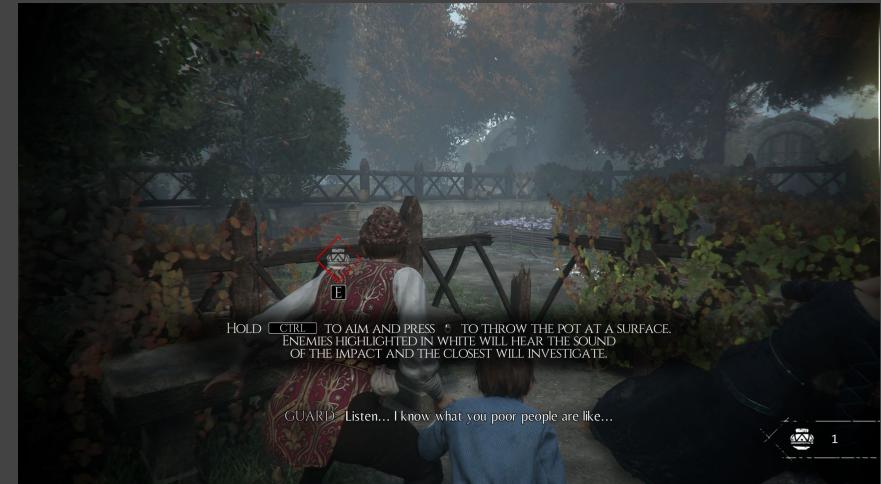
She changes because she must trust her children to protect them. She let Amicia distracts the guards, guides Hugo to open a door and finally leave them alone.

GAME DESIGN

- Instructions
 - Dialogues
 - HUD
 - On screen
-

Instructions

Instructions are given in the middle of the screen when the player must learn a new feature. It happens when the player is located in the area where he/she must take the given action.



Dialogues

The dialogues/pitch lines help the player performing actions or going to the right direction. They indicate what needs to be done. They can reassure the player when he/she does well, or point out when he/she fails.

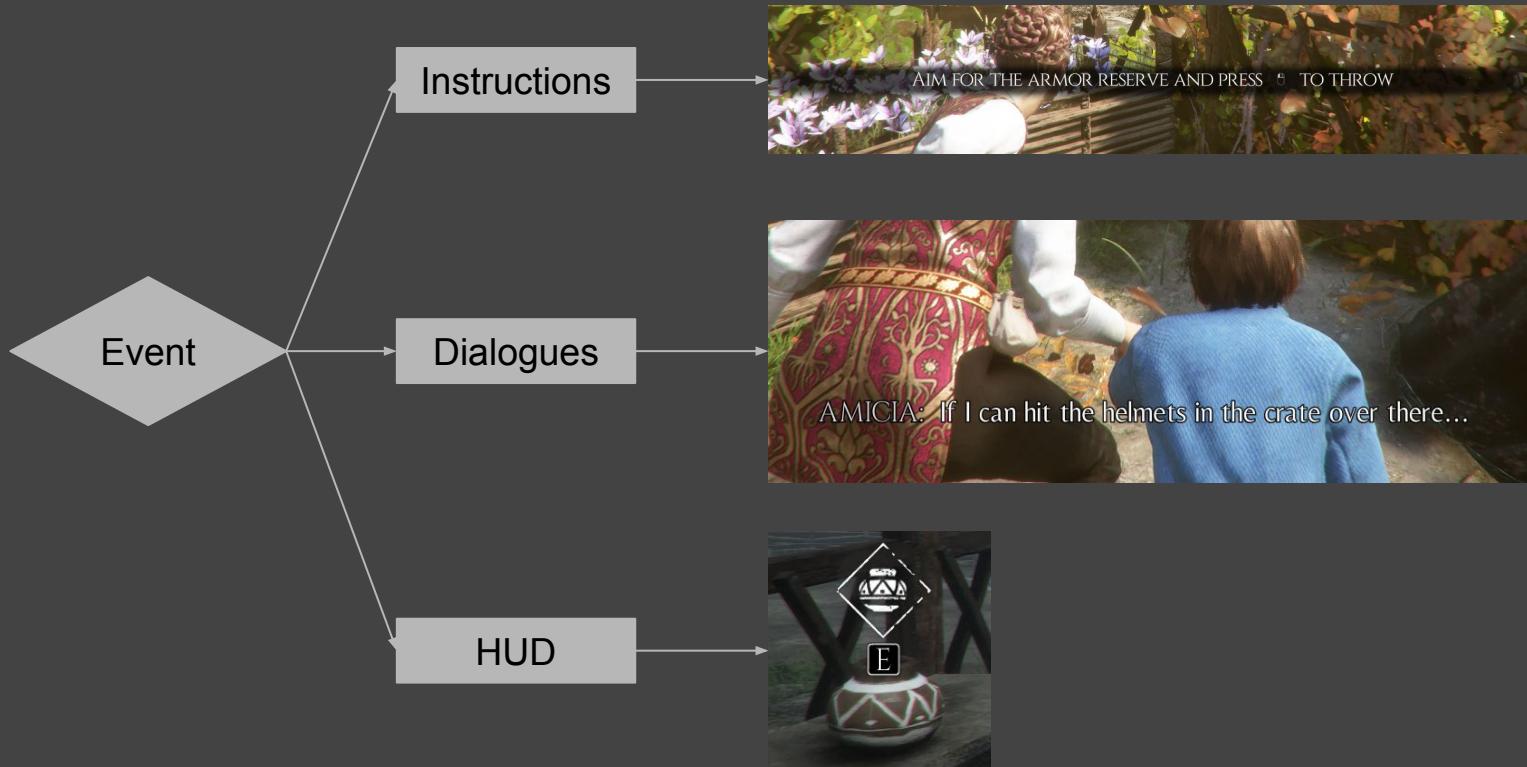


HUD

Collectible items have white reflections on them. Targeted objects are highlighted. Interactive spots get a small round. When the player interacts with those, it is also indicated by icons.



On screen





LEVEL DESIGN

The systems used are:

- the disposition of the objects to hide behind or to block areas
- the marks on the ground to follow (mud) or avoid (blood)
- the open doors or holes in the walls to invite the player
- the placement of the NPC to temporarily block a path or guide the player
- the placement of collectible items
- the obstacles to cross (climb or crouch below)
- the disposition of the high grass to hide into

SOUND DESIGN

The sound design really accentuates the **rhythm** and the emotion of the different scenes. Some elements of the sound design that **support** the narration are:

- the **voices** full of personality
- the **sounds and noises** made by struggles or movements that indicate what area to avoid or to go into
- the **music** that gives the tempo and the tension