**Design Document Outline**

***"The world outside the dungeon isn’t designed to be a caricature—it doesn’t need exaggeration to reveal its absurdity, horror, and humor. NPCs aren’t shallow tropes, but realistic figures with motivations that make them feel alive—whether as villains, opportunists, or simply desperate souls making their way. The contrast is clear: the dungeon is danger, but predictable; the outside world is survival, but increasingly suffocating. There’s always a choice: risk the wild unknown or endure the exhausting routine. Neither is fair, but one feels like freedom."***

**1️⃣ Core Concept & Vision**

* **Game Premise:** A retro ASCII dungeon crawler that **mimics early RPGs** but is **self-aware** of modern gaming industry absurdities.
* **Tone & Theme:** A mix of **genuine adventure** and **satirical monetization tropes** (e.g., NPCs exploiting the player).
* **Gameplay Loop:** Explore dungeons, fight monsters, interact with NPCs, and **constantly be bombarded with ridiculous requests**.

**2️⃣ Gameplay Mechanics**

**🔸 Player Mechanics**

* **Randomized Player Type:** Sight, damage, attack chances vary based on **starting attributes**.
* **Combat System:** Melee vs. ranged mechanics, **attack chance based on sight vs. range**.
* **Magic System:** TBD—could involve **absurd monetization mechanics** (e.g., “Buy more mana for $5.99!”).
* **Traps & Tricks:** Environmental hazards, **fake treasure chests**, **NPC scams**.

**🔸 Monster Mechanics**

* **ASCII Portrait Window:** Displays **monster details** in a separate UI window.
* **Monster List Window:** Allows **target selection** when multiple enemies are present.
* **AI Behavior:** Monsters **prioritize closest player** (for multiplayer) or **react dynamically** to player actions.

**🔸 Dungeon Generation**

* **Dungeon Styles:** Outdoor, indoor, **randomized layouts**.
* **Procedural Dungeon Creation:** Ability to **generate new dungeons without leaving the game**.

**3️⃣ NPCs & Quests**

* **Quest System:** Every quest is **absurdly important**, no matter how trivial.
* **NPC Behavior:** NPCs **exploit the player** at every opportunity.
* **LLM Integration:** NPCs **generate ridiculous backstories** and **react dynamically** to player choices.
* **Player Bombardment:** NPCs **constantly request things**, forcing the player to **navigate social dilemmas**.

CONTEXT:  
 **How the LLM Can Handle This Dynamically**

Since coding this manually would be complex and rigid, using an **LLM-driven approach** allows: ✔ **NPCs to generate responses based on their own limited awareness**.  
 ✔ **Some NPCs to fully understand they’re exploiting the player**, while others **genuinely believe they’re being helpful**.  
 ✔ **Social dilemmas** where the player **negotiates or calls out NPC behavior** (leading to varied reactions).

**🔹 Structuring NPC Behavioral Patterns**

To get this **LLM-driven behavior**, you can define **different "awareness levels"** that the model can run with: 1️⃣ **Oblivious NPC** – Believes they are truly helping, despite being massively unfair.  
 2️⃣ **Opportunistic NPC** – Knows they’re scamming you, but hides behind excuses.  
 3️⃣ **Corporate NPC** – Directly profits off the player but defends it as "just business."  
 4️⃣ **Cult-Like NPC** – Convinces the player **their suffering is noble** (i.e., “The Grand Trial will make you stronger!”).  
 5️⃣ **Guilt-Tripping NPC** – Pretends to be reluctant but **frames it as the player’s duty to help**.

Each quest NPC can **belong to one of these categories**, so their responses **align with their worldview**.

* + *The NPCs will (somehow) make their own self determinations (correct or not) in kind. If the player thinks they're being exploitive and says something on those lines. The NPC, innocent or not, might react in kind doubling-down on the misunderstanding, others might point this out.***How This Could Play Out**

1️⃣ **NPCs Misinterpret Player Intent** – An **innocent merchant** may take accusations of exploitation personally and **refuse to sell items** out of spite.  
 2️⃣ **Overconfident NPCs Double Down** – Some NPCs will **refuse to admit fault**, escalating **ridiculous counterarguments** until the player gives up.  
 3️⃣ **Socially-Aware NPCs** – Others **call out misunderstandings**, trying to **mediate between player frustration and unfair business practices**.  
 4️⃣ **Emergent Player Reputation** – If the player **consistently challenges exploitation**, NPCs may **adjust their pricing**, become **hesitant**, or **spread rumors** about them!

Since an LLM **thrives on adaptive conversation**, the key **isn't just pre-scripted reactions**, but NPCs responding **contextually based on past exchanges**.

**4️⃣ User Interface & Presentation**

* **ASCII UI Elements:** Monster portraits, combat windows, **inventory & stats display**.
* **Fake Production Logos:** **Over-the-top opening sequence** with **fake game studio credits**.
* **ASCII Cutscenes:** Dramatic **text-based cinematics** for major events.
* **Fake Bootloader:** Classic **8/16-bit PC startup sequence** before launching the game.

**5️⃣ Multiplayer & Future Expansion**

* **Multiplayer Integration:** Players **sync movement via database or direct networking**.
* **Monster Targeting:** Monsters **track multiple players** and **prioritize closest threats**.
* **LLM-Driven Player Interaction:** Multiplayer **social dilemmas** where players **negotiate NPC demands**.

**🔹 Next Steps**

🚀 **Refine core mechanics**—combat, magic, dungeon generation.  
🚀 **Start implementing UI elements**—ASCII monster portraits, quest windows.  
🚀 **Expand NPC interactions**—LLM-driven **absurd quest generation**.  
🚀 **Begin multiplayer groundwork**—even if just **basic player tracking**.