

The Early Academic Expeditions of Randolph T. Lewis Jr.

by Oliver Pacut

Genre: 2D platformer

Platforms: PC

Technologies: Unity, Autodesk SketchBook, Visual Studio

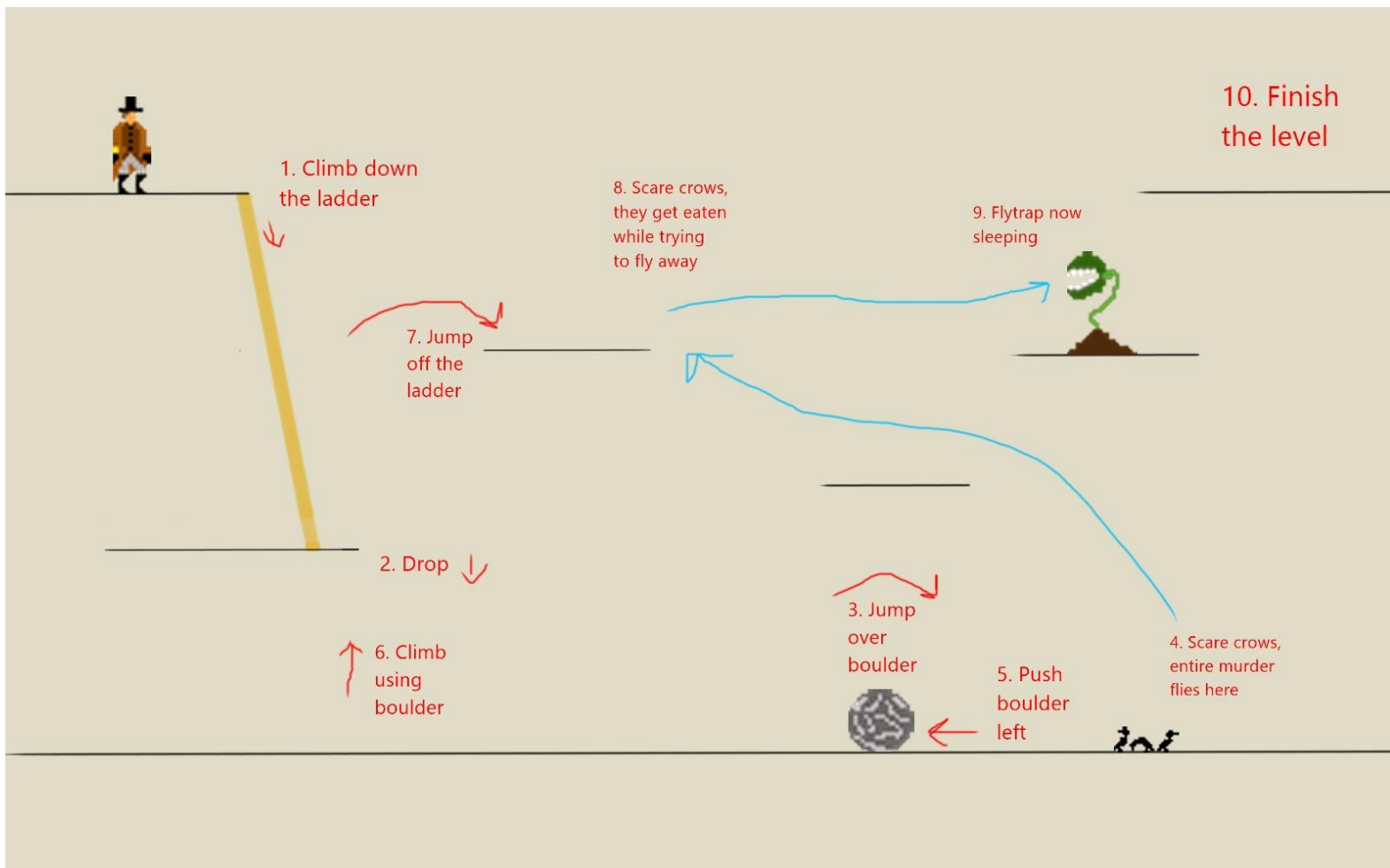
Main idea: Airship Nightingale, en route to the Academy of Science, has been blown away by a violent thunderstorm into unknown air, where it crash-landed on an uncharted floating island. The player assumes the role of young Randolph Lewis, who was recently accepted to the University and had left home on his uncle's (the Captain) ship. The rest of the crew have to tend to the wounded and repair the ship, while Randolph is sent to look for supplies on the island. He encounters a variety of local fauna and flora, some of it friendly, some hostile. Randolph, being a young curious student of geography, is amazed by the size of the lost island and by the bizarre creatures and plants he encounters. The aim of the crew, and ultimately of Randolph as well, is to repair the ship and depart as soon as possible.

Game Mechanics and Features:

- The game uses standard 2D platformer controls. Use arrow keys (or WASD) to move and jump button (Space) to jump.
- Interact button (E) will be used to interact with the scenery
- Inventory button (Q) will be used to bring up Randolph's inventory. To equip an item, click on it.
- Additional buttons like Crouch (C) can be added as deemed necessary
- Moving towards the edge of the screen will change into another screen. That way the level can be described as a grid.
- Randolph will face puzzles consisting mostly of environmental hazards. He can fall into oblivion or get eaten by a giant flytrap etc.
- Any mistake will kill Randolph instantly and he will be respawned on the same screen where he died.
- The UI will consist solely of the aiming cursor and the callable inventory. Dialogue will be displayed in a bar that pops up at the bottom of the screen.
- The game will take place over a couple of days. The player can advance to the next day after finishing an objective. After the last day, the airship is ready to leave and the game ends.
- (*optional*) In later levels, the player will be able to mount local wildlife and use it for transport (unlocking new puzzles).
- (*optional*) To get over some puzzles and to neutralize threats, the player can use shift to enter aim mode, aim using the mouse and click to fire a revolver.

Audiovisual content:

- It would be preferable to make the entire game hand-drawn in a macabre, cartoonish style. Depending on the resources available, making the game in pixel art would also work.
- The landscape is a barren mountainside with occasional oases of life here and there. In this world islands float, so expect gravity-defying phenomena in the scenery.
- The only other human characters are the ship's crew, who do not move.
- The main character will be given grunting, jumping and screaming sounds.
- The game will use instrumental music soundtrack taken from the public domain. The soundtrack will change depending on the screen (calm on the mountaintop, jazzy in the ship).
- In the ship, muffled voices, coughing and engine repair sounds can be heard. Outside, whirls of wind and the chirping of far away birds.
- Some obstacles will have their own dedicated sounds.
- Randolph will be able to walk, run, jump, running jump, crouch, crouch walk, look up, look down, [climb up](#), [climb down](#), [push objects](#) and die. Additional animations may include aiming, shooting, falling and riding a local alien horse-thing.
- *(optional)* Randolph's internal monologue can also be given a voiceover.



The image above represents a simple example of a (presumably early) game level. The player encounters a couple of interactable objects. The first enemy is the non-moving flytrap which will happily gobble Randolph up should he come near it. The flytrap, however, is hungry, not malicious. By tactically scaring off the crows on this level, player can feed the flytrap and send it to sleep.

Player is introduced to climbable ladders (may be changed to simple ropes) and movable climbable objects (the boulder). The player also gets the feel that the island is living its own life with Randolph mostly just being a spectator. All interaction with the crows, as well as with the flytrap, will be commented on by Randolph immediately.

Upon entering the screen for the first time, Randolph will notice the enormous flytrap.

More, purely cosmetic, elements can be added to the level.

Time schedule:

- 1st – 3th week: alpha version, basic mechanics and gameflow
- 4th – 5th week: puzzle design, scripting, concept art
- 6th – 9th week: level artwork, animations, models
- 10th – 11th week: gameplay adjustments, finishing touches
- 12th – 13th week: spare time (not going to be enough anyway)

Moodboard:

