

Through the Fog: The Tower of Hope – By Shawn Nassabi

You, the user awaken in an isolated room in an unknown area only to find a welcoming handgun on a table. You then venture out the door into a mystical area filled with an overwhelming fog that blurs your vision, and to your horror, a wave of the evil undead begin to advance towards you attempting to attack. Your only support is the gun you wield, and your only hope is the blossoming light that appears from the tower a few miles away. Will you get there safe from the horde of zombies, or will your journey end before reaching the angelic light source?

Technical details:

This is a first-person VR experience that involves user interaction, sound triggers, and uses AI based enemies that track the main player. The main user interaction involves holding a gun to aim and shoot the enemies, while also featuring an interactive door. Sound is also an interactive element in the scene, with various triggers being activated due to the user's actions such as picking up the gun, shooting, reaching the tower of hope, etc. Haptic feedback is also triggered every time the user shoots the gun, adding to the level of immersion. The visual highlight of the experience is the fog that surrounds the viewer – made using the unity particle system – as they journey towards the tower of light.

The fog along with the tower of hope that appears to be emitting light from a distance, in addition to the audio stimuli, all contribute towards creating an Aura with the aim of creating a more immersive experience. Jay and Maria, in “Mobile Cinematics”, describe this aura “as the unique phenomenon of a distance, however close it may be” (165) This aura is generated in my scene by presenting the light tower at a distance and surrounding the user by fog. Additionally, the tower acts as a guide to lead the player towards the destination.

Similar to my last assignment, this also incorporates the Freytag Triangle, with a clear beginning, middle, and end. The “exposition” being when the player spawns and is drawn to a lit table that presents a gun. “Rising action” when the play exits the room to be surrounded by fog. “Climax”, in the midst of action with the zombies. “Falling action”, as the horde of zombies seems to come to an end. “Resolution”, when a soundtrack of hope plays as the user gains a better view of the tower of hope. “Denouement”, the user drops their weapon and embraces the joyful moment.

Link to video walkthrough:

https://drive.google.com/file/d/19vNyNsCQ4MUjgSKX8jV1_rFVGVLhqrW5/view?usp=sharing

Documentation and implementation:

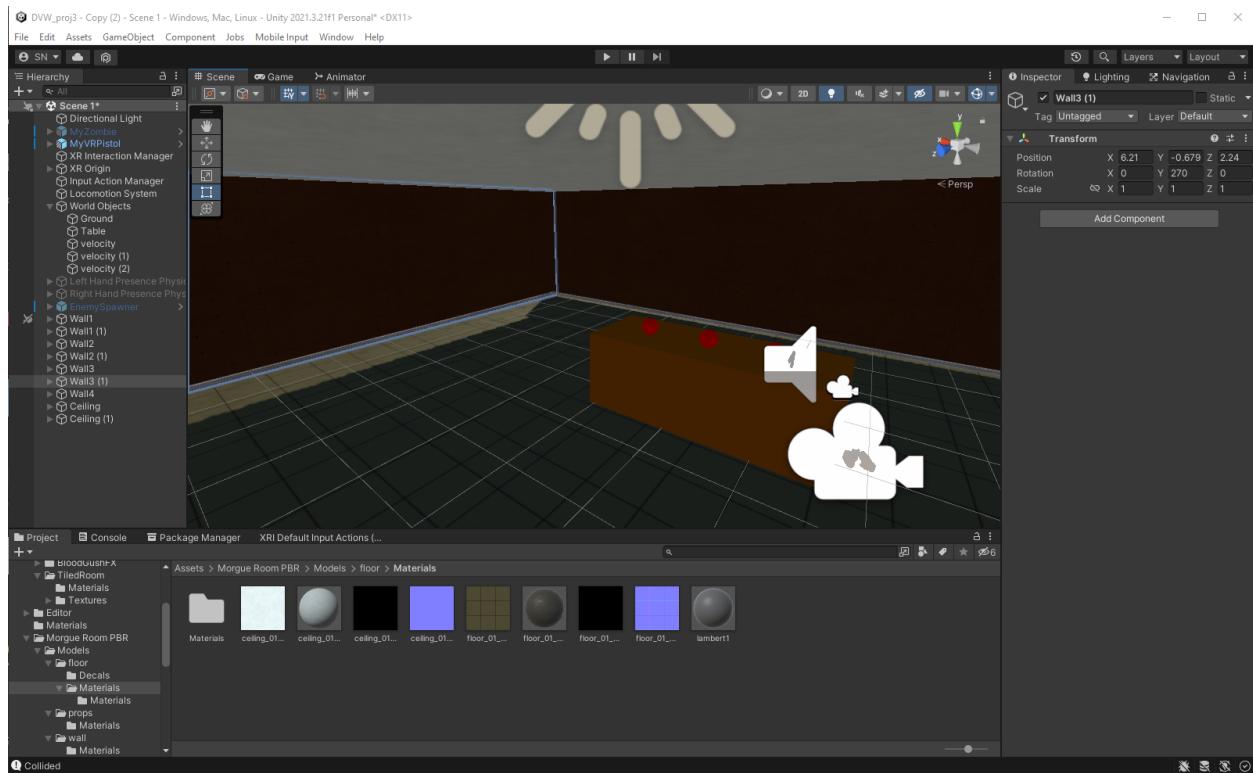
Initially I had to setup the whole VR interaction system before delving into the more technical elements of the project. Then, I first began by setting up the physics mechanics and the user interactive elements along with the other components that are linked to the shooting system in a sample test scene. This involved the gun mechanics including the shooting animation, sound effects, dealing damage to the enemy, bullet physics mechanics, etc. In this sample scene I also programmed the zombie AI using NavMeshAgent and navigation mapping on the plane, along with its animations. The animations are triggered at certain moments, for example the death animation when the zombie's health reaches 0.

Once I was satisfied with the user-enemy interaction system using the gun as a tool, I proceeded to set-up the scene. I created a room placed in a large open space with fog, and of course the tower of light appearing at an appropriate distance away from the room. The sky box and environment lighting was altered to create a more dark and horror themed setting. Inside the room, I placed a spotlight that points to the gun in order to connote to the user that they need to pick up this tool before proceeding. The whole process can be viewed through the set of screenshots taken at regular intervals below.

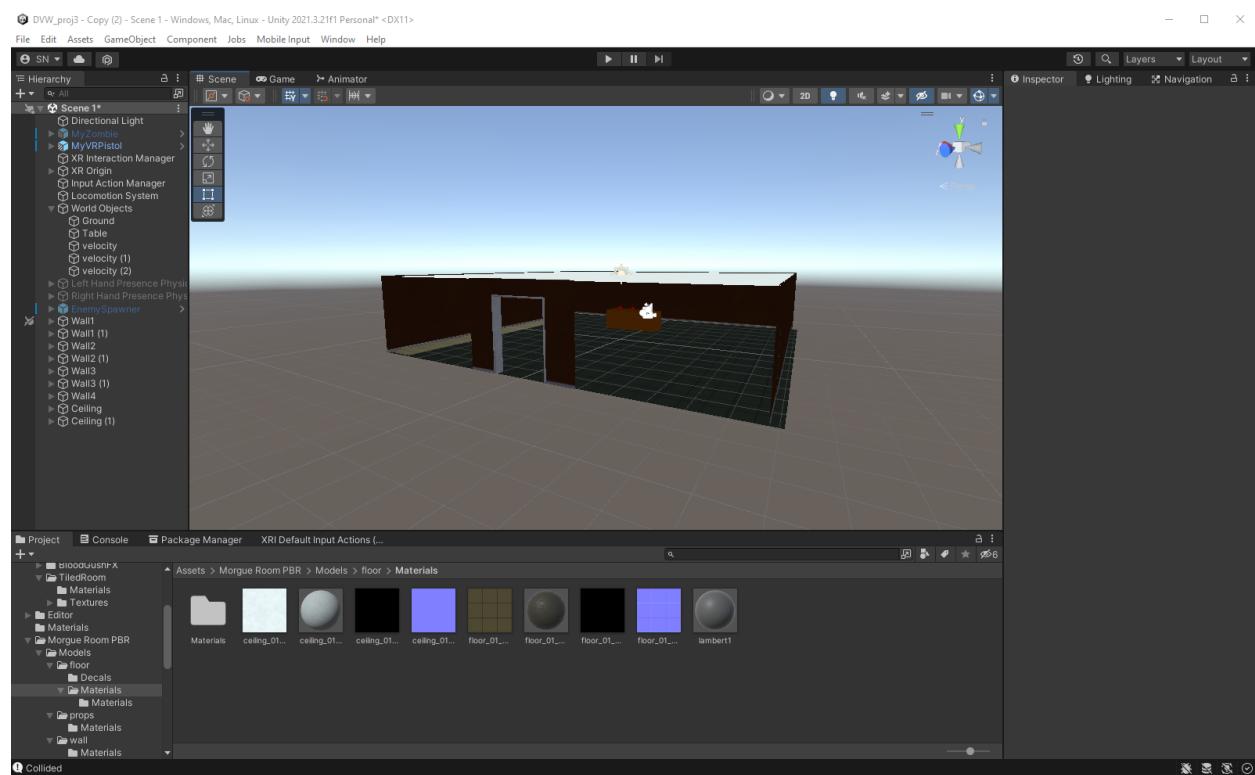
Screenshots:



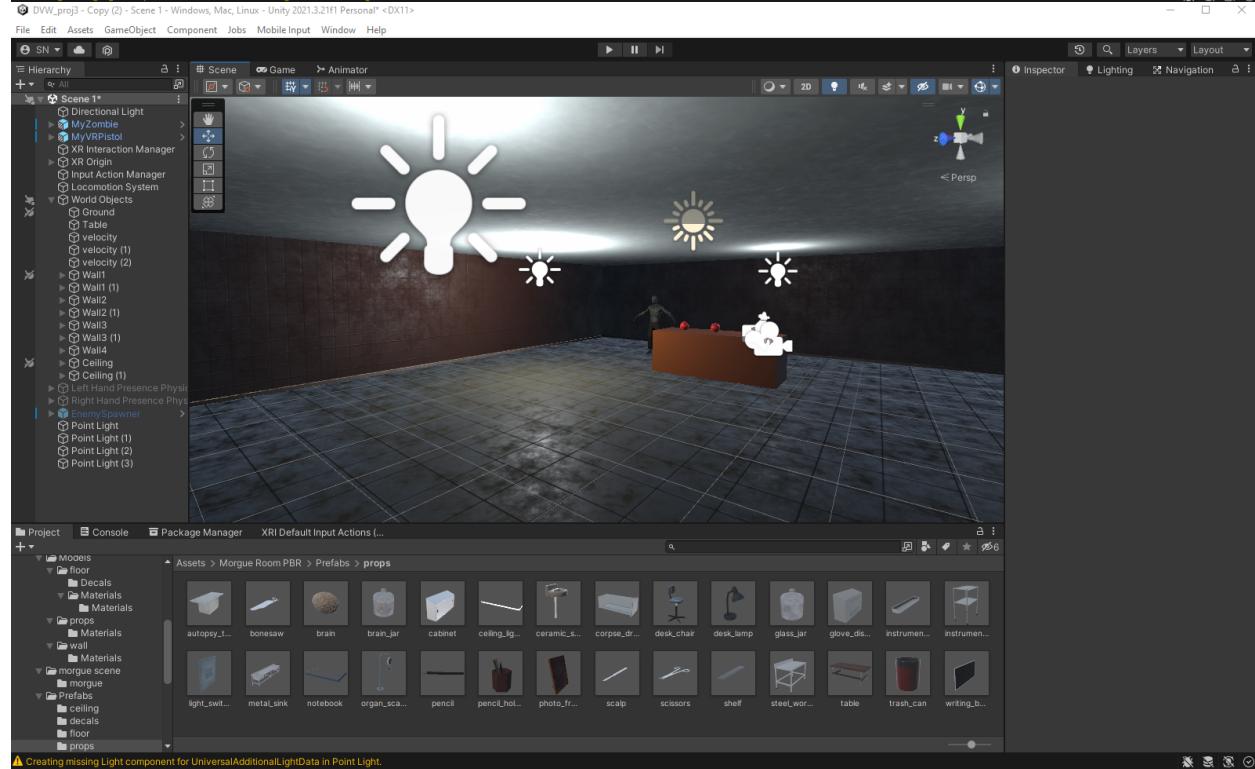
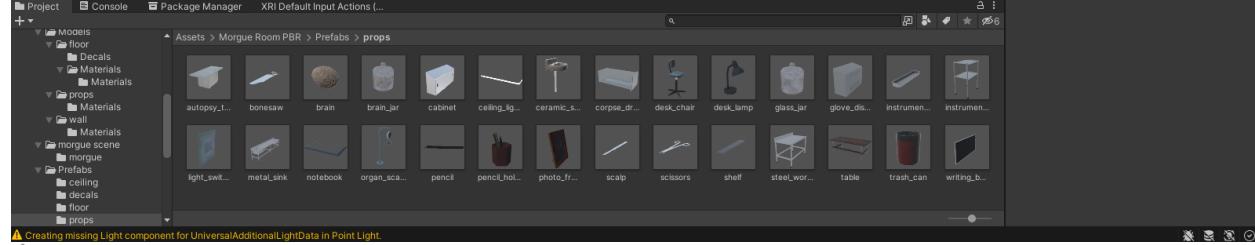
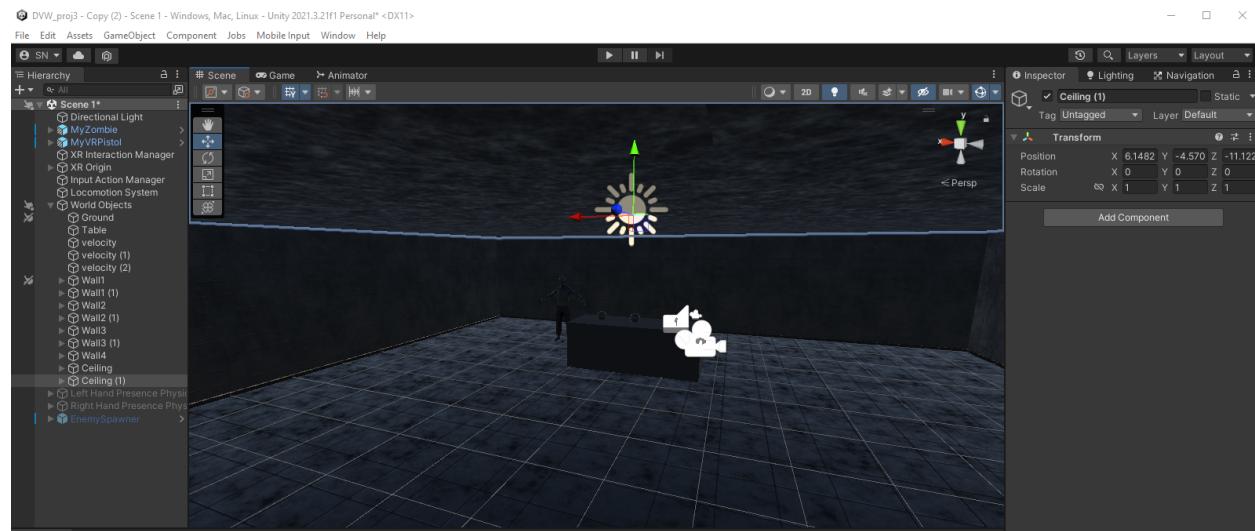
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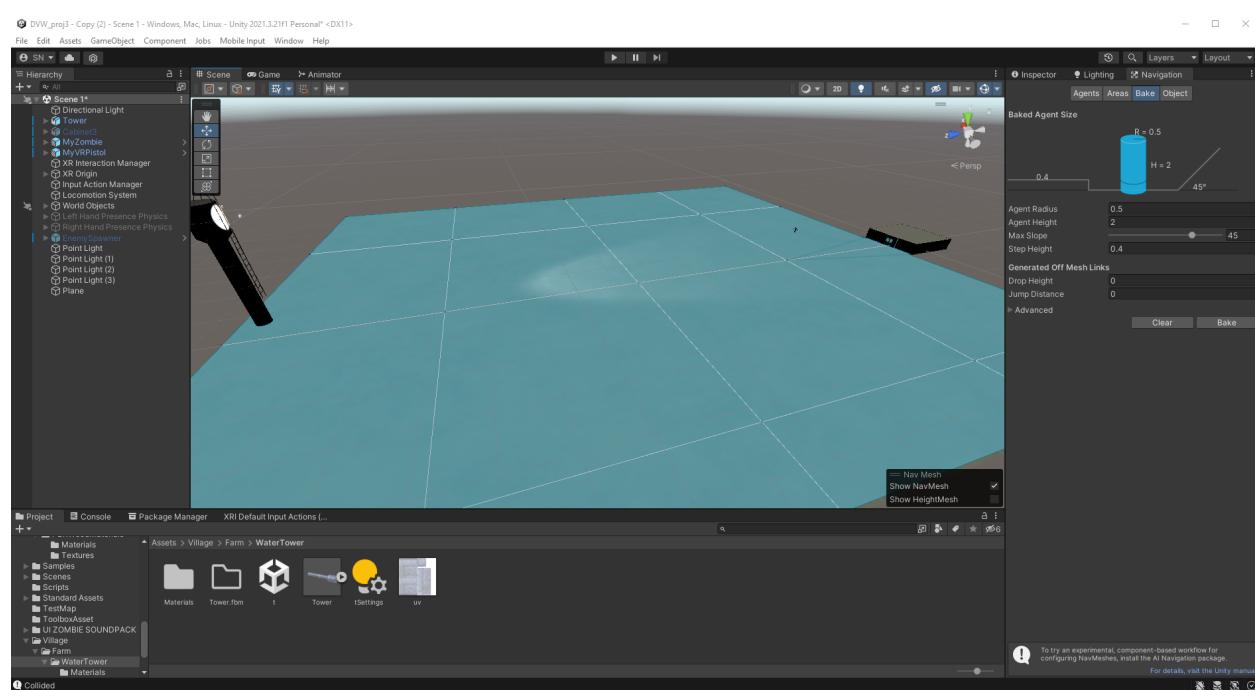
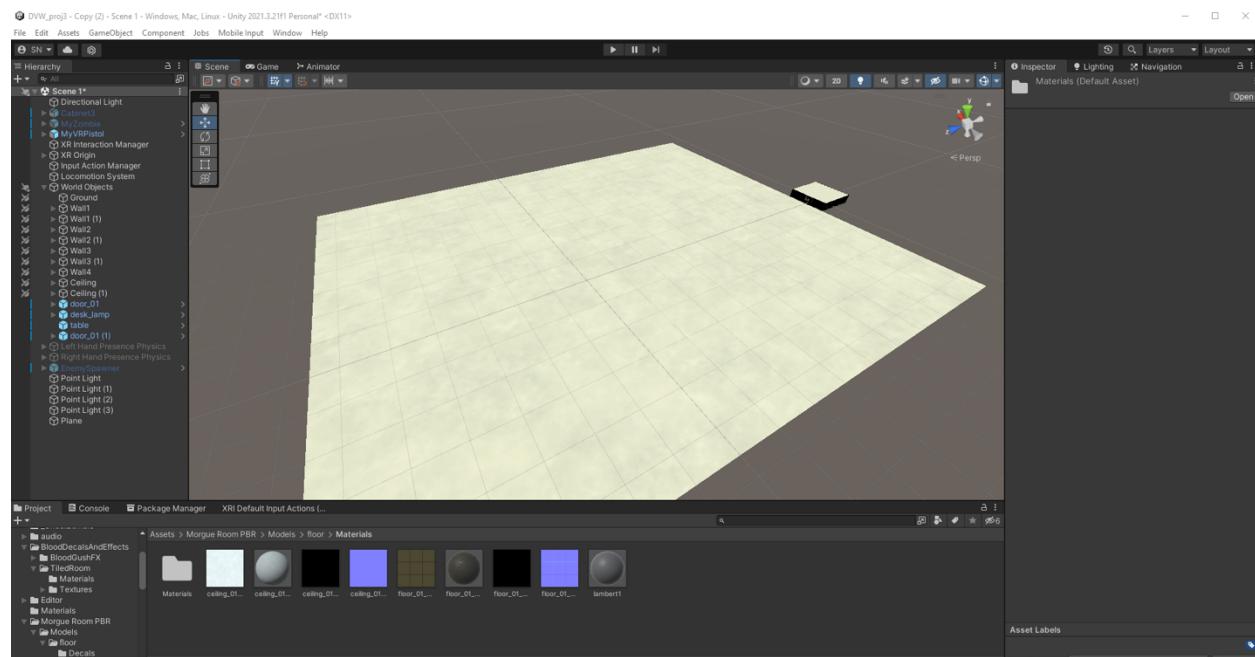
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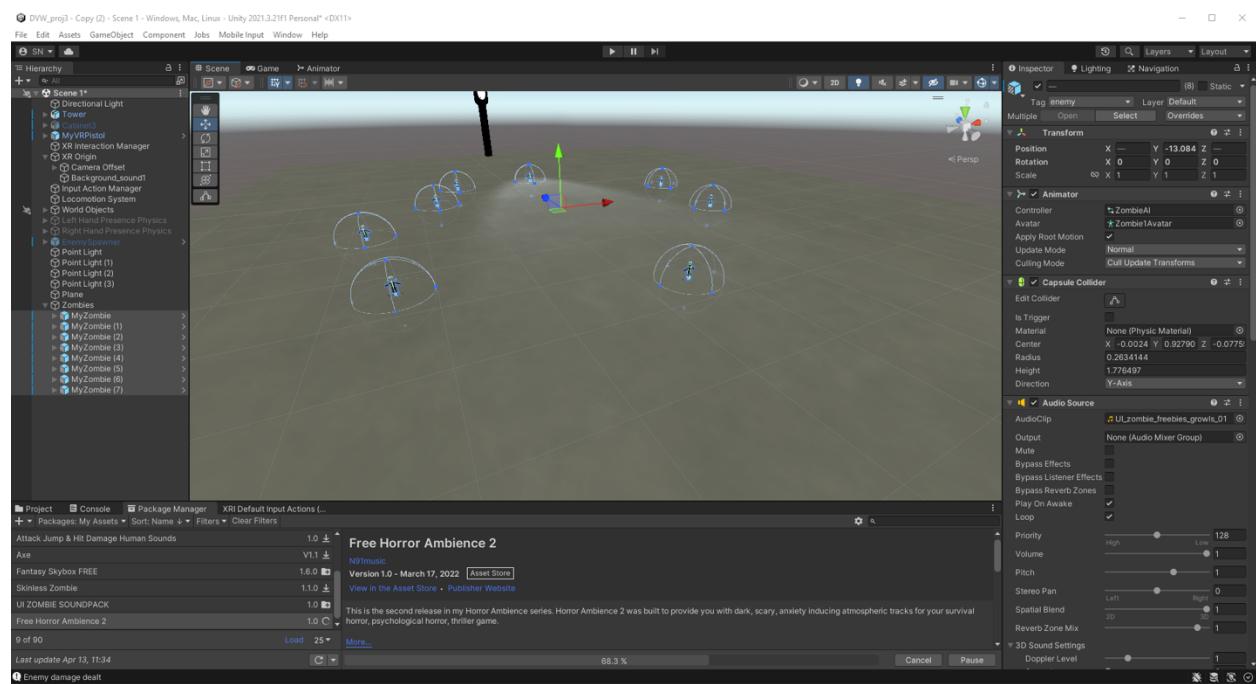
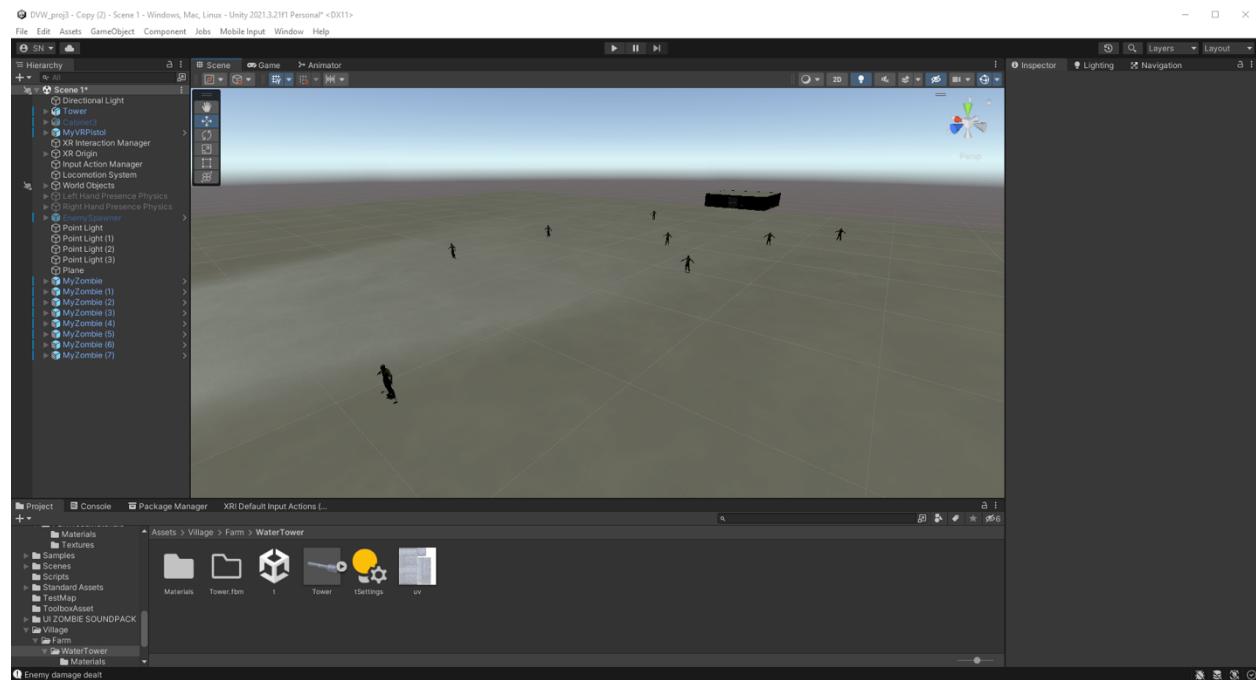
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