

VotSL_GDD

Game Design Document (GDD): The Vigil of the Second Light

Version: 3.7 (Complete Narrative & Mechanics)

Author: Yash Tandon

Genre: High-Precision 2D Action-RPG / Metroidvania

1.0 Executive Summary

1.1 High Concept

The Vigil of the Second Light is a 2D Action-Platformer where combat is a dance of trust between a protector and a ward. The Player controls the **Hero** (Defense/Melee) while an AI companion, the **Child** (Offense/Magic), rains down elemental destruction—but only as long as the Hero keeps her safe.

1.2 Unique Selling Points (USPs)

- **The Trust Mechanic:** Combat is asymmetric. The Hero cannot win alone; they must parry to keep the Child calm enough to cast magic.
 - **Hope-Gating:** Metroidvania progression is tied to emotional healing rather than just finding items.
 - **Precision Defense:** High-stakes parry windows (**0.15s**) reward rhythm and discipline.
 - **The Soul-Forged Choice:** Act III splits into two radically different gameplay experiences (Hard Mode vs. Power Fantasy) leading to three distinct endings.
-

2.0 Narrative & Storyline

2.1 Premise & Theme

- **Theme:** Duty vs. Delusion. The game explores the concept of "Vigil" (duty to the dead) versus the "Illusion of Solace" (escaping grief through madness).

- **Premise:** Six months after a catastrophic attack, the Hero is broken. He protects a mysterious Child, unaware she is his daughter. The journey discovers the truth behind his partner's (The Elf) sacrifice and the weapon she left behind.

2.2 Character Profiles

- **The Hero:** A master swordsman who cannot cast magic. He begins mechanically "nerfed" by grief.
- **The Child:** The Hero's daughter. A young magic user. She represents the "Second Light." She relies on the Hero for safety while providing magical artillery.
- **The Elf (Memory):** The Hero's deceased partner. She forged the **Soul-Forged Blade** at the cost of her lifespan to defeat the Demon King but hid it away due to its dark nature.
- **The King:** Corrupted by the Demon of Hatred. Act III reveals the Child's paternity to her while holding her captive.

2.3 Plot Outline

- **Act I: The Journey to Betrayal.** The Hero regains movement (Double Jump, Glide) via memories.
 - *Climax:* The Hero confronts **The Priest.** The Priest reveals the Elf is truly dead. The Hero enters Rage Mode (Umbra Pact). Finds King's Letter confirming Child's identity.
- **Act II: The Stewardship.** The Hero accepts his role. They travel to elemental domains. The Child learns Poison, Fire, and Ice magic.
 - *Climax:* Defeating the Scion of Decay unlocks **Elemental Imbue.**
- **Act III: The Descent.** The Hero and Child travel to the **Frozen Lake.** The King attacks, **kidnaps the Child**, and reveals the Hero is her father. The Hero wakes up alone, sensing the sinister call of the **Soul-Forged Blade.**

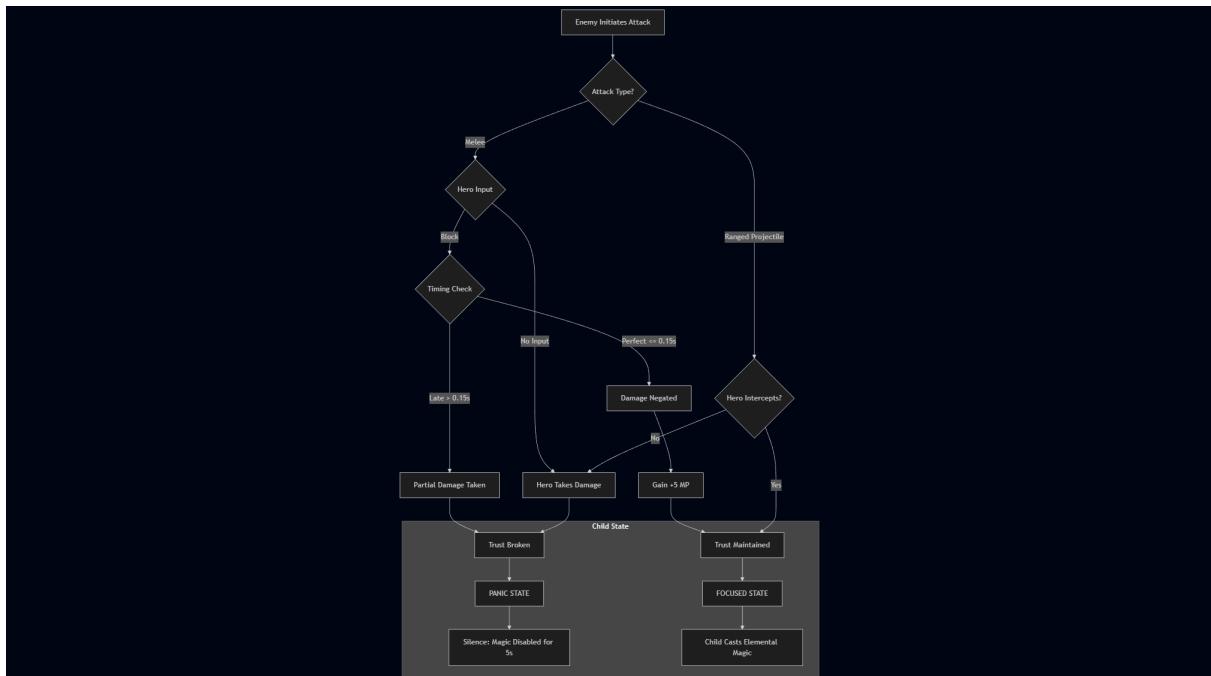
3.0 Core Gameplay Mechanics

3.1 Player Stats & Economy

Stat	Value	Notes
Total Health (HP)	200	Standard health pool.
Total Mana (MP)	200	Scarce resource.
MP Regen	0	No passive regen.
Mana Gain	+5 / +20	+5 MP per Perfect Deflect; +20 MP per Enemy Kill.

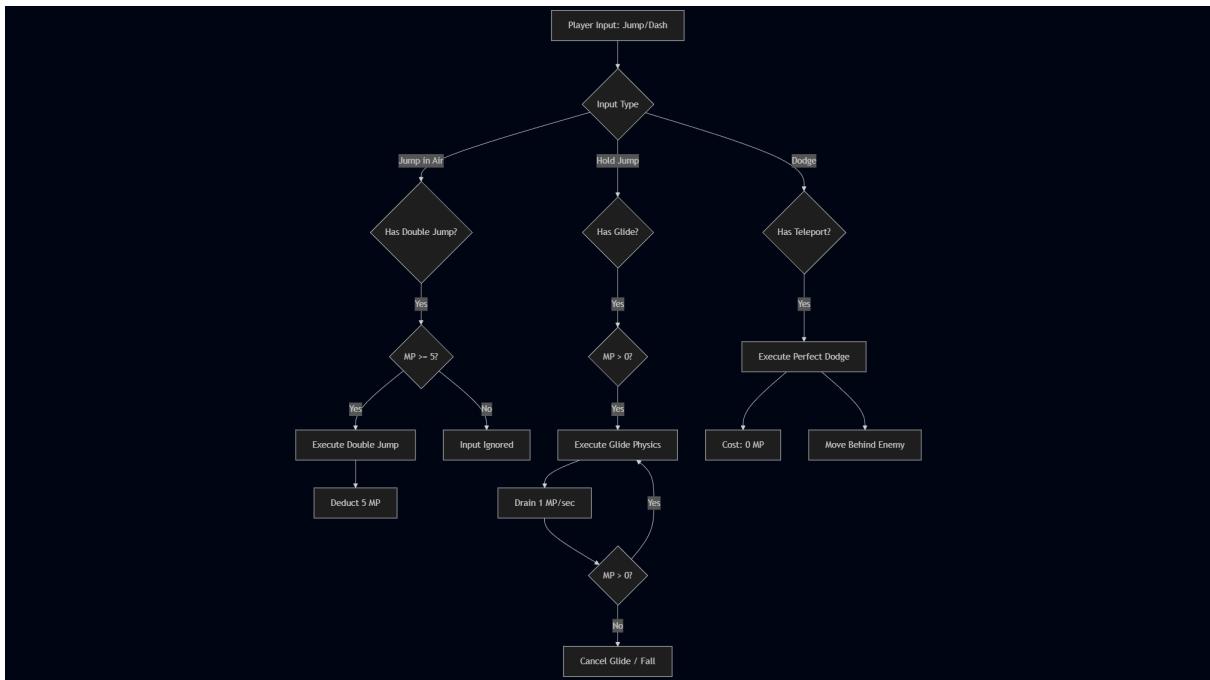
3.2 The Trust System (Combat - Act II)

- **Hero's Role:** Tank / Parry.
- **Child's Role:** Ranged Magic / Elemental Damage.
- **Failure Condition:** If Hero takes damage/misses parry, Child enters **Panic State** (5s Silence)



3.3 Movement & Evasion

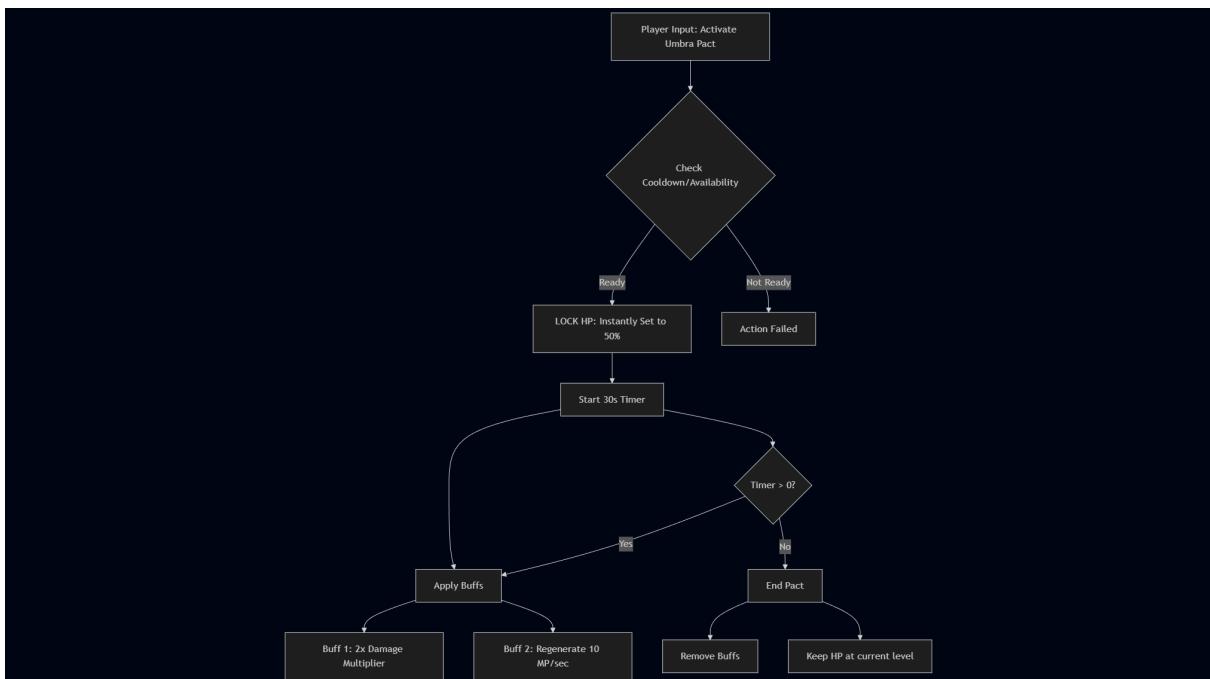
- **Perfect Deflection:** Window: 0.15s. Reward: +5 MP.
- **Perfect Dodge (Teleport):** Window: 0.075s. Cost: 0 MP.
- **Double Jump:** Cost 5 MP.
- **Glide:** Cost 1 MP/sec.



3.4 The Umbra Pact (Mechanic Flow)

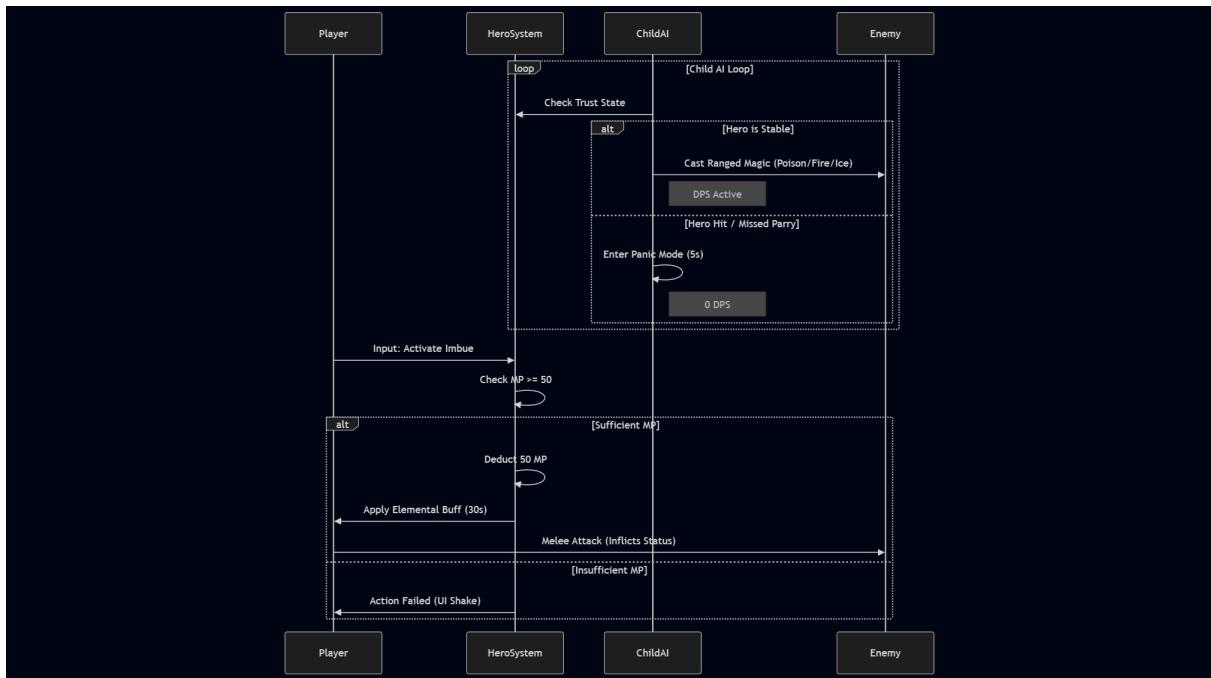
Unlocked at Act I Climax.

- Cost:** Locks HP to 50%.
- Buff:** +10 MP/sec, 2x Damage.
- Duration:** 30s.



3.5 Magic System (Cast & Imbue)

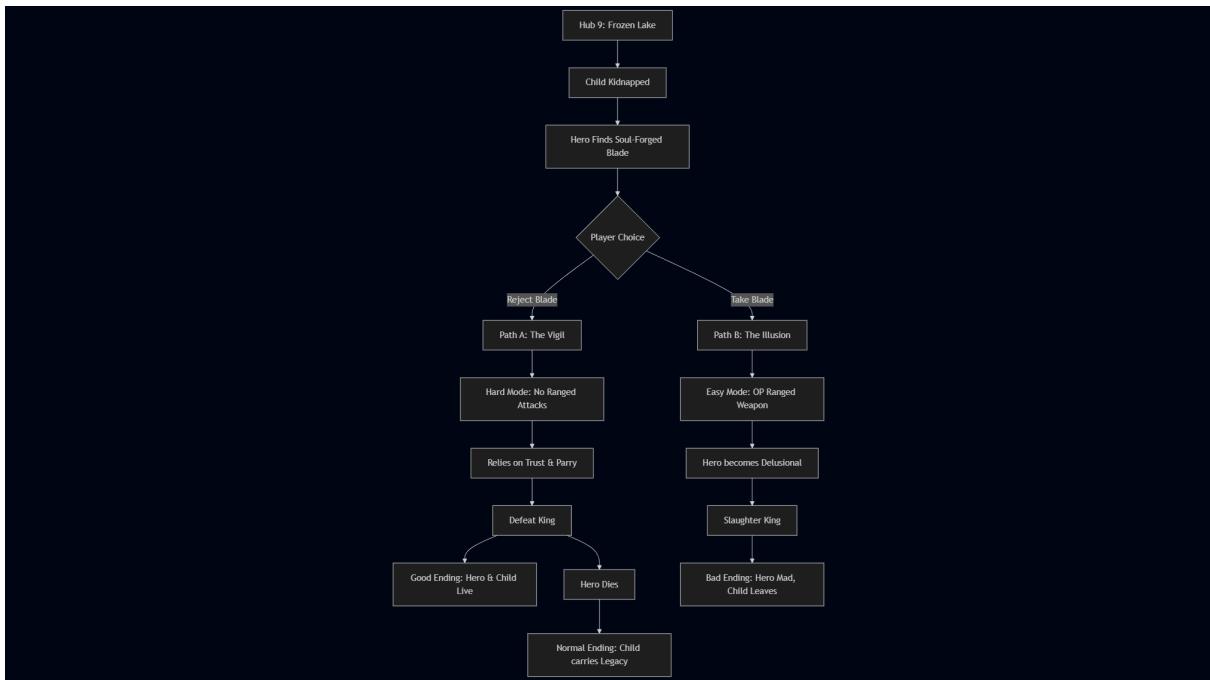
- **Child Cast:** Auto-attacks when Trust is stable.
- **Hero Imbue:** Manual activation (50 MP) to coat sword with Child's element.



3.6 The Soul-Forged Blade (Act III Conditional Mechanic)

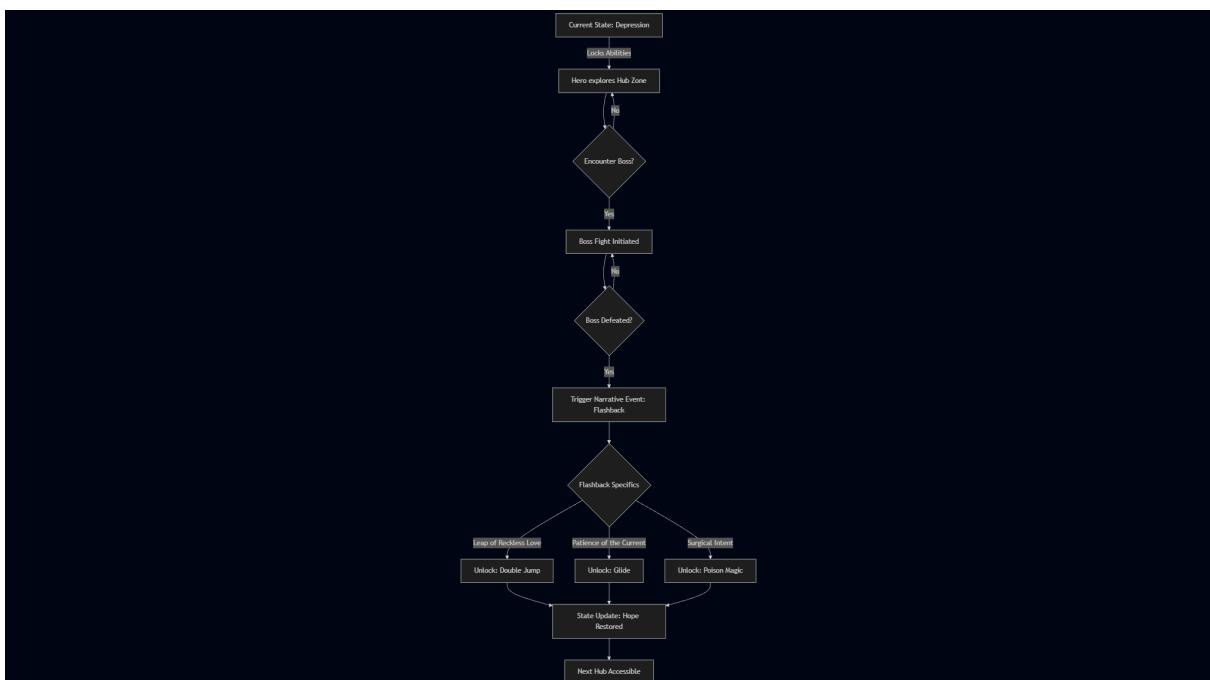
This mechanic allows for the "Bad Path" gameplay style.

- **Unlock Condition:** Act III Moral Choice (Accept the Blade).
- **Weapon Type:** High-Speed Ranged Projectile Weapon.
- **Attack Rate:** Rapid fire (No downtime/cooldown).
- **Magic Types:** Casts Poison, Fire, Ice, and **Corruption**.
- **Corruption Effect:** Enemies hit by the blade become "Demented," attacking their allies instead of the Hero.
- **Passive Effect: Delusion.** The Hero hears the Elf's distorted voice encouraging violence. The Child's Trust mechanic is **Disabled** (she is present but does not fight/support).



4.0 Progression: "Hope-Gating"

Progression is strictly tied to the narrative. Defeating bosses triggers flashbacks that restore "Hope" and unlock abilities.



4.1 Hub & Boss Breakdown (Acts I & II)

Hub	Boss / Location	Ability Unlocked	Narrative Flashback / Dialogue
H1	Mini-Boss: Royal Scavenger	Double Jump (5 MP)	The Leap of Reckless Love <i>Elf:</i> "You risked that much for a single chance. Why?" <i>Hero:</i> "You just taught me what two jumps are for."
H2	Transition: Abyss	Glide (1 MP/s)	The Patience of the Current <i>Elf:</i> "Glide is not a battle; it is a conversation with the wind."
H3	Boss: The Priest	Umbra Pact & Teleport	The Betrayal <i>Priest</i> reveals Elf is dead. <i>Hero</i> enters Rage Mode. Finds King's Letter confirming Child's identity.
H4	Fading Sanctuary	Child Joins	Training <i>Hero</i> masters Trust Mechanic to protect Child. Child's magic shifts from Dark to Yin/Yang.
H5	Boss: Lord Vesper	Poison Magic (Child)	Surgical Intent <i>Elf:</i> "To control the poison is to control the decay. It is a necessary conversation with ruin."
H6	Boss: Ashforged Sentinel	Fire Magic (Child)	The Accepted Risk <i>Hero:</i> "The fire... it will draw everything to us." <i>Elf:</i> "I accept the attention, as long as you remain here, by my side." (75% HP Trust Mandate active).
H7	Boss: Frozen Herald	Ice Magic (Child)	The Core of Stillness <i>Hero:</i> "Find the small point of stillness that is still yours." <i>Elf:</i> "The core... the singular point of intention."
H8	Boss: Scion of Decay	Elemental Imbue	Final Exam <i>Child</i> must negate Fire/Ice apparitions with opposite elements. <i>Hero</i> gains Imbue (50 MP, 30s).

5.0 Act III: The Crossroads of Fate

Hub 9: The Frozen Lake

- **Event:** The King kidnaps the Child. The Hero is left for dead.
- **Discovery:** The Hero finds the **Soul-Forged Blade** in the lake. He hears the Elf's voice (sinister/distorted).

The Moral Choice

Path A: The Good Path (Reject the Blade)

- **Narrative:** The Hero accepts the Elf's death. He refuses the temptation of power and the delusion of her voice.
- **Gameplay State: Hard Mode.** The Hero is alone (Solo). He has NO ranged attacks. He must rely entirely on his own blade, movement (Teleport/Glide), and melee prowess to storm the castle.
- **Goal:** Rescue the Child to regain magical support for the final fight.

Path B: The Bad Path (Accept the Blade)

- **Narrative:** The Hero succumbs to the allure. He believes the Elf is alive within the sword. He becomes callous and murderous.
- **Gameplay State: Power Fantasy Mode.** The Hero equips the **Soul-Forged Blade** (Mechanic 3.6). He gains Ranged Corruption attacks with no downtime. Combat becomes trivial, but the narrative becomes tragic.

6.0 The Endings (Final Boss: The Corrupted King)

1. The Good Ending (Vigil of the Second Light)

- **Condition:** Player chose **Good Path** AND successfully defeats the King.
- **Outcome:** The Child is rescued during the climax. They fight the King together (Restored Trust).
- **Cinematic:** The Hero and Child live together in peace. The Child calls him "Father." The Hero has found peace in his Vigil.

2. The Normal Ending (The Cycle Ends)

- **Condition:** Player chose **Good Path** BUT the **Hero dies** during the final fight (Specific narrative trigger or defeat cutscene).
- **Outcome:** The Hero's soul enters his own (standard) blade. The Child, overcome with grief but empowered by his sacrifice, wields his blade.
- **Cinematic:** The Child unleashes her full power + the Hero's blade to defeat the King. She ends the cycle of hatred alone, carrying her father's spirit.

3. The Bad Ending (Illusion of Solace)

- **Condition:** Player chose **Bad Path**.
 - **Outcome:** The Hero slaughters the King using the Soul-Forged Blade. The Child watches the atrocity in horror.
 - **Cinematic:** The Soul-Forged Blade, having fulfilled its purpose of killing the Demon King, disintegrates. The Elf's voice vanishes. The Hero falls into complete delusion, waiting for a dead woman. The Child abandons him. He is left alone on the throne, mad with grief.
-

7.0 Technical Implementation Notes (Unity)

- **Input System:** Use the new Unity Input System for 0.15s precision.
- **Parry Logic:** `Time.deltaTime` based frame counting.
- **Child AI:** Use a Finite State Machine (FSM): Idle, Casting, Panic (Silence), Follow.
- **Save System:** Progression flags (`hasDoubleJump`, `bladeAccepted`, `endingType`) stored in GameManager.
- **Blade Logic (Act III):** If `bladeAccepted == true`, enable Soul-Forged Blade mechanics (Rapid Fire/Corruption). If `false`, disable Child AI until "Rescue" event trigger.