

Game Proposal: The Maze

Man Zou

Project 2- Prototype

Artistic Vision

Introduction

The legend of Wang Fuyun is a widely known story in Dali.

In winter, on a cloudless and sunny day, suddenly a cloud as bright as silver and white as snow appeared on the Yuju Peak of Cangshan Mountain. The cloud displays clean and soft light across the deep blue sky.

Then, unpredictably, it turns from white to black and raises higher and higher, and its figure became longer and longer, like a slender woman with disheveled hair and a black funeral dress, as if looking down on the vast sea of Er and crying loudly. This is the legendary Cloud of Eternal Sorrow. When it appears, no matter how good the weather is, there will be violent winds and sea waves in an instant.

According to legend, this cloud is the incarnation of Princess Afeng of Nanzhao. She falls in love with a young hunter and together they flee to the mountain, living in a cave. Her father then invited a Buddhist priest, master Luo Quan, to search for the princess. The mountain was too cold for the princess, so the man went into the palace looking for a coat. He found the magic coat of the priest that can protect from any cold, but on his way to bring it back to the princess, he was petrified by the priest, becoming a stone in the sea of Er. The princess died on the peak of Cangshan Yuju and her essence turned into a white cloud, angry, trying to blow the sea away and see her lover. Therefore, later generations called this cloud of eternal sorrow.

Of course, in reality, the appearance of this cloud is entirely caused by the high-speed airflow, and it is related to the special geographical location of Cangshan and Erhai.

Artistic Vision

Main Goal

Historically, women's social status across the globe experienced various states; while their positions are widely studied in dominant civilizations, it is not so much the case of smaller ethnic groups. Growing up as a person of minority ethnicity in China, I have been taught many local legends, leaving the younger me fascinated. However, looking back at those stories, there is some unexplained incoherence in the narrations that troubles me, mainly in the transparency of female characters.

In the tale of the Cloud of Eternal Sorrow, for example, we observe an almost muted opinion of the princess on events that have happened to her. Thus, I want to re-propose an imagined version of the legend that will tell the story from her own perspective, respond to the abnormalities such as why would she follow the man to a cave in the mountain, leading to her lonely death?

The player will start as a soul in the cave, with the skeleton of the princess, going on a quest that will reveal their identity. The soul will enter a maze that will gradually reveal the story. When all the events have been seen, it will be redirected to the cave and will guess the identity of the skeleton (the princess). Upon successful guess, the hidden reality of her relationship with the man and her death will be revealed. The soul then flies to the mountain and becomes the cloud of eternal sorrow.

Colour Theme:



Visual Asset Style:



In order to follow along the theme of Bai people's culture (where the legend is originated), I will keep the illustration style simple and inspired by watercolours.

Fig. 1. Asset example, painted in 2020 by Man Zou.

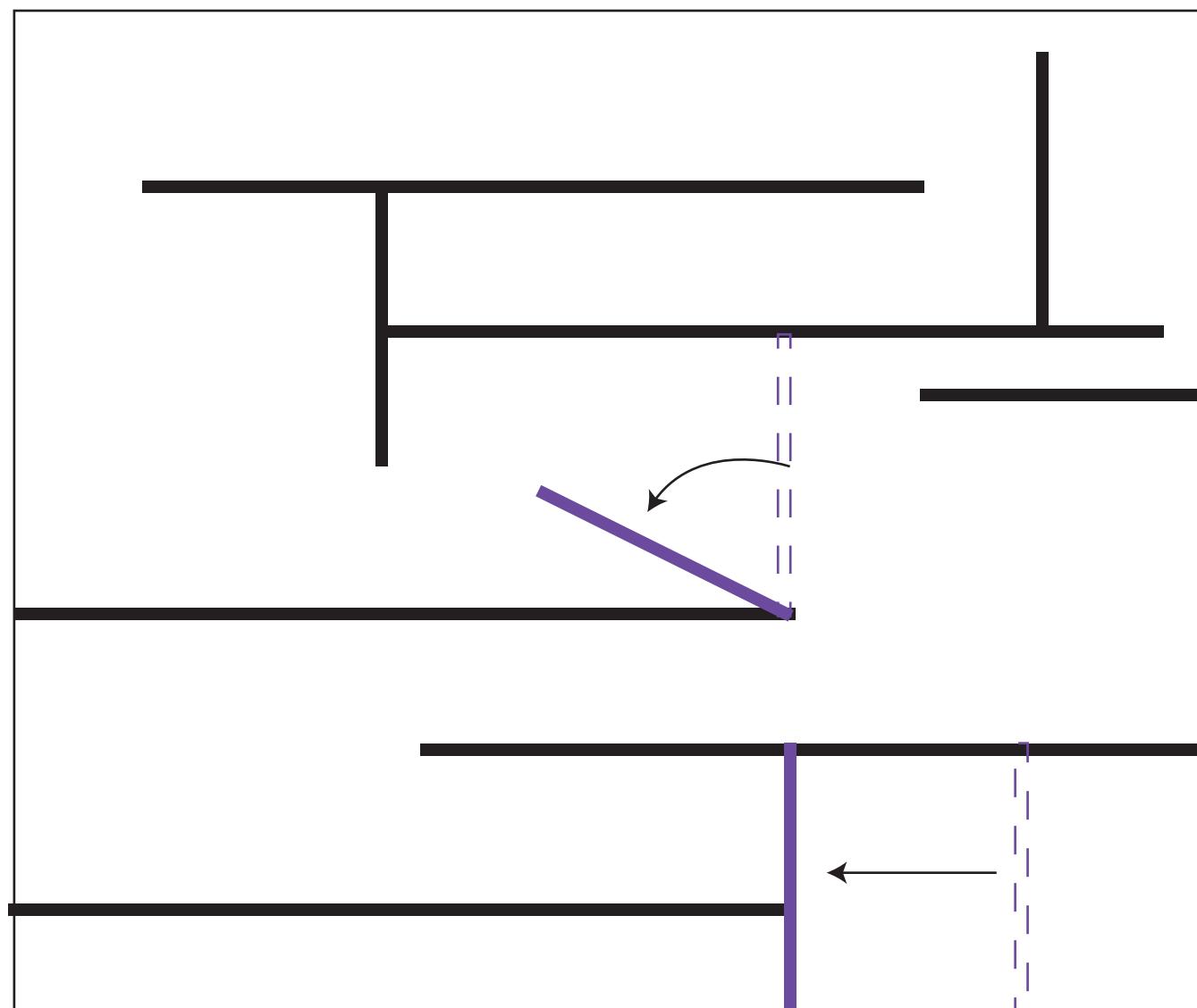
Music and Sound Effect:

As the game is centered around legends, I will search for background music exhibiting mysterious feeling, while keeping a rythm that is engaging.

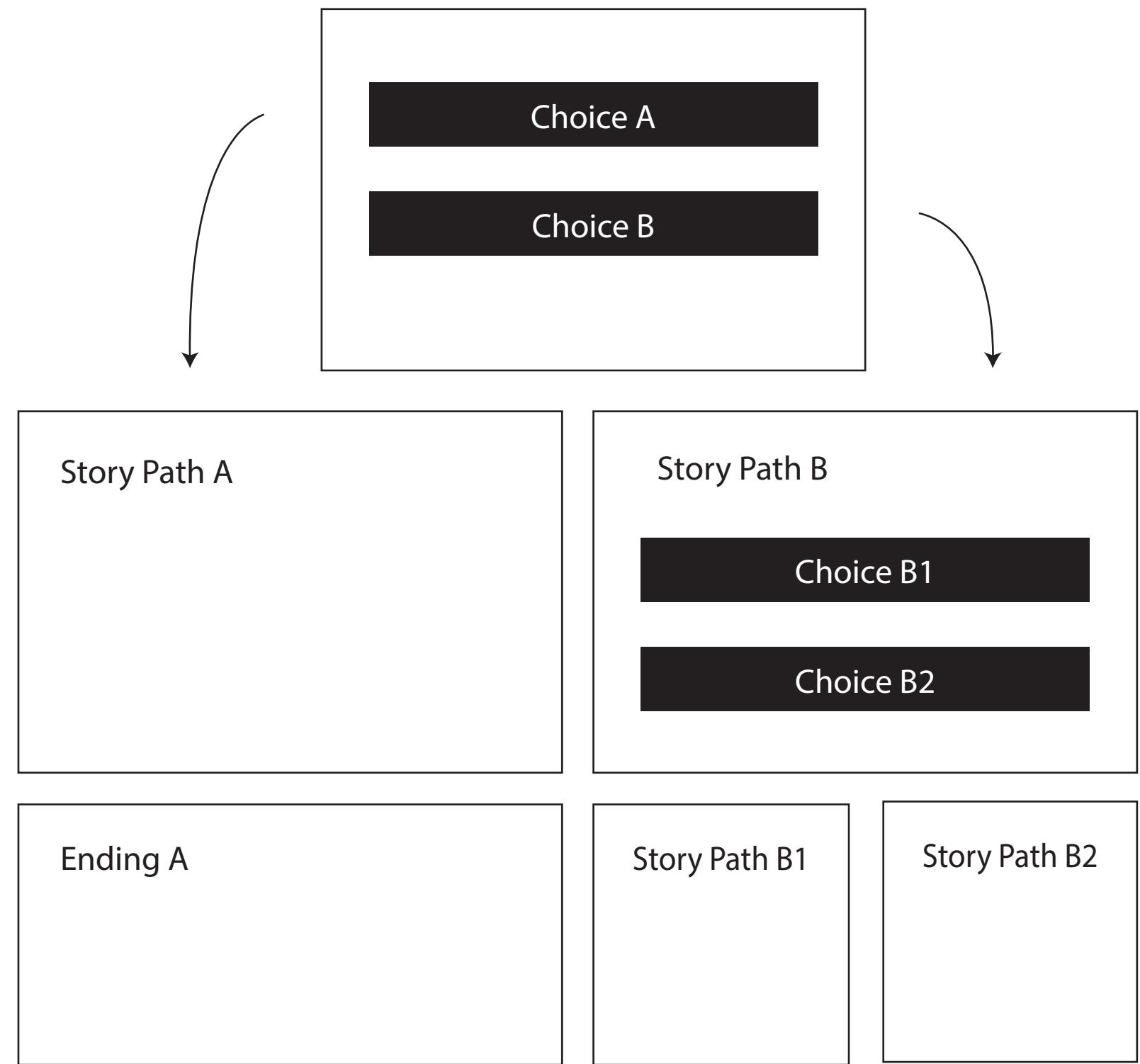
Technical Challenge

Main Goal

I will aim to develop an RPG game structure that incorporates a maze mechanic. I will explore how to create a maze structure with moving walls that will affect the gameplay experience, with different sets of events that will trigger the displacement.



Maze mechanics



RPG mechanics