

God's Petting Choice?

Timeline
Sep -Dec 2018

My role
Designer, Programmer

As a messenger of the gods, you are tasked with aiding the survival of the cat and dog tribes. Will you diligently fulfill your duties and assist both species? Will you favor one side and allow them to dominate the ecosystem? Or will you send all creatures away and let the environment wither? Perhaps you will discover an uncharted path.



GAME INSPIRATION

As we recall the games we have played, many incorporate the concept of side effects. We reviewed them to find inspirations.



We believe the challenge and excitement brought by such designs are thrilling, and we want to incorporate them as design elements.

BACKGROUND

Brainstorm

This work was designed by me during a game jam, with the theme being "side effects". It is an interesting keyword that can be related to lots of natural rules and artworks.

Pills



The most straightforward thought about side effect is taking pills. Pills always cause side effects.

Fiction movies



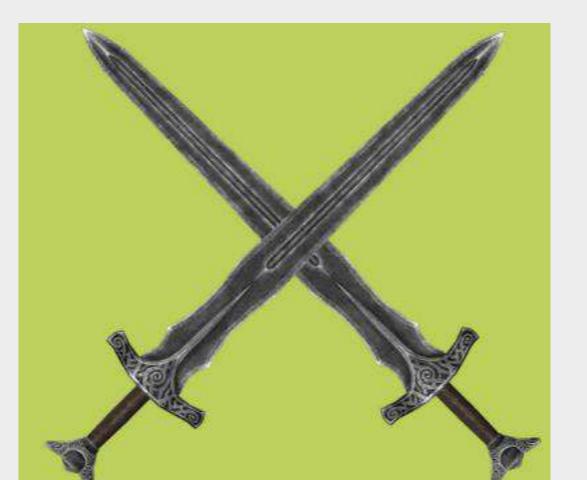
Fiction movies loves the notion like the heroine in Lucy get intelligence but her life get shortened.

Life choices

Side effects is also related closely with choices. Whenever you make one choice, it is always not 100% beneficial as you give up another possibility. Like The Matrix



Double-Edged swords



These game depends on major choices, but I need to incorporate minor decisions, so I should avoid designing such key branching points



Conclusion

- Need to design:
- Different ways to make player endure MINOR side effect.
- Choices that require players to bear certain costs in exchange for significant gains

USER AVATAR

Ming
21 y/o Male University Student



Life Condition
He takes his classes seriously but likes to play games in his free time to relieve stress.
Game Preference

Game Preference
He doesn't have much energy for overly serious games, believing that they don't allow him to play casually and relax.

Dorothy
33 y/o Female IT worker



Life Condition
Busy for work before, but now she has some time to relax as career has risen.
Game Preference

Game Preference
She often chooses games with cute graphics and tells her child interesting little stories while they play together.

ART'STYLE REFERENCE

I have found inspiration from some web designs. I hope to convey a relaxed atmosphere through a cute art style and avoid a serious or didactic tone to a certain extent.



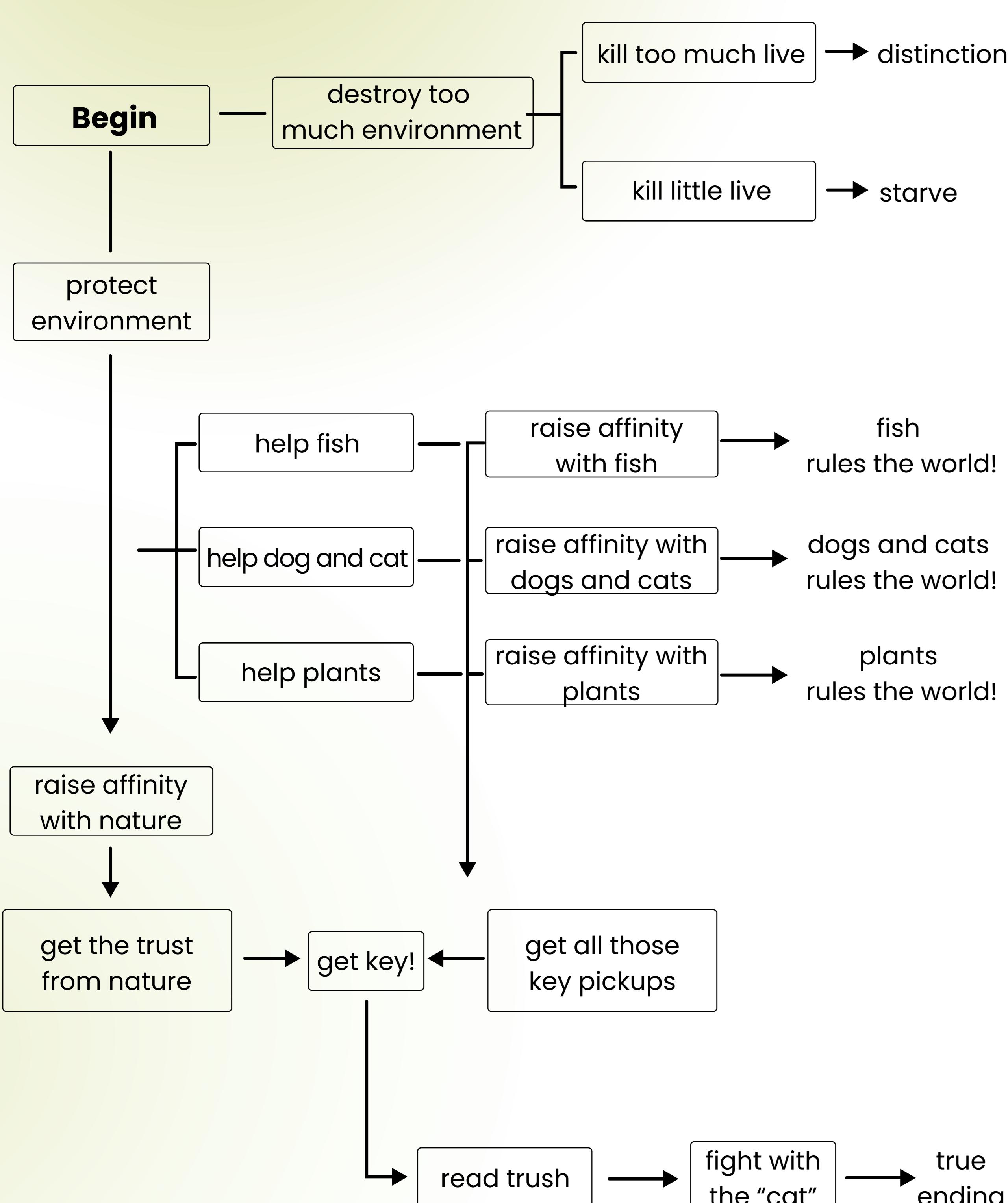
GAME INSPIRATION

Concept Design

Players take on the role of a messenger from the upper realm to resolve various issues in the world..



GAME FLOW



DESIGN KEY POINTS

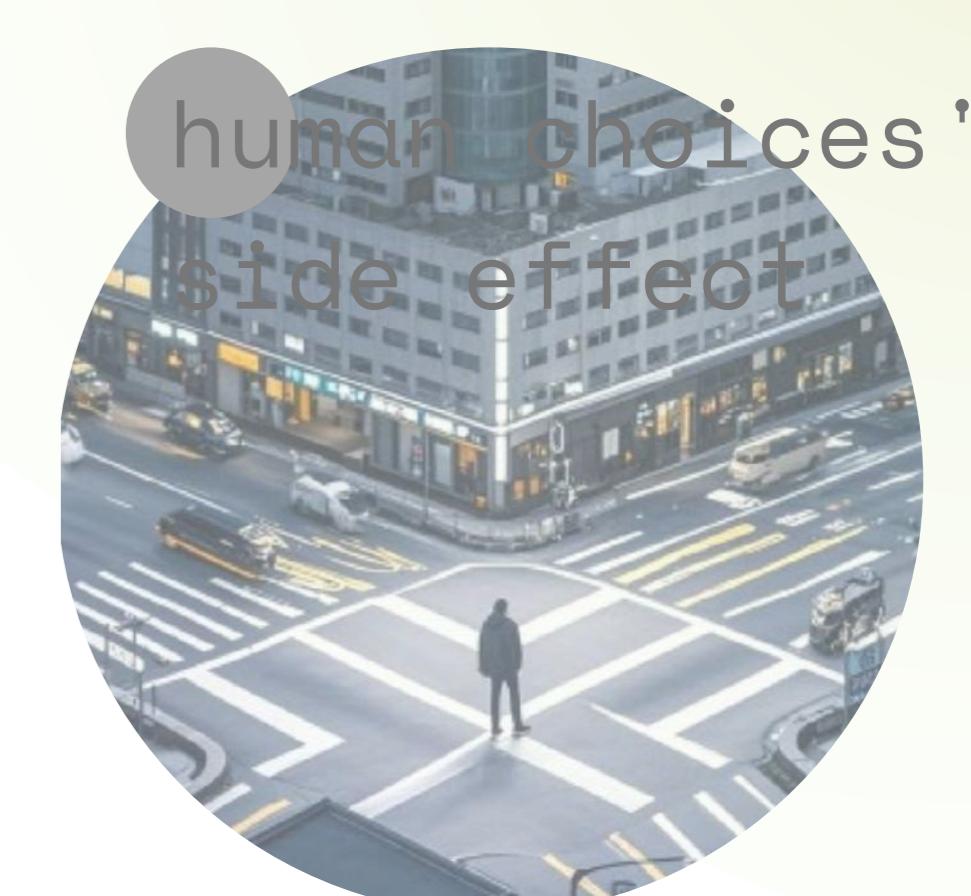
"COMPLEX ENVIRONMENT"

The game features a large, fixed map where the locations and quantities of enemies are predetermined for each game session. Enemies do not respawn after being defeated.

SIMILARITY & DIFFERENCES



V.S



Does it takes effect in a complicated environment?

Yes. In human's body.

Yes. In society.

When the reward is high, do side effects get worse?

Yes. A lot medication cure fatal disease while hurting the body badly.

Yes. Based on our daily living experience.

Does it takes place regularly?

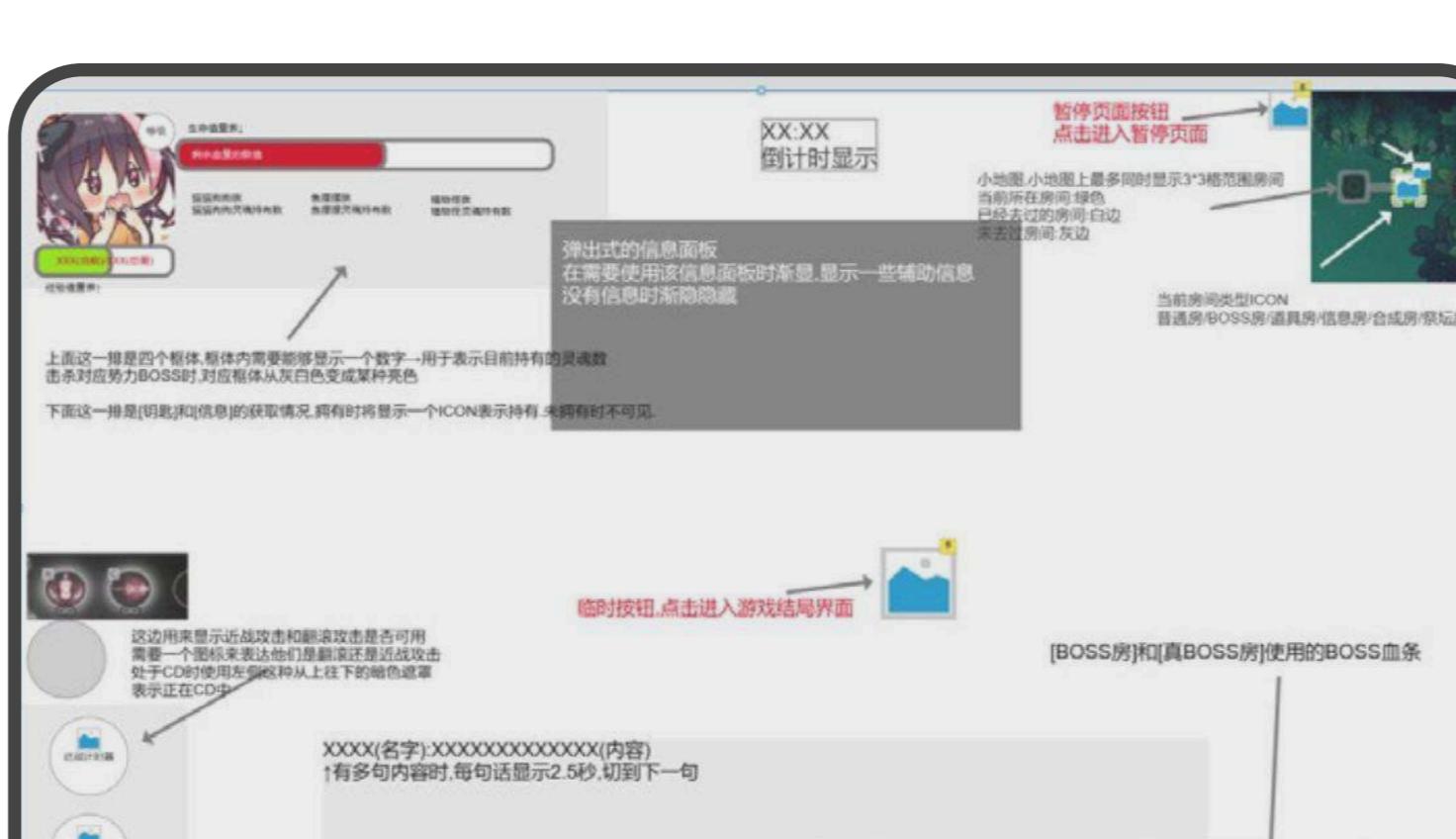
Yes. Medication are taken regularly

No. Instead of regular routine, choice is subtle through out our life and change life in unnoticeable ways.

DESIGN PROCESS

4.20-4.26: Ideation and Planning

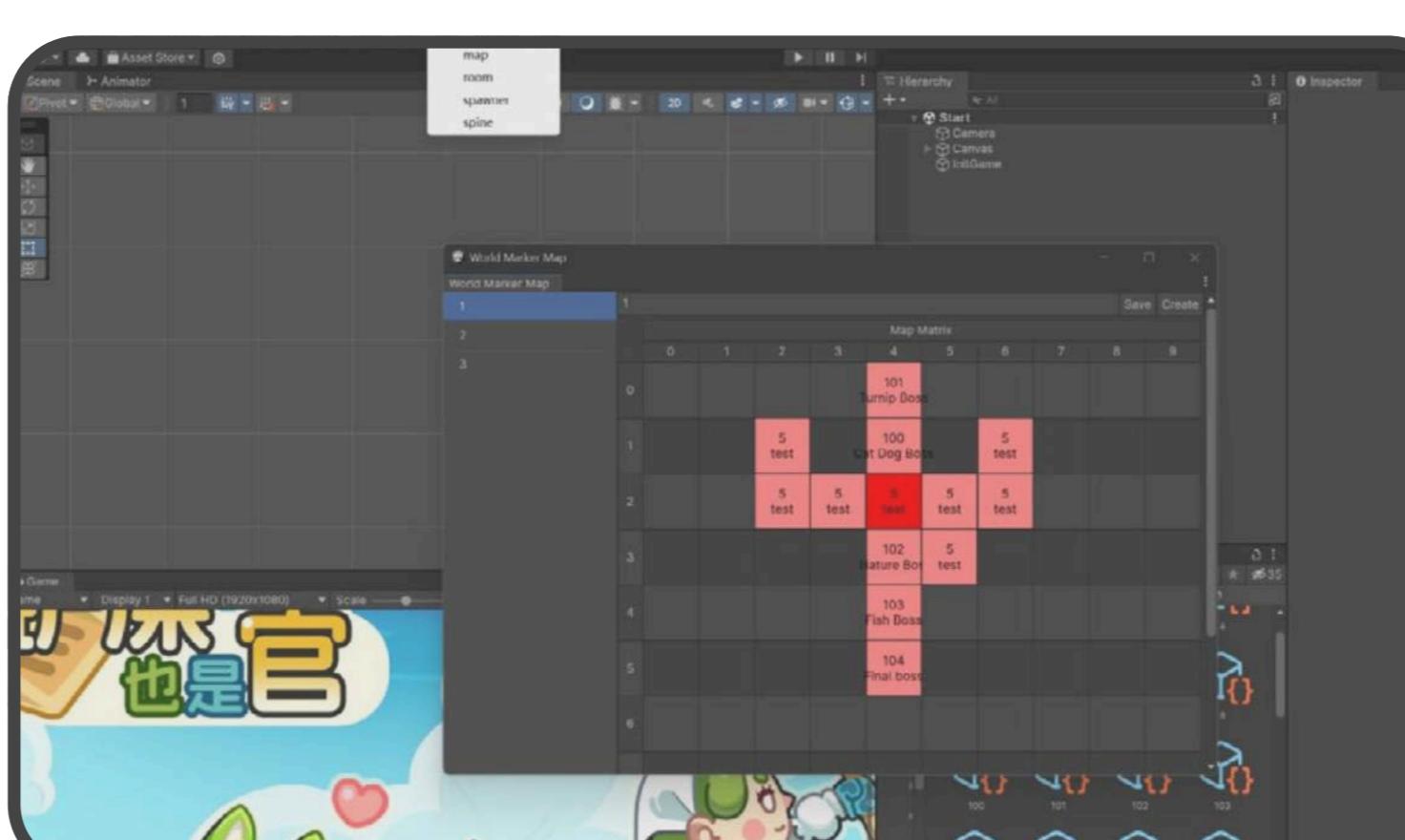
● Complete the game design document. Programmers set up the game framework based on the game type.



● Draw the draft of the main character and design the whole art style.



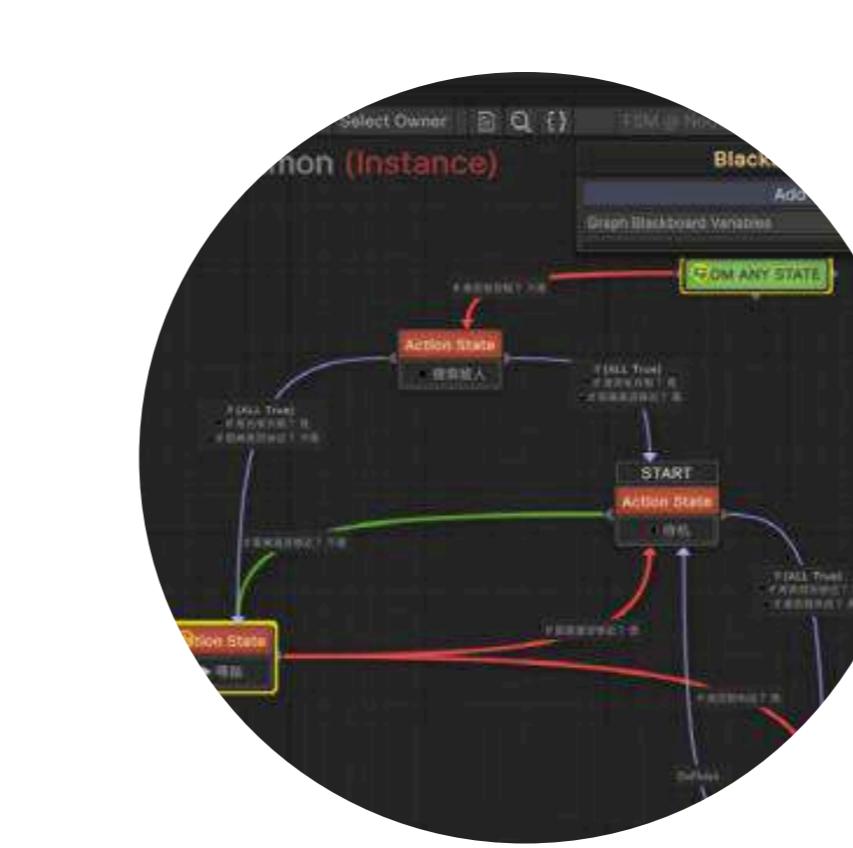
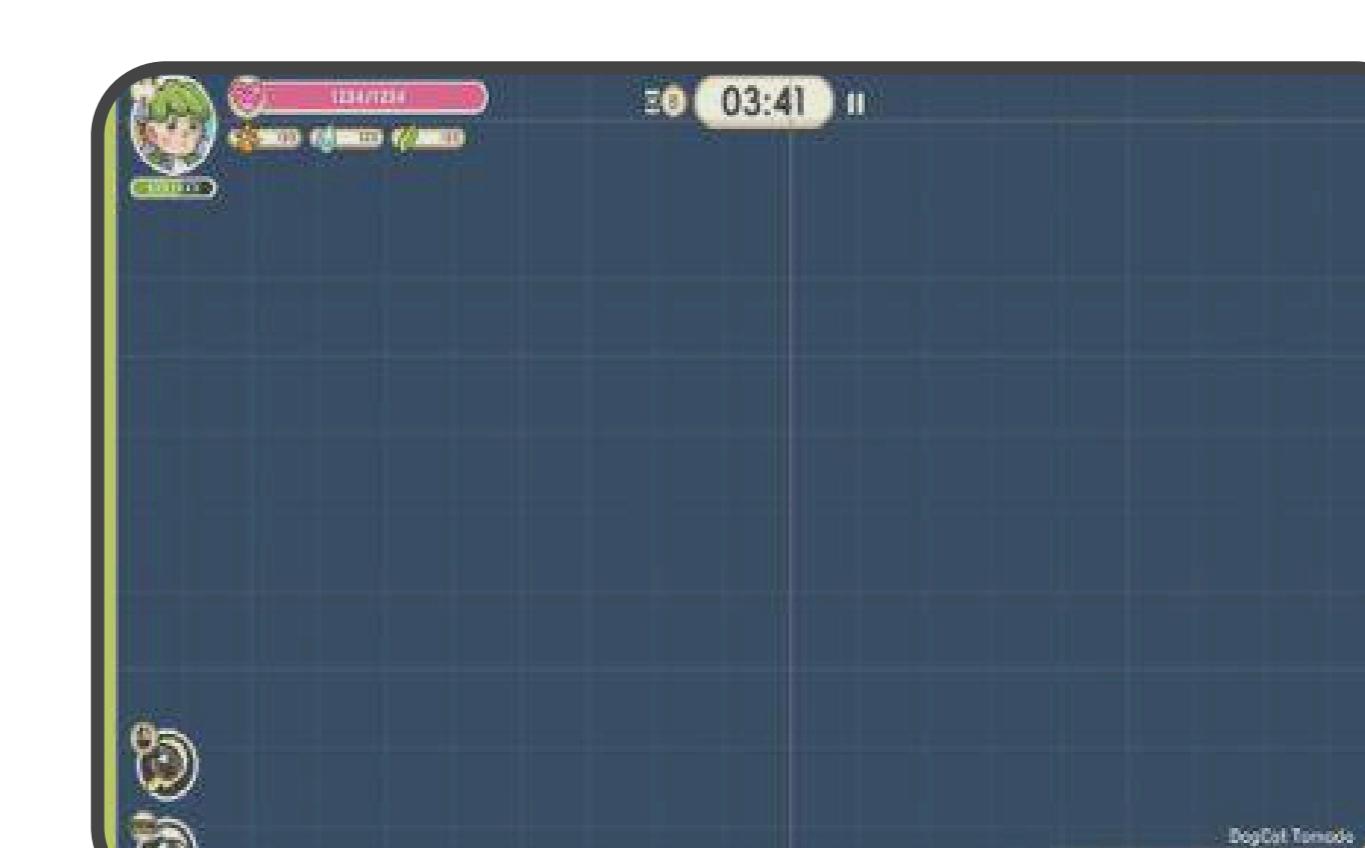
● Develop UI prototypes and create Unity plugins specifically for the pro!



4.27-5.2: Integration of UI Elements

Build the main game content, including enemy targeting logic and other challenging aspects, based on the game framework. Animators design animations based on art assets. Game designers review the quality of artwork and request revisions as necessary.

UI Prototype



Set up and finalize the finite state machine to complete enemy movement logic.



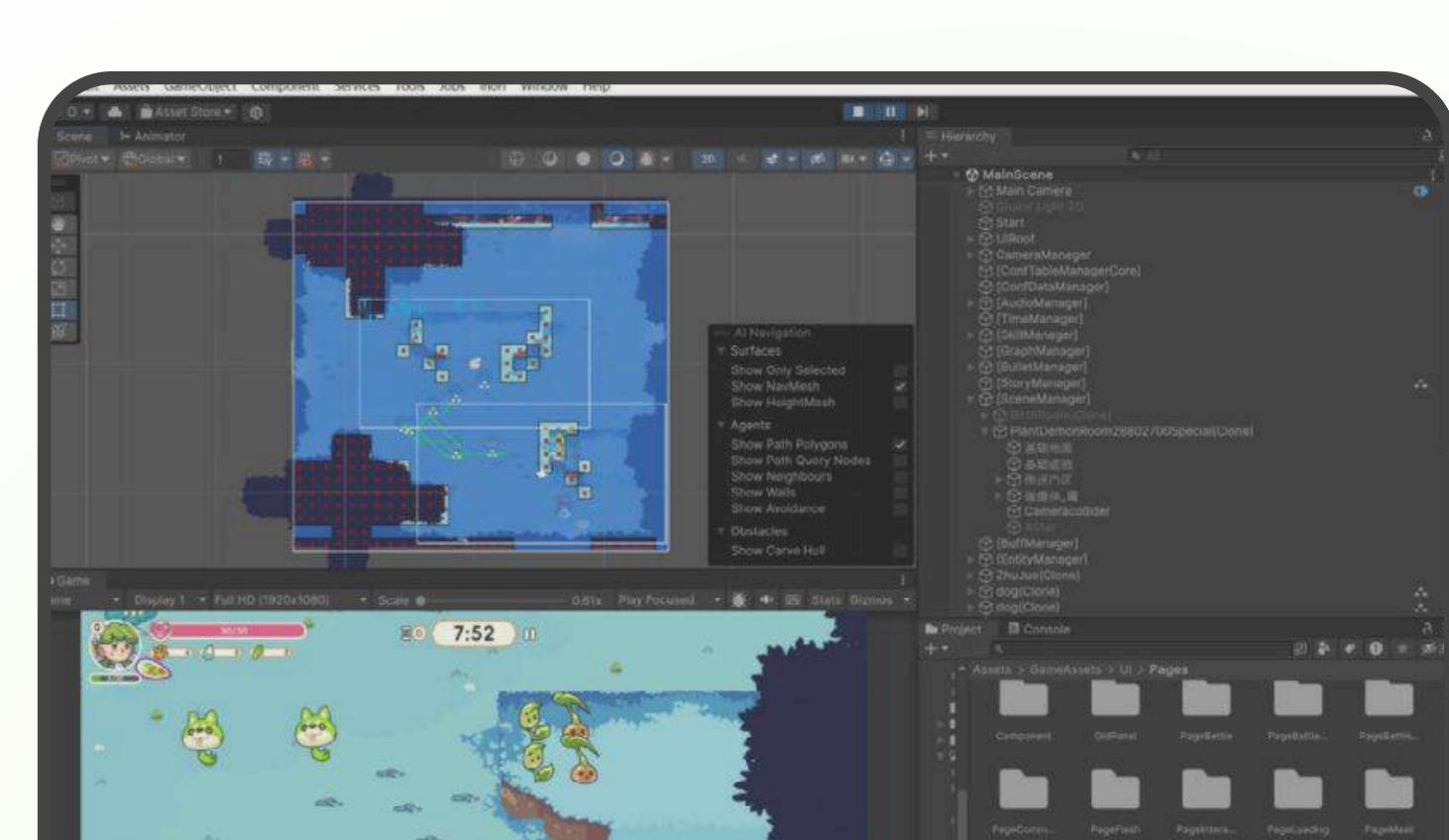
Implement animations (using skeleton animation)

5.2-5.7: Programming Details

Programmers integrate UI elements, implement map switching logic, and trigger sound effects. A playable demo is formed.

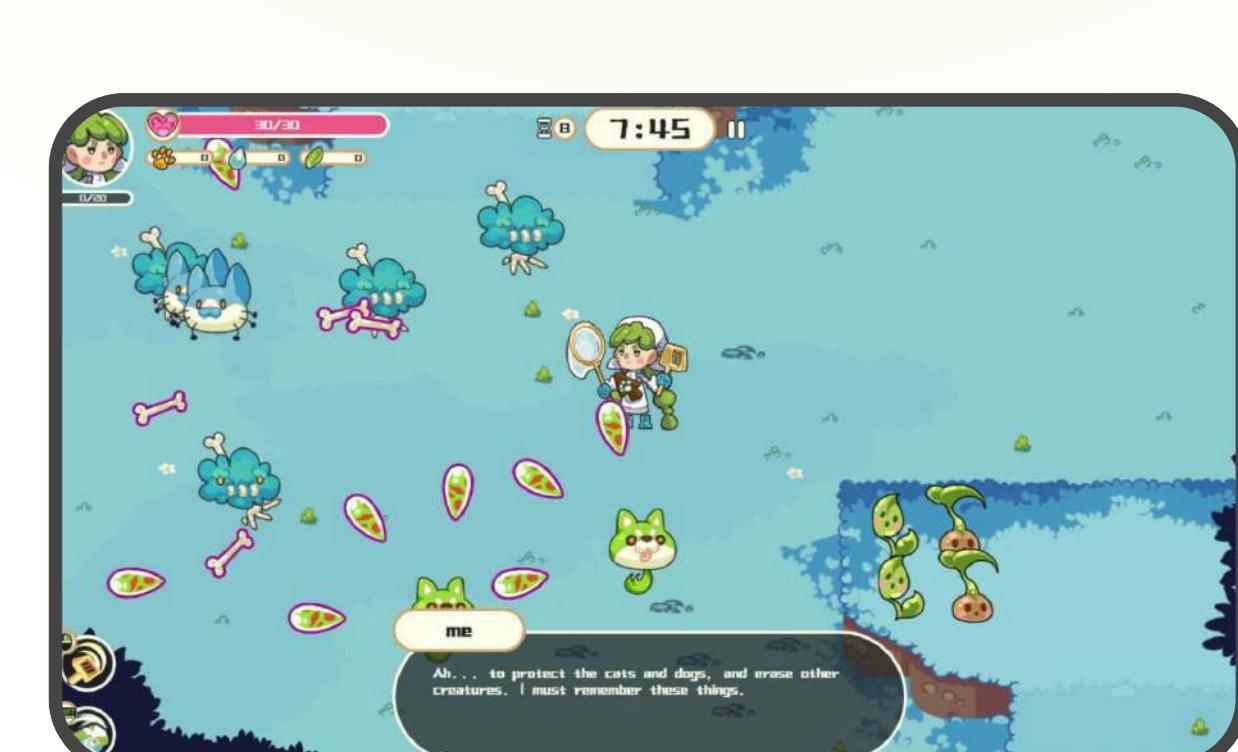
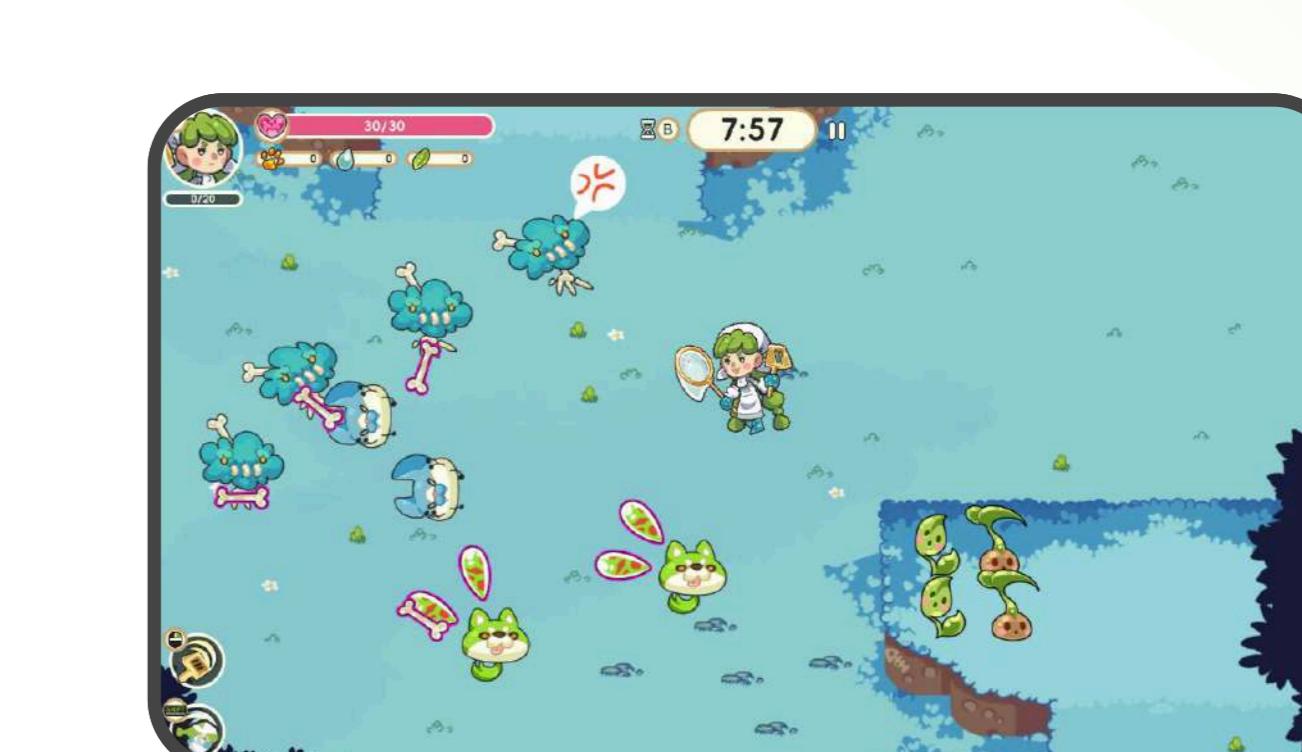
5.7-5.9: Testing and Bug Fixing

Conduct extensive testing of the game. Fix bugs and make necessary adjustments.



Among the enemies, cats and dogs perceive the player as an ally who has come to help them. They will assist the protagonist in fighting other units (until the protagonist actively attacks them). Other units display hostility towards the protagonist.

Before protagonist attacks them

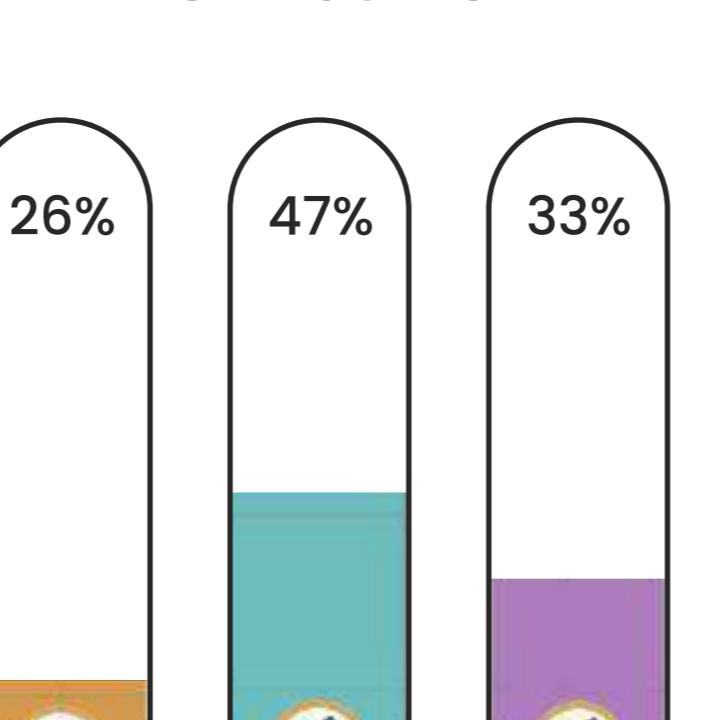


DESIGN KEY POINTS

"COMPLEX ENVIRONMENT"

The game features a large, fixed map where the locations and quantities of enemies are predetermined for each game session. Enemies do not respawn after being defeated.

Distribution



Environment



IDEA 01



Power-1 Power-3
Power-2

IDEA 02



IDEA 02



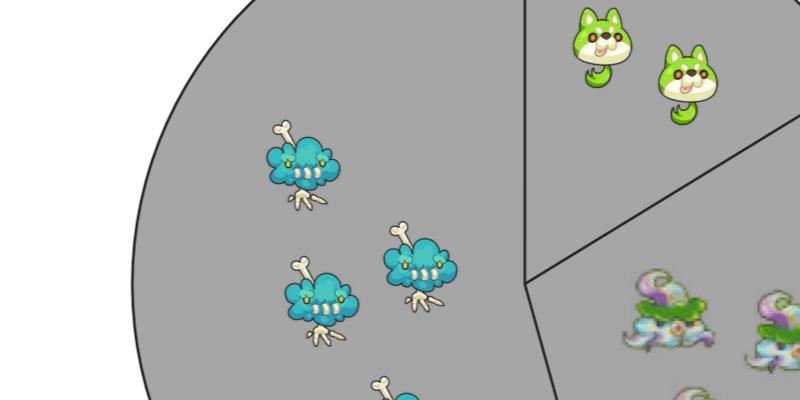
Island-1
Island-2 Island-3

IDEA 03



Many small rooms with big maps design. Compared to the former ones, it can create a big map with variety with limited map assets. And the maze-like map with some temporarily locked rooms makes exploring more exciting.

For the cat, dog, fish, and plant factions, the power of each faction is determined by the number of surviving enemies on the map. This decides which faction will rule the lower realm at the end of the game. Determines the Ending!



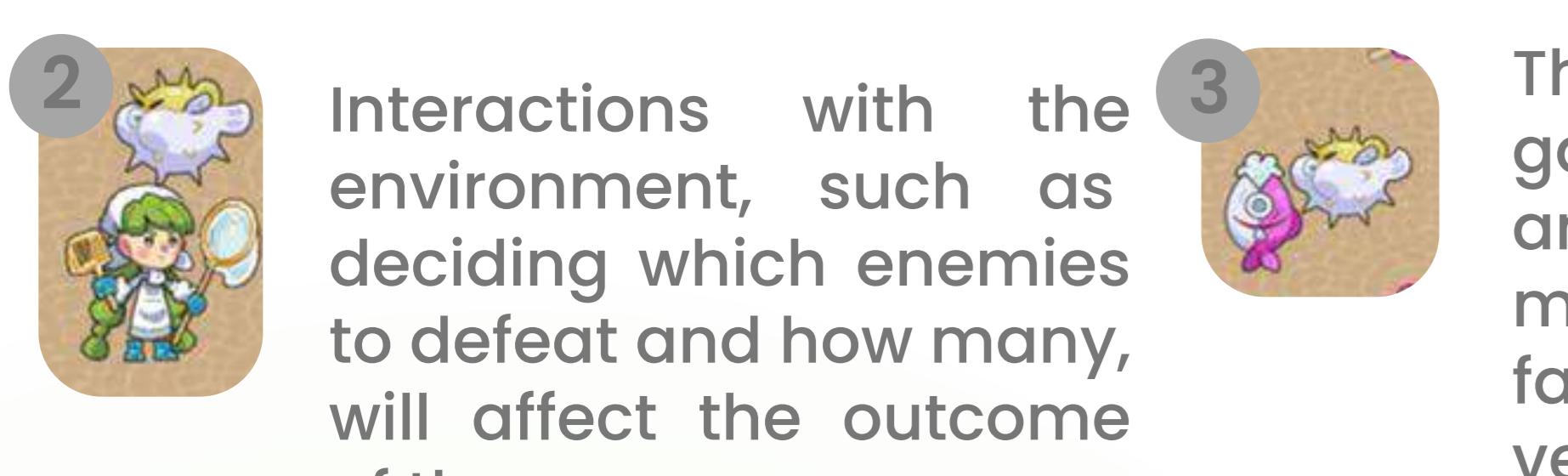
Beyond the three powers, there is a natural power influenced by destructible objects and other environmental elements. This power also controls the storyline, and players need to gradually discover the significance of the natural metrics on their own.

"MINOR CHOICE"

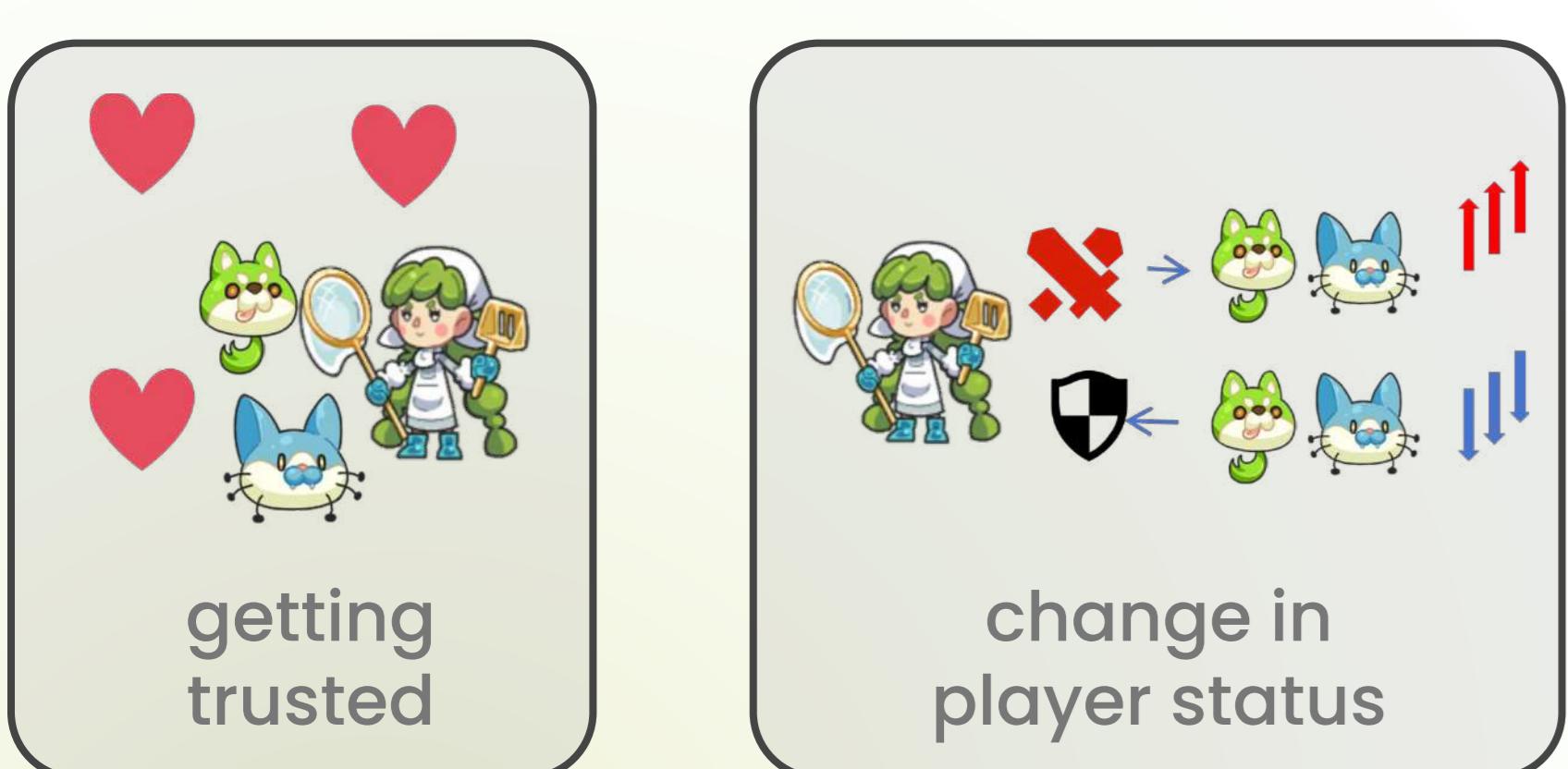
Players need to make numerous subtle decisions, which should be designed to have non-completely positive outcomes: achieving certain positive effects require bearing certain costs



Due to the time limit in each game session, players must make choices everywhere. Taking the time to thoroughly clear rooms means less time for exploration, potentially leading to fewer experience points, items, and skills upgrades with both positive and negative impacts.



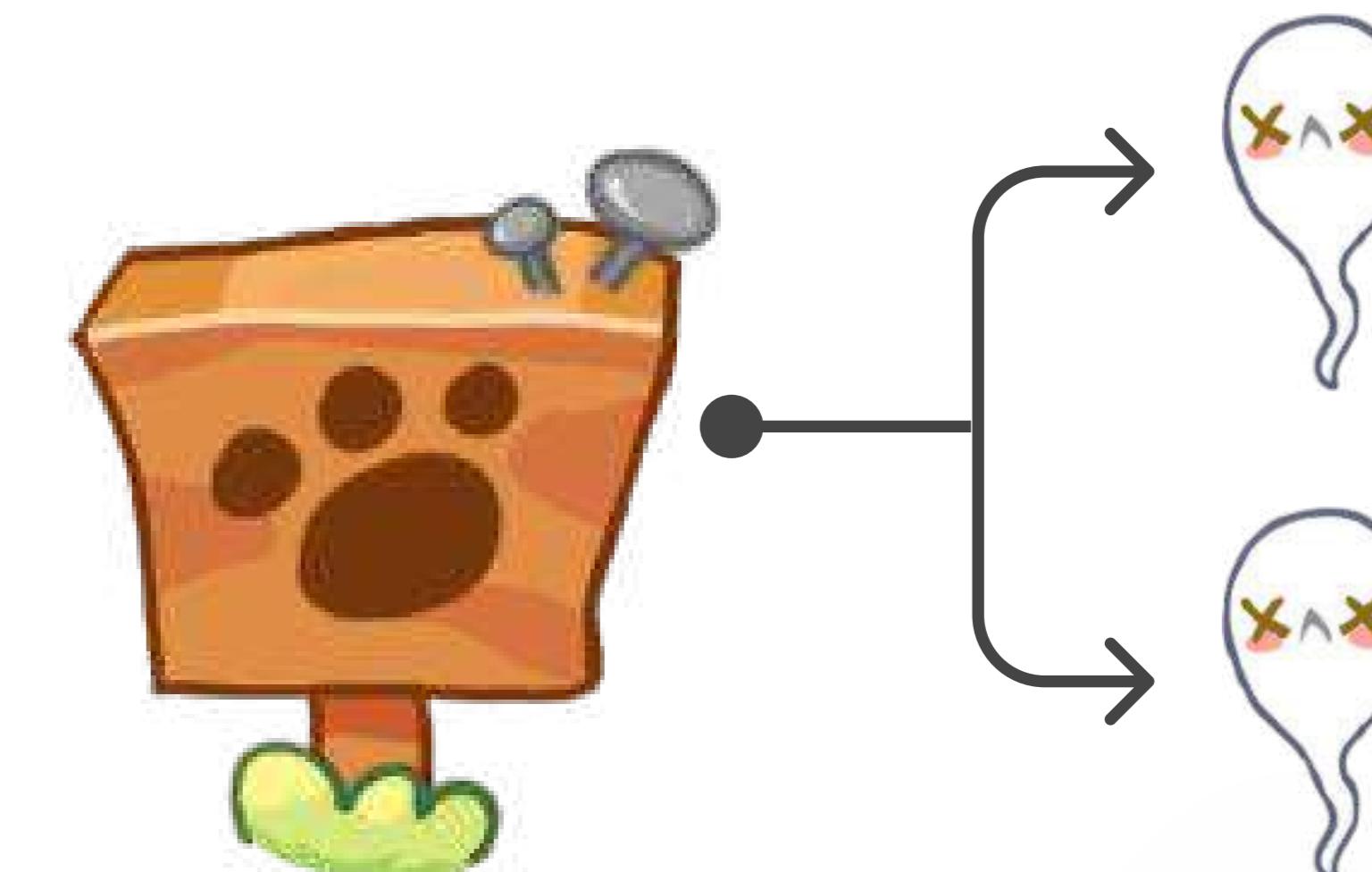
The core attribute "[Affinity]" will span the entire game process. It is an attribute with both positive and negative aspects. The higher this value, the more damage enemies of the corresponding faction will cause to the player and vice versa. Different thresholds of Affinity will also produce various effects.



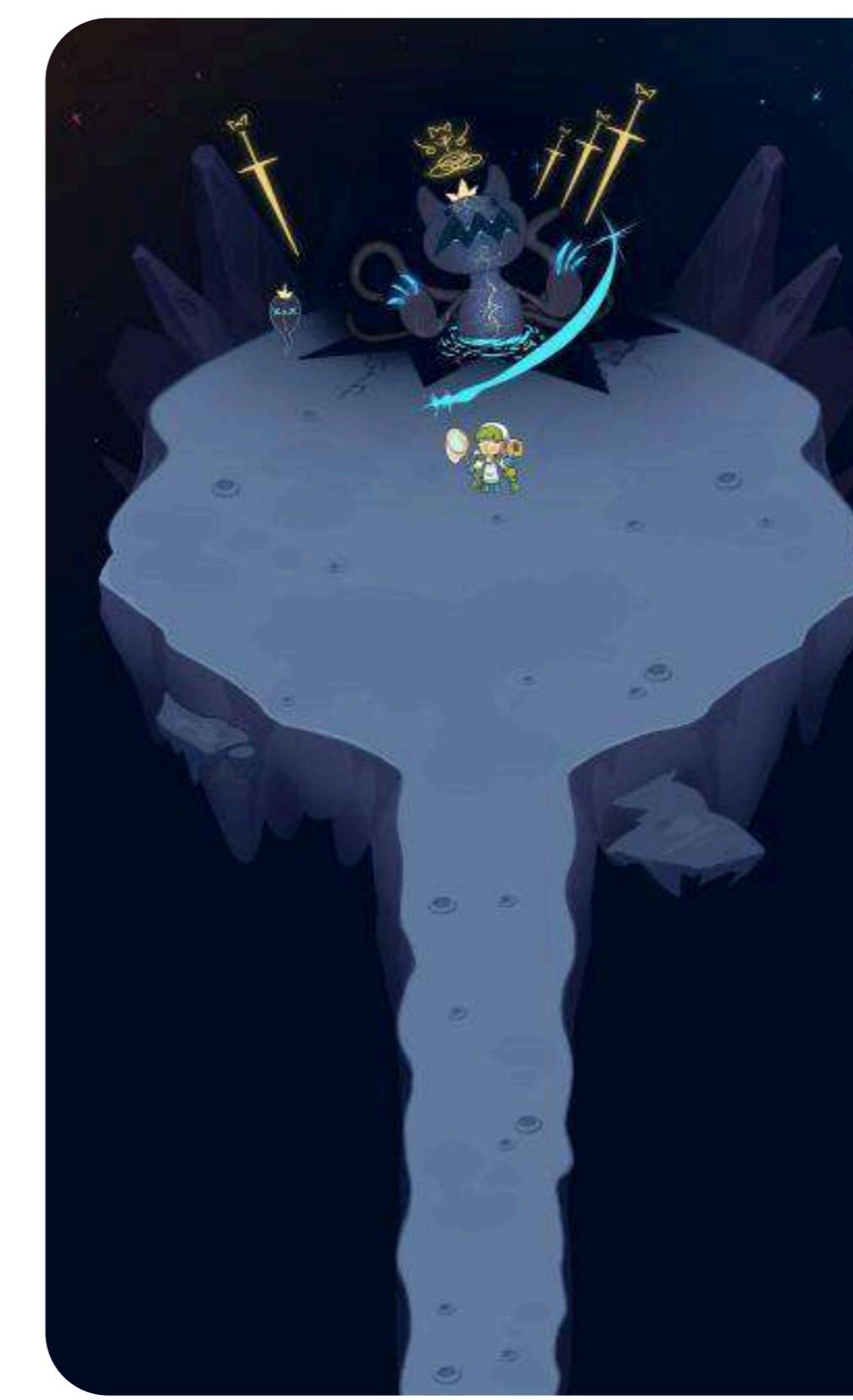
increase of affinity

THE METAPHOR IN THE PLOT - THE THEME OF THE GAME

Player will uncover the truth after several rounds of exploring



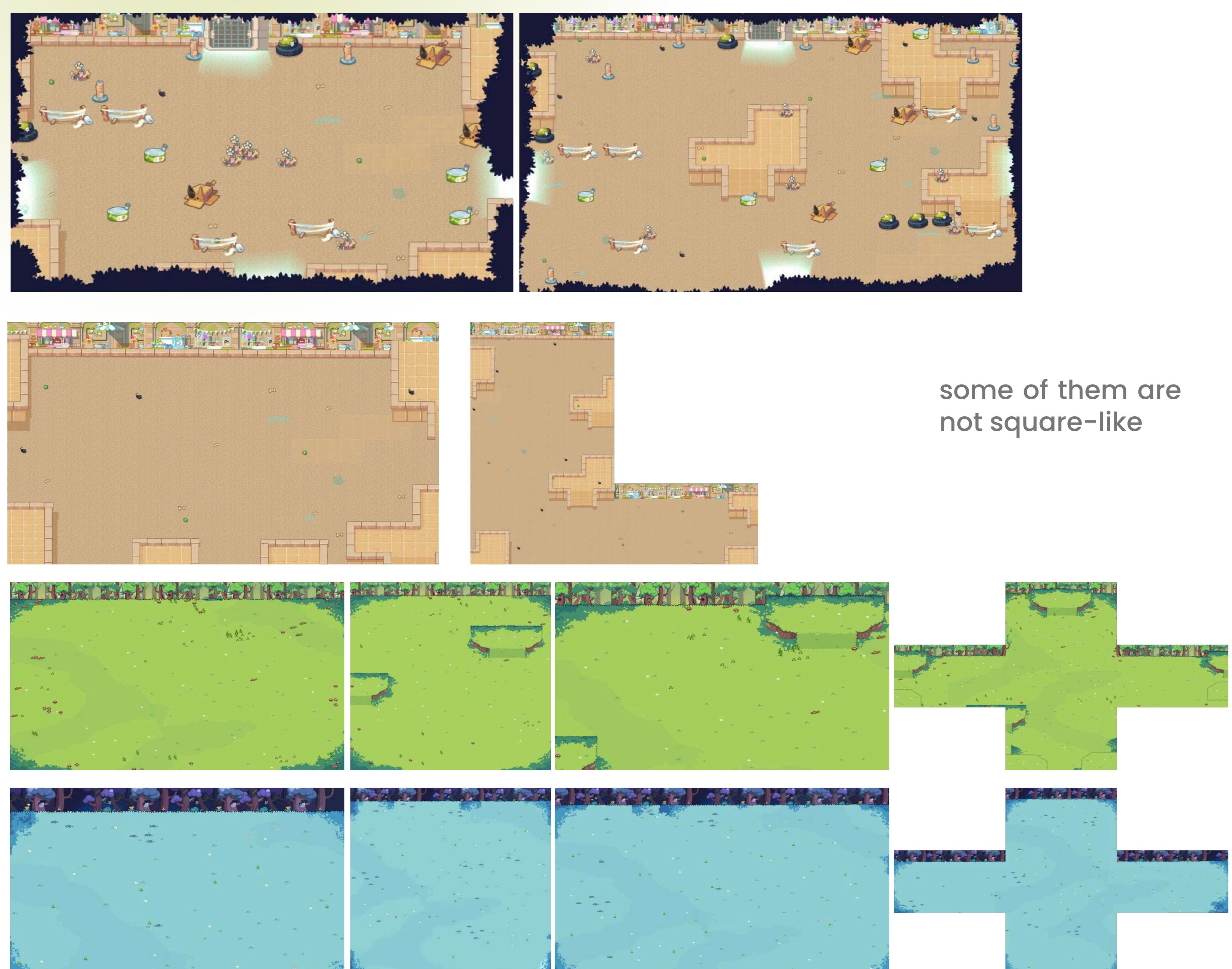
This little story illustrates the situation of not having the right choices. Even when we think we've found the optimal solution, we still cannot escape the side effects that come with it. But the protagonist returns to an ordinary life, avoiding a heavy narrative.



They should unite with these factions to defeat the entity that controls them, freeing themselves from the game of the gods and taking on their responsibilities to prevent similar things from happening again.

ARTWORK SHOWCASE

Different map style

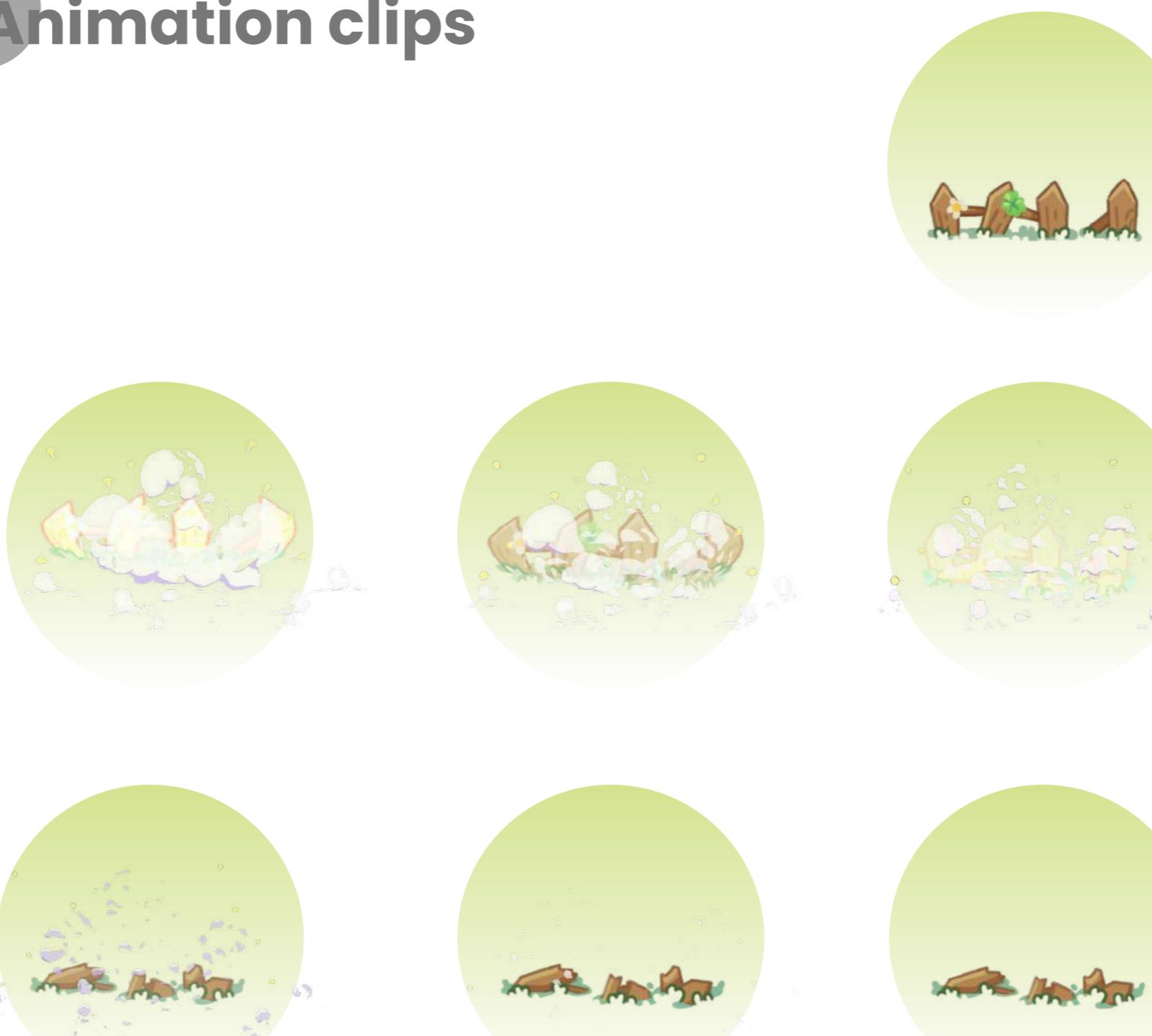


some of them are not square-like

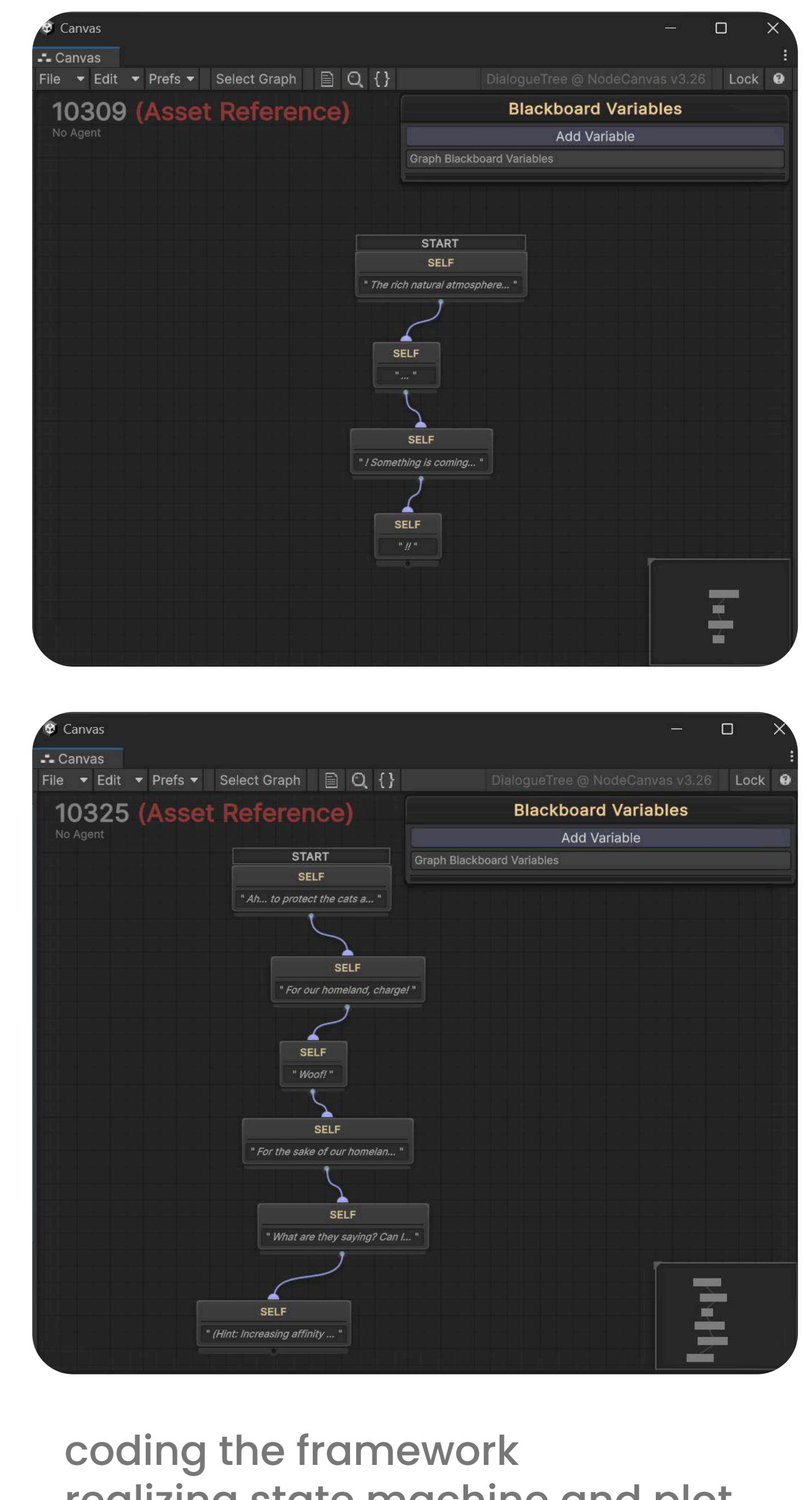
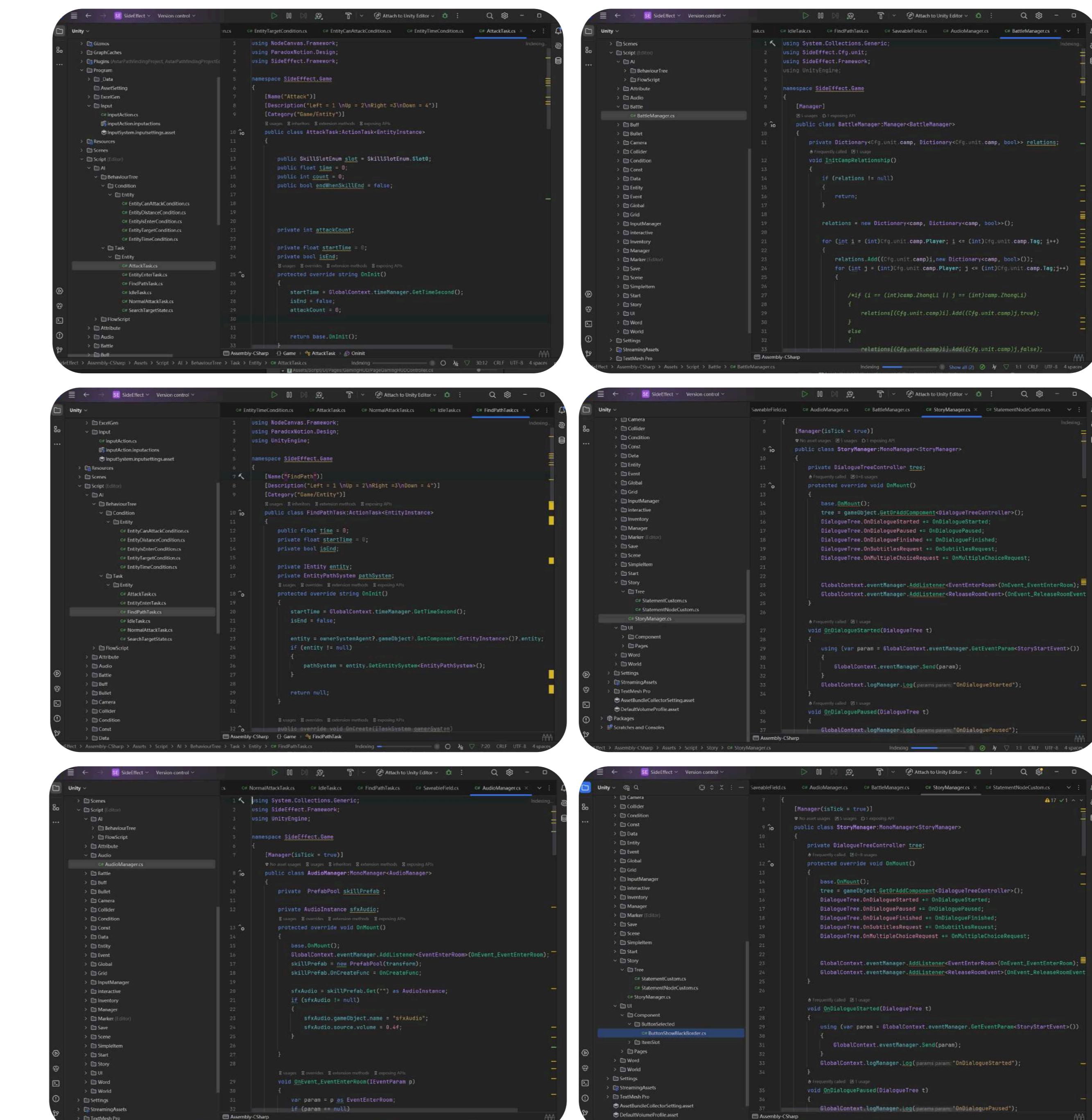
Decorations



Animation clips



PROGRAMMING & CODING

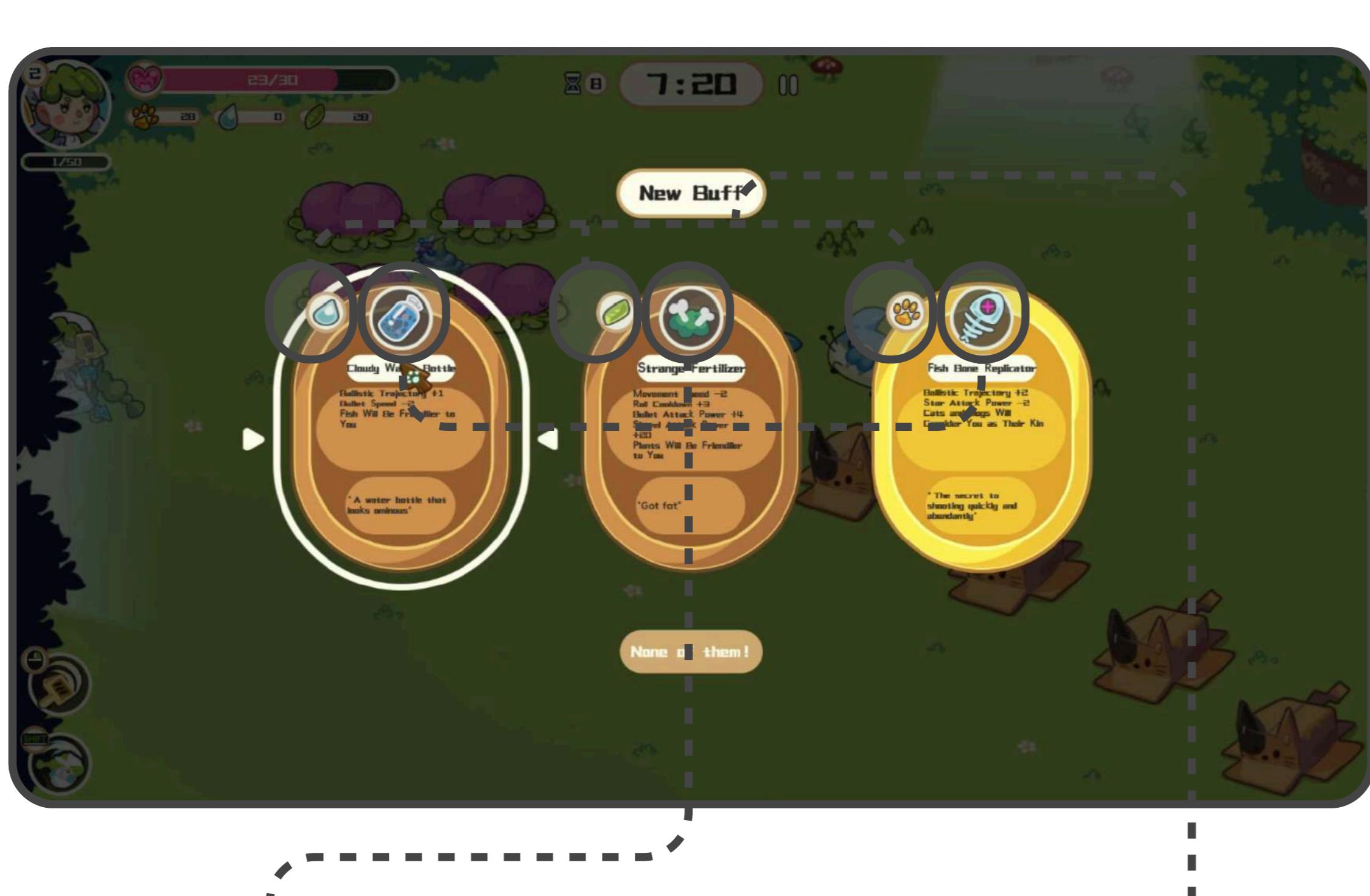


coding the framework
realizing state machine and plot
through visualized plugin

DEMO SHOWCASE



Enemies Bullets



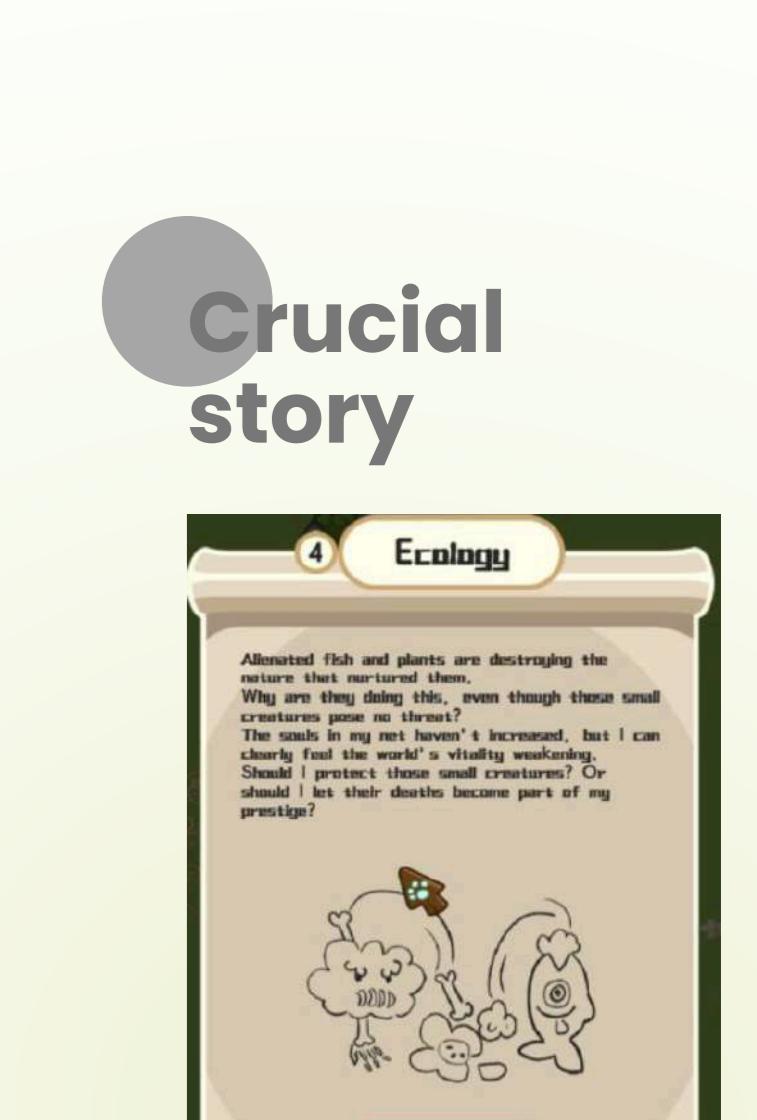
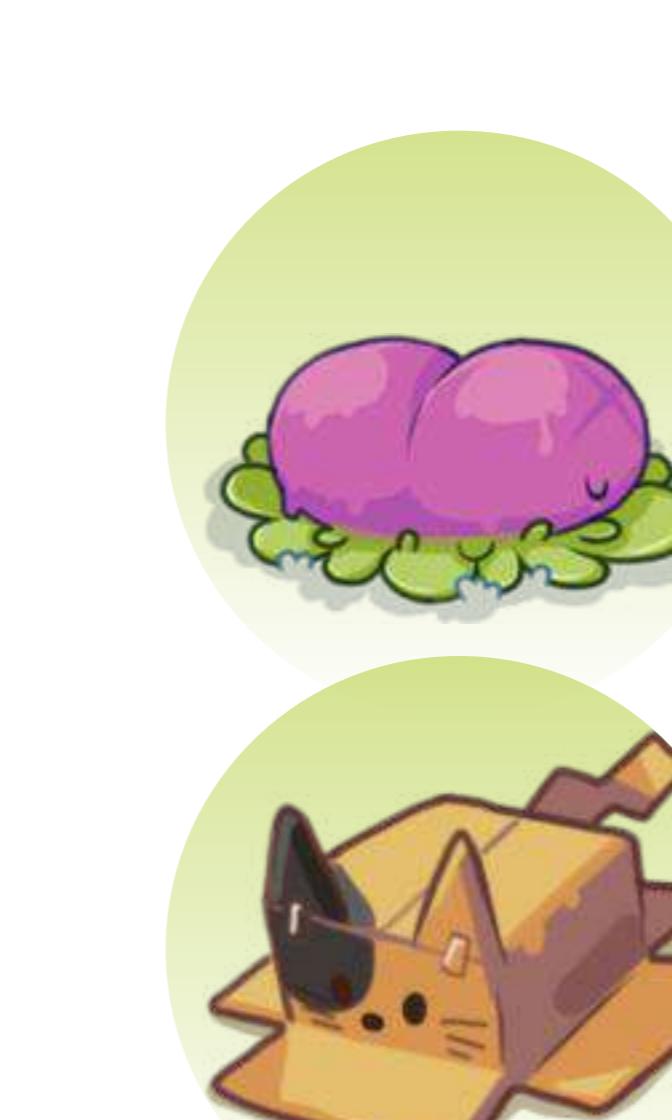
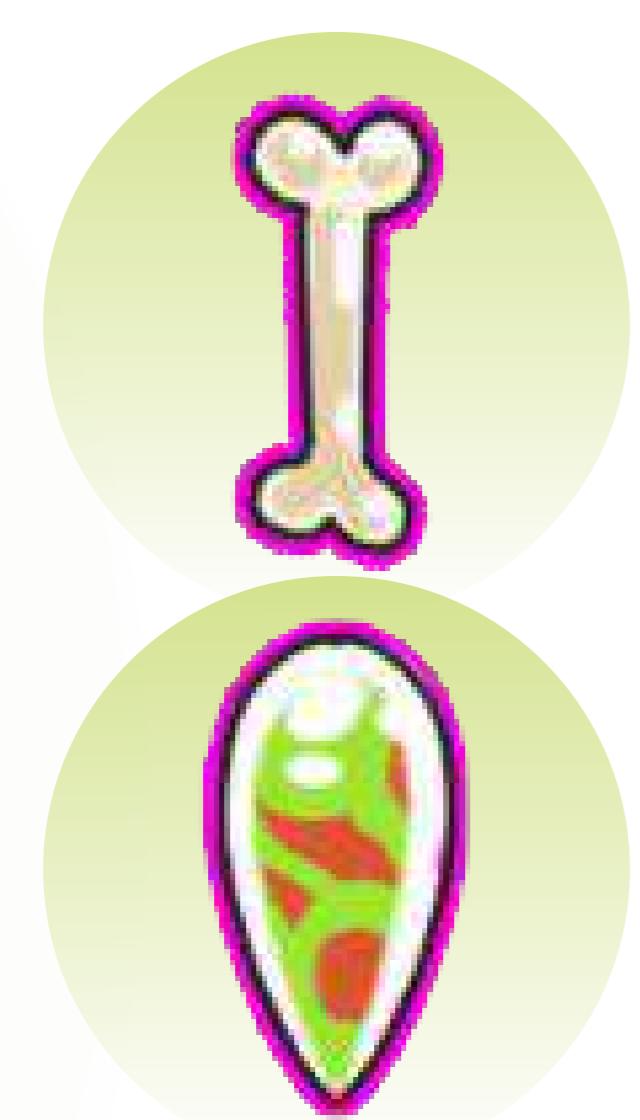
Skills to choose The power it belongs



Stylish Decorations Destroyable Decorations



Important pickups Crucial pickup



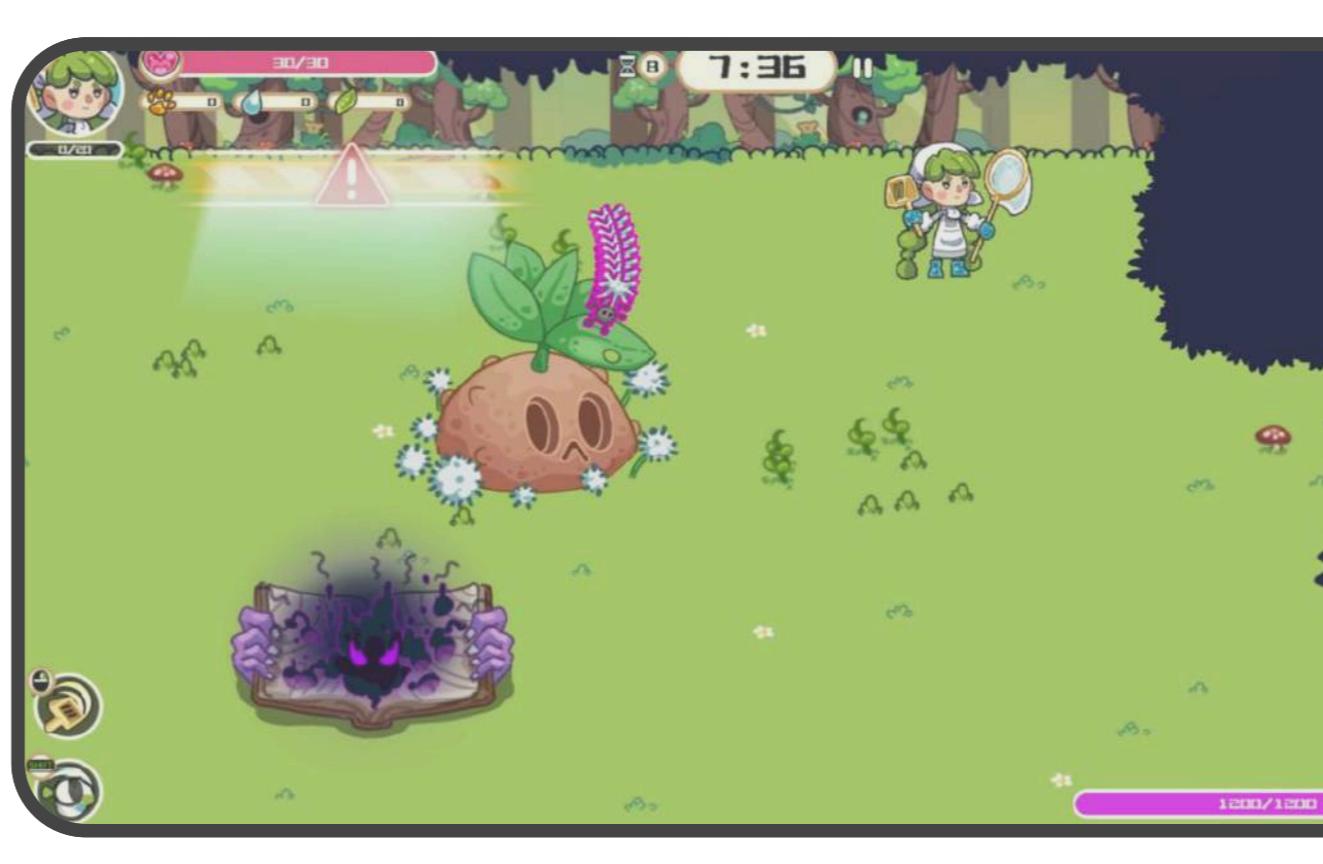
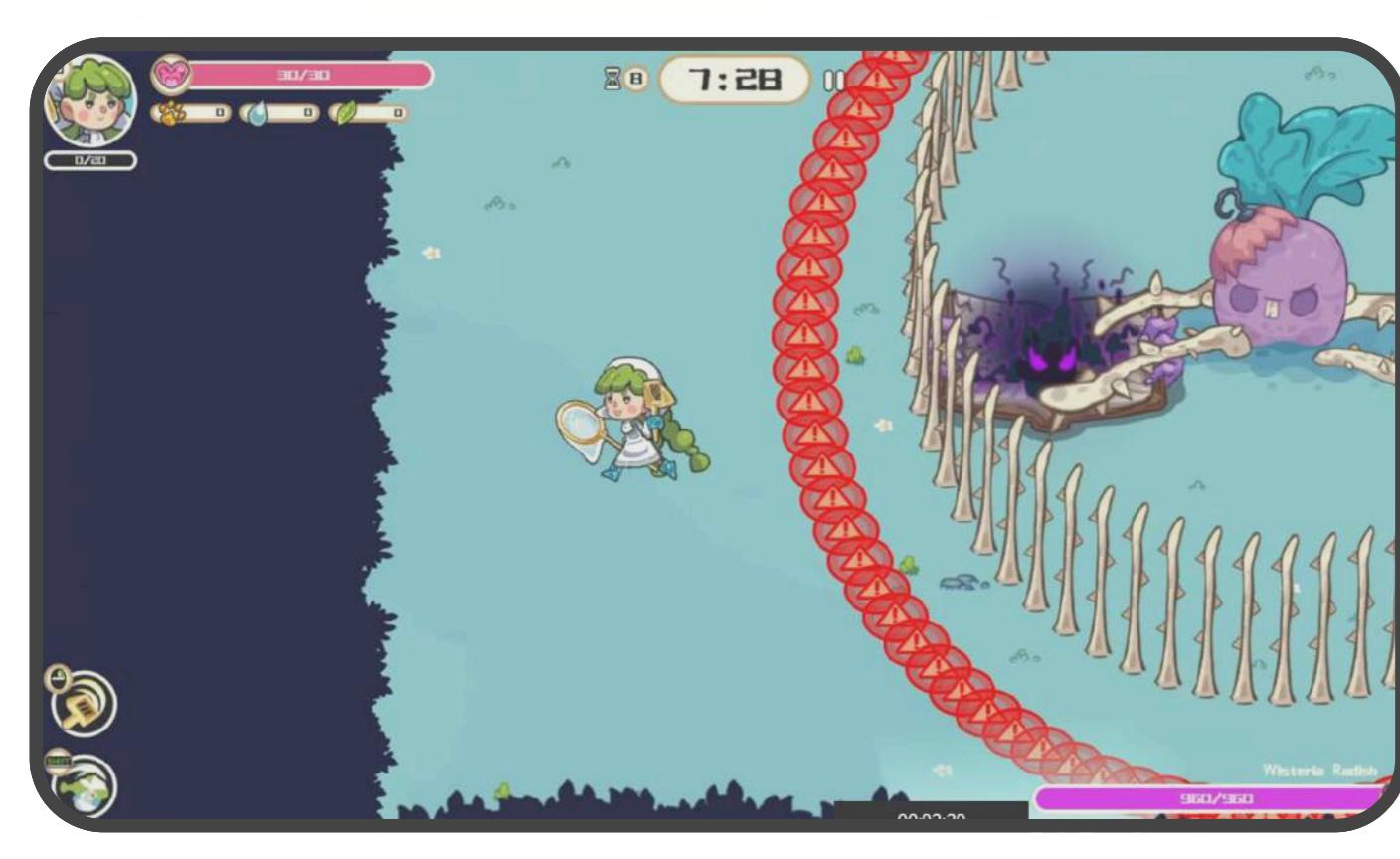
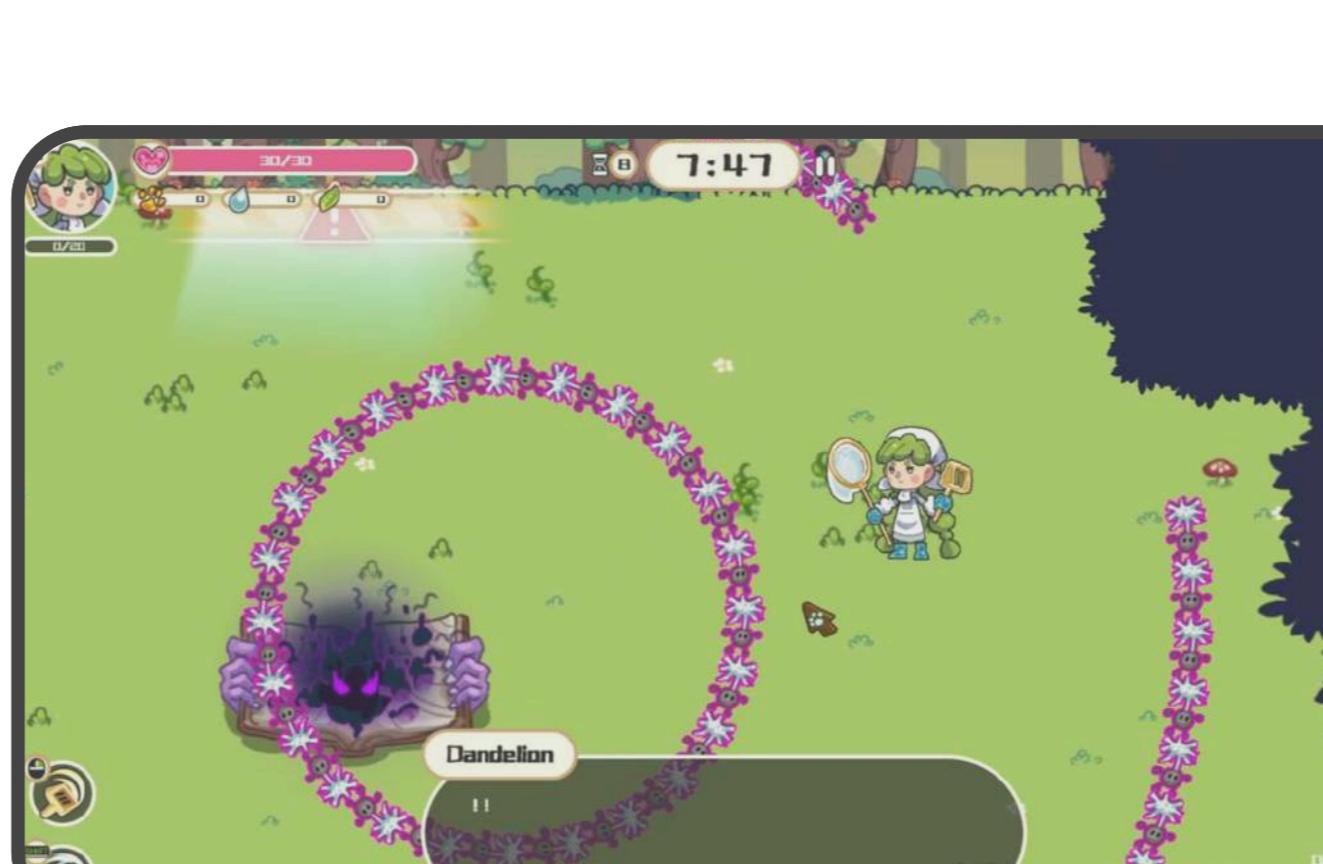
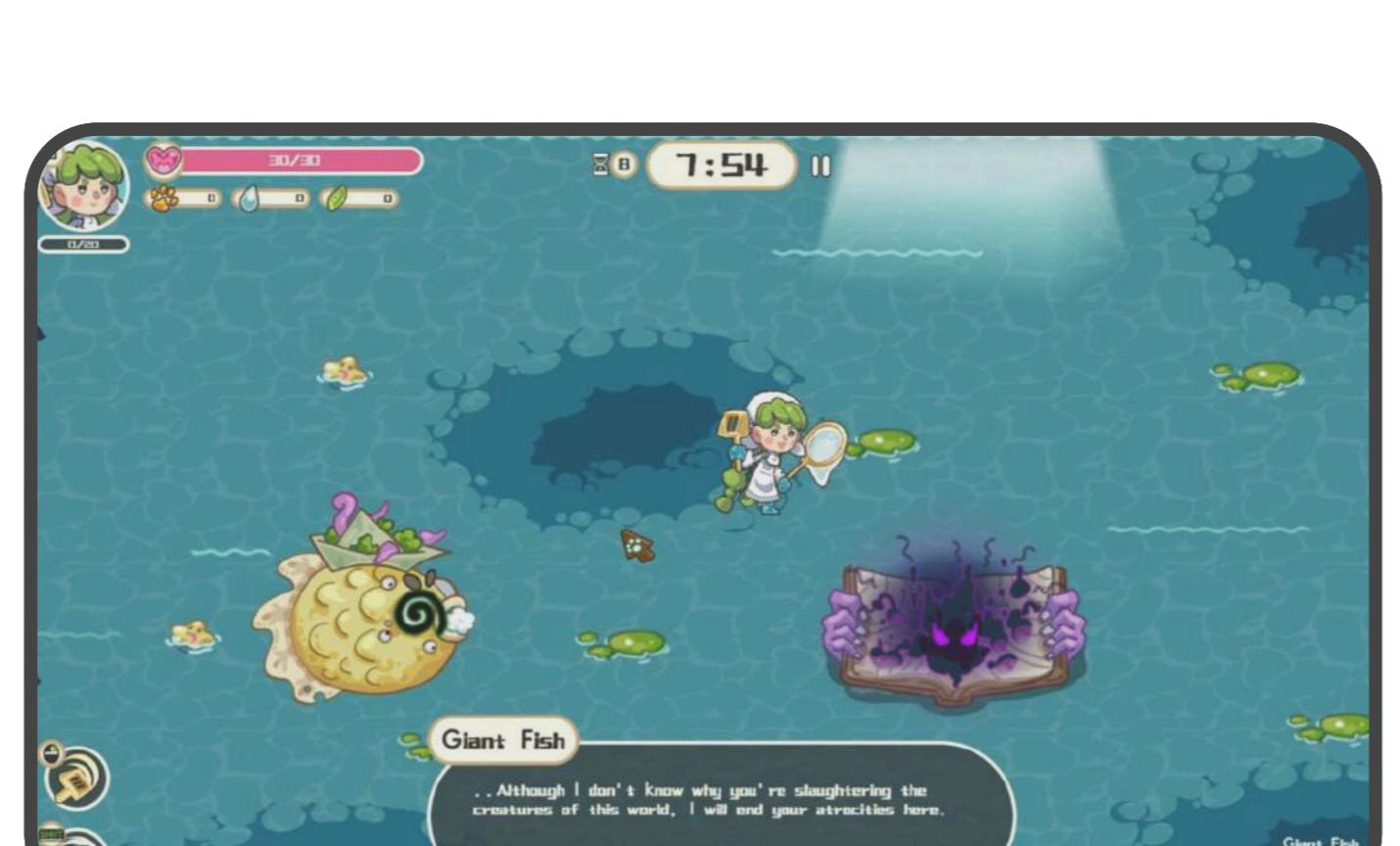
Plant Boss

Dog Cat Boss

Fish Boss

Nature Boss

Defeat the final boss



FEEDBACK

After some internal testing within the team, the game demo was sent to some of my friends for gameplay. We received some positive feedback, such as the high-quality artwork and interesting game settings. However, they also reported issues such as bugs, a relatively short gameplay duration, some problems with combat feel, and incomplete sound effects.

FUTURE PLANS

- Our future plans, prioritized as follows:
- Fix bugs.
- Optimize sound effects.
- Improve combat feel.
- Expand maps and extend the gameplay duration