

# THE WITNESS

## loose ends list

Consider jon's [AMA](#) and his response to questions about deeper secrets within the game when planning to jump down any rabbit holes.

### [A] - Very conspicuous details which are obviously intentional

- List of orange audio logs: The different colors of the audio logs (white/orange). No apparent thematic connection (except that two of the orange logs talk about wind and moonlight). One is in fact a credits log.
  - Ryonen
    - “Only listen to the voice of pines and cedars when no wind stirs.”
  - Niffari
    - “Those who, instead of voyaging, cast themselves into the sea, take a risk.”
  - Feynman
    - “If we were not able or did not desire to look in any new direction...”
  - Eddington
    - “...the awe of the moonlight on the frozen lake.”
    - Directly quotes the Rupert Brooke audio log (which is not orange)
  - Unattributed (Tagore, in secret tunnels)
  - Additional modelling credits
- The sounds which occur upon solving the 4 support column puzzles (in cave) and the multiple solutions to these puzzles.
  - All floor puzzles appear to make that sound.
  - If you remove the ‘randomness’ value from all sounds, they all sound identical in all solutions for these floor panels.
  - These puzzles were probably originally created for the top of the mountain:  
[http://www.artofluis.com/wp-content/uploads/2016/02/shot\\_2014.01.10\\_time\\_16\\_18\\_n03.png](http://www.artofluis.com/wp-content/uploads/2016/02/shot_2014.01.10_time_16_18_n03.png) This explains the floor puzzle noise and the multiple exits.
- The pattern of absent leaves, suggesting a trap door, on the floor of the theater in front of the screen.
  - Pattern might be created by the panels hovering above the theater. But the pattern of panels doesn't really match the leaves on the floor.
  - The top of the mountain could be mapped out in a hex pattern like the theater puzzle. Draw a line that passes over all the statues (including the climbing ones on the side of the mountain?) in the directions that each of the statues is facing or pointing to?
- The four static-filled monitors at the hotel endgame.
  - Three in a row [\[image\]](#)

- The pink orchard's mechanic is spotting which one of a set of things is not like the others. However, unlike all other areas of The Witness, this area seems to have no mechanical effect on the rest of the game. No laser, no audio logs, no monolith puzzles. This connection of both teaching about differences and being its own case example of it's own mechanic feels highly suspect.
  - This would seem to tie to the Town though, just like the alternate branch at Sym Island
  - The mechanic is actually spotting the apple, in every case. There's only one tree without an apple, but you're supposed to notice that the apple was picked by breaking off the whole branch it was on.
  - Only non-credit audio in end2 is lying against an apple and there is also a bowl of apples on the desk. The audio, known as "Tagore\_end" in the game files is shown below and mentions 'secret paths', 'star on the horizon of my heart', the only picture of a heart in the game is at the orchard and you can see the star from the heart area.
    - "Ever in my life have I sought thee with my songs. It was they who led me from door to door, and with them I have felt about me, searching and touching my world. It was my songs that taught me all the lessons I ever learnt; they showed me secret paths, they brought before my sight many a star on the horizon of my heart. They guided me all the day long to the mysteries of the country of pleasure and pain, and, at last, to what palace gate have they brought me in the evening at the end of my journey?"
      - Tagore was an Indian writer, actor and artist.  
[https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Rabindranath\\_Tagore](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Rabindranath_Tagore)
  - A texture in the game files is named "myst-controlpanel" and the texture looks like [this](#). The texture includes an apple puzzle with a blue background, but all the known apple puzzles have a green background. The puzzle has 16 exits. If it is related at all, the island has [~18 areas](#) not including subsurface areas.
  - The orange Feynman audio log mentions "progress which is the *fruit* of freedom of thought."
- The wall banners in the 'wake up' video can be seen at three different points, twice along the path, and in the video. In each of these three angles, the wall banners are completely different. (Go check it out, they must have been a lot of work to take down and replace, so why change them in each shot?)
- Stumped: The tree stumps that do not contain record players, but have a space for them
  - Original promo images of The Witness show filled stumps: [Example](#)
  - These stumps remain in The Witness (found at least 3), but they're empty now
  - Was this how audio logs were originally delivered?
    - If so, once audio logs were changed, why weren't stumps removed?
- Storyline: there was a (scrapped) storyline for the game that connects the dots for various imagery. There is a presentation that talks about it. Examples:
  - One entire side of the mountain is unreachable Protagonist's father was a fisherman who drowned. The stupa outside the monastery has a boat and a

drowning man. The crashed ships. The boat rising from the sea. The little boy holding a boat at the end1.

- Statues were carvings of people the protagonist knew or affected his life. The apex of the mountain shows some points in the protagonist's life such as religion and science. The lady statues could be significant people (ie. mother, sister, girlfriend, wife).
- Perhaps the audio logs were meant to guide the player? Or provide insight on the protagonist's issues.
- The end game was supposed to be some sort of intervention for the protagonist. It is unclear how you as the player are involved, and what the island is. ie. are we in the protagonist's brain? are we in some vr or game like minecraft (building a new world)? are we in a pseudo imaginary world? are we abducted by aliens and are in a simulation so aliens can better understand why people like Trump?

### **[B] - Conspicuous details which would be arbitrary if they're not intentional**

- : the rocky area under the outlook (with the wooden windmill models) and above the small hidden waterfall reachable from the marsh. The statue walls off one side of this area (and the flower on the statue's head seems to point towards this area).
- The variance of colors and behaviors between the lasers. (There seem to be 5 pairs of lasers with the same color, whereas the keep is the only orange laser.)
- Most puzzles have straight exits, but some (among which 1 of the 4 floor puzzles in cave) have diagonal exits - for some still unknown reason.
  - Assuming the floor puzzles were made for the top of the mountain, then the diagonal exits on the one floor puzzle were to open locks located at diagonals, just like how the actual mountaintop puzzle works.
- The resemblance of water stains and their reflections to waveforms in the water drainage area.
- The two different solution options of the final panel to access the boat in the pottery area. ([Pictures](#))
- The binary 1011111011001010 that [can be read from decoration](#) in marsh near the broken cage. Has exactly 16 digits, converts to 48842 in decimal, and 0xBECA in hexadecimal.
  - Also note the kinda similar 16 screwdrivers in the mountain, that also form a 16 digit binary. Looking at the 2 heights of the tools as 1 or 0.
- The rightmost timer panel during cave speed challenge cycles at 7 (Octal base) excepted ONCE (cycles at **5**) when the 2 others are **0** (Left) and **4** (Middle). The others cycle at 9. And the similar 881 and 882 skip.
- The fact that lasers are used to unlock the 'final gate' on the mountain and not just color coded switches. This parallels the fact that [lines had to be drawn](#) in the book '[Masquerade](#)', that is being talked about in one of the video logs, to solve the master riddle.

- In addition to that the game features environment that looks like something specific similar to the 'Hidden Hare' in the 'Masquerade' book ([Picture](#) - Praying lady vs Hidden Hare in hill.)
- The conspicuous appearance of animals in various zones. (Stick bugs in the desert, the crocodile in the swamp, the dog statue near the entry area, pigeons in the quarry, the outline of a bird of some sort also in the swamp, possibly the wolf in the bamboo garden, the koi fish near the glass works... seriously, there are a lot of animals hidden in the environment.) (Edit: Although the dog isn't really hidden and probably just a reference to Oswin: <http://the-witness.net/news/2015/02/thekla/>)
  - If you think Masquerade is a hint, then presumably finding a rabbit somewhere in the game is the final goal.
- The image of a/the woman are visible in a number of areas. (The woman with the bird's talons at the glass works, the transformation of a/the woman at the monastery, the woman on the mountainside reaching towards the woman on top of the broken cage in the swamp, the shadow of a/the woman seen from the parapets of the keep...) Are they all the same woman? Probably, but if so. What does this communicate to the player, is it a narrative, thematic, or mechanical message to the player? Or some combination above?
- Possible color based clues. (The statue of the painter overlooking the swamp has each color on her palette to paint the view, except yellow.) (The X of daisies near the windmill appear white, but are actually different colors if you look at them from an oblique angle to the computer monitor.)
  - On the palette, the blue and purple paint have been mixed together. In the swamp itself, you can connect a blue platform and a purple platform using the rotating bridge.
    - This might also represent the blue and purple waters, which blend together over a distance. (Red/teal/green feel squared-in by comparison.)
- Why is it that you can look at the swamp rotating bridge from underwater by going down the nearby stairs? Unlike some of the other underwater rooms, there is no environmental puzzle here. You can also see that the submerged part has an irregular shape.
- The red panel shutter puzzle before the wonkavator is the only one in the game besides the speedrun to use time as a mechanism to complete a puzzle. Could it have another use? I.e. speedrun to complete shutter puzzles? Could it be a start mechanism for a floor puzzle in the final end1 room which looks like a grid when viewed from above (noclip)? Could it trigger something else?
  - I believe that this is the starting tile for a puzzle grid. You start on the tile, run between the pillars in the room, and get into the elevator. ([noclip view](#)) It may be an audio puzzle with a 7 note scale. This room has some drips & audio in it, and the credits room has some music.

**[C] - Details which seem somewhat likely to have divisible importance**

- The colored vases, their correspondence with binary numbers and with colors seen on the island, and the under-utilization of their puzzle mechanic (raising their platforms), and the fact that they make different sounds when staying nearby
- Strange and seemingly unnatural changes in the soundscape when standing in certain specific locations
- The out-of-place cliffside tree at the edge of the desert and its appearance on the boat map despite its apparent unimportance. [beyond the forced perspective of faces]
- The 3 tangled trees that “sing” in the the bamboo forest seem to have no purpose.
  - One possible purpose might be to guide the players attention away from the small entrance towards the laser area. One tree is placed in a way, that the player hears it on the opposite side while getting close to that entrance. The trees play a [shepard's scale](#), an ever continuing loop of notes perceived as descending or ascending. This scale is said to disorient people (could not find scientific source) or might be a metaphor for the player trapped in the bamboo forest running in circles. Multiple reports from players suggest that the entrance to the laser area is easy to miss. [Poll - Missed At First: 20 | Found Right Away: 4] (increment as you see fit).
- The fact that golden triangle(doritos) puzzle panels are hidden and scattered around the island. [Many of them also follow patterns or sequences.](#)
- The fact that the sun's XYZ coordinates are variable and The Witness uses dynamic lighting despite how the sun apparently never moves
  - <http://the-witness.net/news/2011/12/engine-tech-concurrent-world-editing/> mentions this - the sun is just “moving” to appear rooted in one spot. - Mike Fulton
- The lack of puzzle interactivity in the area with the statue of the man reaching for the chalice (and presence of the area on the map)
  - This same man and chalice is seen falling in the end2 path
  - This same man reaching for the chalice is also the final image on a screen in the end2 area.
  - The yellow laser passes near this area when not redirected
- Daisies scattered through the island, and forming “X” mark just by windmill. ([their locations](#))
  - Symmetry flowers: hinting at symmetry theme.
  - Desert flower: hinting at puzzle solved from reflections.
  - Town flower: hinting at triangle puzzle on top of chimney.
  - Treehouse flowers: hinting at puzzles solved by pairing.
  - Logging flower: ???
    - It's right at the tip of the shadow cast by a leafless tree. There is another leafless tree by the lake (beside the river inlet), and it casts its shadow onto the lake.
  - Marsh flower: hinting at nearby shortcut to underground area?
    - The fact that it's red is maybe a hint that it can be submerged in the red water.

- Mountain flowers: ???
  - I've heard it suggested that a mountain top flower indicates a perspective to solve one of the mountain top floor puzzles (under the men carrying boxes) but I've never checked. And then there's the flower by the big statue, the meaning of which is unclear. Maybe to indicate the big statue/cage statue lining up?
- Windmill flowers: ???
  - Exactly half in light and half in shadow. Match shape on windmill door puzzle.
- The fact that one laser must be redirected with a movable mirror.
  - The mirror has 12 direction settings and is next to a recording about a clock
  - The mirror is used for the dark cloud env puzzle
  - Only a few of the panel directions point the laser elsewhere, 2 of which are the mountain and the cloud, the other 2-3 just point into the sky. The panel doesn't appear to reflect sunlight either.
  - What is the original purpose of the panel? It's not concave like a communications dish but has an antenna-looking shape on the bottom of the panel.
- The random impossible screens before a challenge are [made from specific "digits"](#).
- The number of known puzzles as of 2016-Feb-16th are 523-135-6. Which adds up to 664. Given the significance of 666 in Moriarty's speech. Could there be two more missing puzzles?
- When using the noclip mode, you will notice that underwater, most structures stop shortly below the surface since the water reflects everything and you wouldn't see where they end. But the dock has pillars that go down to the ground and the pillars look similar to the speedrun temple room. You can't see the pillars from the surface, so why have them here at all?
- End1 flyby: does the order the lasers turn off mean anything? Does the route of flying mean anything?
- The movie theater panel does not reject any solutions. Any path you draw stays lit up even if it doesn't do anything. Can't think of any other panel with this behavior.

**[D] - Irrelevant (As dictated by Jon's AMA)**

- The windmill can be switched to the left, which sends power up a different wire and makes it stop in the next "X" position with strange sounds.
  - Windmill models in the mountain are all shown with the same angle ([Pictures](#)). The only outlier being the 3 winged windmill rotor that has 2 wings aligned properly. The windmill on the [boat map](#) has the same alignment. (A Stretch: The corrector symbol, also seen on the boat map, has the alignment of the 3 winged windmill rotor.)