

THE SURVEY PROGRAM THEORY

SEGMENT 1 — RUNDOWN

okay. so.

i have a theory about DELTARUNE.

and i dont mean a theory about who the knight is, or who gaster is, or why dess disappeared.

i mean a theory that could potentially connect ALL OF THESE THINGS.

because what if we've been looking at deltarune completely wrong this entire time?

WHAT IF DELTARUNE ISN'T THE GAME WE'RE PLAYING?

WHAT IF IT'S A GAME **INSIDE** THE GAME WE'RE PLAYING?

THE SURVEY PROGRAM

lets go back to the very beginning.

before we ever meet kris. before we ever meet susie. before we even get to see the world of deltarune itself.

we're greeted by something called the **SURVEY PROGRAM**.

we create a vessel. we answer questions. we're asked to define who we are, what we like, and what kind of person we want to be.

and then?

OUR VESSEL GETS DISCARDED.

we don't get to use the character we made. we don't get to choose our appearance. we don't even get to choose our name for the character we actually control.

instead, we're thrown into the body of kris.

why?

seriously. WHY?

why would toby fox spend all that time letting us create a character, only to immediately take it away from us?

unless the vessel wasn't the point.

unless the survey itself was the point.

think about it. a survey is used to collect information. the SURVEY PROGRAM asks us questions, gathers our answers, and then proceeds to start the game.

so what if the SURVEY PROGRAM is an actual program that exists separately from deltarune?

what if deltarune is the experience it launches?

and what if the survey is doing something more important than simply letting us customize a character?

i think the opening is trying to tell us something about the relationship between the player, the game, and whatever exists behind the scenes.

and i think the answer might involve one very familiar name.

W. D. GASTER.

GASTER'S ROLE

gaster is one of the strangest characters in the undertale/deltarune universe.

in undertale, he's scattered across hidden rooms, obscure dialogue, and extremely rare encounters. his existence is deliberately difficult to establish.

in deltarune, the opening contains mysterious messages that many people associate with him.

but here's the thing.

what if gaster isn't simply a character who appears in deltarune?

what if he's connected to the PROGRAM ITSELF?

what if he's the one who created the survey, the vessel system, and the game that follows?

this is the central idea behind the SURVEY PROGRAM THEORY.

gaster isn't necessarily just another person living in the world of deltarune. he could be involved with the structure surrounding that world.

and if that's true, then a LOT of things suddenly become worth looking at again.

because deltarune has some mysteries that seem completely unrelated on the surface.

a missing girl.

a strange smiling face that keeps appearing where it shouldn't.

a spam email salesman who desperately wants to be free.

a jester who claims that he's already free.

a mysterious figure creating dark fountains.

WHAT IF THESE AREN'T FIVE COMPLETELY SEPARATE MYSTERIES?

what if they're all connected to the same underlying system?

THE MYSTERIES

1. WHO IS DESS?

december holiday. noelle's sister. a person whose disappearance has left a massive hole in the lives of the people who knew her.

we still don't know exactly what happened to her.

we don't know where she is.

and we don't know why her disappearance seems to have such a strange presence throughout the story.

what if dess's disappearance is connected to something that the ordinary inhabitants of deltarune don't understand?

i'm not saying she's definitely trapped outside the game or that gaster took her. we don't have proof of that.

but if the SURVEY PROGRAM theory is correct, then we need to consider whether dess's disappearance could involve something beyond the ordinary boundaries of the world.

2. IMAGE_FRIEND

that weird smiling face.

the one that keeps appearing in places where you might not expect it.

the one associated with strange internal asset names.

why does it exist? why does it appear where it does? and why does the game keep bringing it back?

is it a character? an entity? a symbol? something connected to the game's presentation?

we don't know yet.

but if deltarune is running inside a larger system, then IMAGE_FRIEND is EXACTLY the sort of mystery we should be investigating.

especially if its appearances turn out to be connected to other moments when the game seems to reveal something unusual about itself.

3. WHY IS SPAMTON SO OBSESSED WITH FREEDOM?

spamton was a nobody.

then somebody called him.

then his life changed.

and then everything fell apart.

now he's obsessed with becoming a BIG SHOT, breaking free of his limitations, and escaping the strings that hold him back.

what did that mysterious caller tell him?

what did spamton learn?

and why does his story seem so deeply connected to the idea of being controlled?

what if spamton encountered something that made him question the limits of his own existence?

we don't know whether that something was gaster, IMAGE_FRIEND, or anything else connected to our theory.

but we NEED to investigate that phone call.

4. JEVIL CLAIMS HE'S FREE.

spamton wants to escape.

jevil claims he already has.

both characters encountered mysterious individuals before undergoing dramatic changes in their behavior.

both are associated with freedom, confinement, and a worldview that other characters struggle to understand.

but jevil is still in a cage.

so what does he mean when he says he's free?

does he know something about the nature of his world that everyone else doesn't?

or has he simply found a way to interpret his imprisonment differently?

if spamton and jevil are responding to the same underlying truth, their stories might be two different perspectives on the same mystery.

and that would be HUGE.

5. WHO IS THE KNIGHT?

the knight creates dark fountains.

the dark fountains create dark worlds.

and the knight's identity and motives remain among the biggest unanswered questions in deltarune.

but here's something important.

if gaster is responsible for the larger system, that doesn't automatically mean gaster is the knight.

in fact, i think we should keep those possibilities separate.

what if gaster is connected to the system, while the knight is somebody operating WITHIN it?

what if the knight is changing the world without understanding everything about the world they're changing?

or what if the knight knows far more than we think?

we need to figure out what the knight wants before we can figure out how they fit into this theory.

THE BIG IDEA

here's what i'm proposing.

the SURVEY PROGRAM is the outer layer.

DELTARUNE is the world or experience contained within that layer.

gaster may be connected to the creation or manipulation of the system.

and the mysteries we've been discussing might reveal different aspects of how that system works.

dess represents a disappearance we don't understand.

IMAGE_FRIEND represents an unexplained entity that repeatedly appears.

spamton and jevil represent two very different relationships with the idea of freedom.

the knight represents somebody who can fundamentally change the world from within it.

and the player?

we're the person who gets pulled into the experience without ever getting to use the vessel we created.

we don't know why.

we don't know who is responsible.

and we don't know whether the game is telling us the truth about what we're doing here.

but that's the point.

THE SURVEY PROGRAM THEORY ISN'T JUST ABOUT WHO CREATED DELTARUNE.

it's about whether deltarune has a layer of existence that the characters inside it cannot fully understand.

and if that layer exists, then the biggest mysteries in the game might not be separate mysteries at all.

they might be pieces of the same puzzle.

WHAT THIS THEORY NEEDS TO PROVE

i don't want to just connect random characters because they all have something to do with gaster.

that's not enough.

we need actual connections.

we need to examine the opening, the hidden files, the dialogue, the recurring imagery, and the circumstances surrounding each mystery.

we need to figure out which details are confirmed, which are interpretations, and which are predictions.

and most importantly, we need to be willing to admit when something doesn't fit.

because if this theory is going to explain EVERYTHING, it needs to do more than sound convincing.

it needs to survive the evidence.

so that's what we're going to do.

we're going to investigate every major mystery in deltarune and see whether the SURVEY PROGRAM can connect them.

and we're starting with the thing that began this entire theory in the first place.

the opening.

the vessel.

the discarded character.

and the question that has been bothering me since the very beginning.

WHO WAS THE SURVEY PROGRAM ACTUALLY FOR?

SEGMENT 2 — THE VESSEL WAS NEVER THE POINT

before we can understand anything else, we need to go back to the beginning.

the vessel.

because i genuinely believe that the most important thing about the opening of deltarune isn't what we create.

it's what happens to it.

we spend time answering questions. we choose a name. we construct a character that is supposedly going to represent us throughout the game.

and then the game tells us that nobody can choose who they are in this world.

our creation gets discarded.

we wake up as kris.

now, there are two ways to interpret this.

the first is that the opening is simply a narrative trick. toby lets us create a character, takes it away, and introduces the central conflict between the player and kris.

the second possibility is that the opening is deliberately establishing a distinction between the person playing the game and the person they're controlling.

and i think we need to take that distinction seriously.

because if the SURVEY PROGRAM is an actual layer of the experience, then the vessel could be something that belongs to that layer rather than to the ordinary world of deltarune.

we create it outside the story.

it gets discarded before the story properly begins.

and we enter a world where our actions are carried out through somebody else's body.

WHAT EXACTLY ARE WE SUPPOSED TO MAKE OF THAT???

THE PLAYER IS NOT KRIS

this is already something deltarune explores through its actual story.

kris has their own identity, their own history, their own relationships, and their own actions outside the player's direct control.

the game repeatedly draws attention to the distinction between kris and the player controlling them.

so what if the opening is establishing the rules of our relationship with this world?

we aren't necessarily an ordinary character who belongs in deltarune.

we're an outside participant.

we interact with the world through kris, but that doesn't mean we are kris.

and if the SURVEY PROGRAM exists outside the game, then the player might occupy a position that the other characters simply cannot understand.

THAT is the part i want to investigate.

not the idea that the player is secretly some all-powerful god.

the idea that our relationship with deltarune is fundamentally different from the relationship its characters have with it.

WHERE DOES GASTER FIT?

gaster is the obvious candidate to investigate because the opening contains mysterious dialogue that many players associate with him.

however, we need to distinguish between what the game actually establishes and what the theory proposes.

the game does not explicitly tell us that gaster created the SURVEY PROGRAM.

it does not explicitly tell us that he created our vessel.

and it does not explicitly tell us that he's controlling every event in deltarune.

those are hypotheses.

but if gaster IS responsible for the program, the opening suddenly becomes a lot more interesting.

the vessel could be part of an experiment.

the survey could be collecting information.

the player could be entering an environment that gaster created or prepared.

and the discarded vessel could represent something about the experiment that we're not supposed to understand yet.

there's also another possibility.

what if the vessel wasn't discarded because it was useless?

what if it was discarded because the program had already accomplished whatever it needed to accomplish with it?

that's pure speculation, obviously.

but it gives us a question we can actually investigate:

DID THE SURVEY PROGRAM FAIL TO GIVE US A VESSEL, OR DID IT SUCCEED AT SOMETHING WE HAVEN'T RECOGNIZED YET?

because those are VERY different things.

SEGMENT 3 — DESS AND THE MISSING PIECE

dess is probably one of the biggest unresolved mysteries in deltarune.

and the frustrating part is that we know enough about her to understand why she matters, but not enough to explain what happened to her.

she's december holiday.

she's noelle's older sister.

she's connected to the holiday family and the memories they share.

and she's missing.

but the story doesn't treat her absence like a simple detail that we can ignore.

her name continues to matter. her relationships continue to matter. the consequences of her disappearance continue to affect the people around her.

so let's ask the obvious question.

WHY IS DESS STILL MISSING?

WHAT WE KNOW

dess disappeared under circumstances that remain unresolved.

noelle's memories and the holiday family's situation provide pieces of the story, but they don't give us a complete explanation of where she is or what happened to her.

there are also connections between dess and the strange events surrounding the holiday family that make her disappearance particularly important to investigate.

but we need to be careful here.

we don't have confirmation that dess is dead.

we don't have confirmation that gaster took her.

and we don't have confirmation that she escaped into another reality.

those are possibilities, not established facts.

so how does the SURVEY PROGRAM theory help us?

THE POSSIBILITY OF A BOUNDARY

let's return to our central premise.

if the SURVEY PROGRAM is an outer layer and deltarune exists inside it, then we have a potential distinction between the world itself and whatever exists outside that world.

now, imagine a character encounters something that allows them to interact with that boundary.

what happens to them?

there are several possibilities.

they could discover something about the world that nobody else knows.

they could become involved in an event that changes their life permanently.

or they could disappear in a way that the other characters cannot explain.

could that describe dess?

POTENTIALLY.

but this is where the theory needs to be more specific.

we cannot simply say that dess disappeared, therefore she must have escaped the game.

we need evidence connecting her disappearance to the proposed outer layer.

otherwise, we're just using the theory to explain something we don't understand without actually proving anything.

WHY WOULD DESS MATTER TO GASTER?

here's a question worth asking.

if gaster is involved in the structure of deltarune, does that mean every unusual event is part of his plan?

i don't think we should assume that.

gaster could be responsible for the program without being responsible for dess's disappearance.

alternatively, dess's disappearance could be connected to something gaster knows about, without him being the person who caused it.

or the connection could be completely unrelated.

the important thing is that we need to establish whether dess's mystery involves the same underlying system we're investigating.

if it does, then her disappearance could help us understand the relationship between the world and whatever exists beyond it.

if it doesn't, then we need to explain why her story appears to operate independently.

either result tells us something.

MY PREDICTION

i think dess's eventual reveal will explain more than just where she's been.

i think it will also explain something about the circumstances surrounding her disappearance, and why the people closest to her haven't been able to resolve it.

whether that involves gaster, the SURVEY PROGRAM, or something else entirely remains unknown.

but i suspect dess's story is going to matter to the larger narrative in a way that goes beyond simply finding a missing person.

and if the SURVEY PROGRAM theory is correct, her disappearance might be one of the events that helps us understand the limits of the world we're exploring.

SEGMENT 4 — IMAGE_FRIEND IS NOT SOMETHING WE SHOULD IGNORE

OKAY.

THIS ONE.

because IMAGE_FRIEND is exactly the sort of thing that makes me want to throw every single deltarune file into a folder and investigate them for the next six hours.

we have a strange entity associated with unusual internal asset names.

we have appearances that are easy to miss.

and we have a mystery whose significance is not immediately obvious from the ordinary story.

but before we do anything else, we need to establish a distinction.

an internal filename is not automatically a lore statement.

developers use names for all kinds of reasons. an asset called IMAGE_FRIEND doesn't necessarily mean that the entity is literally a friend, or that the name describes its purpose in the story.

HOWEVER.

when an unusual entity keeps appearing in a game that already has mysteries involving hidden communications, the player, and the nature of the world, it's absolutely worth investigating.

WHAT IS FRIEND?

we need to start with the entity itself.

what does it look like?

where does it appear?

when does it appear?

what is happening around it?

and, perhaps most importantly, does its appearance have any consistent relationship with the story?

those questions matter more than simply assigning it an identity.

because there are several possible explanations.

FRIEND could be a recurring character whose purpose hasn't been revealed.

it could be connected to a specific storyline or location.

it could represent something thematically important.

or it could be an entity whose significance depends on its relationship with the game's underlying structure.

we shouldn't choose one of those explanations before examining the evidence.

THE SURVEY PROGRAM CONNECTION

here's where our theory becomes relevant.

if the SURVEY PROGRAM is a layer outside the ordinary game, then we need to investigate whether any unusual entities have a relationship with that layer.

FRIEND's internal naming is a reason to look more closely at how the game handles its assets.

but that alone does NOT prove that FRIEND exists outside deltarune.

we need a direct connection.

for example, does FRIEND appear in the same circumstances as other unusual interface elements?

does it share a location, visual motif, or other concrete detail with something connected to the opening?

does the game ever establish a relationship between FRIEND and gaster?

these are the kinds of questions that could turn a strange appearance into meaningful evidence.

COULD FRIEND BE CONNECTED TO GASTER?

possibly.

but we should distinguish between three separate claims.

1. FRIEND is mysterious.
2. FRIEND is connected to the larger mysteries of deltarune.
3. FRIEND is specifically connected to gaster or the SURVEY PROGRAM.

the first is an observation.

the second is an interpretation that we can investigate.

the third requires additional evidence.

and i think the third claim is the one we need to work toward instead of simply assuming it.

because if FRIEND is connected to gaster, that could help us identify the kind of entities that exist within or around the system.

if FRIEND isn't connected to gaster, then its appearances might point toward a completely different mystery.

EITHER WAY, WE NEED TO FIGURE OUT WHAT IT'S DOING.

MY PREDICTION

i think FRIEND will eventually become easier to understand through context.

not necessarily because somebody will explain everything about it in one giant exposition dump, but because later appearances could establish a pattern that wasn't obvious when we first encountered it.

and if that pattern overlaps with the SURVEY PROGRAM, then FRIEND could become one of the strongest pieces of evidence for the theory.

for now, though, i'm not going to declare that FRIEND is dess, gaster, the knight, or anybody else.

we need the evidence first.

SEGMENT 5 — SPAMTON AND THE PRICE OF FREEDOM

spamton.

the little man.

the big shot.

the guy who somehow managed to turn a puppet into one of the most unsettling characters in the entire game.

and i think his story is one of the most important things to consider when talking about the SURVEY PROGRAM.

because spamton's entire existence seems to revolve around one question.

WHAT DOES IT MEAN TO BE FREE?

THE PHONE CALL

spamton wasn't always the character we meet in the game.

he was a struggling salesman who eventually experienced an extraordinary rise in success.

a mysterious caller played a role in that rise.

and then the situation changed.

the caller stopped being available, spamton lost his success, and his life fell apart.

we don't have a complete explanation of who was on the other end of the phone or exactly what happened during their conversations.

but the circumstances are important.

spamton's life changed because of a mysterious interaction that he couldn't seem to replace or recover from.

and that interaction left him with an obsession that would define his story.

WHO WAS CALLING HIM?

GASTER IS AN OBVIOUS POSSIBILITY TO INVESTIGATE.

but possibility is not proof.

we need to establish whether the caller's dialogue, timing, or other clues specifically connect them to gaster.

if that connection exists, it could tell us something about gaster's ability to interact with characters inside deltarune.

it could also explain why spamton's story is associated with such strange ideas about control and freedom.

but we should not treat the identity of the caller as confirmed until the game actually gives us enough evidence to establish it.

and even if the caller IS gaster, we still have another question.

WHAT DID HE TELL SPAMTON?

because that might be more important than the caller's identity.

SPAMTON WANTS TO ESCAPE

spamton's obsession with becoming a BIG SHOT is not simply about wanting money or popularity.

his story repeatedly returns to the idea of breaking free.

he talks about strings.

he becomes associated with puppetry.

his NEO form represents his attempt to become something greater than the character he currently is.

and the more we examine his story, the more his desire for freedom becomes central to everything he does.

now, does that mean spamton knows he's inside a game?

not necessarily.

characters can experience control, confinement, and powerlessness without being aware that they're fictional.

but his story raises an interesting question for our theory.

what if spamton encountered something that changed his understanding of what was possible?

what if he believed he had been offered a way out, only to lose that opportunity?

and what if his obsession with freedom is the consequence of that experience?

that interpretation would explain why his pursuit of power feels so desperate.

he isn't simply trying to become successful again.

he's trying to reclaim something he believes he lost.

THE VESSEL CONNECTION

remember the opening?

we create a vessel.

we're told that nobody can choose who they are in this world.

our vessel is discarded.

and we end up controlling kris.

now look at spamton.

his story involves a character who desperately wants to escape his limitations, and whose imagery repeatedly invokes the idea of strings and control.

those aren't identical situations, and we shouldn't pretend they are.

but they do share a theme.

the relationship between a person and the forces that determine what they can do.

the player is given control over kris, but that control has limits.

spamton wants to break free of his limitations, but he cannot simply will himself into a different existence.

and the SURVEY PROGRAM theory asks whether the world itself has a structure that determines those limits.

THAT'S THE CONNECTION I'M INTERESTED IN.

not that spamton is secretly the vessel.

not that spamton is definitely aware of the player.

but that his story could help us understand what freedom means in a world where control is already a major theme.

MY PREDICTION

i think spamton's connection to the mysterious caller will eventually tell us something important about the nature of his downfall.

whether that reveal involves gaster or somebody else, i think the caller's identity and motives deserve serious attention.

and if the caller is connected to the SURVEY PROGRAM, then spamton could become one of the clearest examples of what happens when somebody inside deltarune encounters something beyond their normal experience.

SEGMENT 6 — JEVIL IS FREE. SO WHY IS HE STILL IN A CAGE?

now we get to the other side of the freedom question.

jevil.

unlike spamton, jevil doesn't seem particularly interested in escaping his situation in the same way.

he claims that he's free.

he treats the world like a game.

he behaves as though the rules that constrain everyone else don't apply to him.

and yet he's still imprisoned.

WHAT DOES THAT MEAN???

THE MYSTERIOUS VISITOR

jevil's transformation is connected to an encounter with a mysterious individual.

after that encounter, his worldview changes dramatically.

he becomes convinced of things that other characters don't understand, and he ends up locked away.

this resembles spamton's story in some important ways.

both characters encounter mysterious individuals.

both undergo dramatic changes.

both become associated with ideas about freedom and confinement.

but their reactions are very different.

spamton wants to become a BIG SHOT.

jevil treats the entire situation like a joke.

spamton desperately wants to escape.

jevil claims that he already has.

so let's investigate the possibility that their stories reflect two different responses to something they encountered.

TWO DIFFERENT INTERPRETATIONS

suppose both characters encountered information that changed how they viewed their world.

spamton might interpret that information as a promise of escape.

jevil might interpret it as proof that the world is fundamentally different from what everyone else believes.

that could explain why their behavior diverges so dramatically.

but there are other possibilities.

their encounters might be unrelated.

they might have learned completely different things.

or their behavior might reflect their own personalities rather than a shared revelation.

we need to be careful not to treat similarities as proof of a common cause.

still, the parallel is worth investigating.

because if the mysterious individuals who influenced them turn out to be connected, we might learn something about the source of their unusual worldviews.

IS JEVIL ACTUALLY FREE?

this is the question i keep coming back to.

jevil is imprisoned.

he has not physically escaped his cell.

yet he insists that he is free.

there are several ways to interpret this.

he might believe that understanding the world makes him free, even when his circumstances remain unchanged.

he might be expressing a philosophical idea about the difference between physical confinement and freedom of thought.

or he might know something about the world that allows him to interpret his situation differently.

the SURVEY PROGRAM theory gives us another question to consider.

if the world has rules that determine what characters can do, could understanding those rules change how a character experiences their existence?

that doesn't mean jevil has literally escaped the game's code.

it means his dialogue might be exploring the difference between living under a system and understanding that system.

and that is a distinction worth examining.

JEVIL AND THE PLAYER

there's an interesting contrast here.

we, the player, have a degree of control over kris.

we choose dialogue options.

we make decisions.

we influence battles.

but we don't have complete control over kris as a person.

kris has their own identity and actions, and the game repeatedly draws attention to the tension between their agency and ours.

jevil, meanwhile, talks as though he understands the nature of the game he's in.

could his story be relevant to the player's relationship with deltarune?

POTENTIALLY.

but we should not assume that jevil literally knows the player exists.

the more defensible interpretation is that his story explores ideas about freedom, rules, and confinement that also appear elsewhere in the game.

if later evidence directly connects those ideas to the SURVEY PROGRAM, then we can make a stronger claim.

MY PREDICTION

i think the relationship between jevil and spamton is worth investigating further.

not necessarily because they're secretly working together, but because their stories seem to approach similar questions from opposite directions.

spamton wants freedom.

jevil claims to possess it.

if those stories are deliberately connected, understanding one might help us understand the other.

and if their mysterious encounters share a source, that could become a major clue in our investigation.

SEGMENT 7 — THE KNIGHT AND THE WORLD INSIDE THE WORLD

the knight.

the person associated with creating dark fountains.

the figure whose identity and motives remain a major mystery.

and potentially one of the most important pieces of this entire theory.

because unlike dess, spamton, or jevil, the knight is directly associated with changing the world itself.

WHAT DOES THE KNIGHT ACTUALLY DO?

the knight is associated with the creation of dark fountains.

these fountains bring dark worlds into existence, transforming ordinary environments into places with their own inhabitants, rules, and identities.

the dark worlds are not simply imaginary locations in the minds of the characters.

they are places the characters can enter, explore, and interact with.

and the existence of dark fountains raises questions about the relationship between the light world and the dark worlds.

how are dark worlds created?

what determines their properties?

why is the knight creating fountains?

and what does the knight ultimately want?

those questions matter regardless of whether the SURVEY PROGRAM theory is correct.

but the theory gives us another way to organize them.

IS THE KNIGHT OUTSIDE THE SYSTEM?

i think we should distinguish between the person who creates something and the system in which that thing exists.

if gaster is responsible for the SURVEY PROGRAM, that doesn't automatically mean he controls every character or event inside deltarune.

the knight could be an independent actor.

they could have their own goals, their own motivations, and their own understanding of the world.

in fact, i think it's important that we don't automatically identify the knight as gaster.

doing so would collapse two separate mysteries into one without explaining either of them.

instead, let's consider a few possibilities.

THE KNIGHT IS AN ORDINARY ACTOR WITHIN THE WORLD.

they create dark fountains, but their actions don't necessarily have anything to do with the SURVEY PROGRAM.

THE KNIGHT KNOWS SOMETHING ABOUT THE WORLD'S STRUCTURE.

they might understand aspects of dark fountains that other characters don't.

THE KNIGHT IS CONNECTED TO THE LARGER MYSTERY.

their actions might eventually reveal something about the relationship between the world and the system surrounding it.

these possibilities are not mutually exclusive, but we need evidence to determine which ones fit.

COULD DARK FOUNTAINS BE CONNECTED TO THE SURVEY PROGRAM?

here's where we need to be especially careful.

dark fountains change the environments in which the story takes place.

but that does not establish that they change the underlying program or allow characters to access an outer layer of reality.

we cannot simply equate a dark fountain with a computer program because both create something.

however, if the story eventually establishes a relationship between dark fountains and the deeper structure of the world, that would be extremely important.

it could tell us whether the knight is merely changing the world from within or interacting with something more fundamental.

and if that relationship connects to gaster, the opening, or the mysterious entities we've been investigating, the SURVEY PROGRAM theory would gain a much stronger foundation.

THE KNIGHT AND THE PLAYER

there's another question worth considering.

the player influences events within deltarune.

the knight also influences events within deltarune.

but their methods are completely different.

we influence kris's actions and decisions.

the knight creates dark fountains that alter the environments around them.

could the game be contrasting different forms of agency?

again, that's an interpretation, not a confirmed explanation of the knight's purpose.

but it fits the larger question we've been asking throughout this investigation:

WHO HAS CONTROL OVER THIS WORLD, AND WHAT ARE THE LIMITS OF THAT CONTROL?

the player doesn't have complete control over kris.

characters such as spamton and jevil are associated with questions about freedom and confinement.

the knight can alter the world through dark fountains.

and the SURVEY PROGRAM theory proposes that the world might exist within a larger system.

if those ideas eventually converge, the knight could be crucial to understanding the boundaries of that system.

MY PREDICTION

i think the knight's identity alone won't be enough to resolve the mystery.

we'll also need to understand their motives.

finding out who they are might explain their relationship to the characters, but finding out why they're creating dark fountains could tell us what their actions mean for the world itself.

and if the knight is connected to the SURVEY PROGRAM, the most important reveal might not be their name.

it might be what they know.

SEGMENT 8 — THE CONNECTION WE'RE ACTUALLY LOOKING FOR

so.

we've investigated the vessel.

we've considered dess's disappearance.

we've looked at IMAGE_FRIEND.

we've examined spamton's obsession with freedom.

we've compared spamton's story with jevil's.

and we've considered the knight's role in changing the world.

now we need to answer the biggest question.

WHAT CONNECTS ALL OF THESE THINGS?

because if the answer is just "gaster," then we haven't really explained anything.

we've simply assigned every mystery to the same character.

the theory needs a more useful central idea.

CONTROL, KNOWLEDGE, AND FREEDOM

look at the recurring themes.

the vessel is created, then discarded.

the player controls kris, but kris is not simply the player.

dess disappears, and the circumstances remain unresolved.

IMAGE_FRIEND appears in strange circumstances, and its significance remains unclear.

spamton wants to escape his limitations.

jevil claims that he's already free.

the knight changes the world through dark fountains.

these mysteries don't all involve the same events, and we don't know whether they share a direct cause.

but they do raise questions about three things.

CONTROL.

who determines what happens?

KNOWLEDGE.

who understands what's happening, and who doesn't?

FREEDOM.

what does it mean to escape the circumstances that define you?

those three questions provide a much stronger framework for the theory than simply assuming that gaster is responsible for everything.

THE PROPOSED STRUCTURE

here's the model i think we should investigate.

the SURVEY PROGRAM represents the possible outer layer of the experience.

DELTARUNE is the world we enter through that experience.

the player interacts with the world through kris.

gaster may be connected to the program or to the mysterious circumstances surrounding its opening.

meanwhile, the mysteries inside deltarune may reveal different aspects of control, knowledge, and freedom.

dess's disappearance raises questions about what can happen to a person within the world.

IMAGE_FRIEND raises questions about the identity and purpose of an unusual recurring entity.

spamton and jevil raise questions about how characters understand their own limitations.

the knight raises questions about who can alter the world and why.

the important thing is that **these connections remain hypotheses until we can establish direct evidence for them.**

the theory should help us ask better questions, not give us permission to invent answers.

SEGMENT 9 — WHAT WOULD PROVE THE THEORY WRONG?

i think this is important.

because a theory that can explain absolutely anything is a theory that doesn't actually explain anything.

if every new piece of evidence can be interpreted as proof that gaster is involved, then we're not really testing the idea.

we're just finding ways to protect it from being disproven.

so here's what i think we need to look for.

EVIDENCE THAT WOULD SUPPORT THE THEORY

- A direct connection between the SURVEY PROGRAM and an entity or event within deltarune.
- Evidence that the opening's mysterious speaker is connected to the game's deeper mysteries.
- A concrete relationship between the player-facing interface and an in-universe event.
- Evidence connecting the mysterious individuals who influenced spamton and jevil to a common source.
- A direct clue linking IMAGE_FRIEND to the program, gaster, or another major mystery.
- Evidence that the knight's actions have implications beyond the ordinary creation of dark worlds.

EVIDENCE THAT WOULD CHALLENGE THE THEORY

- The SURVEY PROGRAM being fully explained as a conventional framing device with no additional significance.
- The mysteries we're connecting being explicitly explained through unrelated causes.
- The supposed connections relying entirely on similarities in theme rather than actual evidence.
- The theory requiring us to ignore details that contradict its predictions.

none of these possibilities automatically settles the question.

but they give us a way to evaluate the theory instead of treating it as unquestionable.

and honestly?

i think that's what makes this interesting.

if the theory survives scrutiny, we'll have a much stronger explanation than we would by simply declaring everything canon.

SEGMENT 10 — MY PREDICTIONS

now for the fun part.

what do i think we'll eventually learn?

these are predictions, not claims about what the game has already confirmed.

PREDICTION 1: THE OPENING WILL MATTER AGAIN

i don't think the vessel sequence should be dismissed as a one-time introduction.

the game deliberately spends time establishing the vessel before taking it away.

even if the ultimate explanation is primarily thematic, that sequence is central to how the player enters the story.

i expect the relationship between the player, kris, and the vessel to remain important.

PREDICTION 2: GASTER'S ROLE WILL BE MORE SPECIFIC THAN WE THINK

i suspect that if gaster is involved in deltarune's larger mysteries, we'll eventually learn more about what he actually does.

rather than simply being the answer to every unexplained event, his role may help us understand one particular part of the world's structure.

that would make his involvement more meaningful, not less.

PREDICTION 3: DESS'S DISAPPEARANCE WILL EXPLAIN SOMETHING ABOUT HER WORLD

i think dess's story will reveal more than her location.

it will likely explain the circumstances surrounding her disappearance and why it has affected the holiday family so deeply.

whether this connects to gaster or the SURVEY PROGRAM remains an open question.

PREDICTION 4: IMAGE_FRIEND WILL BECOME MORE MEANINGFUL THROUGH CONTEXT

i expect that comparing its appearances and surrounding circumstances will be more useful than trying to identify it immediately.

if the entity has a larger role, recurring details may eventually tell us what that role is.

PREDICTION 5: SPAMTON AND JEVIL WILL HELP US UNDERSTAND THE GAME'S THEMES

even if their mysterious encounters don't have the same source, their contrasting perspectives on freedom are worth examining.

spamton wants to escape.

jevil claims he already has.

that contrast could remain important to the story's exploration of agency and control.

PREDICTION 6: THE KNIGHT'S MOTIVES WILL MATTER AS MUCH AS THEIR IDENTITY

knowing who the knight is might solve one question.

knowing why they're creating dark fountains could solve several more.

i expect their motivations to be essential to understanding the larger conflict.

PREDICTION 7: THE BIG REVEAL WILL CHANGE HOW WE INTERPRET THE BEGINNING

if the SURVEY PROGRAM theory is correct, i think the opening will eventually become more significant in retrospect.

we'll look back at the vessel, the questions, and the transition into deltarune and understand more about why the game began that way.

that doesn't necessarily mean the opening is a literal computer program inside the story.

but i think it's worth investigating whether the way the game presents itself is part of the mystery.

FINAL THOUGHTS — IS DELTARUNE A GAME INSIDE A GAME?

that's the question at the center of this entire theory.

not whether gaster is responsible for every single mystery.

not whether dess is secretly trapped in another dimension.

not whether spamton knows he's fictional.

the question is whether the opening of deltarune establishes a relationship between the player-facing experience and the world we're entering that matters beyond the opening itself.

if it does, then we have a framework for investigating the mysteries that follow.

if it doesn't, then we need to find another explanation for the patterns we're seeing.

and that brings us back to the vessel.

we created it.

we named it.

we were told that it would be discarded.

and then we entered a world where our relationship with the character we control is anything but straightforward.

maybe the vessel is simply a way to introduce that relationship.

maybe it's something more.

but until we have a better explanation, i don't think we should stop asking questions.

because deltarune is full of mysteries that appear unrelated until you start comparing them.

and the SURVEY PROGRAM might be the key to understanding some of them.

OR IT MIGHT BE A COMPLETELY WRONG THEORY THAT I'VE SPENT WAY TOO MUCH TIME THINKING ABOUT.

THAT'S WHY WE INVESTIGATE.

THE SURVEY PROGRAM THEORY IS NOT PROVEN.

but if we can find even one concrete connection between the opening and the mysteries inside deltarune, we might finally have somewhere to start.

and if that connection exists, then the next question is obvious.

WHO — OR WHAT — IS REALLY ON THE OTHER SIDE OF THE SCREEN?

SEGMENT 11 — PUTTING THE THEORY TO THE TEST

okay.

we've gone through the major mysteries.

we've discussed dess, IMAGE_FRIEND, spamton, jevil, the knight, and the SURVEY PROGRAM itself.

and we've come up with a bunch of possible connections.

BUT THERE'S A PROBLEM.

just because we can connect two things thematically doesn't mean they're actually connected.

spamton wants to be free. jevil claims he's free. kris has a complicated relationship with the player. the knight creates dark fountains.

sure, all of these things can be discussed in terms of control and freedom.

but that doesn't mean gaster is behind all of them.

if we're going to argue that the SURVEY PROGRAM is the outer layer of deltarune, we need to do something more than point at every mystery and say "LOOK, IT COULD BE GASTER!"

we need tests.

specific things we can look for that would either support our theory or make us reconsider it.

so that's what we're doing.

TEST 1 — DESS

THE QUESTION: IS DESS'S DISAPPEARANCE CONNECTED TO SOMETHING OUTSIDE THE ORDINARY WORLD?

dess is missing.

we don't know exactly what happened to her, and we don't know where she is.

our theory proposes that her disappearance could potentially be connected to something beyond the ordinary boundaries of deltarune.

but how would we actually test that?

WHAT WE NEED TO LOOK FOR

- evidence that dess encountered gaster or an entity connected to him.
- evidence connecting her disappearance to the vessel, the player, or the opening of deltarune.
- evidence that her disappearance involved something unusual about the structure of the world.
- dialogue or events that establish a connection between her fate and the SURVEY PROGRAM.

WHAT WOULD SUPPORT THE THEORY?

a direct connection between dess's disappearance and the outer layer we're proposing.

for example, if the game established that dess encountered something connected to the same system as the opening, that would be a concrete reason to investigate whether her disappearance and the SURVEY PROGRAM are related.

WHAT WOULD WEAKEN THE THEORY?

if dess's disappearance were fully explained through events unrelated to gaster, the program, or anything resembling an outer layer, that would weaken this particular connection.

it wouldn't automatically disprove the entire theory.

it would mean we couldn't use dess as evidence for it.

MY PREDICTION

i think learning what happened to dess will reveal more than just where she's been.

i suspect the circumstances of her disappearance will be important to understanding the larger story.

whether that involves the SURVEY PROGRAM remains to be seen.

THE TEST: DOES DESS'S FATE REVEAL A CONNECTION TO THE SYSTEM OUTSIDE DELTARUNE, OR DOES HER MYSTERY HAVE AN ENTIRELY DIFFERENT EXPLANATION?

TEST 2 — IMAGE_FRIEND

THE QUESTION: IS FRIEND CONNECTED TO THE GAME'S OUTER PRESENTATION?

IMAGE_FRIEND is one of the strangest pieces of this entire investigation.

we have an unusual entity, strange internal asset labels, and appearances that invite questions about what the game is trying to show us.

but a filename isn't automatically a lore statement.

we need to establish what FRIEND actually does before we decide what it means.

WHAT WE NEED TO LOOK FOR

- every verifiable appearance of FRIEND.
- the circumstances surrounding each appearance.
- whether those appearances coincide with unusual transitions, hidden content, or other significant events.
- whether FRIEND shares any specific, identifiable connection with gaster or the opening sequence.
- whether its internal names reveal anything beyond ordinary development terminology.

WHAT WOULD SUPPORT THE THEORY?

a repeatable connection between FRIEND and something we can independently establish as part of the outer layer.

if FRIEND repeatedly appeared alongside events explicitly connected to the SURVEY PROGRAM, that would be much more significant than simply finding it in a strange location.

WHAT WOULD WEAKEN THE THEORY?

if FRIEND's appearances were eventually explained through an unrelated in-world purpose, with no evidence connecting it to the program, then we would have to stop using it as evidence for this theory.

it could still be an important mystery.

it just wouldn't necessarily be OUR mystery.

MY PREDICTION

i think comparing FRIEND's appearances will be more useful than trying to guess its identity immediately.

if the entity has a larger purpose, i suspect the surrounding context will eventually tell us more about it.

THE TEST: DOES FRIEND HAVE A SPECIFIC CONNECTION TO THE SURVEY PROGRAM, OR ARE WE READING TOO MUCH INTO ITS APPEARANCES?

TEST 3 — SPAMTON

THE QUESTION: WHO WAS ON THE OTHER END OF THAT PHONE CALL?

THIS IS A BIG ONE.

spamton's rise to success was connected to a mysterious caller.

his life changed dramatically, and his relationship with that caller eventually ended.

we still need to establish exactly who the caller was and what they told him.

our theory proposes that this person could be connected to gaster or the SURVEY PROGRAM.

so let's test that.

WHAT WE NEED TO LOOK FOR

- dialogue that identifies the caller or provides distinctive clues about their identity.
- specific similarities between the caller's language and confirmed material associated with gaster.
- evidence explaining what the caller gave spamton or what spamton learned.
- a direct connection between spamton's experience and the player, vessel, or opening sequence.

WHAT WOULD SUPPORT THE THEORY?

evidence that identifies the caller as gaster or otherwise connects the caller to the system proposed by this theory.

even if the caller isn't gaster, evidence that they provided spamton with information about the structure of his world would be extremely important.

WHAT WOULD WEAKEN THE THEORY?

if the caller were identified as someone unrelated to gaster and the SURVEY PROGRAM, and spamton's story were fully explained without an outer-layer connection, that would weaken our proposed explanation.

MY PREDICTION

i think the caller's identity and motives will be important to understanding spamton's downfall.

i also think we need to pay attention to what spamton actually learned, rather than assuming he knows he's inside a game simply because he's obsessed with freedom.

THE TEST: DOES SPAMTON'S CALLER CONNECT HIS STORY TO GASTER OR THE SURVEY PROGRAM, AND IF SO, WHAT DID THAT CONNECTION ACTUALLY GIVE HIM?

TEST 4 — JEVIL

THE QUESTION: DID JEVIL AND SPAMTON ENCOUNTER THE SAME SOURCE OF INFORMATION?

jevil encountered a mysterious individual and underwent a dramatic change in his worldview.

spamton also encountered a mysterious individual before his life changed.

both characters are associated with freedom and confinement, but their reactions are very different.

spamton wants to escape.

jevil claims he's already free.

that's an interesting parallel.

but is it evidence of a shared cause?

not by itself.

WHAT WE NEED TO LOOK FOR

- evidence identifying the individual who influenced jevil.
- specific similarities between jevil's encounter and spamton's phone calls.
- evidence that either character learned something about the structure of their world.
- dialogue establishing that jevil's understanding of freedom goes beyond his own interpretation of his situation.

WHAT WOULD SUPPORT THE THEORY?

a concrete connection between the mysterious individuals who influenced spamton and jevil.

if both encounters were linked to the same entity, or if both characters received information about the same underlying system, that would support the idea that their stories are connected.

WHAT WOULD WEAKEN THE THEORY?

if their encounters had unrelated explanations and their similarities were purely thematic, we couldn't use them as evidence for a shared source.

and if jevil's claims about freedom were entirely metaphorical, that wouldn't support the idea that he understands the SURVEY PROGRAM.

MY PREDICTION

i think the contrast between spamton and jevil is worth investigating further.

spamton wants to break free of his limitations, while jevil claims that his limitations don't matter.

if their stories share a source, that connection could help explain why they respond so differently.

THE TEST: DO SPAMTON AND JEVIL SHARE A CONCRETE CONNECTION, OR ARE THEIR STORIES TWO SEPARATE EXPLORATIONS OF FREEDOM?

TEST 5 — THE KNIGHT

THE QUESTION: IS THE KNIGHT CHANGING THE WORLD FROM WITHIN, OR INTERACTING WITH SOMETHING BEYOND IT?

the knight creates dark fountains.

those fountains bring dark worlds into existence, changing the environments around them.

but we don't know whether the knight has any connection to gaster or the SURVEY PROGRAM.

we shouldn't assume that the person responsible for creating the outer system must also be the person changing things inside it.

in fact, i think keeping those roles separate is important.

WHAT WE NEED TO LOOK FOR

- evidence explaining how the knight creates dark fountains.
- evidence establishing the knight's motives.
- dialogue or events connecting the knight to gaster, the vessel, or the opening.
- evidence that the knight understands something about the world's structure that other characters don't.

WHAT WOULD SUPPORT THE THEORY?

a direct connection between the knight's actions and the proposed outer system.

for example, if the knight's actions were explicitly shown to affect the relationship between the world and the system containing it, that would be significant.

WHAT WOULD WEAKEN THE THEORY?

if the knight's identity, motives, and abilities were fully explained within the ordinary world, with no connection to gaster or the SURVEY PROGRAM, that would weaken this particular link.

the knight could still be extremely important to the story.

they just wouldn't necessarily be part of the outer-layer mystery.

MY PREDICTION

i think the knight's motives will matter just as much as their identity.

finding out who they are might answer one question, but finding out why they create dark fountains could explain what they're trying to accomplish.

THE TEST: DOES THE KNIGHT HAVE A CONNECTION TO THE SYSTEM ITSELF, OR ARE THEY SIMPLY AN ACTOR WITHIN THE WORLD?

TEST 6 — THE SURVEY PROGRAM

THE QUESTION: IS THE OPENING ACTUALLY CONNECTED TO THE LARGER STORY?

THIS IS THE MOST IMPORTANT TEST.

because if the SURVEY PROGRAM theory can't establish a connection between the opening and the rest of deltarune, then everything else we've discussed becomes much harder to justify.

the opening gives us a vessel.

we answer questions.

the vessel is discarded.

we enter the game as kris.

our theory proposes that this sequence is doing more than introducing the player to the character-control mechanics.

but we need to prove that.

WHAT WE NEED TO LOOK FOR

- a later callback to the vessel that establishes its significance beyond the opening.
- evidence connecting the opening's mysterious speaker to gaster.
- evidence that the survey's questions serve a purpose beyond character creation.
- a concrete relationship between the player-facing interface and an event within the story.

WHAT WOULD SUPPORT THE THEORY?

a later event that establishes a causal connection between the opening and the world of deltarune.

a simple thematic parallel wouldn't be enough.

we need something that shows the opening's mechanics or events are relevant to the larger mystery.

WHAT WOULD WEAKEN THE THEORY?

if the opening were fully explained as a framing device for the player's relationship with kris, with no further connection to the proposed outer system, that would weaken our central claim.

it wouldn't mean the opening is meaningless.

it would mean its meaning might be different from what we're proposing.

MY PREDICTION

i think the vessel sequence will become more significant in retrospect.

whether the vessel itself returns or the opening is explained through some other revelation, i suspect the relationship between the player and kris will remain important.

but the SURVEY PROGRAM theory specifically predicts something stronger: that the opening is connected to the structure surrounding the game, not merely its themes.

THE TEST: DOES THE OPENING HAVE A CONCRETE ROLE IN THE LARGER MYSTERY, OR IS IT PRIMARILY A NARRATIVE INTRODUCTION?

SEGMENT 12 — WHAT COUNTS AS PROOF?

now that we've established our tests, we need one final rule.

WE CANNOT COUNT AN UNEXPLAINED MYSTERY AS EVIDENCE FOR OUR THEORY JUST BECAUSE IT'S UNEXPLAINED.

let me explain.

dess is missing.

that doesn't prove she escaped the game.

IMAGE_FRIEND is strange.

that doesn't prove it exists outside the game.

spamton wants freedom.

that doesn't prove he knows he's a fictional character.

jevil claims he's free.

that doesn't prove he's escaped the rules of his world.

the knight creates dark fountains.

that doesn't prove they're changing the game's underlying code.

and gaster being associated with mysterious material doesn't prove he created every unusual thing in deltarune.

we need to establish actual connections.

a shared name, a distinctive phrase, a repeated event, a direct reference, or an explicitly demonstrated relationship would be much more useful than a vague similarity.

we also need to consider alternative explanations.

if a clue fits our theory but fits another explanation just as well, it isn't decisive evidence.

and if something contradicts our predictions, we have to take that seriously.

otherwise, there's no way to tell whether we're discovering something or just convincing ourselves that we're right.

THE FINAL STANDARD

for every mystery, we're asking three questions:

1. **WHAT DO WE ACTUALLY KNOW?** the evidence the game provides, without adding our own explanation.
2. **WHAT DOES OUR THEORY PREDICT?** a specific connection or event that should exist if our interpretation is correct.
3. **WHAT WOULD CHANGE OUR MINDS?** evidence that would weaken the connection or support a different explanation.

if we can answer those questions for every major mystery, we'll have something much more useful than a list of guesses.

we'll have a theory that can be tested.

and if the SURVEY PROGRAM really is the key to understanding deltarune, those tests should eventually reveal connections that we couldn't have established through speculation alone.

because the goal isn't to prove that every mystery is secretly about gaster.

the goal is to figure out whether the SURVEY PROGRAM actually connects to the world we're exploring.

AND IF IT DOES, WE NEED TO FIND OUT EXACTLY HOW.

SEGMENT 13 — THE QUESTIONS WE NEED TO ANSWER

if THE SURVEY PROGRAM THEORY is going to hold up, we need to ask the questions that could actually prove it right or wrong.

not just “does this fit the theory?”

we need to ask: what exactly are we looking for, and what would the answer tell us?

QUESTION 1 — WHAT WAS THE SURVEY PROGRAM ACTUALLY FOR?

- why does DELTARUNE begin with a character creation survey?
- who was asking the questions, and who was supposed to answer them?
- why are we allowed to create a vessel if it gets discarded immediately afterward?

- was the vessel ever meant to be used, or was creating it part of some other process?
- why does the game begin with this sequence before introducing Kris and the normal world?

what we're testing: whether the survey is just an opening sequence or whether it has a purpose that connects to the larger story.

QUESTION 2 — WHO WAS BEHIND THE SURVEY?

- is W.D. Gaster actually connected to the survey?
- what evidence connects the voice in the opening to Gaster specifically?
- could the voice belong to someone else?
- does the survey's language, presentation, or behavior connect it to anything else associated with Gaster?
- if Gaster is involved, what does he want from the person answering the questions?

what we're testing: whether Gaster is genuinely involved in the Survey Program, rather than simply being a convenient explanation for anything mysterious.

QUESTION 3 — WHAT HAPPENED TO THE VESSEL?

- why was the vessel created only to be discarded?
- who decided that it would not be used?
- where did the vessel go after the survey ended?
- does the discarded vessel have any connection to later events?
- could the vessel return, and if so, what evidence would support that prediction?

what we're testing: whether the vessel is a one-time opening gimmick or an unresolved part of DELTARUNE's central mystery.

QUESTION 4 — WHAT HAPPENED TO DESS?

- what do we actually know about Dess's disappearance?
- is there evidence that her fate involves something outside the ordinary world?
- does her disappearance connect to Gaster, the Survey Program, or the discarded vessel?
- are there specific details that suggest she encountered something unusual, or are we connecting unrelated mysteries?
- what discovery would establish a direct link between Dess and the Survey Program?

what we're testing: whether Dess's disappearance is connected to the theory's proposed outer layer, rather than merely sharing the game's general atmosphere of mystery.

QUESTION 5 — WHAT IS IMAGE_FRIEND, AND WHY DOES IT MATTER?

- what can we confirm about IMAGE_FRIEND from the game itself?
- where does it appear, and under what circumstances?
- is the name meaningful in-universe, or is it simply an internal development label?
- is there a verifiable connection between IMAGE_FRIEND and the survey, the vessel, or Gaster?
- does it interact with anything that suggests a larger system behind the events of DELTARUNE?

what we're testing: whether IMAGE_FRIEND provides concrete evidence for the theory or is an intriguing but unrelated detail.

QUESTION 6 — WHO WAS THE MYSTERIOUS CALLER CONNECTED TO SPAMTON?

- who contacted Spamton before his rise to success?
- what did the caller tell him, and what did Spamton learn from the interaction?
- is there evidence that the caller was Gaster?
- does Spamton's dialogue suggest that he encountered something beyond the ordinary world, or could his words have another explanation?
- does anything connect his experience to the Survey Program specifically?

what we're testing: whether Spamton's mysterious contact is evidence of a larger system or a separate mystery that only resembles one.

QUESTION 7 — WHAT DID JEVIL ACTUALLY LEARN?

- who or what changed Jevil's understanding of the world?
- is there evidence that Jevil and Spamton encountered the same person, source, or phenomenon?
- what specific details connect their experiences beyond their shared themes of freedom and confinement?
- does Jevil know something about the world that other characters do not?
- could his behavior have an explanation that does not involve the Survey Program?

what we're testing: whether Jevil and Spamton are connected by a common cause, rather than simply being two unusual characters with similar themes.

QUESTION 8 — WHO OR WHAT IS THE KNIGHT?

- what does the Knight actually do, and what do we know about their motives?
- is the Knight operating entirely within the world of DELTARUNE?
- is there any evidence connecting the Knight to Gaster, the vessel, or the Survey Program?
- does creating Dark Fountains require knowledge or abilities beyond what the world itself allows?
- could the Knight be an independent actor whose actions have nothing to do with the proposed outer layer?

what we're testing: whether the Knight is part of the same mystery as the Survey Program or a separate force operating within the story.

QUESTION 9 — IS DELTARUNE ITSELF INSIDE SOMETHING ELSE?

this is the BIG question.

- is the Survey Program simply a framing device, or does it represent a real layer of the story?
- does DELTARUNE ever establish a connection between the opening survey and events after it?
- are there moments where the game acknowledges the player, the vessel, or something outside the characters' normal experience?
- if an outer layer exists, what are its rules?
- can we identify anything that belongs to that layer without relying on interpretation alone?
- what evidence would prove that the Survey Program and the main story are separate but connected systems?

what we're testing: the central claim of the entire theory — that the Survey Program may be more than an opening sequence and that the events of DELTARUNE may exist within a larger structure.

QUESTION 10 — ARE ALL THESE MYSTERIES ACTUALLY CONNECTED?

- do Dess, IMAGE_FRIEND, Spamton, Jevil, the Knight, and the vessel share any concrete evidence?
- are those connections direct, or are we connecting them because they are all mysterious?
- could some of these mysteries be related while others are completely independent?

- what evidence would connect two mysteries without automatically connecting every mystery to the same source?
- if one part of the theory is disproven, can the rest still work?

what we're testing: whether this is one connected explanation or several separate theories being bundled together.

QUESTION 11 — WHAT WOULD DISPROVE THE THEORY?

we cannot only look for evidence that supports us.

- what if the survey never becomes relevant again?
- what if the vessel never returns?
- what if the mysterious caller is confirmed to be someone other than Gaster?
- what if Dess's disappearance has an explanation unrelated to the Survey Program?
- what if the Knight's motives are entirely independent of the opening?
- what if the apparent connections turn out to be thematic parallels rather than literal links?

what we're testing: whether THE SURVEY PROGRAM THEORY can survive evidence against it, or whether it depends on every mystery eventually connecting to the same explanation.

THE FINAL QUESTION — WHAT IS THE SURVEY PROGRAM HIDING?

every question above leads back to this one.

is the Survey Program simply how DELTARUNE introduces its player to the story?

or is it the first glimpse of something much larger — a system, an experiment, or an interaction that the rest of the game has not fully explained yet?

we do not have the answer.

that's the point of the investigation.

we need to keep track of what we know, what we suspect, and what we still need to prove.

because if these mysteries really are connected, the evidence should eventually show us HOW.

and if they aren't?

then we need to be willing to admit that, too.

