

**GUILT TRIP**  
**Game Design Document**  
**Cultured**

**Tech**

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**Design**

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## I: Game Concept

### Game theme:

**Main Theme:** Deduction//Induction

**Art Theme:** Hardboiled Noir

**Design Theme:** Overcoming Loss & Confusion

**Tech Theme:** AI

**Game Resolution:** 1280 x 720

**Genre:** Top Down RPG

### Description:

There are two sections of the gameplay. The Battle gameplay focuses on the player needing to select the suitable dialogue during an encounter in order to maintain a threshold of the emotion bars of the enemy, which is the safe zone until the turns of the battle have concluded. The exploration gameplay focuses on the player finding the key item of the stage in order to proceed to the next stage.

### Premise:

A horrible car accident that caused the lives of all of Alex's family members has made Alex to have neverending nightmares everyday as he falls into despair. However all hope is not lost yet as he discovered that in his nightmare, he's still fully aware of what's going on and it is up to him to try and end this neverending nightmare but in exchange he would need to face his deepest fears. In his nightmare he encounters weird entities, dream eaters wanting to make his life miserable and familiar faces that he thought he would not see anymore. With nowhere to run, his only way is to move forward. Can he finally overcome his nightmare? That will be up to him only

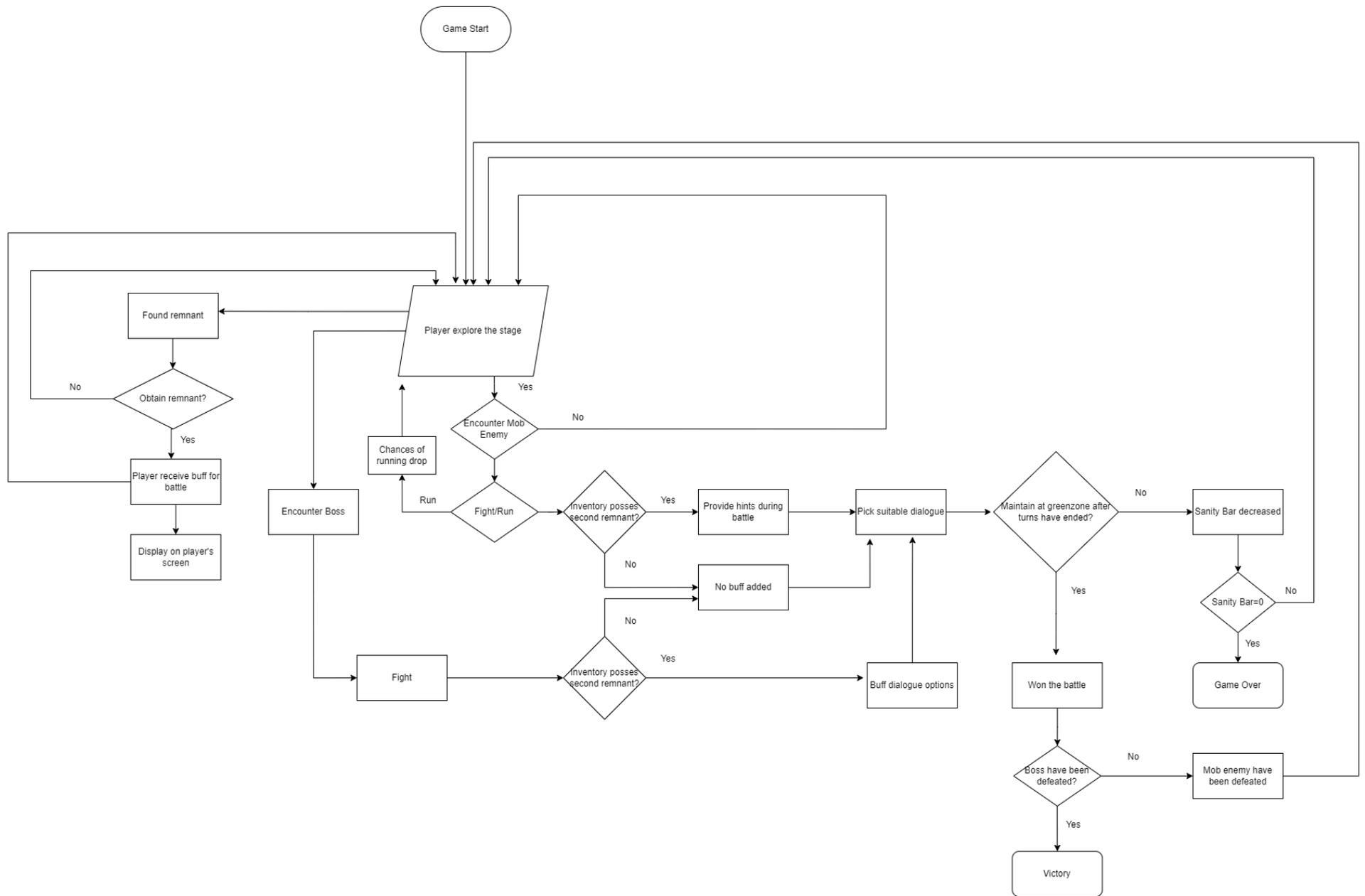
### Player Objective:

The objective of the game is to find at least a remnant and defeat the boss of the stage in order to win the game.

### Player Experience:

The player experience we are going for is having a strong narrative that makes the player more immersed into the game by having them pick choices that will impact the gameplay where your choices matter.

### Game Flow Diagram:



## II: Narrative & Character

### Protagonist of the Game: Alex



#### **Description of Alex:**

Alex has an ordinary family and lives a normal life. However, the family is fragmented due to the death of a family member. Although the death had no clear relation to Alex, he was still blamed by every other person. Not being able to resolve the misunderstanding of this conflict due to the lack of courage between his family, Alex is forced to live with the guilt that he was the cause of why the family is broken apart. Alex hides in his room and sleeps his guilt away.

Alex is a very straightforward person and sometimes that would cause some conflict between him and others but he felt that if people do not accept this real version of him, then why even bother to fake it when one day, the bubble will burst and everyone will not be happy with him.

Ever since his family members death, everyday he wakes up trying to convince that he's okay but deep down he knows his heart is aching as Alex's life slowly devoids of

colour due to this guilt and he lives his life while he falls out with his family. He loses interest in his school life, and always feels anxious. Night by night, he always seems to have a strange neverending nightmare that eats away his mental health and soul, bit by bit. During the nightmares, he also feels like he might die at any moment. Alex joins therapy to help cope this fear, but to no avail

When Alex's in his dream, he would wear a suit to show that he's already mature enough to accept the death of his family members while deep down, he has not moved on and he loves to watch and read detective stories. He would also wear a mask to cover his face to not let people know what he's really thinking about and what expression he's making at the moment.

### **How the stages Nightmare tied in with the narrative:**

Inspired heavily by the **5 stages of guilt**

Each stage represents a family member of Alex which includes **his brother, sister, father and himself** who will convey the message of the 5 stages of guilt and how once every boss has been cleared. However, by the end of the project only one stage is successfully being built, which is the first stage, representing **Denial and the boss the player will be facing is the sister..** The player clears puzzles of the game or obtains remnants to know more about the context between Alex and his sister. Once the boss has been killed, Alex feels like he has already let go of some burden from his heart.

### **Dialogue Matters in battle:**

Player choices in battle is the key point on whether the player wins or loses the game especially in bosses where it will follow a scripted conversation fight. The Player is rewarded if they have been paying attention to the dialogues or have explored around the stage.

### III: Features of the Game

#### 1. Emotion Bar

Players need to maintain a certain threshold also known as the safe zone of the emotion bar until the battle turn has concluded. The placement of the point and the safe zone of emotion bar at the start of the battle is **randomised**. However, it won't be placed on the left side of the emotion bar because when the player picks a wrong dialogue it would go to the left and we do not want the player to just pick the wrong emotion if that's the case.

#### 2. Mob battle

The game will offer up to 4 options when selecting the Normal Conversation and the player can select either one conversation to counter the enemy's conversation and the emotion bar will increase or decrease based on the reply of the player. Conversation effectiveness is **categorised into 3 parts**: **Super effective** where it will help the player, **Normal** means it's not effective or effective and **Not effective** where it will put the player in a disadvantage state. Battle Line have their own unique set of replies and will shuffle through the battles. Mob battles have only **6 turns**.



(Shin Megami Tensei series- the protagonist can talk to the demon and try to please them based on the conversation in order to recruit them into their party)

#### 3. Remnants grant passive skills- Only for boss

Each stage have two remnants that player can collect from exploration where remnants serve as a passive for the player to have. The two ability are Number of words have increased and Help player select the suitable dialogue

- a. Have chance to Show hints to the player during battle

- The dialogue will be circled out and hinting the player to select the dialogue to help them during the battle
  - b. Buff boss battle dialogue**
- More damage will be buff for the player if they selected the right dialogue



(Undertale - when player select act and select the types of conversation they want to use against the enemy)

#### 4. Sanity Bar

Sanity Bar has 5 bars. The lesser the sanity bar you currently have, the chances of you missing in battle will increase. The lowest that a player can miss a turn in a battle is **10% per turn** which means **5% per sanity bar**. Players can **recover the sanity bar by winning against mob or boss**. However, if a player **loses**, it means that if the sanity bar has not **reached 0**, the effect(Misses in battle) will **increase based on the sanity bar**. If the sanity bar has reached 0, it means game over and the player will respawn at the checkpoint of the level.

- Some Words will be highlighted in green,red, and blue. **Green** is **super effective** where if selected, the arrow of the emotion bar will go to the **right**. **Red** is **not effective** and the arrow of the emotion bar will go to the **left**. **Blue** where the arrow of the emotion bar will move slightly to the **right**.

(**Note:** If Player lost against boss, it will also be send back to the checkpoint of the level)



(Don't Starve: The effect when player have gone insane)

#### 5. **Sacrifice Remnants for key item**

In order to proceed to the next stage of the game, players need to sacrifice **at least a remnant** in exchange for getting the key item to proceed to the next stage. One stage will have **ONE key item**.

#### 6. **Mobs Enemy(Exploration)**

There will be a few amount of mobs enemies wandering around the stage and when the player is near the enemy. It will be **alert** and will chase the player. For mobs enemy, if the player loses but the sanity bar has not reached maximum (game over), mob enemies in the map will die but the sanity bar will increase.



(Persona 4- When player is near an enemy, the enemy will be alerted and go after the player)

### 7. Fleeing from Battle

The probability of the player running away from battles (**ONLY MOB FIGHTS**) would decrease the more time the player does it. When the player run away from the battle for the first time, it has a 90% chance, the second time it will dropped to 80% and the third time it will be 60% chance and will remained the same until the game have ended

### 8. Boss Battle

The boss conversation with players will be a **scripted fight** where each option will lead to its own separate branches of answers and similar to mob battle emotion bars. There are 2 scenarios where the player will end up at, the super effective, normal effective scenario and not effective scenario where either scenario will lead to a different path. Boss will have 2 phases and before the end of phase 1 and 2 turn, it will check whether have successfully maintained the safe zone. If the player failed to maintain the safe zone for the first phase and second phase, the player lost.

### 9. Sprint Gauge

Character able to sprint during exploration to mostly hide from enemies

### 10. Puzzles

- There will be 3 puzzles in the game, the first puzzle being activate the puzzle plate in the correct order, second puzzle which is simon calls

where the player needs to activate the lamp post after the lamp post displays the light and the final puzzle which is to ensure all the levers are green. Once a puzzle has been solved a small flashback text will be played out where it gives more context between the relationship between Alex and his sister.

## IV: ART

**THEME: Hardboiled Noir** : Hardboiled is gritty and unsentimental.

**How it will be portrayed in levels and characters:**The game will start off with **black and white** but as players proceed to the next stage **colors also slowly will be present while retaining the art theme.**

**Concept Art:**  
**Stage 1**



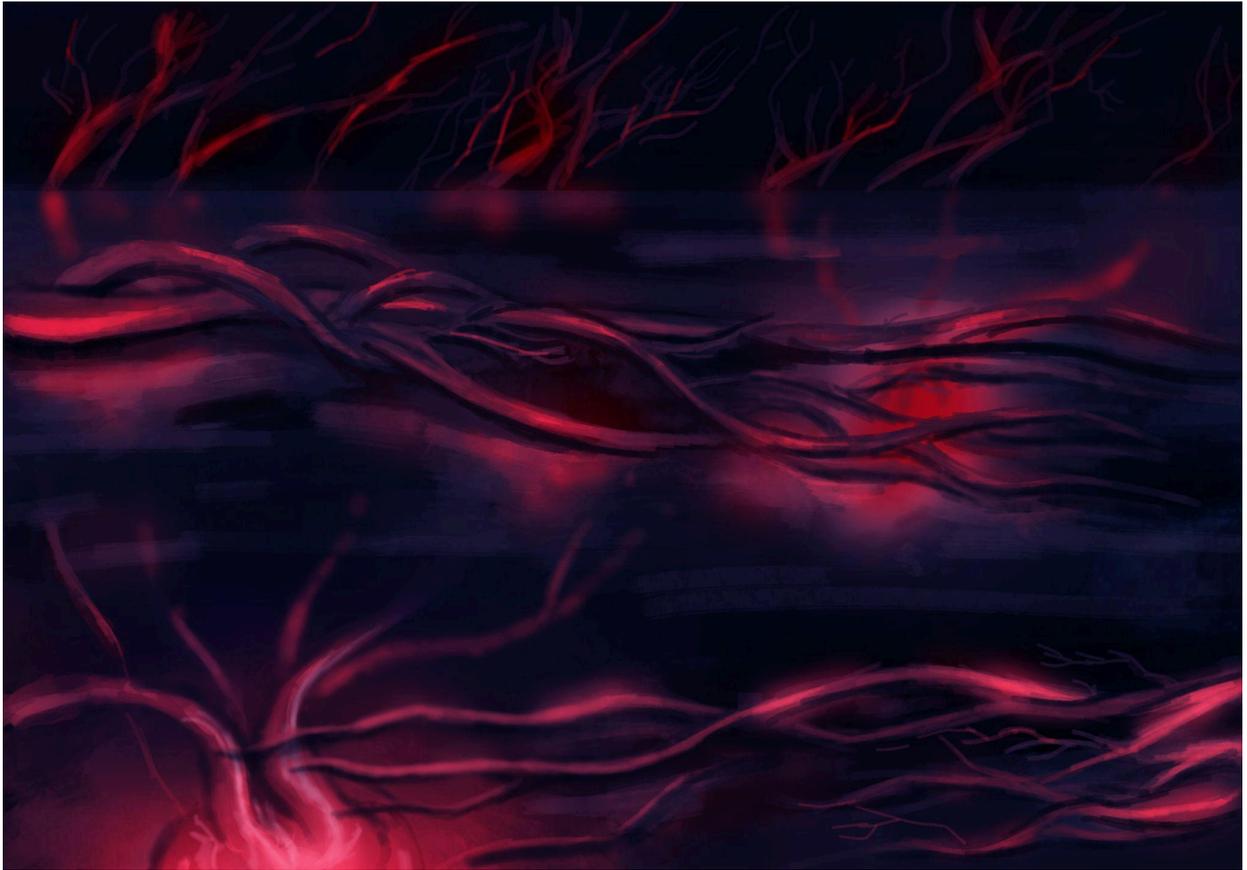


**(Level 1 Denial)**

**Reference:**

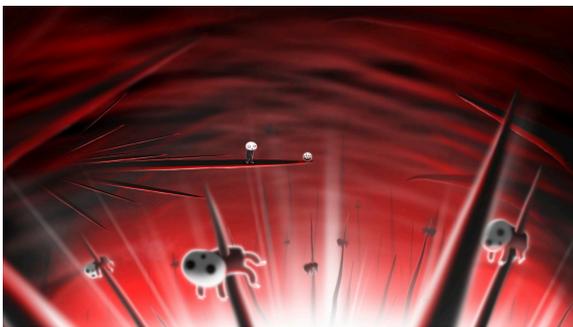


**Concept Art for stage 2**



(Level 2: Anger)

References:



**Concept Art for stage 3**

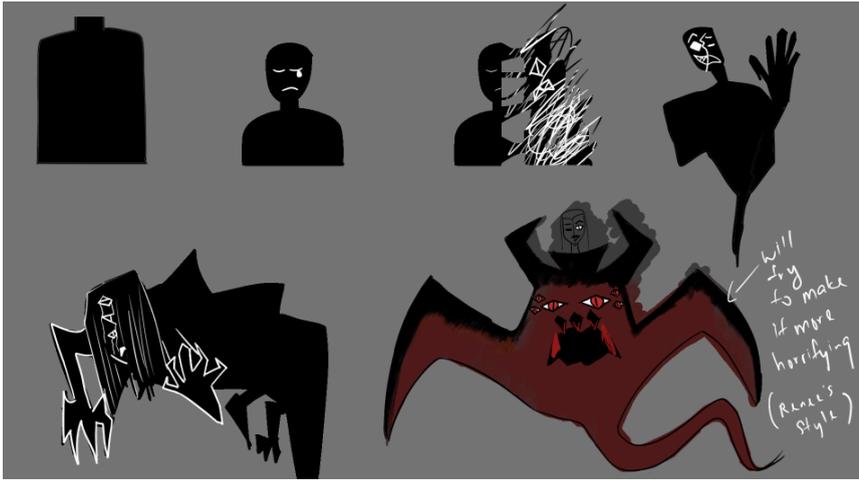


**(Level 3: Bargaining)**

**Level 4 reference:**



**Enemy/Boss Concepts:**



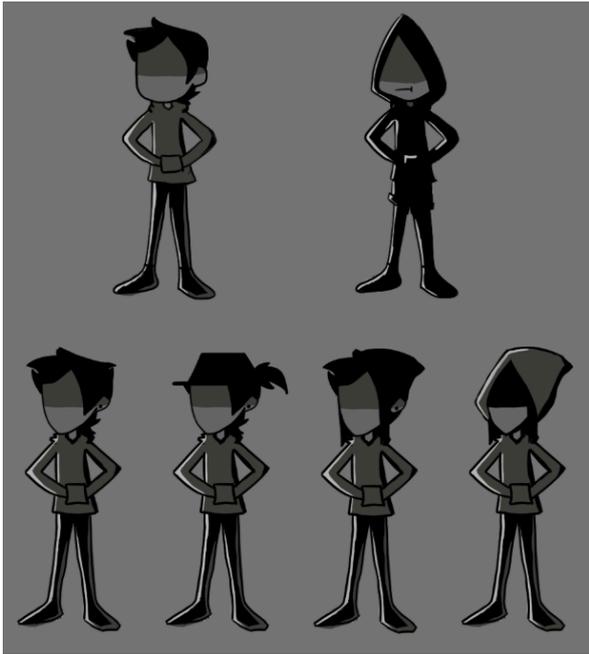
**Enemy/Boss Reference:**





# Concept Art for Alex(Protagonist)

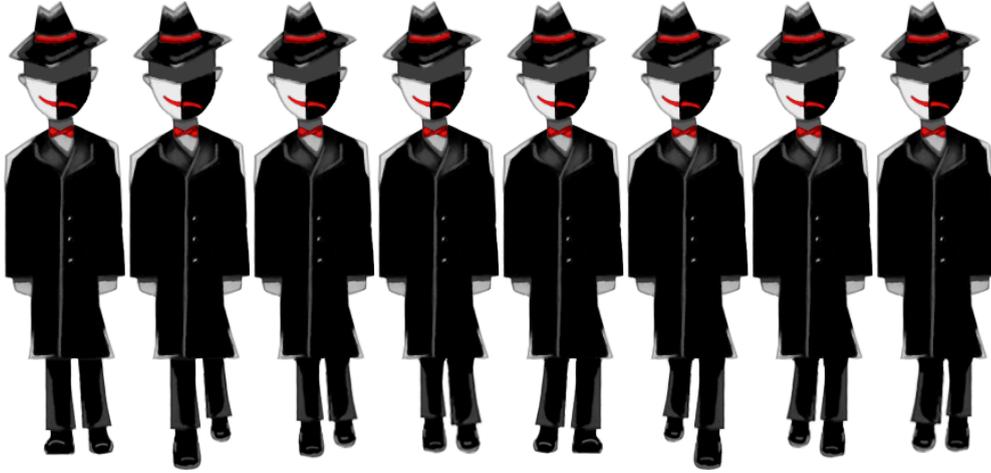




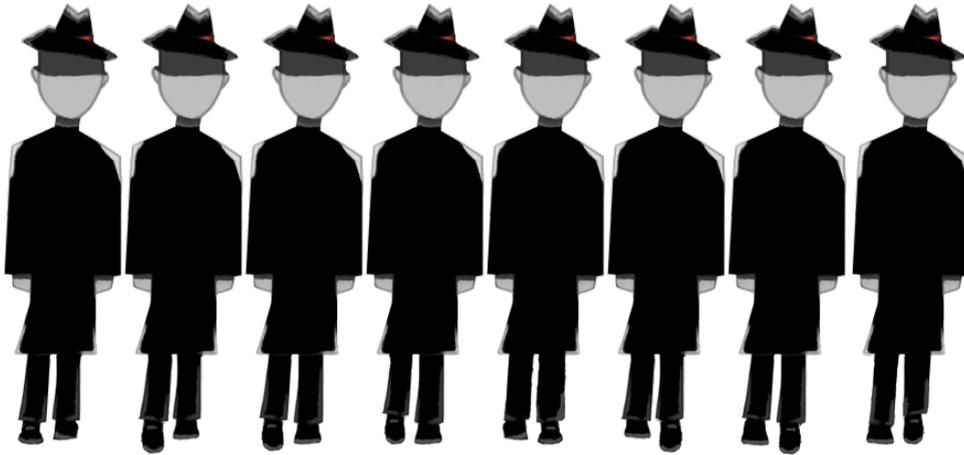
**FINALISED ART**

**Finalised Art for Character Alex:**

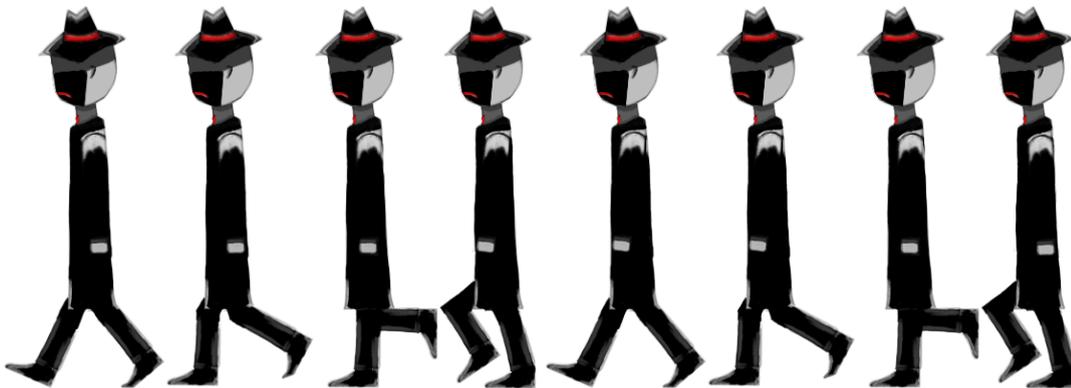
**FRONT WALK:**



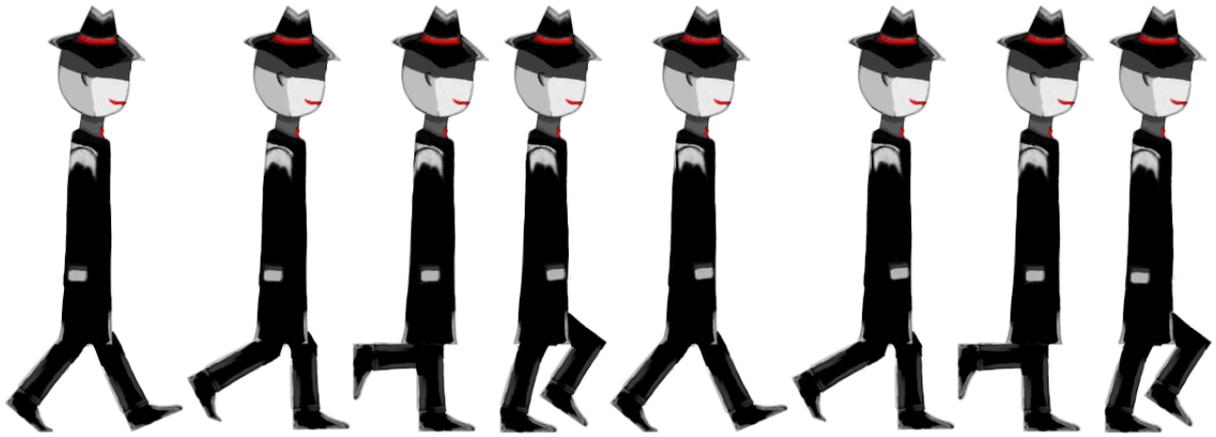
**BACK WALK:**



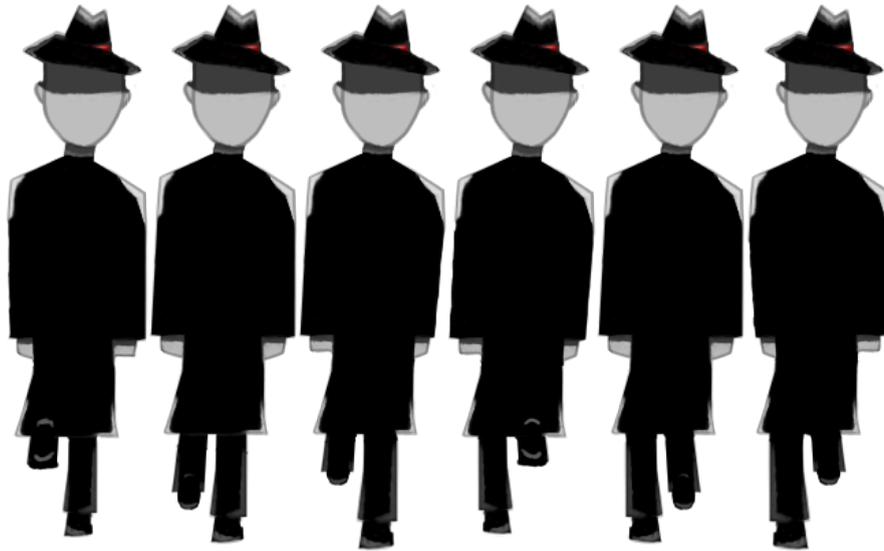
**LEFT WALK:**



**RIGHT WALK:**



**BACK RUN**



**FRONT RUN**



**LEFT RUN**



**RIGHT RUN**



**Finalised NPC:**



**Finalised Mob enemy:**



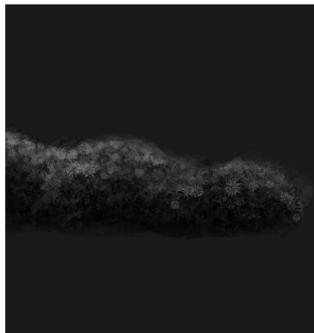
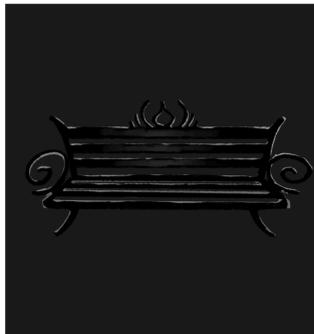
**Finalised Boss for stage 1:**



## Finalised Stage 1

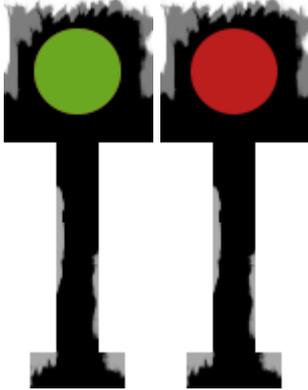


## Props:

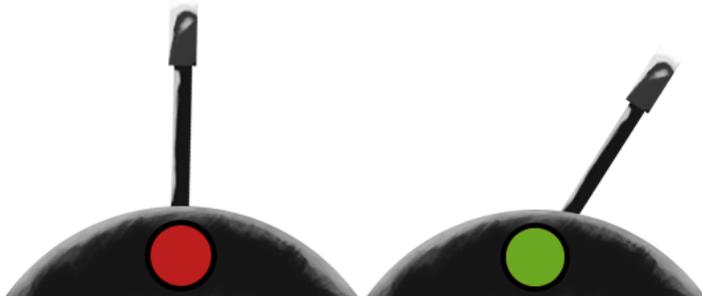




**Interactable Props:**

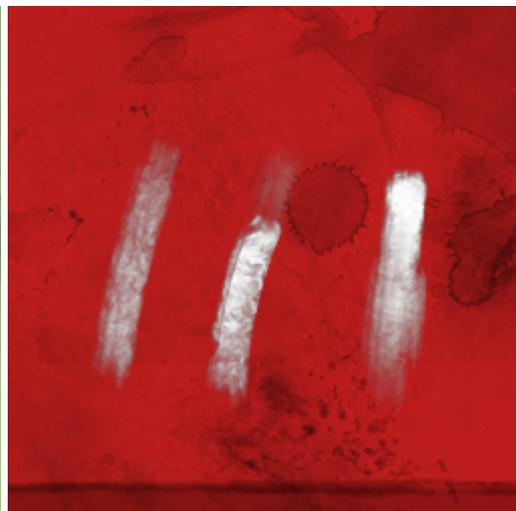
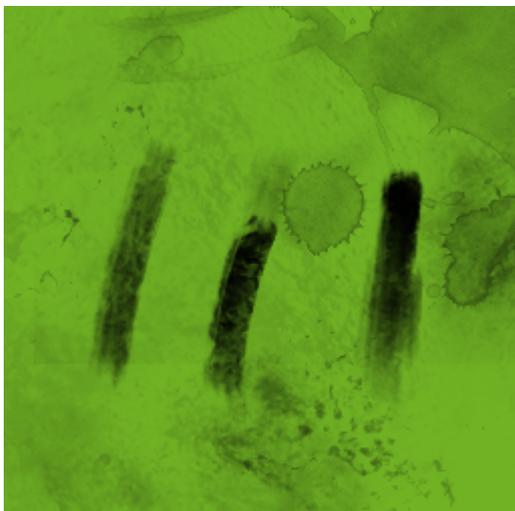


**(Switch-ON)(Switch-OFF)**



**(Lever pull)**

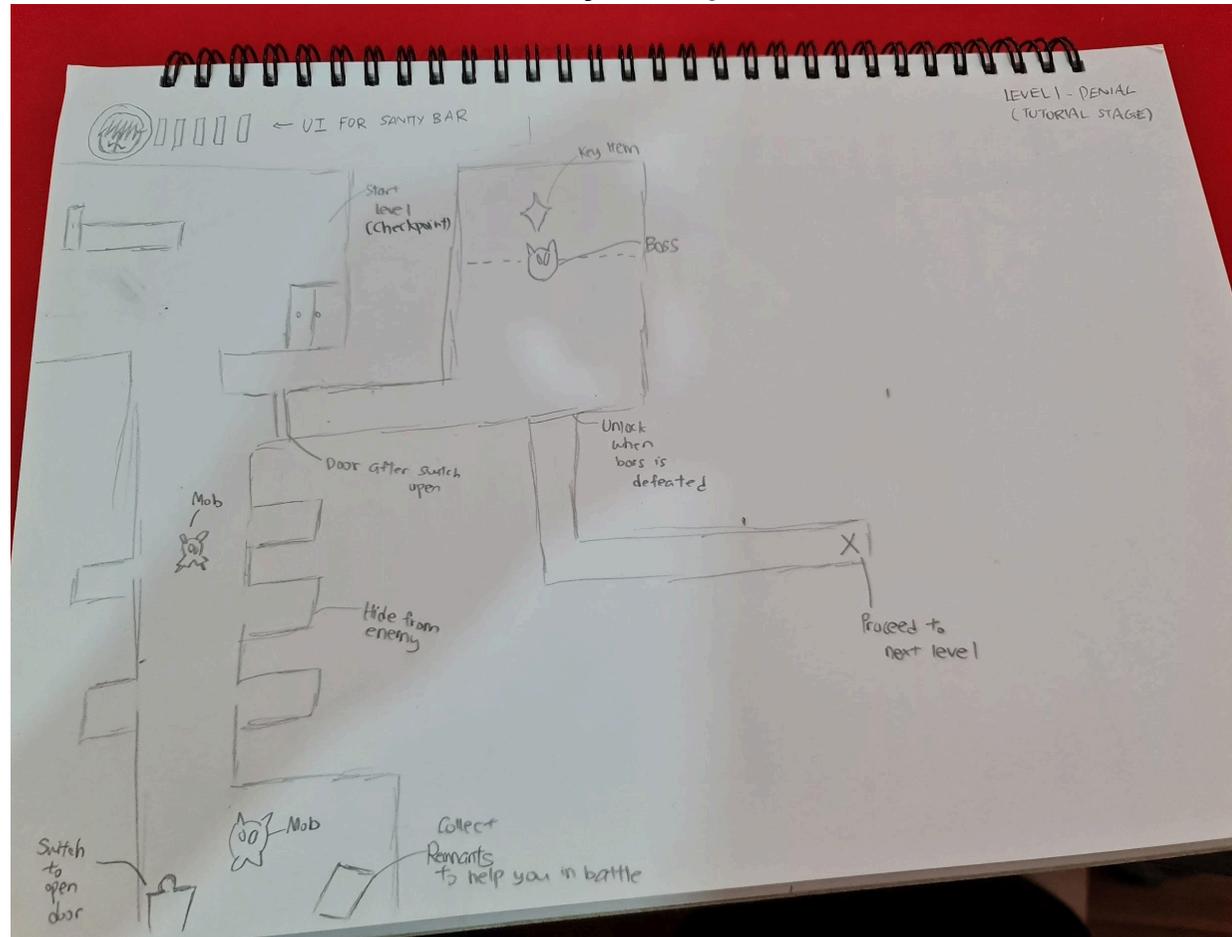
**Pressure Plates**

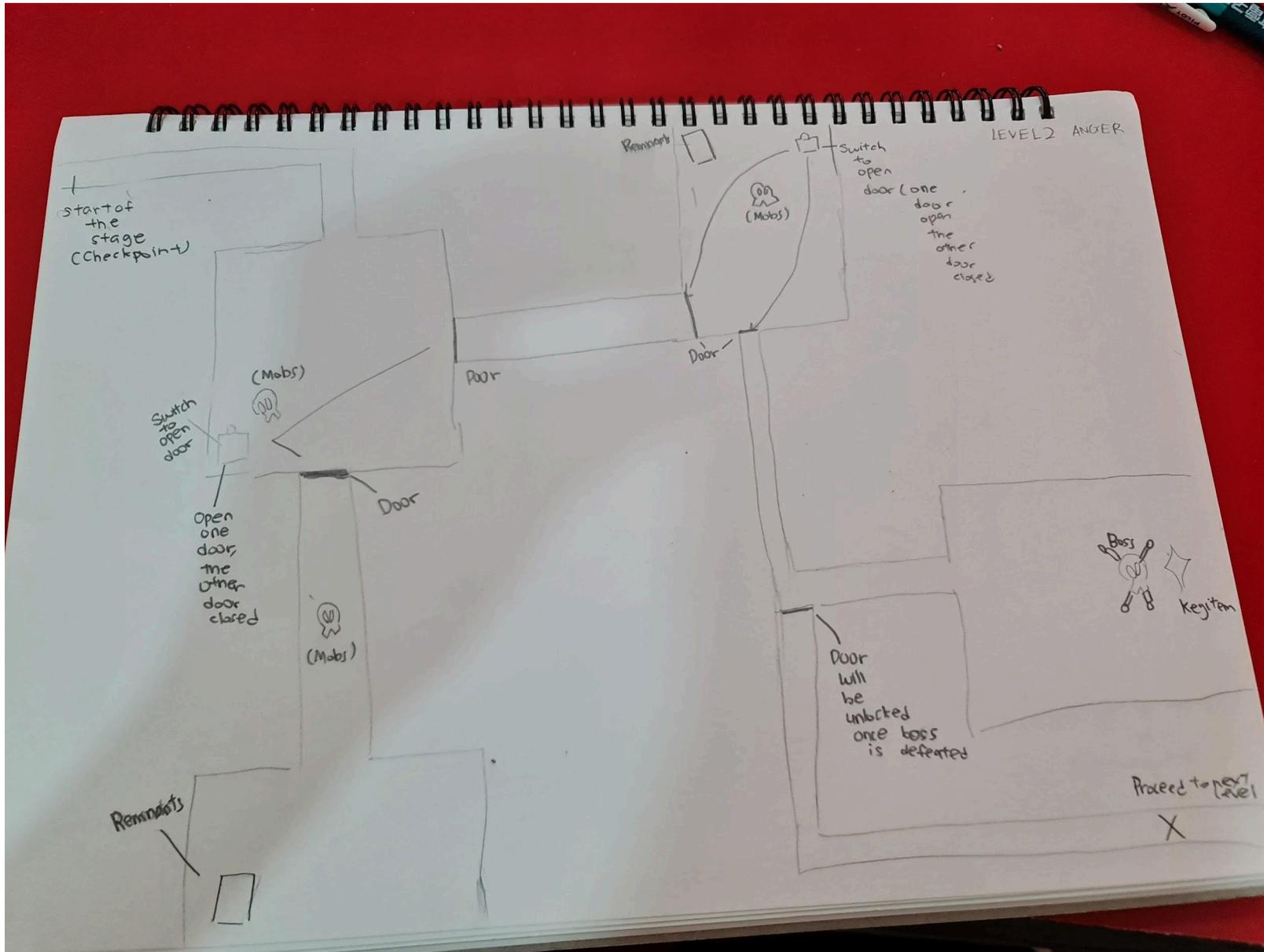


Remnants:



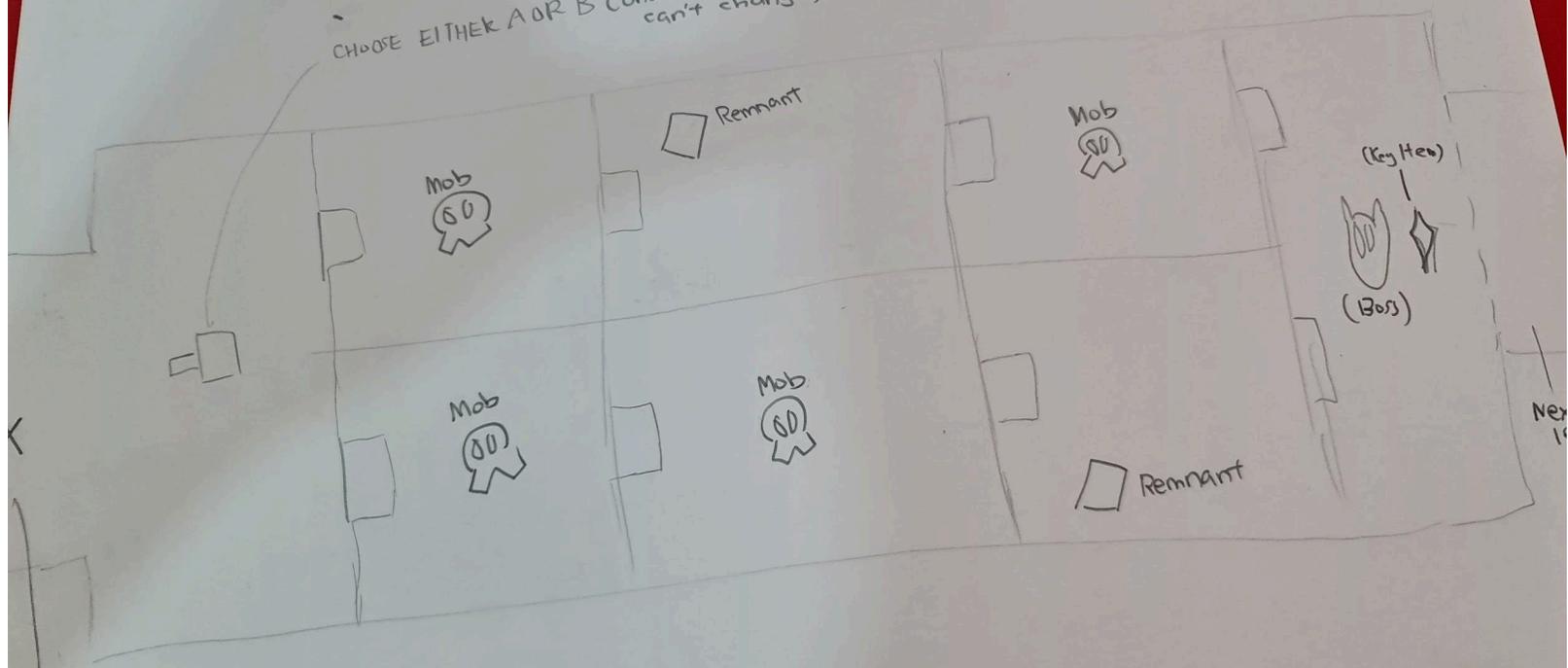
# V: LEVEL LAYOUT: Early Concept



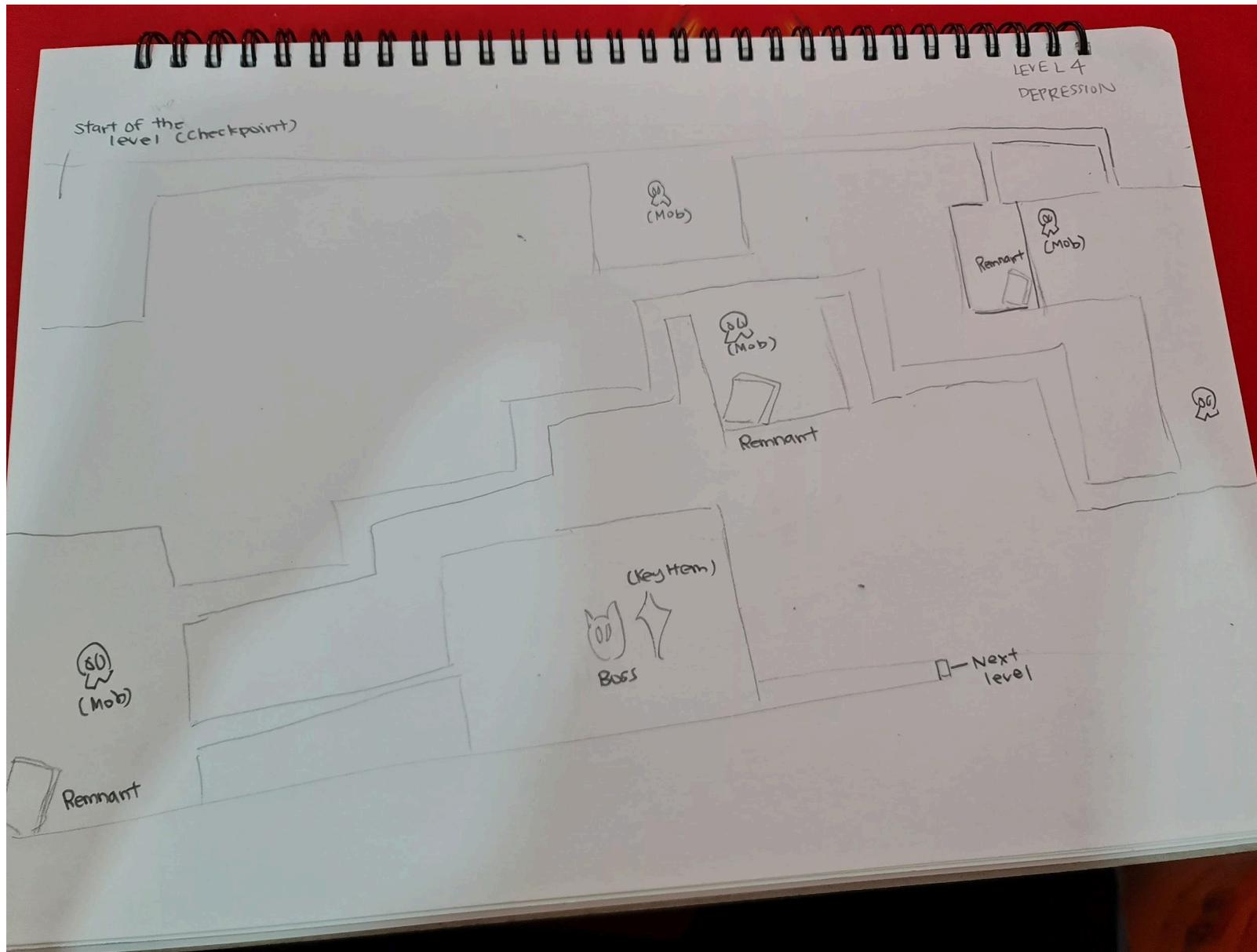


LEVEL 3  
BARGAINING

CHOOSE EITHER A OR B (Once selected can't change)



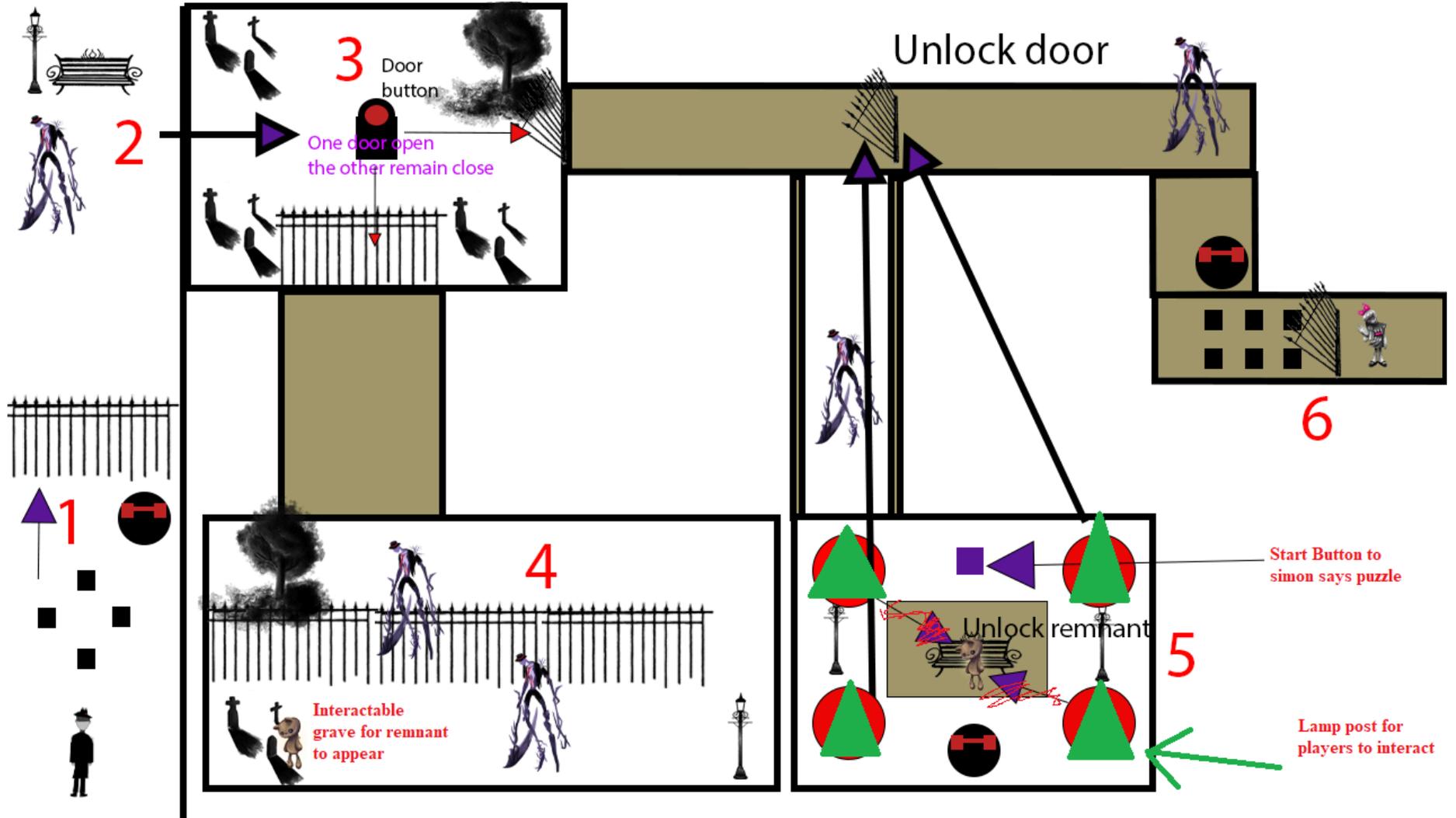
Start of the level  
(checkpoint)



Level 5  
Acceptance .



# Revised Level 1 Map

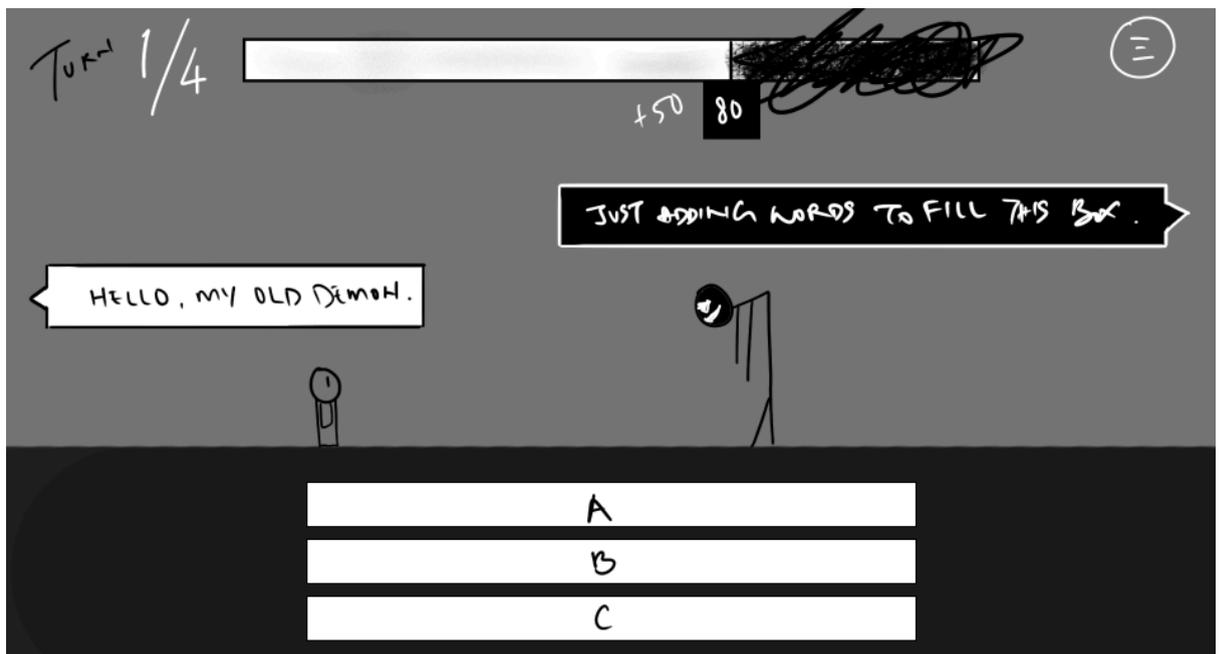
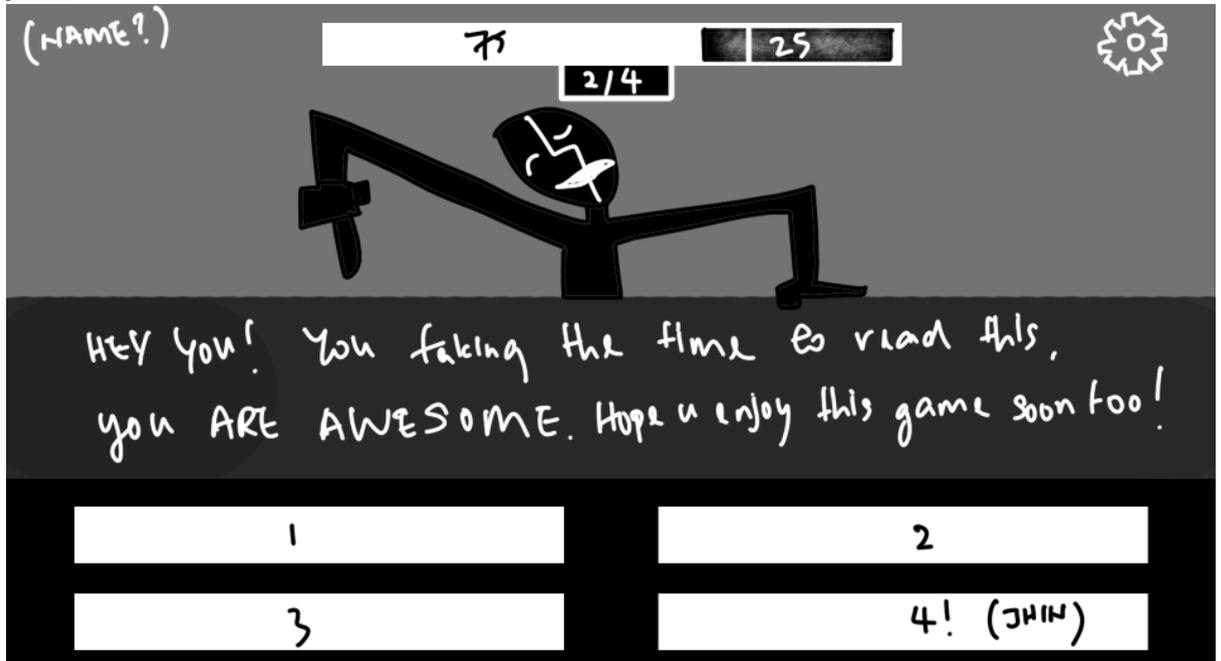


# Level 1 Finalised Map



## VI: User Interface & Control Scheme

### Concept UI



# How boss text will be displayed on originally



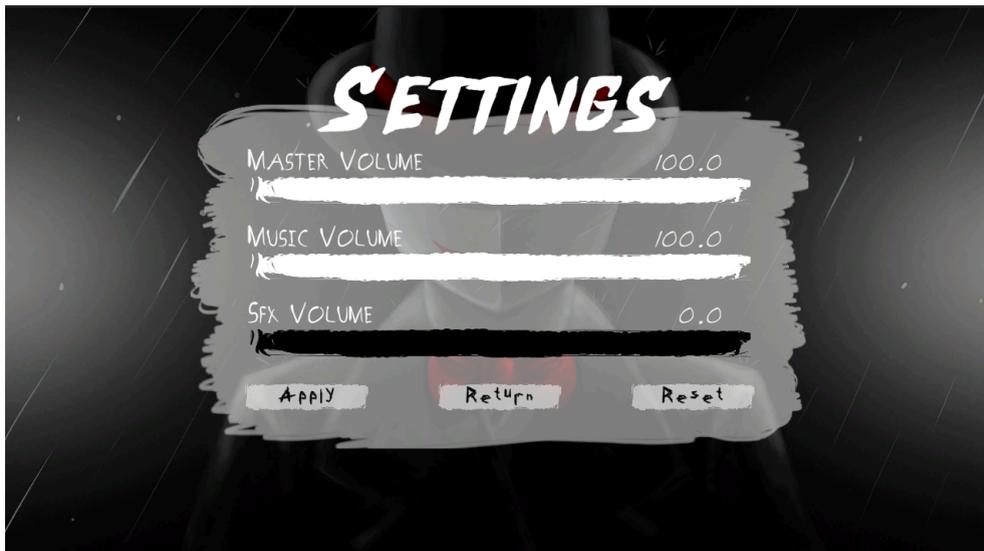
## Finalised UI

### 1. Main Menu



There are 4 interactable Text buttons in the Main menu. The “**New Game Button**”, The “**Load Game button**”, The “**Settings button**” and the “**Quit Button**”. Each Text button would display a hover animation when the Player’s mouse hovers over them. Clicking on the **Start button** would begin to take the player to the tutorial stage in the game. Clicking the **Load game** button would load the checkpoint of the stage but if the player has not played the game before, nothing would happen if the player selects the load game option. Clicking the “**Settings button**” would take the user to the settings where they can adjust sounds. Clicking the “**Quit button**” would cause the application to quit.

## 2. Setting UI



The main functionality of the control setting UI is to provide the User the freedom to adjust the sound of the game. There are 3 categories of the sound settings which are the “**master volume**”, “**music volume**” and “**sfx volume**”. User can tweak the volume to his or her liking. The “**Apply button**” is where the user can save their adjusted settings. The “**Reset button**” is also useful when the user wants to revert back to the default volume settings.

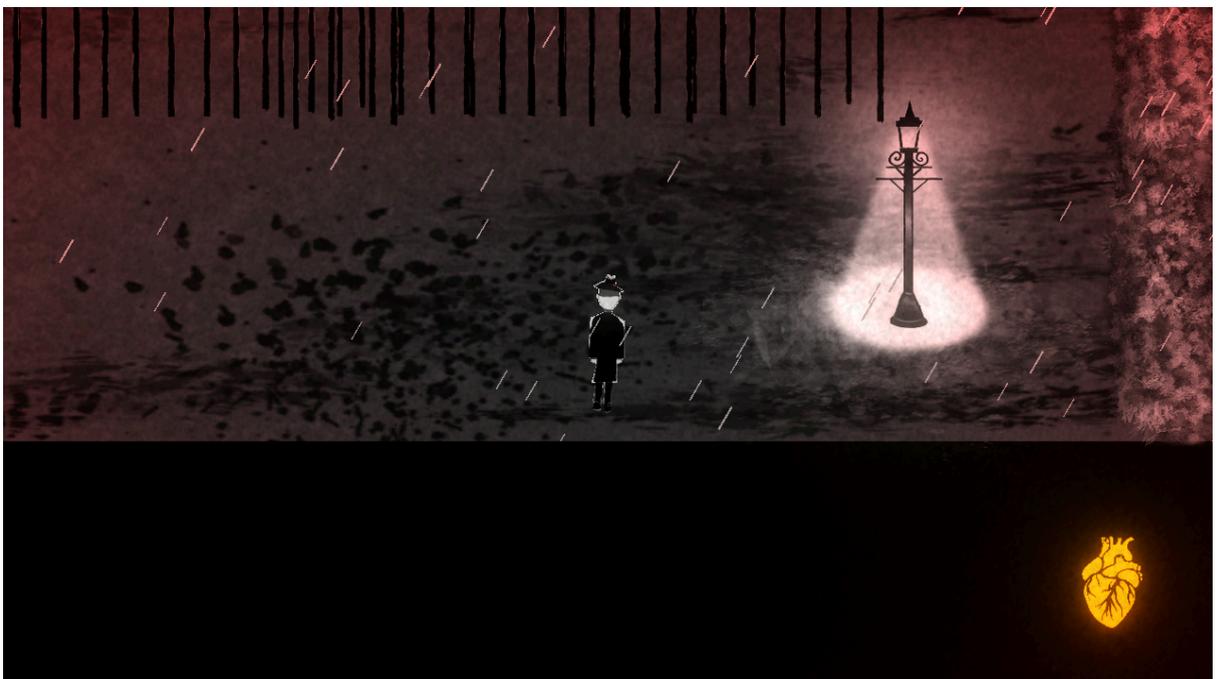
### 3. Sprint Gauge

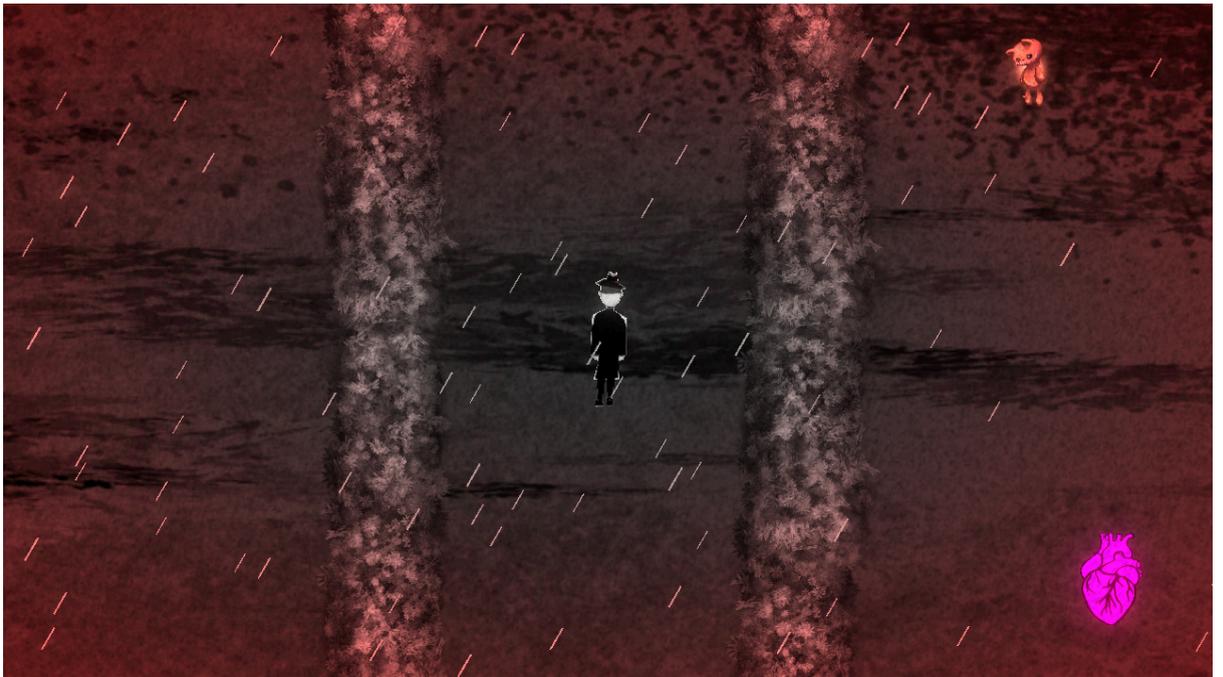


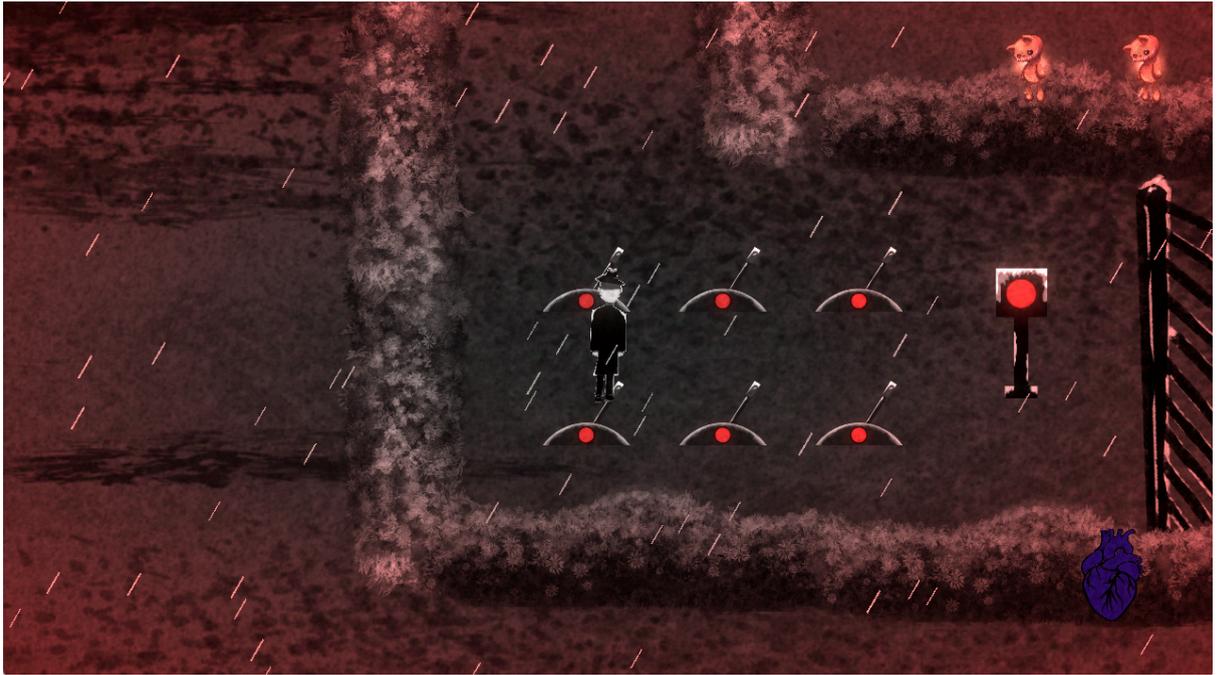
The bar below the player indicates their Sprint bar and how much energy they have left to sprint. **Green** means it's close to full, **Yellow** means starting

to depleted below 80% and **red** means it's recharging back and the player can't run. The Sprint bar will recharge overtime.

#### 4. Sanity Bar UI







When player lose a battle in any mob fights, the game won't transition into game over screen immediately, it would depends on the current sanity bar at the moment and would decreased from **red** to **yellow** to **orange** to **pink** and finally **purple** before reaching the game over scene

## 5. Battle UI



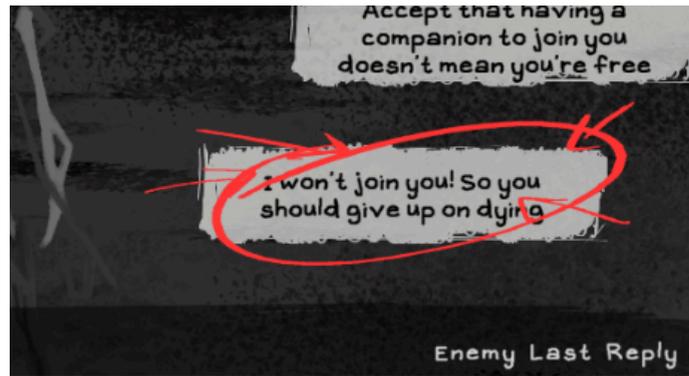
The UI design for battle is non-diegetic as it is more akin to a typical turn-based RPG game where countless text shows up on the screen that describes the narrative. The UI is mainly designed around black and white, evil and good, the player's dialogues and options backgrounds are colored in white while the enemy is black. By switching between both distinctively different colours, it allows the player to easily grasp a sense of whether the player or enemy is talking without actually checking the responder.

This can also be seen for the **Emotion Indicator** at the centre top of the screen, a simple straight line with **2 green border** like icons to signify the “**safe zone**” or **target area** that the player needs to reach by moving the red indicator icon with the dialogue options.

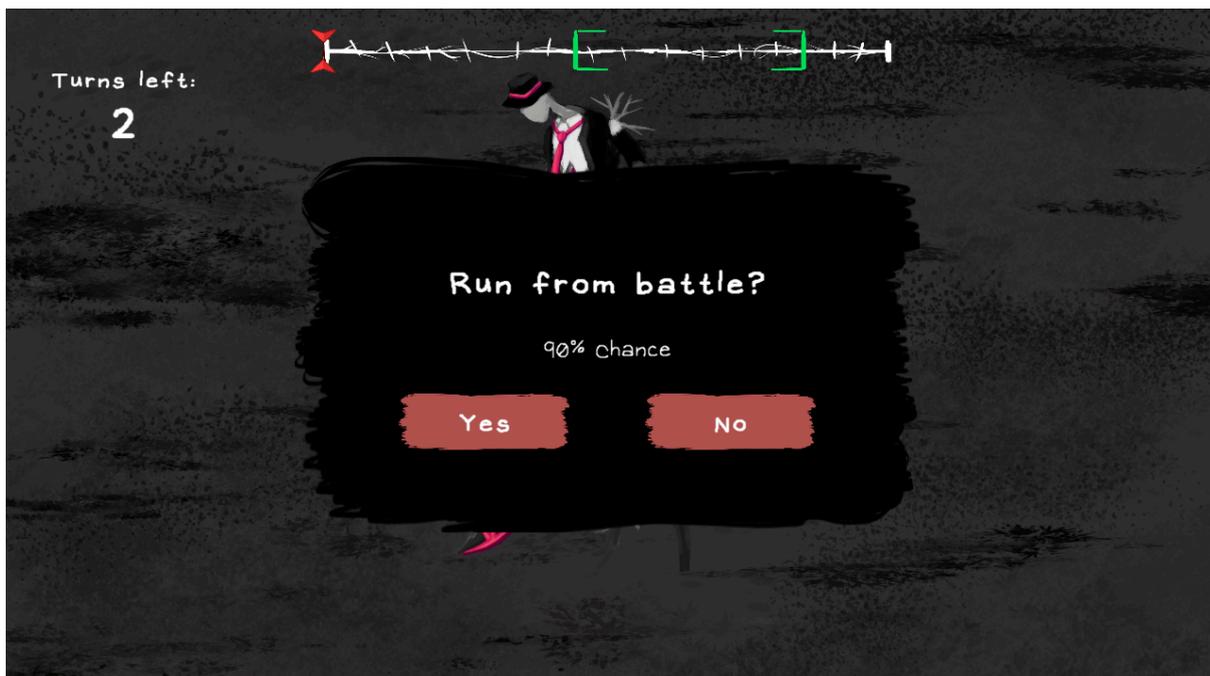
So moving on to those dialogue options, they are placed around the enemy as there was more space also allowing the dialogue box itself to remain at the bottom as to not obstruct too much on the main focus of the battle, the enemy sprite.



**Coloured text or highlighted text** can also be seen on some of the dialogue options, they serve as a **small hint** as to how their corresponding choices may affect the emotion bar, for example, **red** reduces the white portion as it is a colour of warning and danger, while **green** being the opposite, **blue** on the other hand is a stranger choice but it signifies calmness and in this context, being more calm means even more positivity. Furthermore, by hovering over said options with highlighted text, the colored text would stand out more vibrantly as the rest of the text fades darker. This design choice is to help players notice said keywords much easily by pointing out the already highlighted text even more, and to emphasise on them.



Another notable feature would be the **red circular doodles** on some of the dialogue options, it is a sort of hint that triggers based on set chance every round if the player obtained a remnant. This UI is just a simple red circle box with arrows pointing towards to primarily gain the player's attention and decision to select a dialogue, the rarity of said event is intended to make the player feel as if this is something rare and should be acted upon. On the other hand, it could also instil suspicion to some as it could be a trap laid out by the enemy due to the colour and rough feel.



If the player chooses to run away from battle, a pop up will ask the player to confirm whether they really wanted to run. If the player chooses to run, the chance of running away will be decreased during the next mob fights. The player is not allowed to run away during the boss battle.

## 6. Interacting with object UI



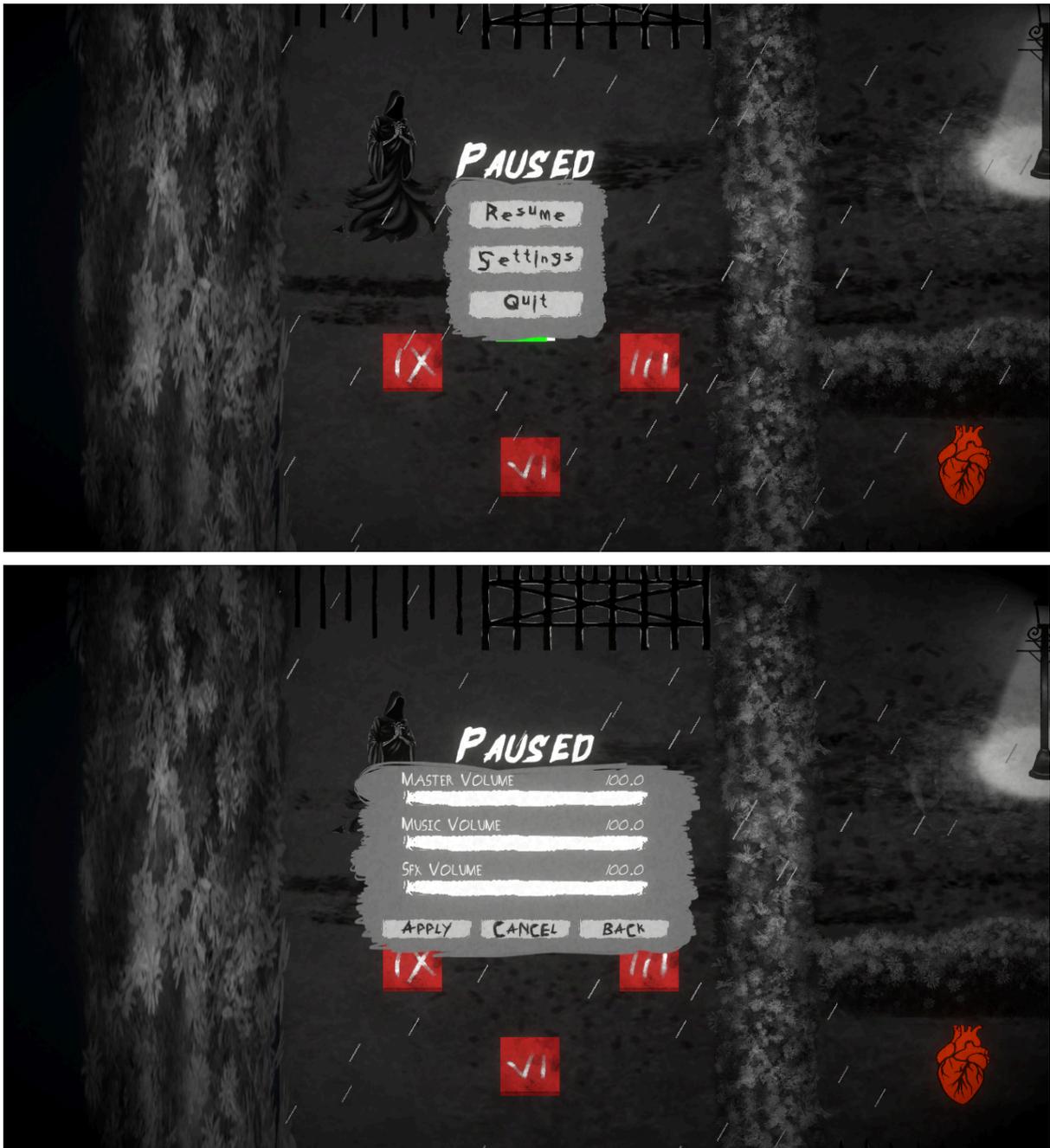
If the player is near an interactable object, a **spacebar UI** will show up meaning that the player can interact with objects.

## 7. Remnant UI



When the player obtains a UI it will be displayed on the top right of the screen and the player can use his/her mouse to hover around the icon and it will display the description of the remnant.

## 8. Paused UI



Pausing will stop all game activity and a “paused” overlay will show up. The overlay consists of “Resume”, “Settings” and “Quit”. If the player chooses to select “settings”, the player can adjust the **master, music and sfx volume** and once they are satisfied they can select the “**apply**” button or if they are not satisfied, they can select the **cancel** button and it will go back to the previous preference.

**Control Scheme based on the UI of the game:**

<b>Action</b>	<b>Controls</b>
<b>Move Left</b>	<b>A</b>
<b>Move Right</b>	<b>D</b>
<b>Move Up</b>	<b>S</b>
<b>Move Down</b>	<b>W</b>
<b>Picking Up Item</b>	<b>SPACE</b>
<b>Interacting Item</b>	<b>SPACE</b>
<b>Select Options</b>	<b>Left Click</b>
<b>Shift</b>	<b>Sprint</b>
<b>Hover Item</b>	<b>Move mouse towards the item</b>
<b>Pause</b>	<b>Esc</b>

## VII: Camera



The game uses Top Down Camera Angle so the player would know the location of the remnants (items) , lever for traversal on which gate is open and the enemy position without the need of having a map and this angle make player feel more tense when they saw enemy started to show up on the player screen due to unable to move the camera direction.