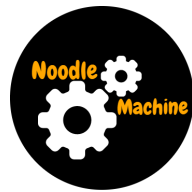


DREAMFINITY

GAME DESIGN DOCUMENT



NOODLE MACHINE

Game Design Studio / GAME M210 CRN 32280 / Spring 2017

Version 3.0

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DREAMFINITY**NOODLE MACHINE**

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OVERVIEW

ABSTRACT

Dreamfinity is a single-player third-person action platformer from Noodle Machine. Featuring a colourful low-poly art style, *Dreamfinity* follows an enigmatic young girl named Aerilyn as she explores her subconscious while dreaming. From the wonder of her dream world to the terrors of her nightmares, *Dreamfinity* takes the player on an adventure through the imagination of a child.

AUDIENCE

Dreamfinity will appeal strongly to the young female audience due to the presence of a young female heroine. The whimsical aesthetic will be especially inviting to casual gamers and non-gamers alike who might be interested in a new interactive experience.

TARGET RATING



Dreamfinity will have an ESRB rating of E (Everyone) for ESRB Content Descriptor of Cartoon Violence (“Violent actions involving cartoon-like situations and characters. May include violence where a character is unharmed after the action has been inflicted.”).

KEY FEATURES

- Resource collection and manipulation of “Lucidity”, the magic of the sleeping world
- A collectible “counting sheep” objective as a means of progression
- Nonlinear level progression players may experience at will with bonus content in areas which promotes clever exploration
- Large content levels themed around different states of dreaming
 - Dreamscape
 - Nightmare
- Interactive puzzles with game objects that can be manipulated through spending Lucidity

- A small set of usable skills, some with more powerful counterparts
 - Basic Attack
 - Basic Movement and Dash
 - Basic Jump and Empowered Jump
- Enemies are scattered throughout the level to threaten the player as she progresses through the game.

NARRATIVE

The player begins *Dreamfinity* in the dreams of Aerilyn. Many elements of her bedroom have been transposed into a forest with impossible flora. As Aerilyn completes puzzles and develops a sense of assurance, she encounters the Nightmare level. Along the way, Aerilyn counts sheep to become more lucid, enabling her to use her powers more freely.

OBJECTIVE

The primary gameplay objective of *Dreamfinity* is to discover and collect sheep hidden throughout the levels, using Lucidity to navigate the world through exploration and by completing various puzzles. Within the narrative, this represents Aerilyn delving into her psyche, confronting her fears, and finding her inner strength. The collecting of sheep grants players an expanded Lucidity pool which facilitates further exploration. Finally, the concept of “counting sheep” reinforces the player’s drive to remain asleep, as waking up restarts the level from the beginning.

TARGET PLATFORM AND MINIMUM HARDWARE

Dreamfinity is designed to be launched on PC markets for digital download. It will launch with standard controller input and PC compatibility. Graphics will imitate a sixth generation console atmosphere, comparable to Playstation 2 and Xbox graphics.

USER INTERFACE

MENUS

Game Menu

Dreamfinity's top menu features a concise list of options including Play, Controls, Credits, and Quit.

Play

Selecting the Play option takes the player to a loading screen. This loading screen consists of a short animation of one of our game's sheep jumping over a fence, on repeat. A corresponding audio file plays, of a little girl snoring. Afterward, the game loads.

Controls

The controls screen provides an informational graphic of a controller, as well as a keyboard and mouse for players gaming on a computer, which outlines all of the buttons, keys, and clicks needed to successfully control the character.

Credits

The Credits list all of the parties involved in the making of *Dreamfinity*.

Quit

The Quit option closes out the game.

Pause Menu

The Pause Menu allows the player to stop their gameplay temporarily. From this menu, they may resume play or quit the game entirely.

HUD

The HUD is comprised of two elements. One is the player's Sheep Counter and the other is the Lucidity bar, which serves as the player's health and magic.

Lucidity

Aerilyn's rate of gathering and storing Lucidity change as she completes objectives. Collecting sheep will incrementally grant Aerilyn an increased capacity for storing Lucidity at certain thresholds. With Lucidity being tracked via an in game system, the graphical user interface of *Dreamfinity* is very minimalistic. The only important data tracked by the UI is the player's "health", or level of alertness. If the player "dies," Aerilyn wakes up and the dream ends. To

represent this, her health is depicted by a single closed eye symbol. This symbol will only appear when Aerilyn takes damage or if she is critically low on health. The eyelid will partially open depending on how much damage she has taken. In addition, it will grow restless and move frequently under the eyelids at points of extreme action or damage taken.

Sheep Counter

In the lower lefthand corner of the screen resides the Sheep Counter. This tracks the total amount of sheep the player has collected throughout the level as well as gives the player a relative understanding of what their goals should be.

GAMEPLAY

RESOURCE

Lucidity is the only resource of *Dreamfinity*. It represents Aerilyn's ability to comprehend and interact with the dream world around her. As the player progresses, she will collect Lucidity. She may then use this Lucidity in order to overcome obstacles by manipulating objects within her world. Lucidity also serves as her ability to remain within the dream. If Aerilyn is dropped to zero lucidity, she awakens.

Lucidity

As an object in the world, Lucidity changes its behavior based on the circumstances that spawned it. When the player takes damage, Lucidity pops out from the center of the object and takes a random value to determine direction. Then it falls until its first collision. Upon colliding with an object, it will lock in the X and Z axes causing it to fall directly down. Lucidity sprung from a well is actively seeking out the player. When Lucidity is released by the player, it moves forward at a constant velocity until it makes contact with an object. Upon collision with a background object, Lucidity created this way acquires gravity and bounces until it reaches a state of rest. All types of Lucidity will interact with interactable objects if possible, regardless of the circumstance of their instantiation.

Collecting Lucidity

The player may gather Lucidity in two ways:

Wells

Wells within the game world serve as storage points for Lucidity. The players may withdraw Lucidity, to a cap, from these wells to help them complete objectives and puzzles. Wells serve as a solace for the player to refill their Lucidity needs for upcoming adventures. Wells also serve as a failsafe for the players.





Enemies

The player may also gather Lucidity by attacking enemies. Rather than kill the enemies, this drains them of their own Lucidity, rendering them a ragdoll husk of their former selves. When an enemy is defeated, they drop an appropriate amount of Lucidity. The goal of the enemies is not to provide a complex combat experience but rather to add a layer of depth to how the player navigates safely throughout the levels. This provides an element of risk vs reward decision making as well as encourages the player to utilize the enemies a source of lucidity when they need it.

Spending Lucidity

The player has one primary use for Lucidity. Aerilyn may project lucidity to interact with objects within the game. This will activate various changes in the objects which should permit Aerilyn to have access to new areas.

ABILITIES

Basic Abilities

While dreaming, Aerilyn is normally limited to her real world capabilities. This includes a very basic run, jump, and attack action.

Basic Movement

Aerilyn can travel in the X and Z axes freely. She begins with a purposeful walk and transitions into a brisk run. At full speed, Aerilyn is slightly faster than the Pete enemies inside the level.

Basic Jump

Aerilyn's basic jump is intended to help her navigate the world. Although not as powerful as any of her empowered abilities, clever use of her basic jump with take her a great distance.

Basic Attack

By swinging her paintbrush, Aerilyn can strike an enemy draining the lucidity out of them. The strength of her attack is directly proportional to the amount of total lucidity



Aerilyn has collected over the course of the game. This further emphasizes the theme of Aerilyn finding her inner strength along the way.

Empowered Abilities

Aerilyn can empower her abilities by taking command of her Lucidity. Although it does not consume a significant amount of her reservoir, she is restricted to using her abilities by her own inability to master the dream.

Dash

The player may tap into her Lucidity while moving to perform an Empowered Dash. This is a brief dash which the players may use to get out of harm's way, complete a puzzle, or find a secret. This dash will generally travel more distance than the Empowered Jump but will also be harder to control.



Empowered Jump

The player may expend Lucidity while jumping to perform an Empowered Jump. This begins as merely an increased acceleration and evolves into a floating sensation when fully empowered. This Empowered Jump has a medium duration with low speed allowing for more vertical precision.

Project Lucidity

The player may expend Lucidity from



Aerilyn's paintbrush to project Lucidity at an object. This imbues the Lucidity into the object which can cause any of several actions to occur, depending on the object. As a projectile, Lucidity travels in a straight line until it hits an object. If that object can be altered by Lucidity, it will consume it and alter accordingly. Otherwise, the Lucidity projectile will gain a gravity component and bounce off whatever it collided with. The player may then find it and pick it up afterwards to try again.

COMBAT

Combat in *Dreamfinity* plays a supportive role to the flow of the game. As an 8 year old girl with a paintbrush, Aerilyn is not typically going to be charging into battle at every step. Rather, she will use her limited combat abilities in limitless ways to aid her in exploration. However, defeated enemies drop bountiful amounts of Lucidity, which is crucial to granting her access to her more areas.

Dealing Damage

Damage is very straightforward in *Dreamfinity*. Aerilyn's attacks deal a flat amount of damage to the Pete enemies. Players who partake in combat frequently will notice that their attacks have become more powerful. This represents her gaining confidence in her own strength as the game progresses.

Taking Damage

Aerilyn may take damage from several sources. Ranged projectiles, environmental hazards, and enemies all threaten her within her dream. Each attack she takes brings her closer to waking up and ending the dream. If she is brought to zero lucidity within the dream, she awakens and must restart from the last Well checkpoint. If Aerilyn takes damage, an amount of lucidity pops out of her body for her to collect. If she does not collect the fallen Lucidity projectiles in time, they despawn and she draws closer to awakening.



OBJECT INTERACTION

Several game objects within *Dreamfinity* may be infused with Lucidity to change their behavior. There are several terms to describe the types of behavior that might change when Lucidity is applied. Each of these instantiate when Lucidity is either directly placed into an object or when it is placed into a corresponding remote switch. All puzzles are made from objects featuring a mix of these very simple mechanics.

Remote Switches

Remote switches function as Lucidity triggers which allow the player to deposit Lucidity for an effect they could otherwise not interact with. This includes time sensitive events, distance challenges, and several other object specific interactions.

Remote: Sensors

Amidst the puzzles will be several location recorders which take indirect input from the player by recording their location as a feature of progress. This will be used to begin other events relative to the area. This data is also used to update the checkpoints system.

Transformative Objects

This describes the way in which an object changes when Lucidity is added to the object switch. The 3 main qualities for transformation are position, rotation, and scale. The types of transformative interaction objects are as follows.

Transform: Movement

Upon receiving Lucidity, an object with this function will move along a set series of waypoints to reach a goal.

Transform: Lerp

An object with a Lerp, or Linear Interpolation, function will move back and forth along a set series of waypoints indefinitely when it receives Lucidity.

Transform: Rotate

Transposing Lucidity into an object with a rotate function will rotate it along one or more axes in increments of 45 and 90 degrees unless otherwise specified.

Transform: Scale

A scaling object will scale to specific dimensions appropriately when imbibed with Lucidity. This can be used to grow, shrink, or stretch an object.

Transform: Push

When imbued with Lucidity, an object with a Push function will be pushed back relative to the location of the player upon firing the projectile. This is especially noteworthy as each of the other Transform functions will be set in stone. An object with a Push function grants the player unlimited room to use their creativity to the fullest extent possible.

State Alteration Objects

This describes any objects whose very existence is altered by an injection of Lucidity. Most State Altered Objects will have three components. The first is the initialization. This is the starting position, shape, color, or behavior of the object. If there isn't yet an object, the interaction will first be represented by a relevant object. Next, the object or interaction will have a transformative state. This represents the transition a State Alteration Object takes and is purely for the benefit of the player. It serves no gameplay function other than to alert the player to the consequences of their actions. Finally, the third state will be the final result of the interaction. These are as follows:

State: Delete

Some objects disappear entirely when imbued with Lucidity. This is often used to clear pathways, open hidden paths, or to remove a detrimental interaction. Objects which are deleted are done so by being targeted and hit by a Lucidity projectile.

State: Spawn

Objects which require spawning to complete a puzzle cannot be directly influenced by Lucidity in the first State since they don't yet exist. Rather, they will be activated either directly by Totems or indirectly by Sensors. Some spawning objects will become newly formed permanent terrain. Others, however, will be temporary objects which the player must take advantage of while they can. Otherwise, they will have to reset the corresponding remote trigger.

State: Update or Replace

Several objects will change form or function when injected with Lucidity. Although specific to each object, this interaction will always function as a change to the model's physical properties. Some will become entirely new objects whereas others will merely change color, animation, or behavior.

PUZZLES

Puzzles in *Dreamfinity* accent the exploration gameplay by adding a refreshing change in the pace of the game. Many puzzles serve as small interactions between different Lucidity mechanics. Others are grand mixtures of several mechanics with platforming challenges built in. The importance of puzzles in *Dreamfinity* is that they enable the player to use their Lucidity creatively to reach their destinations. Every puzzle is a combination of moving parts that has a multitude of solutions.

Example Puzzle One: Seesaw

Difficulty: Easy

Mechanics:

Lucidity Projectile

Transform: Scale

Description:

The player encounters this puzzle after being introduced to the mushroom mechanics once before. The first time, the player encountered an individual mushroom that grew and shrunk with lucidity intake. This time, the player finds four mushrooms underneath two seesaws. Shooting lucidity into the mushrooms will cause them to behave similarly to the previous mushroom encounter. When the mushrooms are grown, they will hit the seesaws and cause them to tilt. The objective of the puzzle is to grow the mushrooms in a way that cause the seesaws to form a vertical ramp to the next area.

Example Puzzle Two: Aligned Mushrooms**Difficulty:** Medium**Mechanics:**

Lucidity Projectile

Transform: Scale

Player: Empowered Jump

Description:

This puzzle offers a shortcut to a raised area otherwise inaccessible until much later on. The player is met with a series of four mushrooms near a cliff. Like other mushrooms, these ones grow when Lucidity is placed into them. Unlike the other mushrooms, these mushrooms are linked to each other. This means that activating each will result in the activation of itself and the next one adjacent. The first will activate the first and the second. The second will activate the second and third. The third will activate the third and the fourth. The fourth will activate the fourth and the first. The objective of the puzzle is rather simple. The player must raise the mushrooms in such a way that they can climb up to the top of the cliff. Accomplishing this puzzle will prove mastery over the mushroom mechanic and be rewarded by one of the most visually stunning vistas in the entire game.

Example Puzzle Three: Cages

Difficulty: Hard

Mechanics:

Lucidity Projectile

Transform: Movement

Transform: Lerp

Transform: Rotation

Player: Empowered Dash

Player: Empowered Jump

Description:

The player encounters several trees and must assess their options to navigate them quickly and effectively. The drawing indicates one possible path through this encounter. However, there are several Lucidity interactions in this area and the key to success is choosing ones that work with each other. In this puzzle, we have mushroom steps which can be spawned, leaf platforms in every direction, bird cages in different alignments which rotate along their X-Axis, and destructible objects which can alter the location of the cages. In addition, execution of this puzzle encounter is paramount as failure will set the player's progress back a great deal.

CONTROLS**KEYBOARD AND MOUSE INPUT**

Pause	Escape
Camera	Mouse
Move	WASD/Directional Keys
Dash	Shift
Jump	Spacebar
Empowered Jump	Spacebar x2
Melee Attack	Left Mouse Button
Cast Lucidity	Right Mouse Button
Drain Well	E Key

CONTROLLER INPUT

Pause	Start Button
Camera	Right Stick
Move	Left Stick
Dash	Move + B Button
Jump	A Button
Empowered Jump	Press & Hold A Button (after Jump)
Melee Attack	X Button
Cast Lucidity	Right Trigger
Drain Well	Left Bumper

CHARACTERS

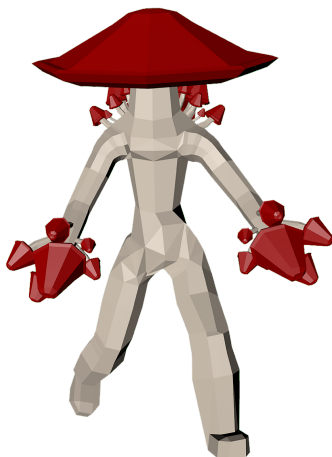
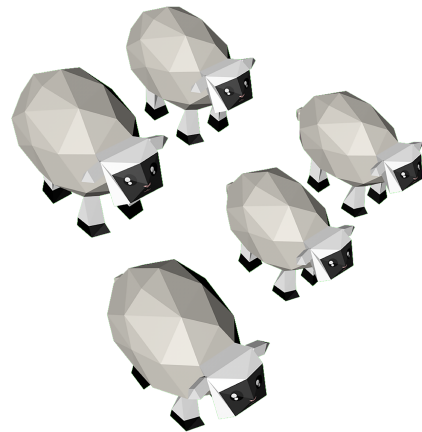


AERILYN

Aerilyn is a mostly normal young girl in a modern setting. At 8 years old, she's learning how the world functions while still allowing her imagination to influence her perspective. She enjoys art and reading. At school, Aerilyn is bullied due to her small size and stature. At home, she often feels ignored and unimportant. Only when she's dreaming does she truly feel safe and powerful. Lately, her many dreams have begun to overlap and she is afraid. Before, when each dream was self-contained, she could conquer them individually. Now that they have intertwined, Aerilyn feels small and insignificant again. By exploring and mastering the interactions of her dreams, she begins to learn that she had the aplomb all along.

SHEEP

As she explores the dream world, Aerilyn finds and counts sheep. Sheep are scattered throughout the game world in areas that reward exploration and completed puzzles. When Aerilyn has collected enough sheep, she is granted access to the Nightmare level.



MUSHROOM PETE

Mushroom Pete is a creation of Aerilyn's Nightmare that has seeped into her other dreams. He has no purpose other than to scare her. Now harnessed with the player's courage, Aerilyn can interact directly with Pete by draining Lucidity from him. Naturally, this has upset all incarnations of Pete throughout her dreams and caused them to become aggressive. When Pete is fully drained, his body is rendered into a ragdoll husk of its former self until it disappears.

LEVELS

Dreamfinity contains two large unique levels. Each is themed after a different state of dreaming. Both levels contain several interactive objects unique to the levels with comprehensive puzzles that tie the mechanics together.

DREAMSCAPE

This interpretation of Aerilyn's dream world is inspired by a wondrous forest. Here she will find vibrant colours, exaggerated shapes, and familiar objects in unfamiliar settings. Aerilyn begins the game with her room transposed into a forest clearing. As she explores upwards and outwards, she encounters some Pete enemies throughout the level.



NIGHTMARE



The Nightmare features the corruption of all things Aerilyn has come to love. Primarily, the forested dream world seeps into the Nightmare to create a haunt. Many aspects within this level will feature distorted version of existing objects such as wilted flowers and decayed trees.



ASSETS**VISUAL STYLE**

Dreamfinity features a low-poly aesthetic to better mimic the haziness of a dreamstate and childlike imagination. All world assets within the level are treated with an outline filter which adds a layer of distinction to each object and further emphasises the aspects of art and dreaminess.

MODELS

Bed
Butterfly
Chair
Crystal Fox
Daisy
Mushroom
Cloud
Lily
Rocking Horse
Rose Bush
Rose
Sheep
Shelf
Path stones
Arch
Fence1
Fence2
Fence3
Fence4
Fence5
Tree1
Tree2
Tree3
Hedge
Easel
PaintBrush
Grass wall
Cattail 1
Cattail 2
Cattail 3

Broken Easel
Paint Bucket
Slide
Hollow Tree 1
Hollow Tree 2
Hollow Tree 3
Tree Base 1
Tree Base 2
Tree Base 3
Balloon
Seasaw

Character

Aerilyn

Weapon

Paint brush

Enemy

Mushroom Humanoid
enemy

Animals

Sheep
Fox
Butterfly

Start Area

Bed
Chair

Nightstand
Shelves
Dresser
Closet
Posters

Dreamscape

Wells
Trees
Grass
Grass Patch
Flowers
Vines
Mushrooms
Rocks
Shrubs
Animals

Caves

Rocks
Cave Walls

Nightmare

Wells
Swamp
Trees
Skeletons
Rocks
Plants
Nightlight

DREAMFINITY

ANIMATIONS

Player
Idle
Run
Attack
Jump
Fall

Mushroom Pete

Animations:

Idle
Walk
Attack
Getting Hit

PARTICLE EFFECTS

Water fall
Water stream
Lucidity drain
Lucidity spend
Enemy drain
Character glow

Dust from footsteps when
running
Rain
Snow
Leaves
Fog
Shadows (lighting)

UI

Lucidity
Sleep Meter
Sheep Counter

AUDIO

Electric, keyboard, upbeat,

Background Music

Track 01 - Menu
Track 02 - Dreamfinity
Track 03 - Nightmare

NOODLE MACHINE

Sound Effects

Aerilyn - Gasp
Aerilyn - Ow
Aerilyn - Snore
Ambient - Birds
Ambient - Caves
Ambient - Cricket
Ambient - River
Ambient - Creaks
SFX - Brush Swing
SFX - Dash
SFX - Duck
SFX - Jump
SFX - Lucidity Cast
SFX - Lucidity Pick Up
SFX - Pop
SFX - Sheep
SFX - Walk (Grass)
SFX - Walk (Stone)
SFX - Well Drain

PLAY TEST RESULTS

Presentation and Playtest Feedback

Playtest	Version	Date
Alpha Presentation	0.0.5	April 3, 2017
Alpha Playtest	0.0.5	April 6, 2017
Alpha Playtest Observations	0.0.5	April 7, 2017
Alpha Playtest 2	0.0.6	April 8, 2017
Alpha Playtest 3	0.1.2	April 12, 2017
Beta Presentation	1.2	April 17, 2017
Beta Public Playtest	1.3	May 1, 2017
Beta Playtest Observations	1.3b	May 2, 2017

FUTURE PLANS

As it currently stands, plans to continue this project hinge on further discussion from the entire group. On one hand, this project is close to achieving a viable product state for publication and would only require a continuation of our work processes to complete. On the other hand, this project bears the weight of every amateur mistake we made as seven amateurs and all of the emotional baggage to go along with it. The discussion as to whether or not to complete this game is yet to be finished; however, if we were to complete the game, we would:

- Add more character and environment animations
- Increase environmental asset diversity and density
- Rebuild levels around mechanics and types of dreams
- Build a total of 4-6 levels
- Add new enemy types
- Reintroduce sheep herding enemies
- Refine and expand combat
- Refine Lucidity casting
- Expand abilities usable by Aerilyn
- Introduce stat scaling based on accomplishments
- Diversify Lucidity expenditure
- Change the Lucidity bar UI elements

CONCLUSION

Every children's story shares a few similar components. Ours is no different. It begins with a beautiful child. Ours is Dreamfinity. Then her wicked step-mother is introduced. Ours comes in the form of conflicting ideas, decisions, in-fighting, and over-ambition, which caused us much strife. Much like our game's protagonist, this journey has been much about self-discovery and rallying our own inner strength to get through this experience. We have very much so been our own worst enemy, our own wretched parent.

There is one crucial component of these stories: the transformation. That's where we come in. Over the last eighteen weeks, we've had problem after problem with the development of this game. I'd like to say that there was some miraculous design realization that fixed our problems. The truth is, we brute forced it every step of the way. In doing so, we learned more about each other and how to work in a group than anything else.

As we approach the end of this project, there is one definitive conclusion that we as a group can say together. We love game development. We spent more than a third of this project in crunch mode. We made sacrifices in sleep, social life, physical health, employment, personal relationships, education, and much more. For many of us, there simply was no higher priority. Our initial goal was so arrogantly greater than our capacity as students in such a limited time frame. We made every amateur mistake possible because we were exactly that-- amateurs. Without these last several weeks of sacrifice, we wouldn't have come close. And still we pushed on. I suppose that's our biggest takeaway from this project: we have what it takes to persevere in this industry. That may seem like a strange lesson, but it needs to be said. At every step in this process, we were met with challenges and setbacks grounded in harsh realities we had neither foreseen nor expected. We overcame them with Dreamfinity. We can overcome them again.

Going forward, there's one more major lesson we learned from this project. That was us learning how to work together. Working as a group of seven is so much more than having seven people create components to be assembled. First, proper management and task assignment is astonishingly important. In this, we succeeded. Working together also includes managing a hierarchy and allowing members to do their jobs while ensuring that one area does not dominate the other. This is very important and a big reason we struggled. Finally, all members of the group need to have similar expectations and goals. Several of us saw this project as a chance to create a big portfolio piece to show the industry we are ready. Others treated it as just another group project for school. This led to varying levels of commitment, conflict as to what constitutes as success, and countless other miniscule issues that added up. However a group chooses to conduct themselves, they must all be on the same page.

What's next for us, I cannot say. How this project turns out in the end has proven to be a matter of perspective more than a matter of fact. Some consider it a success. Some consider it acceptable. Some consider it another set of lessons learned. This isn't the happily ever after we had hoped for from this project. Regardless, we will be okay. After all, happily ever after is the ending. And for us, this game is just the beginning.

CREDITS

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Noodle Machine

