

'The Hierophant'

Narrative Design Document

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Contents

1.0 Concept	2
2.0 Summary	2
2.1 Tagline	2
2.2 Brief	2
2.3 Detailed Synopsis	2
2.4 Story Branch Tree	4
2.5 City Description	5
2.6 Tarot Information	6
3.0 Main Characters	6
3.1 Minor Characters	8
4.0 Gameplay Overview	9
ACT ONE	9
ACT TWO	12
ACT THREE	15
5.0 Narrative/Gameplay Loop	19
6.0 Dialogue	20
7.0 Script	22
8.0 References/Inspirations	22
9.0 Narrative Pipeline	23

1.0 Concept

Set in 1977 in the grungy parts of Cannon City, Tarot Reader Celestine Lyle is tasked to help two detectives solve a string of murders. The victims are left in strange but meaningful ways and Detective Lana Connors can't decipher the message behind the murders. This is why she consults with Celestine to connect the crime scenes to classic Tarot Cards from the Major Arcana. Celestine must connect the mystic meanings with the information she discovers from the crime scenes and suspects along the way. The pressure builds with finding the right answers, along with keeping the cases quiet at the demands of the Mayor while plucky journalist Suzanne Young is aiming for a breakthrough story.

2.0 Summary

2.1 Tagline

Use your knowledge of Tarot to solve crimes!

2.2 Brief

The story follows a Tarot Reader who assists a veteran detective solve a serial murder case. The tension is high as the Mayor wants to keep the murders quiet but the city spirals into a panic. The cards reveal more information about the victims, the killer and the city they reside in.

2.3 Detailed Synopsis

Set in 1977 in the American city of Cannon, Tarot Reader, Celestine Lyle sits in her fortune-telling shop as she's about to close for the night. Business has been slow lately, but she enjoys her job. She believes her purpose is to help others and despises other psychics who only wish to scam their customers. As she's about to close up her shop, an elderly man stops her and asks if he can have a quick reading. He looks desperate, disheveled, with heavy bags under his eyes and a frayed trench coat. Celestine takes him in out of pity and asks what answers he needs. He says that his grandson has been missing for weeks and the police have given up looking for him. He wants to know if he's okay and if they'll find him soon. She offers him a reading to learn more about the situation. After the reading, the grandfather is satisfied and claims he knows where to look.

A week passes and two detectives come into her shop. Grizzled female veteran Lana Connors, and the younger male rookie, Keith Shepard. The two ask her about the elderly man she saw a week ago. Celestine confirms that she did a reading for him and the detectives decide to cut to the chase. They explain that famous rockstar guitarist, Mason Spudson, has been found dead near the city's small canyon. His grandfather found him and reported it to the police, but they are stumped as to who the culprit is. Celestine is shocked to hear this but Lana continues. She tells Celestine that it's possible the killer was trying to send a deeper message since the victim was

placed in a strange position and decorated with specific items. Since Mason was involved with occult the two detectives have been trying to connect a message with the crime scene. Lana is desperate for answers and decides to test if the scene could match up with tarot. Since the Grandfather had praised Celestine so much for her tarot reading, the detectives decide to consult with her. Despite not being very keen on the idea, Lana feels Celestine might be able to reveal some information.

Soon more cases appear similar to the first one, which means a serial killer is making the victims look like the Major Arcana. Celestine feels even more inclined to help the detectives catch the killer.

The story follows a routine of helping the detectives with the case files and doing readings of suspects, witnesses and those related to the victims. As Celestine helps solve the cases with the detectives, she discovers more about her city and how others are reacting to the crimes.

[Cases are described in the Gameplay Overview. There are four cases in total with a review period near the end of the game for the player to connect the dots between the cases. Case 4 will be determined by the player's ability to get the correct answers.]

As Celestine assists the detectives she notices that others are trying to meddle with their investigation. A certain journalist, Suzanne Young of the Daily Days newspaper, is a threat to the secrecy of the case. On the other hand, Mayor Roy Giovanni wants to keep it quiet as to not cause panic. The stress is piling on Lana as she has to deal with the embarrassing actions of Keith and keep the cases on a low profile fearing her job is on the line.

Note: There will be interactable items in the shop that provide information about the city like the T.V. There will be a phone to call Lana when they are ready for the next case. The game will follow a routine of Reading/Interrogation (questioning suspects), Downtime (interacting with the shop), Case File Examination (looking at the case files and matching Tarot Cards with the crime scene), Visual Novel Events(points are calculated and if certain points are reached, then certain scenes will play.)

The player can decide on how they want to respond to Lana and other characters which determines the relationship score. Depending on the choices different events will occur such as grabbing a drink to discuss underlying secrets of the city (and complain about Keith). The accuracy and choices of the player will determine the ending. Will they form a friendship and catch the killer or face horrendous consequences?

[Note: The game will involve two endings (good and bad), each being determined by the proficiency of the readings/interrogations. Different events will occur depending on the proficiency of the readings/interrogations and the relationship score. Some scenes of the game will only occur when relationship levels are high enough (such as the 'grabbing a drink' scene.)]

Good Ending (+ Precision, + Relationship)

The relationship between Celestine and Lana has gotten better. Near the last case, Celestine and Lana pinpoint where the killer may be and notice his choice of victims. After discovering the general location of the killer they start to put together who the killer is and how he was related to each victim. It was professor Edward Carmichael, a suspect who appears in both versions of Case Four during the investigation. She remembers how he expressed a very big interest in Tarot and asked some really big questions about the will to change. Lana goes to find the killer and much to Celestine's surprise asks her to come with her.

They find him in his office at Cannon City University and bring him back for questioning. Edward admits his guilt but provides 'justifications' for why he murdered the victims. He claims he did them and the world a "favor" by getting rid of them. He saw each victim abandon their family and felt he needed to "teach them a lesson". He never had a family of his own which fueled his motivation to kill. Backup comes and Edward is taken away. Lana thanks Celestine and leaves. It cuts to some time later with Lana and Celestine out for a drink, it's inferred they are now good friends.

Bad Ending (- Precision, - Relationship)

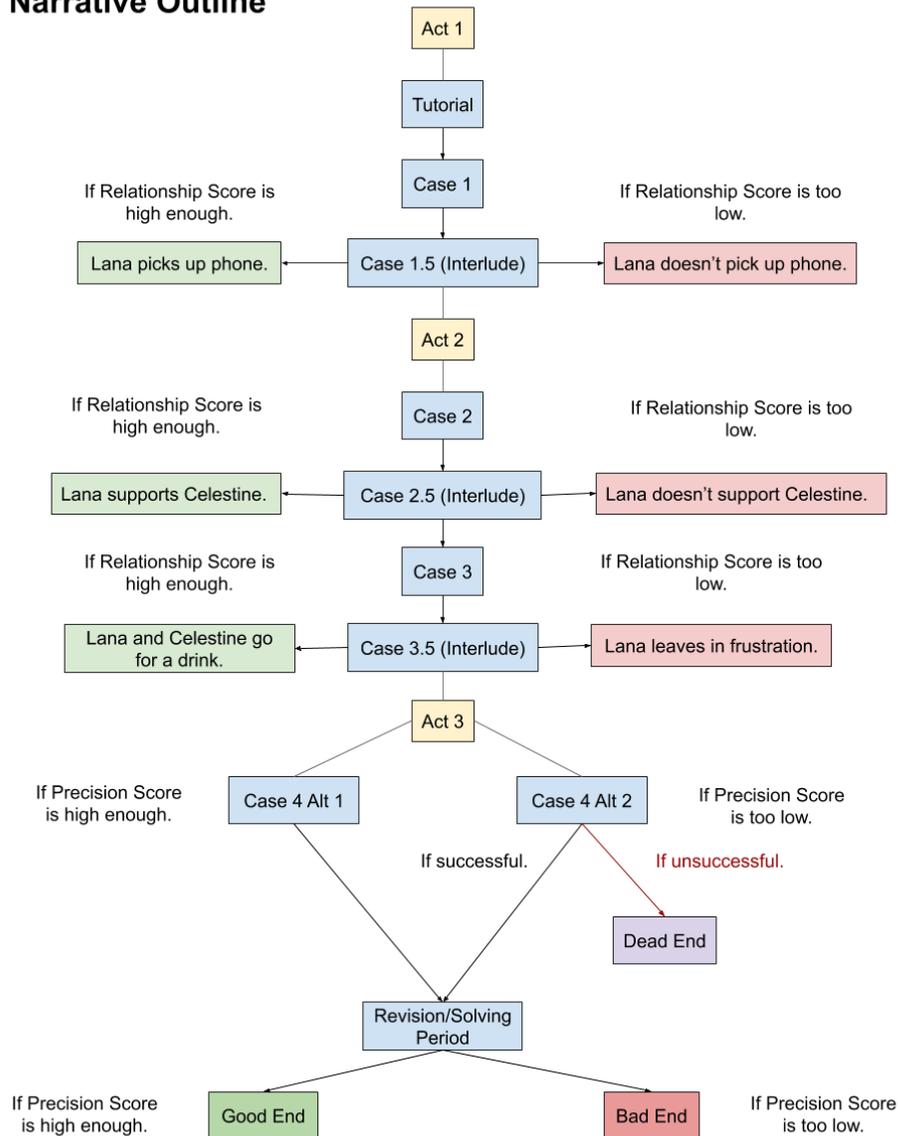
Due to the lack of accuracy during the readings and interrogations, there are no leads in the case. The suspicion falls on Celestine. No one defends her thus she is put in holding for questioning and believed to be the culprit. The real killer is assumed to have fled the city and plotting his next crime. Lana is fired from her position as lead detective and is overwhelmed with immense guilt. Celestine also cracks from the guilt and convinces herself that she committed the murders, which eventually drives her mad.

[Note: If Celestine still managed to have a good relationship score while doing poorly in solving the crimes, a small dialogue will occur where Lana apologizes for not being able to do anything about the situation and leaves Celestine in the cell.]

2.4 Story Branch Tree

The Story overall is separated into three acts. Act One is more introductory and forgiving, Act Two is more punishing if the player doesn't solve the cases correctly. Act Three is the least forgiving as it leads to the end of the game. Throughout the game, dialogue choices will affect Relationship Points, depending on the number of points, different scenes will occur. After each case, a Relationship 'point check' will determine which event will occur. These events happen in between cases and are the '0.5s' of the cases (for example, 'Case 1.5.'). After the final review period, a Precision Point (the accuracy of the player during case investigations) check will determine the ending, good or bad.

Narrative Outline



[Note: See Game Design Document for full details - last modified Nov. 21, 2019.]

2.5 City Description

Cannon City

The city of Cannon is a large metropolis with an estimated population of 2,672,598. The city was artificially built as a man-made harbor in a major city on the Atlantic Coast. Historically, Cannon became rectified under the consolidation of smaller cities that now act as distinct boroughs. The population has become unevenly distributed among these boroughs over the past decade. There is an expanding population density found near the coastline of the Atlantic which acts as

the city's downtown area. The heart of the downtown area consists of skyscrapers and a bustling night-life. The outskirts of the city are comprised of subdivisions and suburban communities that consist of lower-income families. These districts of Cannon have become neglected over time with the election of the new Mayor. Fundraisers, social services and other amenities have been canceled which have left these families to fend for themselves. The Mayor in forceful fashion has put forward a large emphasis on urban city planning and the creation of tourist attractions. The new additions to the city have inadvertently increased the level of crime within the city, specifically in areas where poverty is more rampant. The atmosphere of Cannon has drastically changed, especially with the rising crime rate. Garbage continues to pile up on the disheveled streets as a wretched stench litters the air of a once-prominent city.

2.6 Tarot Information

Tarot is a deck of cards divided into two categories, twenty-two Major Arcana and fifty-six Minor Arcana. Each card has different meanings and can be interpreted differently depending on the situation. Cards can be dealt upright (image is facing right side up) or reversed (image is upside down). Both have different meanings depending on the way they are facing and typically contrast each other. Different card spreads describe different aspects of a person. For our game, we will focus on the standard three-card spread which reveals a person's past, present, and future.

[Link to our Tarot Guide.](#)

3.0 Main Characters

Tarot Reader - Celestine Lyle (aka Celeste, Cell, Lesty, Celery [mockingly])

Note: A young adult in her mid to late twenties. She is philosophical and very versed in the art of Tarot. She has high respect for the beliefs of others and is quite empathic. The player will decide how she will react to situations, either being respectful or disrespectful to Lana. She also has a black cat named Salem and her shop is named "Change of Fate".

Biography:

Celestine was raised in Cannon by her single mother, her father was a soldier that had died in combat overseas. At a young age, Celestine had a strong relationship with her neighbors, building a familial community that extended beyond her family. Being the eldest of her siblings she had to uphold responsibility for the house while her mother worked to financially support her family. Acknowledged as being jovial and radiant, Celestine always lived a jaunty lifestyle which led to her interest in Tarot. During her college studies, Celestine's mother had fallen gravely ill, causing Celestine to drop out of school to take care of her sickly mother. After half a decade, her mother would repay her by buying her a storefront in Cannon. Celestine now operates the store as a small boutique shop that specializes in tarot card readings and other mysticisms.

Female Detective - Lana Connors

Biography:

Lana grew up in a strict family that was living the suburban American dream. A single child, her parents were devout and practicing Catholics. The intensity of this regulated Catholic lifestyle only cultivated substantially when her mother passed away due to cancer when Lana was still a child. Her father believed that religion would be the binding structure with his daughter, but as Lana grew older her relationship with her father became continuously estranged. Coming out of college, Lana believed she had to take more control over her life. This premonition led her into the path of law enforcement. Her hardships with authority figures continued to propagate as she received misogynistic bombardment from her male co-workers. Through struggle and sheer determination, Lana kept her head held high while climbing the ranks of her local police department. She eventually transferred to Cannon working as a detective. Lana has solved many cases that garnered support in her workplace even as a female detective. Despite this, Lana still struggles to balance the insecurity of her male counterparts and her authoritative ranking at the Cannon Police Department.

Male Detective (Rookie) - Keith Shepard

Biography:

Keith was born into a privileged family, his father was a renowned police administrator and his mother the daughter of a wealthy businessman. He attended private schools throughout his life and attended a prestigious university. It wasn't long after graduating that Keith found a job in law enforcement. When training at the police academy he struggled to relate to his fellow trainees due to his advantageous life. Nepotism was often cited as to why Keith failed to create any meaningful relationships with his compatriots. That being said, with his father's support Keith was hastily promoted to the role of detective. Being a fresh rookie whose career was started upon favoritism, he acts as an understudy to an already accomplished detective. To Keith's detriment, his partner is female which comes as an abrupt surprise to him. Though he does not convey any true conviction to his partner, Keith feels as though he got the short end of the stick.

Serial Killer - Professor Edward Carmichael

Biography:

Edward grew up in a caring foster family in a Cannon subdivision. Adopted as a baby, Edward never met his biological parents. Oddly, he never yearned to discover his true parentage. From a young age, Edward was described as being courteous and cordial. He achieved academic success throughout his life and was admired by his peers. During his university studies, Edward engaged in a romantic relationship with a girl he met on campus. He was attracted to her

bohemian lifestyle and her astrological superstitions. The couple would meet their demise when Edward's girlfriend had gone missing during one of the couple's camping trips. It was later deemed by the police that she had committed suicide. After his undergraduate degree, Edward under the advice of his professors continued his education. Currently, Edward works as a professor at the University of Cannon.

Mayor - Roy Giovanni

Biography:

The mayor of Cannon over his tumultuous political reign has begun to cast an iron vise on Cannon. His election campaign was built upon promises that he has yet to uphold, cutting costs wherever financially possible. The city investments are often never accounted for as no one has the proper authority to challenge Roy. Many citizens have flocked to the defense attorney of Cannon to do something yet unbeknownst to the citizens the defense attorney is an accomplice of Roy. As his term is coming to a close, Roy has focused his attention on being re-elected. With citizens becoming unrestful and a serial killer garnering attention, Roy is beginning to take drastic measures to keep Cannon under his sole control.

Journalist/News Reporter - Suzanne Young

Biography:

Suzanne grew up in a quiet town located on the outskirts of Cannon with her parents and younger sister. Suzanne from a young age was always adventurous, she sought enjoyment out of seeing the boundaries of what her parents would allow her or not allow her to do. Her father was a writer for her town's local newspaper, naturally causing her to become a sleuth at a young age which often led her to question the world around her. Suzanne attended college to hone in on her writing ability, later finding a job at The Daily Days as a young but bright journalist. As Suzanne has spent more time living at Cannon she is now beginning to witness the proliferation of corruption and criminal activity that Cannon had grown accustomed to. With a pen and paper, Suzanne hopes to uncover the true veil of Cannon City.

3.1 Minor Characters

Old Man - Thomas

The Old Man is a desperate family member of a murdered victim. He visits Celestine in the introduction of the story asking for her reassurance about the safety of his grandson. The introduction with the Old Man is used to show how Tarot readings are performed within the ramifications of the game. The Old Man is the reason as to why the police department, specifically the two detectives, Lana and Keith, use Celestine as a consultant for the later cases.

Music Manager - Ricky Graves

The Manager is a potential suspect that the police bring in for questioning. He was the manager of a rock star who was a murdered victim. The Manager attempts to run his clients to the ground to make money which he opens up about in the investigation. The Manager has a relationship with Mayor Giovanni as they are gambling buddies.

Widow - Beatrice Bates

Beatrice is a potential suspect after the death of her husband, Leonardo Bates. Her husband's death was a part of a case that occurred a while ago which eventually became cold. The investigation was recently reopened as the events and evidence of Leonardo's case had similarities with the prior victim. After her husband's death, Beatrice began to live a more posh lifestyle which is the reason why she is being questioned.

Mayor's Wife - Isabelle Giovanni

Isabelle Giovanni is the third victim. After her untimely death her husband, Mayor Giovanni, is suspected by the police. She was on the board of directors for Cannon University before her death, having been brought up from a wealthy family. When the Mayor is brought up for questioning on behalf of his wife's death he is rather disgruntled and uncooperative.

Police Commissioner - Commissioner Warren Hudson

A war veteran, Warren had grown up in Cannon from a low-income family, often begging on the streets as a troublemaking kid. After joining the military, Warren would find structure in his life and when returning home would find himself enlisted in the Cannon Police Department. Working as a street cop for a couple of decades, by befriending the right people Warren would slowly but surely find continuous promotions. With the election of the new mayor, Warren was selected to lead Cannon Police Department.

Radio DJ - DJ Boogie

A fun-loving radio DJ who speaks his mind on the air. His comments reflect the city's Political outlook as well as updating the player on news in the world.

4.0 Gameplay Overview

ACT ONE

Tutorial/Introduction

Introduction: Basic Reading/Tutorial

Celestine gives the cards to the client, Thomas and he shuffles them. He gives them back to her and she lays out three cards. Thomas asks what she's doing and she explains that each card represents the past, present, and future. The Past Card is The Emperor, The Present Card is Justice, and The Future is Death. Through three dialogue options (one for each card), Celestine has to pick the right choices that align with the meanings of the cards. The Player will be able to gain an idea of the cards as Celestine explains their meaning to her client as the Player clicks each one. The Player can learn about each card in whatever order they like, and there will be extra information available in a book on the table if they desire to do more research.

Solution:

The Player has to choose:

- Emperor - "You were an authority figure in your grandson's life, almost like a father."
- Justice - "You hold yourself partially responsible for him going missing."
- Future - "You need to put the past behind you and forgive yourself."

Picking these options will make the Grandfather admit that the Grandson's parents died when he was young, so the Grandfather had to raise him. However, he felt he was too lenient in how he raised him. He let him get away with staying out past curfew and mingling with disreputable people. He felt guilty the grandson's parents were taken away, despite not having any control over it. With all this in mind, he believes he knows what he has to do and takes his leave.

Case #1 "The Fool's Errand" CASE FILE EXAMINATION

The detective's layout an interactive case file on the table. The Player can click on the pictures and other evidence and the Detectives will explain in dialogue the details of the evidence. The guitarist is left leaning against a tree by a cliff, he has two coins glued to his eyelids and his guitar in front of him (his guitar has white roses on the design). His wrists are chained to the fretboard and he also has a leash around his neck but it's not tied to anything. To further add salt to the wound, the victim is wearing a cheap jester's hat. He has a dog patch on his jacket. The Detectives claim that the cause of death was a drug overdose, but the killer went to great lengths to set up the body in a particular way.

ITEMS IN CASE FILE:

- Photo of CRIME SCENE
 - Mason Spudson is against a tree by a small cliff. He has no blood or markings on his body (he was killed by poison). He is wearing a jester's hat and coins are glued to his eyelids. He has a dog leash around his neck but it's not tied to anything. He has a dog patch on his jacket. His hands are chained to the fretboard of his guitar which has white roses on the design.
- Business Card

- Business card reading, Swindle Talent Agency, XXX-XXX-XXXX, Richard 'Ricky' Graves, Talent Manager.
- Clothing Patch of dog
 - Small dog patch from Mason's jacket
- Dog Leash
 - From the crime scene.
- Photo of Mason and his Grandfather Thomas
 - Mason is a young boy in a school uniform with his Grandfather Thomas.
- Newspaper clipping
 - Newspaper clipping, "A Rising Star", written by Suzanne Young. Photo of young, spiky-haired man with a guitar on stage.

Solution:

The Player will have to connect a Tarot card meaning to the crime scene based on dialogue options like in the previous one. The correct option is "The Fool" because "The killer is saying the victim set off on a journey for fame and fortune, but lost sight of himself in the process". From this, the detectives will agree, and Celestine will ask who started the guitarist's music career. The detectives will say his record manager, and the tarot reader will say that the killer is leading them towards the manager. The placement of the body propped up against a tree near a cliff's edge is representative of the Fool. The body found near a cliff is on the mountains on the Fool card, the mountains being symbolic of challenges. The guitar is symbolic of the Fool's knapsack, the Fool's knapsack represents everything he needs, likewise the guitar to a rockstar guitarist means everything. The white rose is held in the hand of the Fool, the name of the band of the guitarist is the White Rose.

Case #1 "The Fool's Errand" INTERROGATION

The next day the detectives come back and say that the rockstar's manager had "The Fool" card in his desk, ergo the Tarot Reader was right. They have already questioned the Manager, but want the Tarot Reader to interrogate him as well. The female detective admits "Your tarot stuff might be the key to unlocking this case, so give it a shot." The Manager, Ricky Graves, is a fat balding man with a mustache and thick cigar, doesn't take Celestine seriously and calls her a joke. Still, she proceeds with the reading, despite him clouding up her shop with his cigar smoke.

Just like in the tutorial, Celestine gives the cards to Ricky and he shuffles them. He gives them back to her and she lays out three cards. She reiterates that each card represents the past, present, and future. The Past Card is The Magician, The Present Card is The Lovers/Reversed, and The Future is Wheel of Fortune. Through three dialogue options (one for each card), the Tarot Reader has to pick the right choices that align with the meanings of the cards. The Player will be able to gain an idea of the cards as Celestine explains their meaning to her client as the Player clicks each one. The Player can learn about each card in whatever order they like, and

there will be extra information available in a book on the table if they desire to do more research.

Solution:

The Player has to choose:

- Magician - "You were an ambitious leader, striving to manifest your goals"
- Lovers/Reversed - "In your quest to gain power, your relationships became strained"
- Wheel of Fortune - "You still have time to make things right, but what goes around comes around"

Picking these options will make the Manager admit that he has been selfish. He forced Mason into more and more shows and recordings, which likely overwhelmed him into doing drugs. He says if it wasn't for the murder, "the kid might've done himself in any way", but he swore he was doing it for his good. He finishes by saying he's not guilty of the murder, but the detectives say he's still guilty of overworking a minor employee. The Manager says he'll work to change his ways and listen to those around him, but he wasn't guilty of the murder.

Note: At the review period, the Detectives will cross-reference that the young guitarist was a student of Professor Carmichael.

ACT TWO

Case #2 "Tall, Dark, and Dead" CASE FILE EXAMINATION:

At first, assumed to be a suicide, but Lana brings it in on a hunch that it's connected to "The Fool's Errand". The victim Leo Bates was thrown off Cancom Tower during a thunderstorm at night. He had no suicide note, but his wife Beatrice claims he was ranting about financial troubles and felt he had no choice. Yet other people claim that his death came as a shock and seemed out of the blue. He was a wealthy businessman at the top of his game, so the circumstances around his suicide were very suspicious. Police investigated the possibility of the wife being the murderer but her alibi is rock solid. This case was long before "The Fool's Errand", but previously ignored as there was too much debate whether it was a murder or a suicide.

ITEMS IN CASE FILE:

- Photo of Crime Scene
 - Photo of a tall urban building at night with lightning striking behind it.
- Photo of Leonardo Bates
 - Photo of a smiling man in a suit and tie. He is holding a small computer chip in his hand and waving to the crowd on stage.
- A Microprocessor
 - Broken from being smashed from Leo's fall

- A Business Card
 - Reads "Leonardo Jr. Bates. Cancom Executive. Phone xxx-xxx-xxx 75th floor of Cancom Tower." There is a tinge of red around the card as if it was soaked in blood.
- Photo of Beatrice Bates
 - Photo of a woman wearing a white beret. She's wearing a moon necklace.
- Bank Notice
 - Has lots of red "Overdue" stamps on it
- Doctor's Notice
 - Says Beatrice Bates was getting a prescription for "Clomiphene citrate" at 8:00 pm on October 7th, 1974.
- Newspaper Clipping
 - Daily Days, written by Suzanne Young. The headline reads "Gone in a Flash"

Solution:

The Player will have to connect the card meaning to the crime scene based on dialogue options like in the previous one. The correct option is "The Tower" because "The killer is saying the victim invited chaos into his life". The crime happened on a literal tower, at night, during a lightning storm. The tower was also significant in the victim's life as he valued his career above all else, including his family. Yet, his ambition to be innovative led to him taking a lot of risks as "falling from grace". From this, the detectives will agree as the victim was known to be a risk-taker in the stock market. The detectives decide that they should bring in the wife for questioning to see if Celestine can get more answers.

Case #2 "Tall, Dark, and Dead" INTERROGATION:

The detectives come back with the wife, who seems to have benefited greatly from her husband's death as she's wearing some high-end fashion. She says that she still misses her husband, and in her grief, she's spent a lot of money to try and fill the void of his absence. Celestine gives the cards to the wife and she shuffles them. She gives them back to her and she lays out three cards. She reiterates that each card represents the past, present, and future. The Past Card is The Empress, The Present Card is The Devil, and The Future is The Moon.

Solution:

The Player has to choose:

- The Empress - "You desired a child in the past"
- The Devil - "Yet, you felt restricted by your husband."
- The Moon - "And now you've hidden your true emotions from everyone, including yourself"

Picking these options will make the Wife admit that her marriage wasn't great, but she never wanted her husband to die. The truth was, he wasn't interested in having a family, nor did he

ever spend with her as he was too busy with work. She tried to be supportive, but she felt that time was running out and they would never have a family. She turned to all sorts of people for advice and help, but nothing seemed to be working. Then out of the blue, her husband supposedly committed suicide, and somehow she felt it was partially her fault. She wonders if she had just stayed quiet, that maybe he would still be alive. Her lawyers at the time were insisting they say it was a suicide, but now she's not sure she believes it. The police ask her for a full list of those whom she told about her tumultuous marriage over at the station.

Note: At the review period, the Detectives will cross-reference that the wife told Professor Carmichael of her marital problems.

Case #3 "Caught In Between" CASE FILE EXAMINATION:

The body of the mayor's wife was recently found under a gazebo located in the heart of Cannon City Park. The body was laid out flat with both hands clasped together in the form of prayer. Small bits of pomegranate was found sparsely spread around the gazebo, likewise, a 12-jeweled crown was found not far from the gazebo. The wife's body was left exposed other than a translucent shawl that blanketed her body. The cause of death was determined to be by strangulation as the victim's throat was crushed, but no fingerprints were found at the scene. The detectives will also state that the coroners believe the time of death was predicted to be near sundown.

ITEMS IN CASE FILE:

- Photo of CRIME SCENE
 - Photo of a gazebo in the middle of Willis Park. The picture was taken at sunset. There are bits of pomegranate interspersed all around the gazebo. Isabelle's body is covered by a white veil and lying on the gazebo.
- Choker
 - Worn by Isabelle. Possible cross on it?
- A note with some handwritten text
 - Reads "Meet me tonight. We can't go on like this Roy. Sorry, I'm done pretending. ~ Bella"
- Divorce papers
 - Signed by Isabelle but NOT by Roy
- An elegant white veil, long enough to act as a shawl.
- Photo of briefcase
 - Weathered as though it were thrown away.
- Photo of Isabelle
 - She is a slender woman in a pantsuit in the middle of a school campus.

Solution:

The Player will have to determine that the correct Tarot Card is the 'High Priestess'. The structure of the gazebo is meant to represent the pillars of the entrance to the temple found between the High Priestess. The translucent shawl is indicative of the clothing the High Priestess wears. As one of the symbols of the High Priestess is the spread of knowledge and wisdom, the victim was strangled as a sign of silencing that voice. The time of death also represents the ideology of light and dark, sundown being the time where the sunsets and nighttime begins. The pomegranate and crown are meant to throw off the player, pomegranates are found on both the High Priestess and Empress card while the 12-jeweled crown is solely independent of the Empress card.

Case #3 "Caught In Between" INTERROGATION:

The detectives will bring the Mayor to the Tarot Reader for interrogation. The Mayor was expecting his wife to return home from a nightly church service the night she had gone missing when she did not return at the expected time he had contacted his aides. It wasn't long until she was reported missing that the police had started a city-wide search for the Mayor's wife. Lana will mention that she had interrogated the Mayor's aides and personal servants and that there was a constant murmuring rumor that the Mayor and his wife were planning on a divorce. Lana will also mention how many of the Mayor's servants have described the wife being in a morose and sullen mood for months. The Mayor will snap at Lana, telling her that his marriage is none of her concern. He will also state his alibi that he was reportedly at a construction site planning which his aides can attest to. After the short quarrel, the Tarot Reader instructs the Mayor on performing the reading to which he begrudgingly agrees to. The Tarot Reader will lay out the three chosen cards, the Hierophant upright for past, the World reversed for the present and Death upright for future.

Solution:

The Player has to choose:

- The Hierophant - "The connection between you and your wife was first rooted in religion."
- The World Reversed - "Your relationship with your wife had deteriorated when your life focus turned to manage Cannon City."
- Death - "Your ambitions will uproot all stability in your current life."

The Mayor will negatively respond to the readings and attempt to leave but Lana will proclaim that the Mayor is currently a suspect and will otherwise be thrown into jail if he does not cooperate. The Tarot Reader suggests that the Mayor should speak about his relationship with his wife. Mayor unwillingly states that he had met his wife when he was young and still attending church. Since the time that he met her, he was always pursuing governmental and bureaucratic positions and with her support his campaign for the mayoral election was successful. He explains that the more time he had spent on developing the growth of the city, the less time he has to manage his personal life. This has led to an estranged relationship with his wife where their relationship had grown distant over time. The Mayor will then move towards the Death card and exclaim that that card was planted by the Tarot Reader to implicate him. The Tarot Reader will then speak up and suggest that the card is exemplifying the death of his marital relationship

but also symbolize the current state of crime in the city. At this point, the Mayor has lost his temper and tells the Tarot Reader that he could close her shop at any time. The detectives will then end the interrogation and tell the Mayor they will continue their debriefing of him at the station.

ACT THREE

Note: The Player's Precision Score will be calculated thus far. If they have a High Precision Score they will have to solve ALT 1. If they have a Low Precision Score they will have to solve ALT 2.

Case #4 ALT 1 "Judgement Day" CASE FILE EXAMINATION:

After getting the list from Beatrice about the people she told her material problems to, the detectives recall a murder of one of the men on the list. Professor Henry D. Jenkins was found dead in his office a few months ago. His body was put in a 'flamingo-like' position with his right foot tied and his body propped up by his tall office lamp. There was strangely no sign of struggle and his office was spotless. Making the detectives believe the person was invited inside and that the lack of visible wounds could mean he was poisoned. Henry was the head of the Psychology department at Cannon City University and was known to be a hard worker. He was often cooped up in his office writing reports for the research study he was conducting. The lack of evidence left the detectives with little leads to go on and they had to drop the case until further evidence could be found. Now, with similarities to past cases and a connection to other victims, they believe he was killed by the same person.

ITEMS IN CASE FILE

- Photo of CRIME SCENE
 - Henry Jenkins (old Psychology professor) tied haphazardly to a tall lamp in his office. The body was placed in a 'flamingo-like' position. He has no noticeable wounds.
- Picture of neat office
- Picture of brandy on the desk
- Newspaper clipping
 - The headline reads "Brilliant Professor to be Decorated" by Suzanne Young. Picture of Henry Jenkins receiving an award.
- Photo of his family
 - Picture of a woman and a young boy.

Solution:

The player will have to connect the murder to The Hanged Man/Reversed. The killer is saying the victim should slow down and look at things from another perspective, but is ignoring these signs. The detectives know the victim to be a workaholic who focused too much on their work rather than their personal life and had suffered because of it. The detectives say they should bring in a close coworker to ask about the victim.

Case #4 ALT 1 “Judgement Day” INTERROGATION:

The co-worker brought in is another professor at Cannon City University, Professor Edward Carmichael, the head of Philosophy. Dr. Jenkins and he liked to work together as they found their profession went hand-in-hand and engaged in deep conversations with each other. He is very compliant with the detectives and the tarot reading as he thinks it is very interesting. He and Celestine each shuffle the cards and get into the reading. The Past is The Devil, The Present is The Moon/Reversed, and The Future is Justice/Reversed.

Solution:

The player has to choose:

- The Devil - You were very jealous of Professor Jenkins
- The Moon/Reversed - You were secretly mad at Professor Jenkins,
- Justice/Reversed - You know you have done something wrong.

These options will make him admit that he was very jealous of Professor Jenkins as he was very successful in his field as it was taken more seriously despite being just as valid as Philosophy. He felt that his conversations helped with Professor Jenkins’ work but he never got any credit. He was mad at Professor Jenkins because he had a perfect life, a wonderful family and a job, but he threw it away for recognition. Edward always wanted a family but it never happened so he was mad that Professor Jenkins didn’t spend much time with them. He will admit his jealousy was wrong but he truly valued professor Jenkins as a friend and would do anything to help him. The detectives say they will continue some questioning at the station.

Case #4 ALT 2 “The Fallen Angel” CASE FILE EXAMINATION:

Celestine receives a phone call from the killer himself, telling her that she’s disappointing him. Before she can get any answers Lana and Keith arrive to tell her that Suzanne was found dead in the cemetery. Keith, in particular, is angry about it, but Lana still believes there's a connection to tarot and the killer. Celestine looks over the evidence of Suzanne's death.

ITEMS IN CASE FILE:

- Photo of CRIME SCENE
 - Suzanne Young chained to a tombstone like she's being crucified. Her head is positioned upwards to the sky, her eyes are closed. Fastened on her back are paper angel wings made out of Newspaper from the Daily Days.

- Letter to Professor Carmichael
 - Written by Suzanne, reads "Dear Professor Carmichael, The cops keep consulting this Tarot reader for help. If I can see you sometimes I could use your two cents. This occult hogwash is all Greek to me, and I'll pay you back later. Thanks, Suzanne."
- Photo of Suzanne
 - Plucky journalist

Solution:

The Player needs to connect the crime scene to Judgement, or else Keith will get impatient and convince Lana to give up the tarot lead*. However, solving it will make Keith realize there is a connection to tarot and he becomes more forgiving. Lana decides to bring in Professor Carmichael since Suzanne was using him as an informant to tarot and she was last seen with him.

*Incorrect Response - DEATH END

If the Player has a high relationship score, Lana will give Celestine a second chance to connect a card to the crime scene. However, if the player fails twice, Lana and Keith will drop the connection of tarot and leave. This then leads to the DEATH END were a week later, Celestine gets a call from the killer again. He will say she's gotten too boring and too dangerous to keep alive. She realizes he's already poisoned her, and as she's dying he remarks that her detective buddies will have to solve her death without her.

Case 4 ALT 2 "The Fallen Angel" INTERROGATION:

Professor Edward Carmichael is brought in by the detectives. He seems willing to help but is skeptical at the reading. He was the last one who spoke with Suzanne before she was found dead, and he gave her information on tarot (since Celestine refused to cooperate). He says Suzanne was a good student and wishes to catch her killer just as much as the detectives. The cards revealed are The Past is The Star, The Present is The Hierophant, and The Future is Justice Reversed.

Solution:

The Player needs to choose:

- The Star - "You wanted to help others transform their lives"
- The Hierophant "You cemented yourself into the role of a spiritual teacher"
- Justice Reversed "You know you have done something wrong."

Picking these options will make Carmichael admit that he's been fixated on helping people. Not just in being a Professor, but as a friend. That's why he wanted to assist Suzanne with her

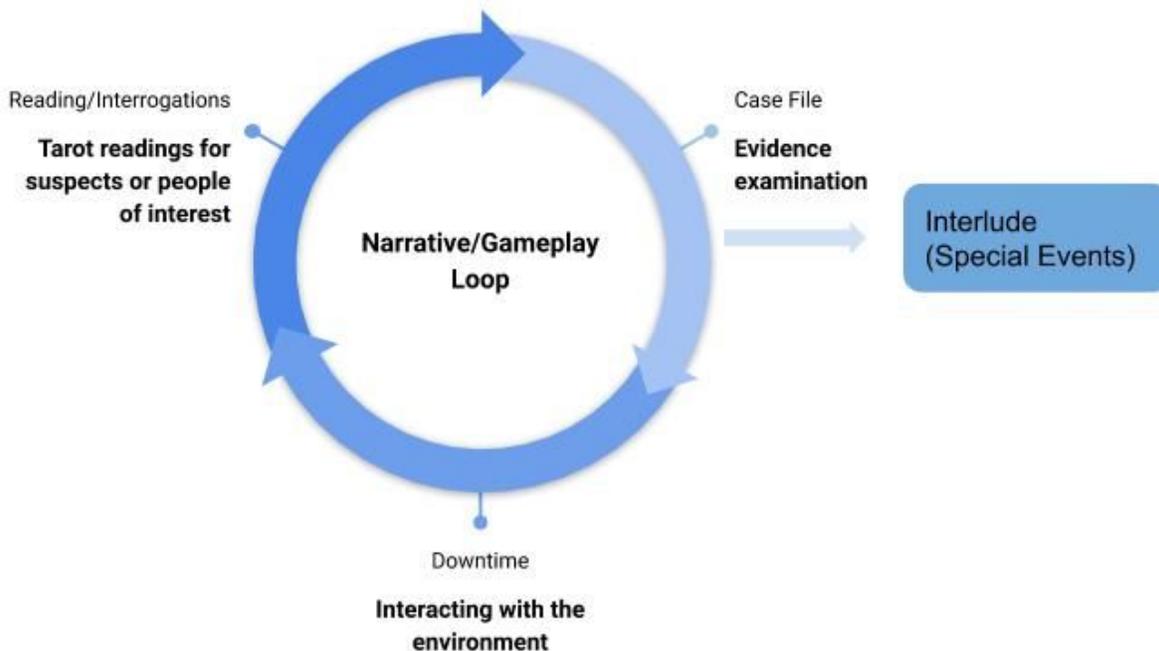
article by providing his knowledge of tarot. Yet he feels guilty for doing so because if he hadn't told her she might not have gotten killed. All he wanted to do was help her, but in the end, he leads her astray. Celestine herself feels this fear as (the player) hasn't been doing very well with solving the cases, despite her best efforts.

POSSIBLE DEATH END:

If the player fails the interrogation then there will be a scene where the Professor will insult the detectives for wasting his time, targeting Lana in particular. Lana will get upset with him and there will be a choice to either stop her from attacking the Professor or let her. If the player lets her attack, then this will lead to the dead-end after the Professor leaves outraged and Lana quits the case out of frustration. If the player stops her then there will be an alternate pathway where Celestine calms Lana down and they proceed to take the Professor away. This would then lead to the case review.

Note: After all the cases, there will be reviewed period where the player can connect the dots and see what the victims and suspects had in common.

5.0 Narrative/Gameplay Loop



Note: Can be in a different order depending on the case, but each case will have these elements of the narrative. Each case will end with an interlude that will have a 'special event' occur if their relationship level is high enough.

In every “Case” instance there will be four elements. There will be a Case File, Downtime, Interrogations, and Visual Novel elements.

CASE FILE:

In a Case File, the detectives will bring in a case for Celestine to examine. The purpose of this is to match the crime scene with a Tarot Card to understand the killer's message. Every Case File will have interactable clues the detectives have found that can range from photos, paperwork, etc. Lana and/or Keith will explain the context behind the clues as the player clicks on them. The player has to try and match the card with the crime scene out of a specific set of choices. If they pick the wrong one then it will either give another chance to pick the right one or continue with a negative outcome (see Visual Novel Elements).

DOWNTIME:

This segment works to provide extra worldbuilding to the player. It will always be in Celestine’s shop with specific interactable elements.

The Television: When clicked on, the television will have a Visual Novel scene of Cannon News. Will typically have the Mayor giving a speech or be a report on recent crimes in the city.

The Telephone: When the player clicks on the phone they will skip downtime and go right into another case. However, after they have interacted with all the elements the phone will ring and Lana will give Celestine a new case that will finish Downtime.

Tarot Guide: Will provide extra information about the Tarot Card meanings for the player to research if they wish. More knowledge of tarot makes the cases that much easier.

Tarot Cards: Player can go through all 22 cards of the Major Arcana and inspect them more closely.

The Corkboard: Will track the player's progress in the game and show how well they are doing on a case by case basis. At the end of the four cases, all the information from the corkboard will be used to determine who the culprit is.

The Radio: Will play automatically based on each case. DJ Boogie will talk about events going on in the city related to the cases and the rising tensions amongst civilians.

INTERROGATION:

Lana and Keith will bring in someone who is connected to the victim in each case. This suspect will sit down for a reading and Celestine will have a three-card spread for them. For each card,

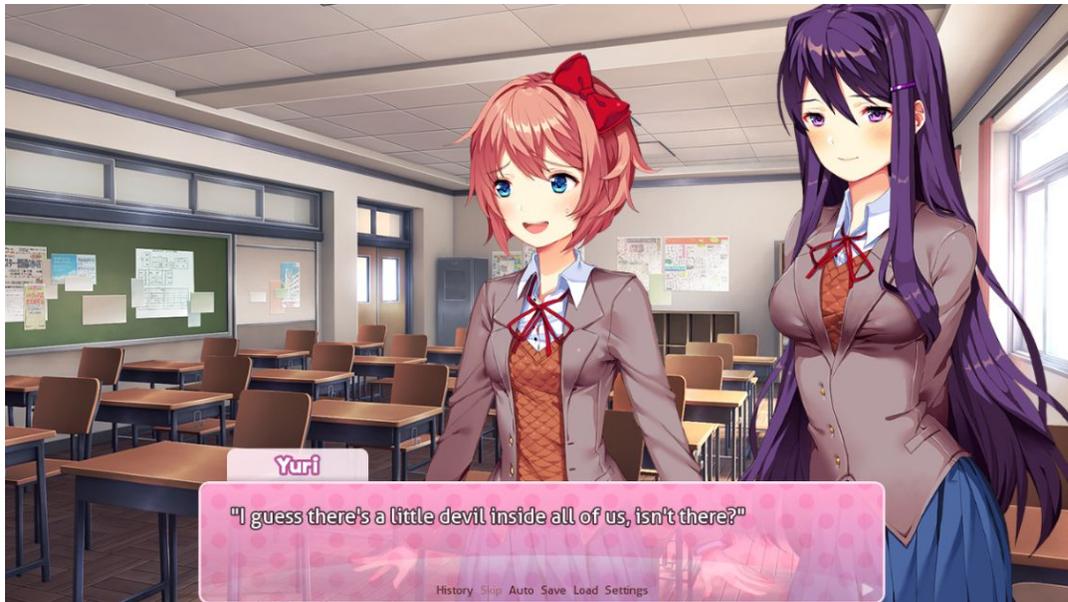
there will be choices for interpretation. If the interpretation is wrong it lowers their Precision score and garners a negative reaction from the interrogatee. In some cases, the player will be given a second chance for an interpretation. If the interpretation is correct the suspect will reveal more information about themselves that will contribute to the end game. Depending on how well the player does they will receive either a positive or negative Visual Novel outcome.

VISUAL NOVEL EVENTS:

In a Visual Novel Event, it portrays a scene from Celestine's point of view. These will occur after cases or in the case of interludes. There are text boxes that are aligned with a character's dialogue and sprites that go with them. Occasionally there will be a dialogue choice for the player which will impact their Relationship score with Lana. The Relationship score contributes to different outcomes in the narrative including the ultimate ending for the game.

6.0 Dialogue

The dialogue of the game will involve set choices the player can make. These dialogue choices will include the selection of interpretations of the cards which will determine the outcome of the cases, responses to conversations that will determine relationship levels, and filler dialogue conversations that will let the player shape the character of the Tarot Reader. We will be using a third-party system will implement the dialogue. [Pixel Crushers Dialogue System](#)





(Doki Doki Literature Club)

The script of the game will be held within the dialogue box like most visual novels.

Choices will be in little sections of the dialogue box and highlighted when hovered over. The player will select the options and receive a response to the selection.

Dialogue within the Tarot Reader's head will be written in plain text, while outspoken dialogue (from the Tarot Reader or other characters) will be written within quotations to show it is being spoken. The style will be 1st person (Celestine's perspective) present tense.

7.0 Script

[Link to the script.](#)

8.0 References/Inspirations

References for style:

The Arcana, the writing and visual novel style gameplay that occurs in the game.

"A Mystic Romance is a luxurious and interactive visual story and otome inspired dating sim for iOS and Android." - *Nix Hydra*

"For everything you have lost, you have gained something else. Without the dark, you would never see the stars." - *Muriel*

Doki Doki Literature Club, the visual novel story-telling elements especially the dialogue options and how the story distorts into something unexpected and grime.

“The Literature Club is full of cute girls! Will you write the way into their heart? This game is not suitable for children or those who are easily disturbed.” - *Team Salvato*

Labyrinth, The mystical tone of the film and the flare of the characters.

“I say, does anyone want to play a game of Scrabble?” - *Didymus*

Clockwork Orange, the serial killer’s sense of “justice” and philosophy of people.

“I see what is right and approve, but I do what is wrong.” - *Anthony*

“The important thing is moral choice. Evil has to exist along with good, in order that moral choice may operate. Life is sustained by the grinding opposition of moral entities.” - *Anthony*

“Is it better for a man to have chosen evil than to have good imposed upon him?” - *Anthony*

Taxi Driver, the setting of the city with its grim atmosphere.

“Someday a real rain will come and wash all this scum off the streets.” - *Travis*

Heavy Rain, the setting of the city with its tone of voice and the influence of choice.

“Dealing with a range of adult themes, the game revolves around a plot and narrative threads that explore a moral proposition.” - *Heavy Rain Wiki*

Detroit: Become Human, the influence of choice gameplay and the dynamic between the detectives.

“Detroit: Become Human is a cinematic neo-noir thriller game developed by Quantic Dream.” - *Detroit: Become Human Wiki*

“I think working with an officer with personal issues is an added challenge, but adapting to human unpredictability is one of my features.” - *Connor to Hank*

L.A Noire, the interrogation scenes and the attention to detail of words.

“L.A. Noire is a neo-noir detective action-adventure video game developed by Team Bondi and published by Rockstar Games.” - *L.A Noire Wiki*

“I know you’re lying, James. You went out looking for her. Tell me what really happened.” - *Detective Phelps*

The Silence of the Lambs, the serial killer’s mind games and state of mind.

“Plum Island Animal Disease Research Facility. Sounds charming.” - *Dr. Lecter*

9.0 Narrative Pipeline

Narrative Pipeline

