



PEEP SHOW

GAME DESIGN DOCUMENT

VRINDA



2025

**FEED YOUR
VOYEURISTIC DESIRES**



A voyeuristic stealth game where you don't play as anyone—you play with everyone.

Slip into the misty form of a deva, a nosy little spirit, to rummage through the minds of an unsuspecting kingdom. Possess peasants, princesses, and potted plants alike. Be everyone, know everything. But be careful—if you get too good at it, you might lose track of who you were to begin with. It's not your fault though - it's hard not to fog up the window when you're desperately pressed up against the glass.

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KEY USED



I'm not like the other games. (I make you play with yourself)

Peep Show employs unconventional mechanics that grant the player total control over every character in the game. With no fixed avatar, the player inhabits everyone, essentially turning the classic NPC into a revolving door of selves. In doing so, the game transforms into a solo performance: the player is made to play with themselves.

The experience is deliberately designed using principles of abusive game design, centering around shifts in focalisation to foreground the dialogic relationship between player and designer. Rather than offer immersion, the game stages a conversation, one that nudges the player to become aware of the strange choreography they're part of.

This culminates in a purposefully dissatisfying end state: a state of total control, where the player acts out both sides of the dialogue and finds themselves trapped in a feedback loop. Not playing with the game, but playing as the game.

The final question lands like a quiet threat: If you were one with everything... wouldn't you get bored?

THE STORY



Kingdom Chai

Nestled in a valley of blooming flowers, is the tiny kingdom of "Chaitanya", or "Chai" for short. Ah yes, in this pocket of tropical paradise the sun shines brighter, the marigolds blush redder, and the people - oh, the people hide secrets no other.

But it still is paradise. Why would a silly little affair or a murderous secret society ruin that?

The King, curious about the rot in the undergrowth, has sent for a fortune teller. Not just anyone - Baba, the fraud hindu priest. While he claims to read bones under moonlight and carve runes into his skin, his real trick is whispering with Devas - mischievous little spirits too weak to take form, good only for spying.

You are one of them. A nosy wisp sent to crawl inside people's minds and feed Baba their secrets.

The game begins at a lavish party thrown by Queen Devi, who suspects a bastard heir lurks in the crowd. Your job? Find the heir before she does - so Baba can take the credit ... What? What did you expect? Jewels? A harem? You're barely a dust bunny, look at yourself.

THE CONCEPT



THEMES

Voyeurism (not in a weird way, unfortunately): The nature of the player's position as an observer and their evolving involvement in the narrative world.

Secrets: The proliferation of secrets and rumours in a small community, the desire to have "layers" in order to find individuation.

Identity: The defining conflict of the game is one of mistaken identity.

SETTING

The game is set in a fictionalised version of early mediaeval India. Civilisation is primitive, largely agrarian, organised around micro kingdoms. Great liberty is taken with historical accuracy, incorporating terms and art styles from different cultures.

TOPE

Initially humorous and upbeat emulating the atmosphere of having a sleepover at your friends place and sharing gossip. Growing less frivolous over the course of the game as the player begins to feel more enmeshed with the lives of the NPCs. Finally, a blatant and abrupt tonal shift with the death of a key NPC will catapult the game into a frantic hellish mess.

USPS

All Playable Characters: The player does not create an avatar, instead inhabiting other characters, in doing so all "NPC's" become playable.

Stealth: Player must hide and covertly move between locations to not catch the NPC's attention.

Level Design in Dialogue: Through controlling a character's dialogue the player can navigate towards their topic of interest. Dialogue trees do not cycle back to allow the exploration of all dialogue options.

THE CONCEPT



GENRE Low fantasy narrative game, first person perspective.

PLATFORM PC

TARGET AUDIENCE Demographic: 18- 35, containing strong language, crude themes, and copious drug and alcohol references.

Appeals to: Youth looking for narratively rich games, individuals seeking a meta narrative on the nature of gaming.
Players looking for a new spin on a familiar setting (small medieval kingdom).

Adjacent Game Interests Disco Elysium, Papers please, Wolf Among Us, Immortality, Games found in Netflix library.

MARKETING The game would be positioned as a stealth game with no combat, nuanced characters, and the opportunity for trickery and tom-foolery. It would be positioned as the ideal game for people who enjoy a stylistic aesthetic, mind games, and a new take on the old formula of a first person RPG in a medieval setting.

MECHANICS

GAMEPLAY



PRIMARY MECHANICS

THEMATIC RELEVANCE

Capturing:

Clicking on an object will result in the player travelling to it and occupying it (supposing they have the required skill level to). Doing so often requires a high degree of stealth and good timing. With increase in skill, the abilities gained through capturing increase as well.

The mechanic of capturing ties in with the game's theme of the fluidity of the self, allowing the player to exist in the game world not as an avatar of their own but as multiple NPCs instead.

Dialogue choices:

When occupying a person, the player may either be able to nudge subconscious thoughts to the forefront or outright make a character's dialogue choice for them (depending on skill level).

Voyeurism escalates - from silent observation to full control.

SKILL + ABILITY

THE ABILITY OF THE DEVA

A deva's greatest weakness - its inability to take solid form, existing only as a piddling mist, - is also its greatest gift, the power to occupy other vessels. This mechanic, called "capturing," forms the core of gameplay.

At first, the player can only capture inanimate objects. But by uncovering and relaying secrets to Baba, the player gains skill and levels up. However, skill isn't permanent; it ebbs with time. To maintain and grow their power, the player must keep feeding Baba juicy gossip.

Skill Progression

As the player advances, they unlock the ability to:

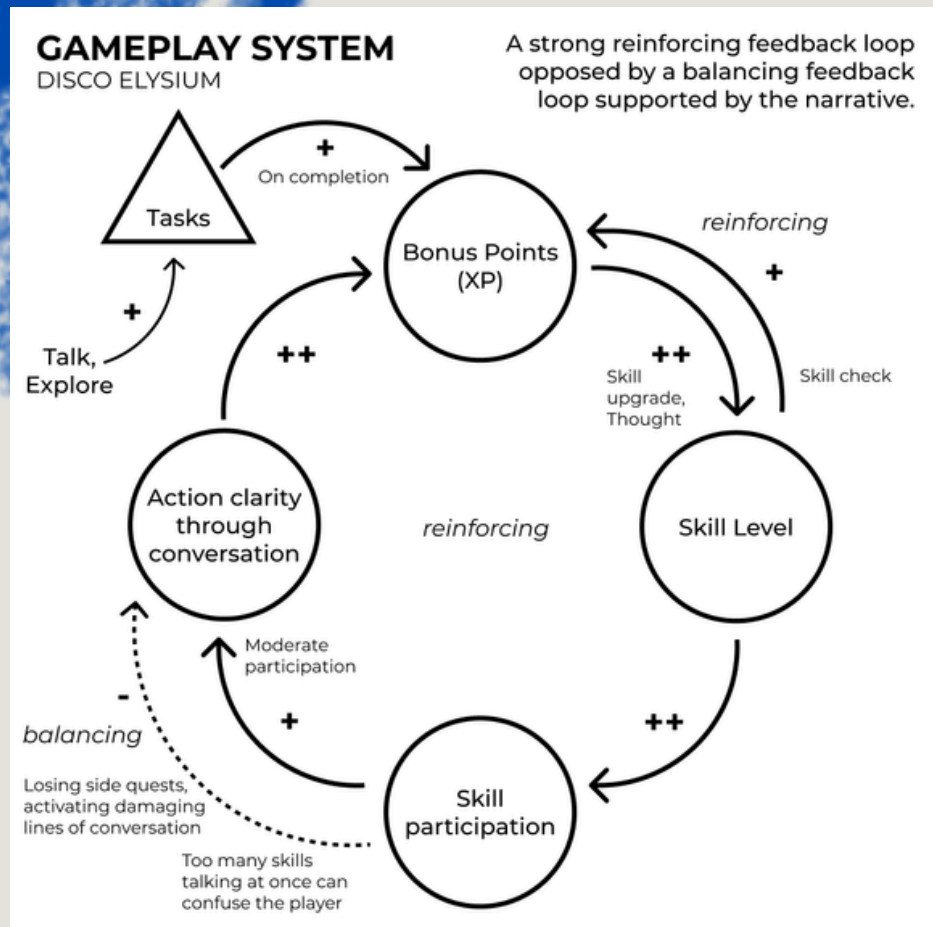
- Capture simple animate vessels - animals, children, or intoxicated/mentally unguarded people
- Enter the minds of mentally guarded NPCs
- Access hidden, unspoken thoughts during conversations (Note: subconscious thoughts may lie.)
- Nudge NPCs toward specific dialogue choices
- Eventually control most of an NPC's speech and behaviour

Key Terms

- **Capturing:** The act of possessing an object or person. Success depends on skill level and knowledge of the target.
- **Vessel:** Any object or person eligible for capture.
- **Knowing:** Captures of vessels are only successful if the player sufficiently "knows" them. Depending on the nature of the vessel (inanimate, intoxicated, idiotic, etc) players require different levels of knowledge of the vessel.

Note: Clothing worn by people is considered a part of their person, and not accessible for capture. The same applies to small objects (such as insects) which would be too small a vessel to contain the deva

SYSTEM



THE ABILITY OF THE DEVA

The system is organised around the main reinforcing feedback loop, wherein players' level increase is managed through submitting "secrets" learnt through the day, earning "skill points" which in turn increases their ability. The balancing feedback loop, that is, player opposition, emerges when the player has reached a moderate level. Power leaks. The more secrets you steal, the more your vessels begin to glitch. NPCs start hearing things they shouldn't - their own subconscious, or maybe yours. Soon, thoughts leak. Emotions stir. And the system turns against you. Good. You were getting cocky.

Another discouragement will ideally manifest from the player's own moral quandaries about divulging the secrecies of NPC's private lives. In that case, if the player wishes to continue to gain skill, they will be required to prioritise, sacrificing some NPCs to protect others.

This system is similar to that of Disco Elysium's (which is illustrated above).

ROYAL FAMILY



CHARACTERS

KING CHAI

King Chaitanya is picture perfect. Magnanimous, generous, humble, and a looker too. He believes he knows his citizens even better, playing matchmaker, hosting cow beauty pageants, and inventing the wheel.

However, the King Chaitanya we meet at the start of this story is quite a different one. Rattled by the news of his mother's death, he takes up a drug habit - experimenting with psychedelics to better understand the post-life journey his mother went on. But after the grief came the anger. Betrayed by the coverup - both she and her doctors had known of the illness for sometime, he does not know his kingdom as well as he had thought.

Thus, seeking to know the future of all citizens of his kingdom, he calls upon Baba. A fact he hides from the citizens as he intends to wield the information as he sees fit. Little does he suspect the person closest to him has a voyeuristic task force of her own.

QUEEN DEVI

Queen Devi really knows how to throw a party. Almost a weekly affair in Kingdom Chai, her parties are open to everyone in the kingdom, throwing the gigantic palace doors open in unfettered revelry, she welcomes man, woman, and child with a gummy smile and a glass of her newest experimental wine.

It was this charm that won King Chai's affection. Followed by her steel will and commitment to the throne, having lost her own kingdom and family to invasion when she was a child. It is this fact that allows him to indulge in nights on end spent laying in the grass in fungal induced revelations.

But he underestimated how far she would go to protect her own seat on the throne. The Queen is on the hunt for the juiciest secret in the kingdom - the rumoured bastard child - heir to the throne.

ROYAL FAMILY



CHARACTERS

PRINCESS GOWRI

Princess Gowri is the stuff of fairytales. She would be best suited to play the troll swiping children's ankles as they pass over a bridge. Sullen, surly, and suspicious of everybody's intentions, Princess Gowri never holds back a cruel word or biting funny insult. Despite being the first born child and heir to the throne, the villagers have grown familiar with her, parrying back her remarks with their own. So well known is her short temper that they often conduct secret competitions, trying to anger her in increasingly silly ways.

But none anger her as easily as the head knight of the legion. Knight Mazboot. She claims his kindness and self effacing personality is a farce and disgusts her. In truth, she is hopelessly in love and incapable of expressing her affections. After their encounters she takes refuge in a shadowy corner to rhapsodise about her love, reciting sickly sweet poetry.

PRINCESS AGNI

The second in line to the throne, but always the first to try her mothers boozy concoctions is Princess Agni. Entirely uninterested in her royal duties and claiming the royal family is an unjust system, she has been through several evolutions of the "rebellious teen". Starting with the very psychedelics her father is now experimenting with, to attempts to establish a secret coup, and finally graduating to blindfolded knife throwing, she is slowly realising her rebellions are going unnoticed (apart from the occasional villager with a funny shaped haircut).

That is, until, her father learned that the doctor presiding over his mother was Arya, the young blind priest, marking him as Princess Agni's next conquest.

PALACE WORKERS

CHARACTERS



RAJ + THE ENTERTAINERS

The troupe of entertainers consists of a pair of twin jesters, three dancers and one shameful actor. Theatric plays have been deemed dull and out of style, the royal family and villagers alike preferring daring feats, shocking acts of magic, dance verging on acrobatics, or a good old slapping competition.

Of them is the unstylish actor, Raj. Desperately trying to make the theatre cool again. He is the son of Priestess, and the true heir to the throne. He suspects he might be the heir ... but he'd rather perform Hamlet in a rice field than sit on a throne.

HANDMAIDENS

The greatest threat to the player. Giggling handmaidens are often the first faces one will see upon entry into the castle. Trained to anticipate the royal family's wants, they are very perceptible. While they possess the most factual information about the villagers, the player will be discouraged from spending too much time with them as they will easily spot the player in almost any vessel, ending the game.

ADVISORS

Four loyal advisors preside over all civic disputes in the kingdom, and advise the King on criminal disputes. They often flounce down the paths in the kingdom, looking for quarrels to butt their upturned noses into. They believe themselves to have their ears to the ground but are unaware that by the time information gets to them, the snake-like trail of whispers have often twisted the story.

PALACE WORKERS

CHARACTERS



KNIGHTS

The soldiers of Kingdom Chai are brave knights, towering figures of masculinity and dominance, machines honed for combat, who have never been engaged in battle. Ever. Yet, they remain vigilant, pumping wood with new fervour each sunrise. Sometimes an errant passion takes a soldier by force, beckoning them towards finger painting or stand up comedy. But the camaraderie of brotherhood, the raw, sweaty, oiled - ahem - nights in the training room call them back.

MAZBOOT II

The Head Knight is Mazboot (the Second) named after his father, Mazboot (the First). His exemplary behaviour guides the bumbling but well intentioned legion, often further complicating an awry situation they were supposed to remedy. Nonetheless, he does not let this daunt him, taking up a new challenge everyday, having learned nothing.

One of the red herrings on the quest for the secret heir.

He remains unfortunately unaware of Princess Gauri's affections, taking her animosity at face value.

MAZBOOT FAMILY

Mazboot (the First) was the the watchdog of the kingdom for over two decades. He was the King's right hand man, retiring only when he lost said right hand in a training exercise gone very awry.

Dania Mazboot, his wife, is a beautiful artisan. She was the heartthrob of the kingdom, earning the affections of many men. She is positioned as the mother to the secret heir for most of the game.

THE PRIESTS

CHARACTERS



PRIESTS

The priests of Kingdom Chai act as a second figure of authority Capable of seeing through the veil of reality and root out evil, their perception penetrates several planes of existence. But that's just the company line. In truth, they are practitioners of herbal medicine, the lie was concocted as villagers believe science to be a force of evil.

YUVA (HEAD PRIESTESS)

Often found in namaste pose (unless she didn't notice you walking up to her), Yuva answers all calls of distress with alarming promptness. Especially if the caller is easy on the eyes. A hedonist, Yuva enjoys the many favours granted to her for her priest work. She is the mother of Raj, the true heir, but has no interest in claiming her position as the King's consort as it would rob her of her holy freedoms. Acting as part time fortune teller, she is Baba's biggest competitor.

While the power has certainly gone to her head, there is only one person who reminds Yuva she is not godlike. The ambitious and unscrupulous bar owner- Daksha, her ex-girlfriend.

ARYA (BLIND HEALER)

Arya's holy work is that of a healer. His blindness, is what gave him traction as a doctor, patients believing his insights to be gifts from god. However, it is a farce, concocted as villagers believe science to be a force of evil. Claiming to have been abandoned in the woods and found by Yuva, the villagers believe them to be mother and son, but his true parents are unknown.

The true ending of the game - total control - is reached when the player, unaware that Arya is not blind, allows themselves to be seen in their true form. Having spent much of his life in meditation and armed with esoteric knowledge, this triggers a transcendental experience for the priest. Capturing Arya in this state will result in the player "knowing" all things.
Game Over.

VILLAGERS

CHARACTERS



MISCELLANEOUS VILLAGERS

The villagers of Kingdom Chai enjoy warm summers and cool winters by lounging around in the grass. In the brief respites between lounging they engage in work in the castle, field work, or odd jobs around the kingdom. Villagers are often named after their profession, for example "Soda Bottle Opener Wala", which translates to "The person who opens soda bottles".

DAKSHA + LUNGS TAVERN

One of the many taverns in the kingdom, "Lungs" is situated near the backwaters of the river. The establishment has a steady stream of patrons yet the quarrelling owners often lose the month's returns gambling on an underground lizard fight ring.

Daksha, one of the three owners of "Lungs", is always looking for new avenues to fund her gambling addiction. She is frequently (and flirtatiously) offered help from Priestess Yuva but declines due to animosity from their breakup.

AYUSHMAN

The quintessential everyman.

The silkworm farmer, Ayushman Silkworm-wala works alone, pruning his field and caring for the many silk worms he rears to be used for trading with other kingdoms. A bit of a hermit, not even attending the Queen's parties, his origins are unknown, creating fertile ground for rumours to proliferate.

The only times he makes an appearance in public is in attendance of the secret society. Due to his comedic prowess, the other attendees begin to think of him as their leader.

LOCATIONS



COMMON SETTINGS

PALACE UPPER FLOORS

The royal family (with the exception of Agni) and palace workers are often found in the Palace. When engaged in official duties, the palace workers do not stray from their responsibilities but catching them during the break time will give the player more information about the history of the kingdom.

The Royal chambers are often frequented by handmaidens, making them hard to access.

PALACE BALLROOM

The site of the Queen's parties. Villagers are chatty and mildly intoxicated at parties, providing the best opportunity to gain information and eavesdrop. However, due to the large number of people, conversations are hard to overhear and require prior preparation in order to be at the right place at the right time, within immediate vicinity of the target.

FOUNTAIN CENTRE

Located in the centre of the village, villagers pass by the fountain frequently. Due to its central location most paths lead in and out of the fountain centre. While capturing people here is not easy, camping out in the centre will give opportunity to the player to follow people, potentially creating new leads.

THE TEMPLE

Priests and visiting village workers hang out in the temple for long periods of time, usually engaged in a ceremony.

Capturing people in the temple is difficult but when done grants the greatest insight into their minds.

LOCATIONS



COMMON SETTINGS

LUNGS TAVERN

Lungs provides a space for the player to gain the most access to villagers as intoxicated people are easy to capture. However, the information gained is not always trustworthy. The basement of the tavern is where secret society meetings are held.

FROG POND

Here, the player can converse with Baba through the reflective surface of the pond. Conversations are meandering, delving into Baba's musings around the colour Orange being a psy-op, his suspicions that a worm has been following him, and his glimpses into the ever widening maw of eternity.

MAZBOOT HOUSE

The house of the Mazboot family. Guarded by their hostile cat.

SIDE QUESTS



SIDE QUESTS

While the main objective of the game is to find the secret heir, there are several other plot lines that can be pursued to explore the kingdom and/or gain skill.

SORCEROR

A rumour of a sorcerer that turns animals into children is a false one, taking the player deeper into the history of the kingdom as they visit an orphanage. Families in the kingdom are rarely nuclear, most children being raised communally. Here the player will participate in mini games with the children, who have formed gangs to battle each other and hoard resources. As children freely divulge their parent's secrets, a great amount of skill can be gained here.

LIZARD FIGHT RING

The owners of Lungs perpetually lose their earnings in an underground lizard fight ring. Investigating the fight ring will take the player outside the kingdom, participating in a death match as a lizard. The player will also learn secrets about the palace workers, such as, the advisors stealing from the royal fund, the knights sheltering a royal from a nearby kingdom, and the handmaidens covering up the death of a senior, in order to collect her pension.

AGNI + ARYA

Playing cupid between Agni and Arya involves setting up romantic situations for them, something made easy with high skill as the player can direct dialogue choices. Doing so will incite the ire of the king. While their romance initially is a farce, born out of Princess Agni's desire for parental attention, it eventually blossoms into authenticity.

GAURI + MAZBOOT

Depending on the level of the player's knowledge of who the secret heir is, the player may wish to either play cupid with the two or keep them apart, out of fear they are siblings. Both options will result in comical scenarios.

THE END



Where are we in the end?

The game concludes in one of two ways: either the player is caught in the act, the observer finally becoming observed, or they reach the core narrative's endpoint (see the ending of page 13 for the same.)

At no point is the player ever truly known by the in-game characters. While the tone of Peep Show is largely light-hearted and absurd, its design places the player in a position of ethical discomfort: a voyeur, a puppetmaster, an invader of lives.

As the game progresses, mistakes compound. Secrets unravel. The kingdom frays. And eventually, the player is granted total control - the ability to dictate the actions and dialogue of every character. But this so-called "ultimate power" is not a reward; it's a trap. A deliberately hollow, frustrating end state where the player finds themselves performing both sides of every scene. Alone.

This is where the game bares its core idea:
If you were one with everything... wouldn't you get bored?

Personally, I think the answer is yes.
The "self" may be a prison — but it's also what lets us surprise each other. And play together :)