

Title

Tags (separate with spaces)

[[There|There 1]] [[were|were 1]] [[five|five 1]] [[of|of 1]] [[us|us 1]], [[when|when 1]] [[we|we 1]] [[started|started 1]].

[[You]] [[should]] [[have]] [[seen]] [[us]].

[[Five]] [[with]] [[me]] [[twice]] [[and]] [[it]] [[still]] [[went]] [[to]] [[hell]].

[[They]] [[came]] [[through]] [[four]] [[and]] [[they]] [[needed]] [[one]] [[more]].

[[We]] [[never]] [[would]] [[have]] [[been]] [[enough]].

the making of **if not us**



2018
by ruqiyah
with contributions from shiny
special thanks to m mackenzie



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Introduction

In April 2017 I finished the first draft of a visual novel script - a project I'd been working on for years. I was very proud of it, but there was one sequence that I suspected didn't quite work: a very sad bit of random branching that I'd desperately wanted to include. This sequence had a point to make about a) tragedy and b) player agency, and Boy Oh Boy, it did both of the above, but it... didn't quite fit the narrative. It was a bit too grim.

Then off I went to GX Australia, where people kept asking me what I did, and I didn't have much to show beyond an obtuse Twine game from 2014. Whelp, I thought, time to make something! Maybe I could get the desire for Tragedy And Player Agency out of my system, then go back and cut it out of *amarantus*.

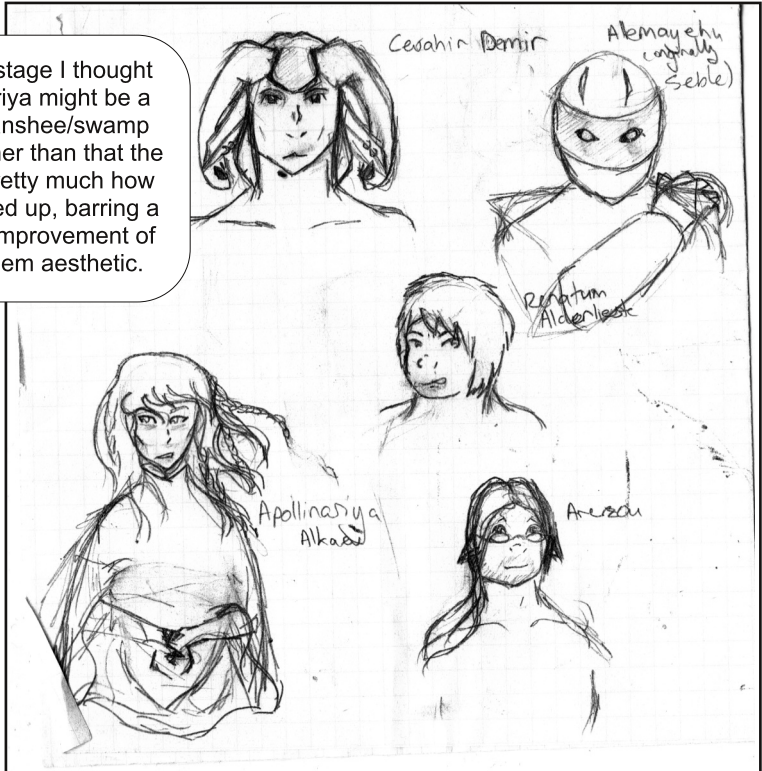
Another story idea had also been knocking around in my head for a few years: a band of heroes save the world by handing over their leader to the bad guys, then agree to lie about it rather than admit the truth. And I'd wanted to do a story about heroes regrouping years after their glory days ever since I played the visual novel *April was a Fool*.

I opened up Twine and started smashing out something vague and simple, trying to capture a full range of characters in a few opening sentences. You may observe from the front cover that this got very out of hand very quickly.

Okay, I thought. Let's try pen and paper. I sketched out a cast, pinning down some good Hero Archetypes. I had previous experience with Inform 7 and Twine, so I jotted down some formats that would work well in them: stream of consciousness, writing a letter, jumping around on a timeline, a conversation, and something that involved giving simple commands and getting simple responses.



At this stage I thought Apollinariya might be a ghost/banshee/swamp witch. Other than that the cast is pretty much how they ended up, barring a general improvement of Al's golem aesthetic.



number of ~~conversations~~ with ~~Androm~~ ~~characters~~ (from him)
 she is going back to the folds
 Androm ~~is~~ ~~flashing~~ ~~at~~ ~~him~~ ~~his~~ ~~eyes~~ - ~~winks~~ ~~from~~ ~~the~~
 (she's going him) ~~surprised~~ ~~smile~~ ~~side~~
 Ren - single remain deciding what to leave for the next ~~hour~~ round?
~~what~~ ~~is~~ ~~your~~ ~~intention~~ ~~up~~ ~~with~~ ~~the~~ ~~spy~~
 to the ~~ultra~~
 Arzon - leaving a ~~bit~~ ~~for~~ ~~Ren~~ ~~Jonah~~
 Almayehu - You are ALEMAYEHU You are standing on the tip of the CITADEL
 There is no one behind you
 TEXT-BASED PARSEK GAME

IF NOT US

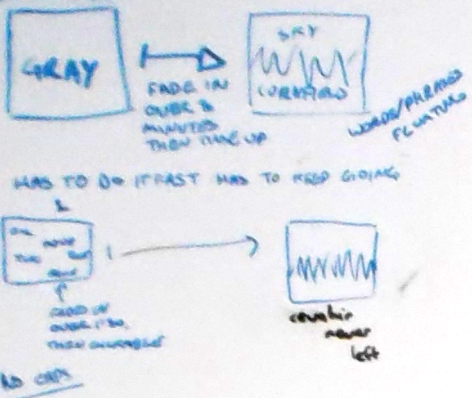
3 MINUTES

Next I got out a whiteboard.

CEVAHIR

ROB'S
00:10

① LAYOUT



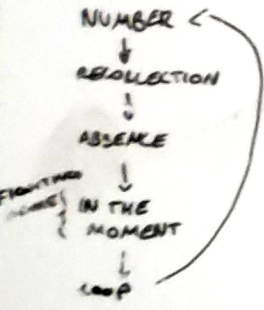
② ORDER

- ALEMAYEHU TRAP
- AREZOU ACCIDENT
- PAULINA BATTLE (ARROW?)
- REN HEROIC SACRIFICE
- [SHILOH]

③ FOCUS

STREAM OF CONSCIOUSNESS
 THING WHO'S GONE BEFORE
 NO FOCUS ON DEATH (GENERAL OR SPECIFIC)
 THIRD PERSON
 SHE DIDN'T HAVE THAT LONG TO LAST ANYWAY
 NO SPECIFIC MEMORIES - JUST FEELINGS
 FAMILY - BROTHERS & SISTERS
 TRINKETS

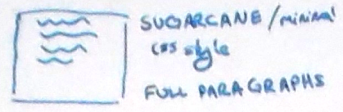
④ STRUCTURE



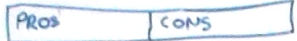
PAULINA

GOES HOME

① LAYOUT



① THIS IS NOT MY WORLD.
 ALL THAT REMAINS IN QUESTION IS HOW MUCH I OWE IT.



AS SHE GOES FURTHER BACK, HER WRITING STYLE RELAXES/LAPSES
 END GOES HOME
 MONOTONY REAL WORLD

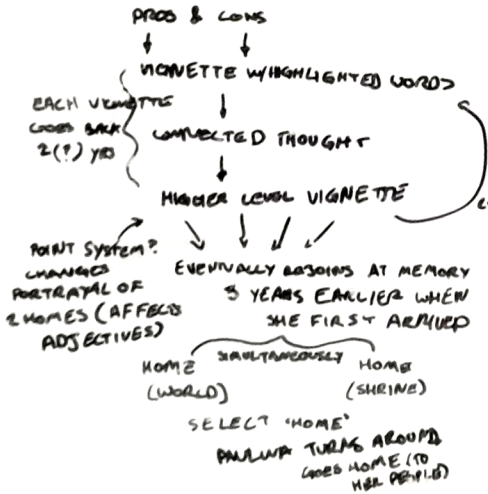
② ORDER

- CEVAHIR GEMERKER
- ALEMAYEHU TARGETTED ATTACK
- RENATUM SHOT
- AREZOU FAILURE

③ FOCUS

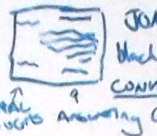
BUILDING A NARRATIVE OUT OF VIGNETTES e.g. FIRST ARRIVAL & MEETINGS
 STARTS FLOWERY BUT PROSE DECADES
 AFRAID - SMALL
 FAITH (RELIGIOUS)
 PARENTS
 TRYING TO FIT EVERYTHING INTO A COHERENT NARRATIVE (TO JUSTIFY WHY SHE'S THE HERO LEAVING)

④ STRUCTURE



RENATUM

① LAYOUT



Let me see me make
 You've seen
 CERTAIN WORDS
 CLICKING ON T
 HOW DESPERATE
 GETS DEPENDE
 MAKE THEM TH
 FRIENDS & THE

② ORDER

- AREZOU
- PAULINA
- ALEMAYEHU
- CEVAHIR

③ FOCUS

GRADUAL OR OBSTINATE
 DEEPLY CONC
 REMEMOR
 TO PRESERVE
 DEEPLY SCIPS
 EMOTIONAL M
 PRETENTIONS
 THEIR MIND

④ STRUCTURE

THERE WE ST
 ANSWER
 ASK MORE
 REN'S WORDS
 500?
 WHEN
 EMOTIO
 DESPERATE
 TO SAVE P

OM

PLEADS THEIR CASE

VAH, right aligned, bold text on white BG.

PERSONAL (UNSEEN) OS

my piece. Let

is a good job. ARE HIGHLIGHTED - THEM = ASKING ABOUT.

ITG/PLEADING PEN IS ON WHAT OS ARE WORK OF THEIR ILL YET DEFEATE

TAKES RESPONSIBILITY MAGE WIFE FEUTETS THE CHILDREN GIVES SELF UP TO SAVE REN

DESCENT INTO PLEADING

EMERGED AFFECTION - THEY'RE ONLY DOING THIS THE MEMORY OF THEIR FRIENDS DISTIC MATURITY OF A 10YO AS WELL IS THEIR GREATEST - & ONLY ASSET

I WERE FIVE OF US, WHEN

RENARDS HIGHLY BEING OS

OS ABOUT FRIENDS - EMOTIONAL ABOUT PLAN-LOGICAL

BRAIN IS SMALL! LIMITED WANT TIL THEY LOSE FOCUS INCREASED RAMBLING AS WORDCOUNT REACHED

LOGICAL COOL REQUEST FOR REASON

TAKEN PRISONER

AREZOU

TRIES TO GET TO THE HEART OF REN'S CHARACTER



Actual fonts per calligraphy or (COMPUTER) blue lines (stained) etc.

REINVENTION (FULL NAME) (FORMAL INTRO) AREZOU (REN'S)..

AN ACCOUNT OF EVENTS.

2 SELECTABLE STARTS FOR EACH SENTENCE

TEXT PAGES W AS SELECTED



SELECTABLE

1 ORDER

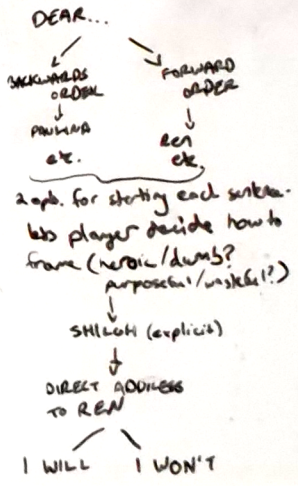
- REN
- CEVAHIR
- ALEMAYEHU
- PAULINA

- QUITS (REN'S) → PAULINA
- POOR PLANNING → REN
- SOMETHING COULDN'T → AREZOU
- TRYING HER BEST → CEVAHIR

2 FOCUS

AIMING FOR OBJECTIVITY BUT GUILTY AS HELL (PAINFUL) TRYING TO JUSTIFY HIS DECISION WAS MEANT TO BE BETTER THAN THE CAN'T STOP WONDERING WHAT HAPPENED TO SHILOH? PEPPERS TEXT W HISTORICAL REFS (V DENSE WRITING) FOCUSES A LOT ON METHODS OF DEATH - DETAILED ACCOUNTS (ONLY 1 TO DO SO?)

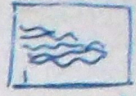
3 STRUCTURE



LEAVE LETTER

MAKES A DECISION

ALEMAYEHU



Inform?, which on which VERY minimal

You are ALEMAYEHU. You are standing on the steps of the CITADEL.

There is NO-ONE behind you.

VERBOSITY MOUNDS ARE CAPITALISED

REMEMBER REFLECT ACT

GET REALLY POSTERIOR W/ ANSWERS, E.G.

REMEMBER JOY REFLECT ON DEATH etc.

END POSSIBILITIES

- STAY
- ACT FORWARD
- ACT BACKWARDS
- ACT (WHOLE?)

2 ORDER

- PAULINA
- REN
- AREZOU
- CEVAHIR

- GOES HOME (THO COMPLETE)
- CAPTURED SLOW STRATEGY (DELOY) (QUARANT)
- SAVES SIBLING'S

3 FOCUS

DOES NOT THINK. IS. TIME MOVES ON. IT DOESN'T CARE ETERNAL. WHY IS IT HERE? IT WAS THE ONLY EXPENDABLE MEMBER. THE WORLD MOVES ON. WHY DOES THIS MATTER? BIGGER PICTURE. DID NOT LIKE REN. THEY'RE NOT ALIKE; THEY'RE OPPOSITE. DOESN'T UNDERSTAND DEATH. THINKS PURELY IN WORDS.

3 STRUCTURE

ALL INTERACTABLE WORDS APPEAR IN TEXT. (I/A NOT TRYING TO RULL PEOPLE OVER) EVERY INTERACTABLE WORD HAS A RESPONSE FOR ALL 5 VERBS NEVER RESPONSES REQUIRE PRE-REQS

NO ACTUAL LOCUS EXIST, EXCEPT FOR THE STEPS

[MAX 20 MOUNDS - DON'T GET CARRIED AWAY! CHARACTER = 6]

LAST TEXT BLOCK:

- There's a FORWARD. There's a BACKWARD.
- There is HERE.
- There's a WHOLE.

"ACT WHOLE" BIG FUCKIN B...



Breakdown

At this point I knew I was doomed.

Here were the key points as they stood:

- ❑ Each story presents its narrative in a different way, with its own UI and writing style.
- ❑ Each story uses a different style of player input.
- ❑ Each story needs to reveal elements of the perspective character that: a) are not shown in any of the other stories and b) illuminate the character's actions in other stories.
- ❑ Each chapter needed to present a different perspective of the arching narrative.

I started to consider *if not us* a warmup to my visual novel project: what were things that I'd wanted to put in the VN but decided to cut? What skills could I get now in preparation for going back to the VN? Elementary coding would be useful, as would be working with other people - so I did a callout for interested artists and hit the jackpot with the absolutely wonderful Shiny, who is the world's most patient artist. Shiny signed up for character sketch commissions and ended up doing a marvellous job of character design and illustration. I don't think I'll ever be grateful enough for the work she did to bring the cast to life.

On the following pages, I go through each character (in the order that the chapters were planned and drafted) to discuss how each chapter worked mechanically and thematically. I also discuss how each character was designed, with input from Shiny.



Themes

There are two key questions being explored throughout *if not us*:

1. What defines a victory?

Each of these characters exists in a world where their side has already lost the battle. There's no True Ending here, just a set of characters each trapped in their own Bad Ending, and no hope of undoing the string of choices that led them here.

But they're still playing the role of a hero. What does that mean to them? How can they act heroically in these circumstances? What heroic decisions can they make? What decision can they live with?

How can each of these heroes *win*?

Look at Cevahir's story. Plenty of heroic stories have ended like this, the blaze of glory, the Bolivian Army Ending. But there's something tragic about the inevitability of it. Cevahir has no other option, not even the possibility of one.

In comparison, that ending never even occurs to Apollinariya, who's fighting an entirely different battle. Alemayehu and Arzan can both follow Cevahir, but they can also both find their victories in very different conclusions. The player will have to choose: what do they need to do, to feel like they have won?

2. What happens afterwards?

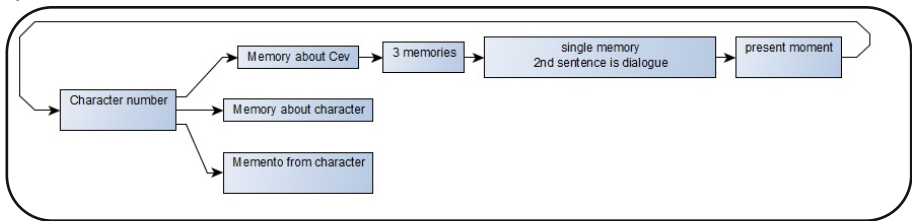
if not us is about what happens after the pivotal moment in the story, after the quest is finished, after the story is told, after the war is lost. What do the characters need to do to live with themselves? Where does their life need to take them, after what's happened? This comes through especially in Apollinariya's story, because as far as she's concerned, everything that's happened in the last seven years is the epilogue of a story that's already been told.



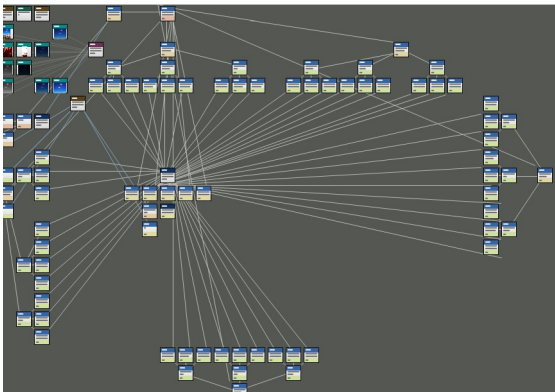
Cevahir

Cevahir is an unstoppable force. Her story is a cyclical stream of consciousness, fading into abstract thought and then repeatedly dragged back into brutal reality until, eventually, everything fades out for good. It has a single inevitable ending, that comes quickly and without warning.

Stream of consciousness is my favourite way to write in Twine, so I gravitated straight to it. I wanted the style for this chapter to be something like Dan Waber's *a kiss*, which has a simple start and then branches out to a ridiculous degree. The opening splits into 5 paths, which then branch like this:



I wrote Cev's chapter first, capturing tiny snapshots of team conversation based on the little I knew about the cast. After writing all the other chapters, I came back and made characterisation tweaks.



As the first chapter I worked on, I spent a ridiculously long time working out how to get the visual effects I wanted, particularly the lightening/darkening background and the fade-in of the final field.



Visually Cevahir's design was a delight, as one of the first non-human characters I've worked with in a while. She was one of the first characters Shiny and I pinned down: big, buff, horns, the end.

Shiny: Cevahir was the easiest to draw, and a lot of fun. From the initial sketch to the final piece, there weren't many alterations to her design. "Big, buff, horns," pretty much covers it, though I did add some feminine coded touches to her appearance as well; I wanted to convey both her gentleness and strength.



In terms of tropes Cevahir is the Cute Team Mascot turned Team Tank, a change that the party (and Polli in particular) struggles with. The rest of the cast tend to understate her intelligence (or humanity, really). This allowed me to use her chapter to reveal Cev as a much more poetic and introspective character than the other party members give her credit for.

There are some very informative details buried in this chapter, especially in regards to Cev's family and circumstances. If you know where to look, this chapter has the most information about Shiloh of the anthology.

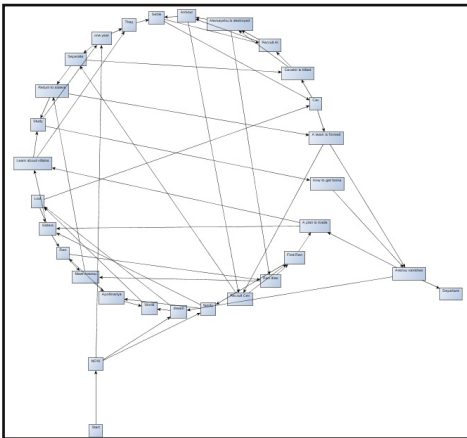
The role of this chapter in the overarching narrative is to provide some insight into the team's dynamics and relationships. I consider it somewhere between a preview and an introduction: a very quick and obscure overview that drops you in the deep end.



Apollinariya

Apollinariya is a displaced millennial, drawn to a fantasy world with promises of all the things missing from her 21st century post-university life: purpose, appreciation, wonder. Except she's been there for a while now, and she's starting to get restless.

Way back in high school I first thought about writing some sort of Tragic Magical Girl Life Flashing Before Her Eyes narrative, and Apollinariya offered the perfect opportunity.



The trick to constructing this chapter was finding a way to pace the player. The Departure passage is meant to be a dramatic reveal, so I wanted to make sure it was the hardest to get.

After a bit of trial and error, I mapped out the chapter as a flow chart. This made sure that every passage had at least 2 entry points and 2 exit points and that the Departure (far right) is the most buried passage in the story.

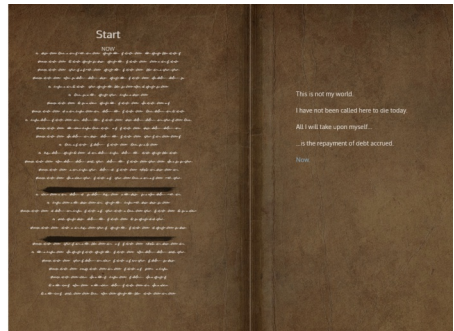
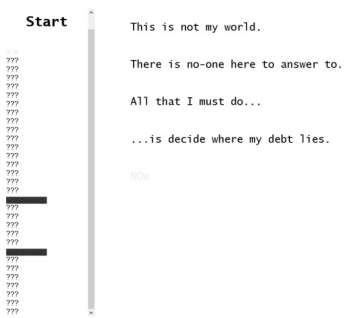
Polli's chapter has two endings, based on whether you've reached two particular passages. If you've reached both, you get a rather obtuse choice.

Polli's writing style shifts as the timeline moves further into the past. In a very-nearly final draft, I emphasised this by slipping in the odd meme. My proofreader pointed out that this looked less like intentional meme usage and more like my own slip ups, and she convinced me that I had to either cut all of the memes or let Polli go Full Memelord. After a brief internal struggle, the memes got cut.



It was important to me to capture Polli as very stern - her days of wide-eyed wonder are past. Magical Girl Chosen Ones aren't usually fed up and in their late 20s.

Apollinariya was fun for me because I used a few techniques I don't often in order to give her hair a textured appearance. Her character, like Cevahir's, flowed fairly freely from the initial outline through to the final design.



At first I wanted to make the UI very pared back and reminiscent of a computer screen, then I decided to take it in the opposite direction and make it look like Ye Olde Fantasy Novel. I also briefly considered having it shift between the two as you moved along the timeline! Ran out of time for that.

Apollinariya's role in the overarching narrative is to provide a sprawling look at the timeline and specifically to give you information about the original heroic quest (ft. Shiloh). Her chapter understates the importance of the current quest in favour of her original Chosen One journey, which was much more important to her character development.

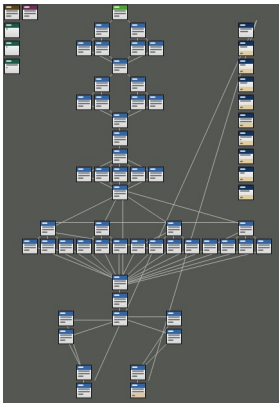


Renatum

Renatum An Amurum was around when the world began, and will be there when the world ends, changing bodies as necessary but always the same, wise and unknowable and impenetrable. When we're introduced to Ren, they're trapped in the form of a child, but that doesn't mean they've lost any of their world-weariness or their cynicism.

At least, that's what Renatum would like you to think.

Ren is my take on one of my favourite tropes, the mysterious immortal benefactor who could probably solve all of your problems in an instant except that they just don't want to. Originally Ren spent a lot of time being vague and complaining, and then it occurred to me: sure, I could write a world-weary all-knowing spirit trapped in the body of a child. But it'd be a lot more fun to write an ten-year-old convinced that they're a world-weary immortal.



Ren's got an agenda and a place they need this conversation to go. Ask them the questions they're expecting and let them stay in control of the situation, and they'll get colder, more cruel, more dismissive. But keep pushing them to think about their friends and everything they've lost, hold them accountable and refuse to give way, and eventually, Ren will crack.

I included a pointer to suggest as much - if Ren's kept their cool, they'll give an assessment of how the conversation went. This is one of the only points in if not us where a character acknowledges that your choices may change the outcome of their situation.



Mostly I just liked to draw Ren as a little kid perpetually about to throw a tantrum. Beyond that I didn't give Shiny much to work with, though I will note that Ren's jacket is inspired by the Little Prince's.

Ren's age was the most difficult aspect to convey in their design. It took a few adjustments of costume and facial features in order to convey, "I'm 10, but also as old as time and salty about everything."



Early in development I tested out narrative styles by writing a short piece from Ren's perspective about the team dynamic. Most of it ended up in Ren's and Cev's stories, in some form or another. This bit gives you a good idea of how I was feeling the characters out:

"You'll understand again when you're older."

"Cevahir-"

"Re-he-hen," she brays back, and Ren can't help but laugh a little hiccup of noise; the sun's going down and the air is getting cooler, Arezou's umbrella is hooked over his arm as he combs his hair around his face, Nariya humming something high and sharp as they start to point out places to stay tonight, Alemayehu's teetering fall of a pace slowing, jerky, as Cev reaches out in a two-handed gesture, responsive even without moving its head, the steady stomp of collective feet and mutual complaints and above all of that – these are the people that have known Ren in a way no-one will again and no-one did before, not eight years ago and never again – these are friends and they are going home.

Ren's role is to provide a more explicit (and biased) look at team dynamics and to fill in some blanks about the mysterious enemy that the Tragic Hero Squad went up against. The sequence at the end was a last minute addition, but I think it adds a lot.



Arzan

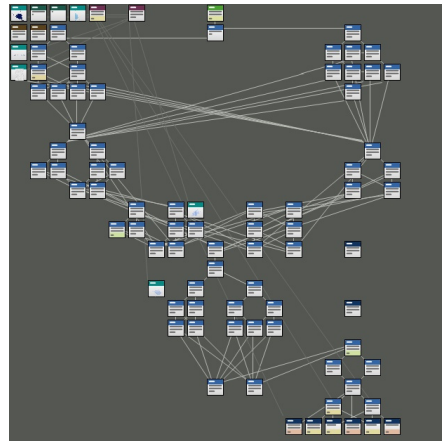
As a child all Arzan ever wanted was to be a hero like Renatum An Amurum or the prophesised five who saved the world seven years ago. As an adult he has his own duties and responsibilities, but when the opportunity arises, he jumps at the call. Of course, his personal investment in the quest may play a role...

Arzan's chapter features some of the most complex branching in the anthology, mostly because it's what I like to call 'double-written' - you can go through it twice and write two almost completely different letters.

Arzan spends his chapter torn between hope and despair, the player must negotiate these two variables throughout the letter.

Does he dwell on the losses of each party member, or focus on the happiest moments with them? These two variables will have a significant effect on how the chapter will end.

There are six different endings to this chapter, mostly variants on two options. This chapter is where I really double down on the themes of the anthology: what does it mean to 'win' the game? Is convincing Arzan to fight on or to go home the win condition?





Arzan was originally just a promoted-fanboy trope, then a friend pointed out that I like sad dads. I DO like sad dads, I thought, and lo, sad gay fish dad was born.

Arzan was the most difficult of the five from the design perspective, but despite that, he is my personal favorite. I love to draw characters with long, flowing hair, so I could indulge in that regard. Also, he's tragic and I will die for him.



At first I entertained the idea of actually writing out all of the text in this chapter by hand and then scanning it in and having it be revealed as the player made their choices. Then I wanted to have the text be drawn on-screen in real-time. Eventually I compromised with the Alemayehu flashback sequence, which expresses the same dynamic feel by playing around with line spacing and kerning, plus the strikethroughs and tense changes near the end. The animation effect that ends three of the six endings was one of the easiest (and most visually impressive) parts to do!

Arzan has a very important role in the narrative: he has to be sad as hell. No-one else gets as miserably invested in recounting the sheer tragedy that befalls the Tragic Hero Squad. I have a collection of drafting notes for his chapter which nearly all boil down to **MAKE SURE HE'S NOT TOO FULL OF SELF PITY.**



Alemayehu

Alemayehu is a clay golem recruited to a heroic quest because everyone was sick of doing their own manual labour. It performed its duty stoically, then found itself travelling the world alongside Cevahir. Then it found itself.

The Alemayehu we're introduced to in *if not us* is very distinct from the golem most of the cast is familiar with. While other characters struggle to comprehend its sentience, Alemayehu's chapter shows us a patient, loyal companion. The Tragic Hero Squad never knew what they had in Alemayehu.

I knew from the start that I wanted a golem character (Cev and Al were the first two characters I drafted - I was really enjoying getting into the fantasy archetypes) and it seemed obvious that a golem, being essentially a Fantasy Robot, could only be controlled via direct commands. Plus, once I'd used every variant of Twine that I could think of, I had to think outside the box.

What came out of that was surprisingly heartfelt.

If I could tell someone how to play through the anthology, I'd say: start wherever you need to to get drawn in, but you gotta end on either CHOOSE CEVAHIR or CHOOSE REN.



Alemayehu started out as a formless lump of clay, spent a while lurking around in a suit of armour, and now that it has retired it's settled halfway between the two. The scarf it wears is patterned like stalks of wheat, and in my art (left) it's borrowed Cev's straw hat - note the divots cut for her horns.

I had some trouble with Alemayehu because, wearing the clothes it likes to wear, it looked quite sinister in my early sketches and that's not its nature. Getting to a more neutral vibe was fun and challenging, as well as maintaining its 'not-quite-human' appearance.



OKAY. Let me give you an idea of how Alemayehu's chapter works. The game recognises twenty-three different nouns (plus some more scenery nouns, and I won't say anything about those except that there is a time-passing mechanic and you might want to look around every now and then).

Three key verbs - REMEMBER/REFLECT/CHOOSE - will give responses when used with any of those twenty-three nouns. Some of those responses will change if done in sequence - for example, REMEMBERing most characters will give a different response if preceded by REMEMBER DEATH.

For the CHOOSE command, each of the 23 nouns is paired with a mutually exclusive noun. You can't choose both nouns in a pair, and if you try to it'll point out that those two ideals are exclusive. Each noun also corresponds to an action: when you try to ACT, you get a list of all the actions that align with the nouns you've already chosen. There are five different actions, which give you five different endings.

The end result of all of this is that of the entire cast, Alemayehu is the most capable of free will. It can continue the fight, or it can go home, or it can become more than anyone else.



Trailer

I worked out pretty early on that *if not us* was going to need some sort of video trailer - sure, it's 100% text based, but I wanted to capture how dynamic the text was. If I could also capture the mood of the anthology, that'd get it pretty far, and if I could get across the core concept - 5 people, they die - then the trailer would be doing a lot of heavy lifting.

The first mockup ended with a very cute but also very cheesy slow timed fade-in of the cast. This was something I struggled with for a while. I very much wanted character art in the trailer (BECAUSE IT'S GORGEOUS), but I couldn't shake myself of the mental image of watching an elegant, very abstract trailer for a very thoughtful looking game, and then getting a faceful of hot anime girls. Of course this cast isn't hot anime girls, but I did eventually conclude that the trailer had to be a face-free zone.

Nearly all the footage in the trailer was written/adapted specifically for it, and I'm pretty proud. The decoding shot from Polli's story in particular is a cool effect I would have loved in the game proper.

The backing track for the trailer is by the musician Memphre, who adapted an unreleased track specifically for my purposes. The track does a beautiful job of expressing the solemn melancholy of the anthology, while promising an eventual sense of peace and closure.



So, what's next?

amarantus is a visual novel about a bunch of dissatisfied youths who decide to travel across the country in order to confront the Tyrant Lord of the Realm. It probably will not go so well.

Okay, okay, but it's a relationship simulator. Arik has gotten a crew of people together to accompany him on his journey. Some are old and dear friends, some of them are new and terrible, and Arik's going to spend more time trying to keep this crew together than he will working towards his actual mission. Also, why on earth did he decide to go on this deadly quest anyway?

Features:

- the opportunity to alienate your two best friends in order to hook up with a very hot, very dangerous lady
- many opportunities to platonically hold hands with a whole lot of people
- leave two party members to their own devices? okay now they're dating and your other friends think it's a bad idea and maybe you should step in
- unpick what exactly has gone wrong with the country and how you can solve all these problems by assassinating this one guy

fuck your friends! fuck over your friends! maybe change the world!

I can't give much away much more at this stage but I can confirm that both Shiny and Memphre are involved in development and so far it's been a delight. Follow me on Twitter @pettyantics for updates!

if not us: an interactive fiction anthology is a collection of stories about a group of heroes who go on a journey and nearly unanimously end up dead. Here you'll get an idea of why *if not us* exists and how it ended up the way it did, and probably discover at least one Sad Thing that went over your head when you played.

Includes: concept art, storyboards, whiteboard photographs, flowcharts, Twine maps, discussions of choice mechanics, and a preview of my next project.