

# FEARSOME

“Fearsome” is a point-and-click story adventure about three misfit characters, Nuthaniel, Stitchabelle, and Eleafabeth. Each of them is dealing with a deep personal fear. As they run away from their fears, they’re summoned by two mystical cats that are stuck inside a teapot, and they’re gifted a deck of oracle cards: not to predict the future, but to guide how they communicate and connect with others.

The central mechanic is conversation as combat. The player uses oracle cards to navigate dialogue with NPCs, slowly making the fear meter go down. The vertical slice follows Nuthaniel as he must return to the circus where his abusive director, the Nutcracker, still holds power. Along the way, the trio builds unexpected alliances, confronts injustice, and learns that overcoming fear is something only courage and connection can do.



Nuthaniel is a magician in the circus and is a little timid. The nutcracker puts a lot of pressure on him and the other circus nuts. He wants to learn how he can deal with that sort of pressure and joins the others on their adventure.



As the last survivor of the old forest, Eleafabeth feels out of place among the poisonous mushrooms that now inhabit it. Her search for belonging leads her to the other main characters.



Stitchabelle is a high ranking knight in the knight order and guards the king. The king orders the knights around and uses them for selfish endeavors, which makes Stitchabelle question everything. She doesn't want to be a tool of unjust purposes.

## GAMEPLAY LOOP

The gameplay loop revolves around exploration and conversation. The player explores each area to discover the different NPCs and interact with them through dialogue. Certain conversations are resolved using oracle card combat, and successful interactions often lead to quests that reveal more about the world. Completing these quests, and overcoming conversational challenges reduces the protagonist's Fear Meter. As the Fear Meter decreases, a new area becomes accessible, allowing the player to progress further and confront the area's boss.

# STORY

The story begins with three strangers, each fleeing from their own fears. During their escape, they discover posters advertising a two-headed cat said to possess the power to solve any problem. Following the posters they arrive at a giant teapot and argue over who should enter first.



The cats intervene, they must enter together. Once inside, they reveal that the protagonists share a common struggle: they are all running from their fears. When the trio asks for a spell to solve their problems, the cats laugh and instead give them a deck of Oracle Cards. The Oracle cannot fix their problems, but it can guide their conversations and help them find the right words when they need them most.

The vertical slice follows the group as they travel to the Circus to help Nuthaniel confront the Nutcracker. Upon arriving, Nuthaniel's fear overwhelms him, leaving him unable to face the Nutcracker directly. His companions suggest speaking with the circus workers first. Through Oracle-guided conversations and small quests, the player earns the workers' trust and gradually lowers Nuthaniel's Fear Meter.

As they explore the circus, the group uncovers signs of a mysterious mushroom infestation that is spreading throughout the world and overtaking both people and places. The Nutcracker has been consumed by this growth, which has twisted his personality and contributed to his cruel behavior.

Once the Fear Meter has been reduced enough, the group enters the underground circus, where the Nutcracker announces his grand finale: the public cracking of his runaway magician. The boss fight begins.

If Nuthaniel is triumphant, the journey continues into future areas of the game, where the remaining protagonists must confront their own greatest fears: the Mushroom Queen, Eleafabeth's antagonist, and the King, Stitchabelle's antagonist.



## FEAR METER

The Fear Meter is visible in the top left corner of the game. It indicates how high the protagonist's fear currently is. We incorporated this mechanic to showcase how fear can sometimes be paralyzing, therefore the character can't progress to the next area if their fear is too high.

By interacting with NPCs and engaging in card combat, the protagonist's Fear Meter goes down. They earn the support of NPCs, incorporating the concept of "it's less scary when you're not doing alone".

## ORACLE CARDS

When the player talks to an NPC, a card combat encounter begins. The player receives an Oracle Card and must interpret its meaning to choose the correct response from four dialogue options. Selecting the correct response lowers the Fear Meter, while selecting an incorrect response increases it.

We approached this mechanic by writing the dialogue first, then determining the correct answer. Once we had the right answer, we designed an Oracle Card that helps to figure out which one is correct.



This is what the cards look like in-game. Each of them carrying a different meaning that the player needs to figure out.



## NPCS

NPCs are a core part of the game. In the vertical slice, all NPCs are circus employees. Some conversations trigger card combat encounters, and successfully completing them turns the NPC into an ally. Allied NPCs provide unique support abilities during the boss fight, making them important for both world-building and combat.

Lady Macademia is one of the ally NPCs. Her story is that she is tired of being objectified just for the sake of the show, and helping her out results in her assisting in the bossfight.



## POINT-AND-CLICK

The game features point-and-click mechanics that are used during exploration, world interaction, and quest completion. Players complete quests by finding and collecting items, which can then be crafted into new items needed to help NPCs.

## WORLD EXPLORATION

The world is a key part of the game. The characters are tiny and live in a world once inhabited by humans, remnants of can be found throughout the environment. The circus setting is built from objects left behind. Players can interact with these objects, causing Nuthaniel to share his observations and thoughts about them.

Different interactable objects each tell a part of the overall story. In the "staff only" area of the game, there are human remains of a jester. These parts tell the story of how humans that once reigned the earth are now used as decoration or props. The ribcage of the jester is being used as a cage to keep a rabbit family hostage.



## BOSS FIGHT

The boss fight is the final segment of the vertical slice. Nuthaniel confronts the Nutcracker, who is foreshadowed throughout Nuthaniel's story. Once the Fear Meter is low enough, Nuthaniel and the other characters can enter the circus, where a brief confrontation with the Nutcracker takes place.

The player then enters a final card combat encounter. The fight follows the same rules as previous card combats, but some Oracle Cards are obscured by mushrooms, making them difficult to read. Allies gained through successful NPC interactions can provide support abilities that temporarily reveal the cards.

If the player loses the boss fight, the encounter restarts. If the player wins, a short ending sequence plays.

## MUSIC

The music in Fearsome was composed by Anila Shabani specifically for the use of our game.

## TECHNICAL DETAILS

Our game was developed in Unity using the Yarn Spinner extension to integrate our dialogue and make the different answers interactable. For the visuals we used Procreate and Procreate Dreams for the animations.

## TARGET AUDIENCE

The game targets young adults who enjoy narrative-driven experiences, whimsical storytelling, exploration, and character-focused gameplay. Its audience overlaps with players of games such as Little Misfortune and Night in the Woods.

## TESTINGS

We tested and iterated on our paper prototypes multiple times throughout development. Incorporating previous feedback and observations from playtesting. In total, we created three prototypes, with the final version building upon all features planned for the game.

Prototype testing with our mentor Tobias Kreienbühl during Demo Day.



## FUTURE FEATURES

The vertical slice does not represent the full scope of the game. Given the opportunity for further development, we would like to expand several aspects of the experience. One planned feature is the ability to switch between characters during exploration. Each character would have unique dialogue and reactions when interacting with objects and the environment. We would also like to add additional card combat encounters and point-and-click quests. Finally, we aim to expand the game world by implementing more areas.

## OUR GROUP

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Programming, Game Build, Balancing  
Character Design, Animation, Dialogue, UI  
Environment Design, Dialogue, UI, Administrative Tasks

## OUR MENTORS

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Gameplay, Programming,  
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