



NARRATIVE STRUCTURE

A PLAGUE TALE
— INNOCENCE —

Manno Ugo
Narrative Design

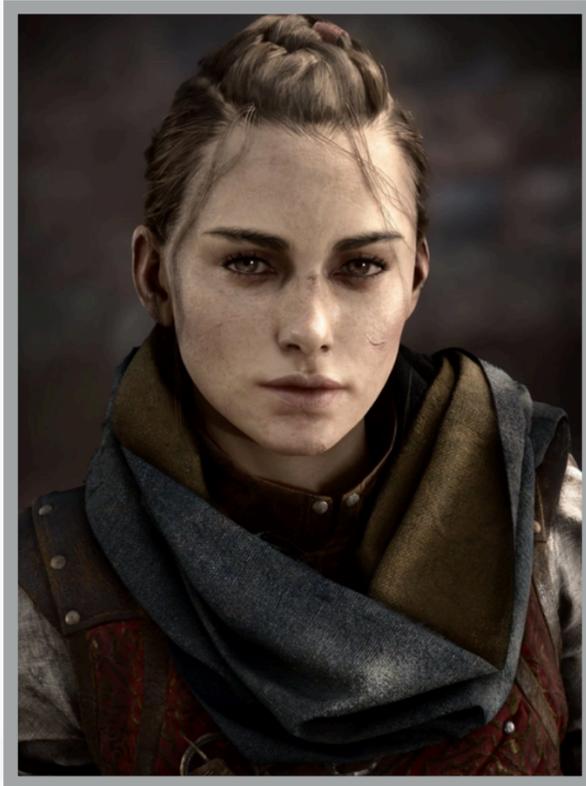
SYNOPSIS

Hunted by the soldiers of the Inquisition, Amicia de Rune, a teenager from a noble family, suddenly finds herself in the care of her little brother Hugo, a child suffering from an unknown illness and cut off from the outside world since his birth.

Together, they will learn to know and trust each other to search for a cure, in a world invaded by rats during the Black Death.



CHARACTERS



Amicia De Rune

Hugo's protector during the adventure



CHARACTERS



Hugo De Rune

5 yo, fragile, little knowledge of the world
Protected by Amicia during the adventure

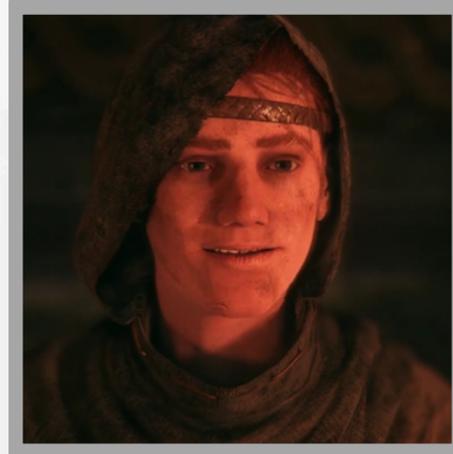


CHARACTERS - PARTNERS



Mélie

Arthur's sister
Competent thief



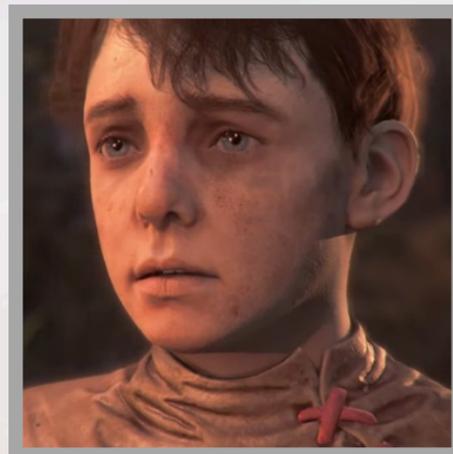
Arthur

Mélie's brother
Competent thief



Rodric

Son of a blacksmith
Robust fighter



Lucas

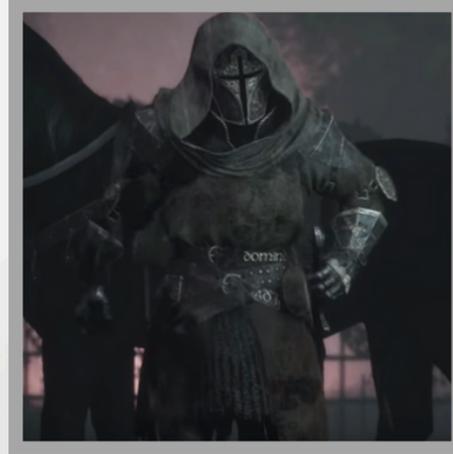
Apprentice of Laurentius
Master alchemy



CHARACTERS - RIVALRY



Vitalis Bénévent
Inquisition Leader
Wishes to capture
Hugo De Rune



Seigneur Nicholas
Captain of the
purple guard
Hunt to capture
Hugo De Rune



CHARACTERS - OTHERS



Robert De Rune
Father of Amicia &
Hugo
Retired knight



Béatrice De Rune
Mother of Amicia &
Hugo
Alchemist : seeks a
remedy for Hugo



NARRATIVE STRUCTURE

- Linear story
- Divided into 17 chapters
- With 3 large distinct parts



NARRATIVE STRUCTURE

Attack on the house

Capture of the castle

Hugo's run away

End of the game

Escape & wandering
of Amicia & Hugo
Meeting of the first
companions

Security period at the
castle and meeting
the last companions

Hugo's rescue and
final confrontation

7 chapters

6 chapters

4 chapters

Narrative episode focused on one or more characters,
accompanying Amicia in her adventures

AUDIO & VISUAL

- Lively cinematographic staging during the cutscenes.
- Contrast between dark danger zones and light safe zones.
- Very low camera during Hugo's game sequences creating a feeling of insignificance.
- Change in the role of rats.
- Use of stringed instruments reinforcing the suffering caused by rats.
- Highlighting the decor



THEME & MESSAGES

- Family link between Amicia & Hugo
- Fight against disease
- Potential sacrifice of a person for others



PROS & CONS

Pros :

- Relevance of the companions.
- The family message is well transliterated.
- The linearity of the game allows for a better pacing of events.

Cons :

- The powers related to the control of rats go beyond the reality established.
- Little presence of the Black Death.
- Little impact of the death of certain characters.



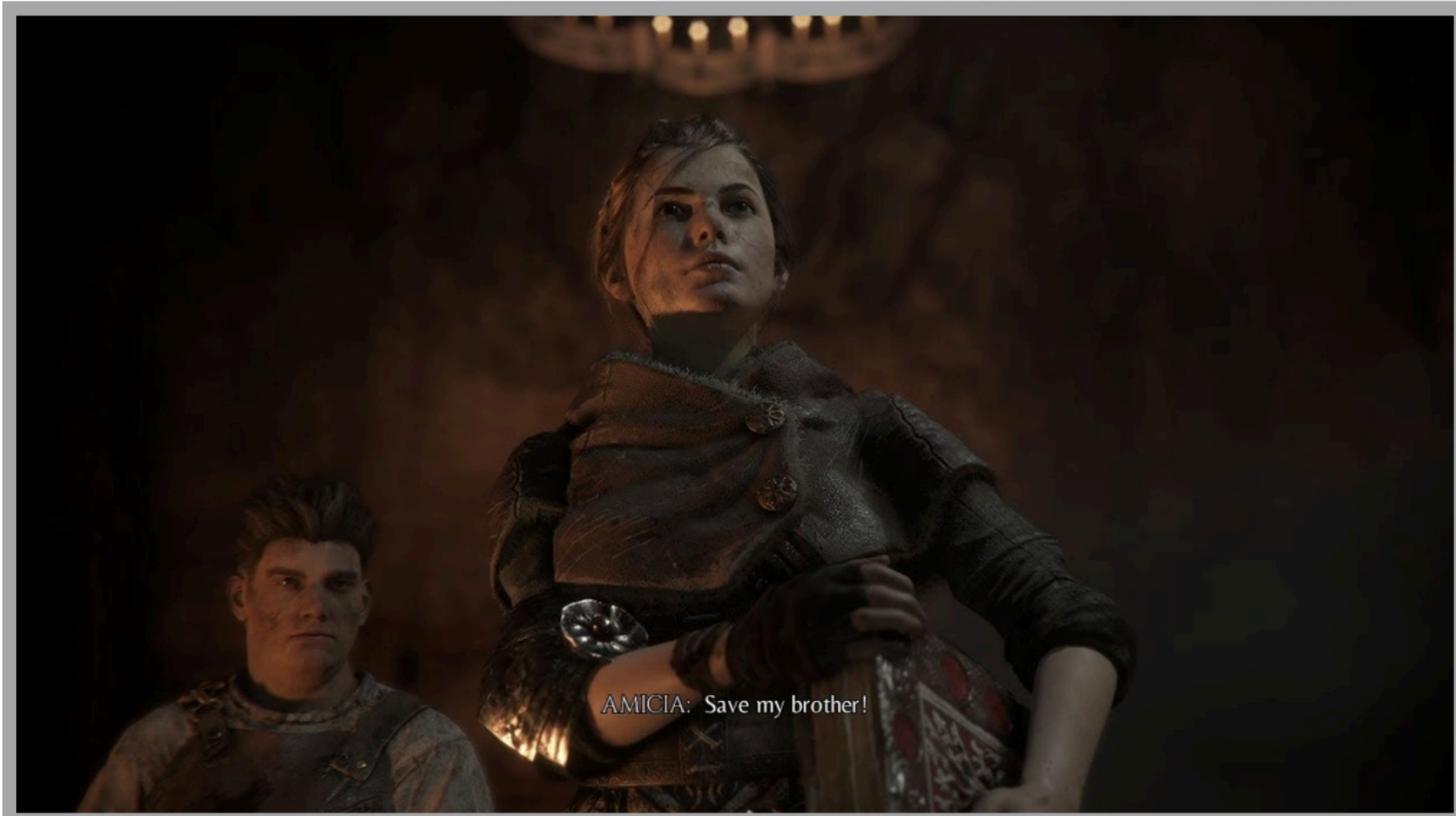


QUEST DESIGN - THE KNOWLEDGE KEY

A PLAGUE TALE
— INNOCENCE —

CONTEXT

After retrieving the Sanguinis Itinera from the university library, Amicia returns to Umbrage Castle accompanied by Rodric, a determined blacksmith who had been held prisoner by the Inquisition. She finds Lucas in the alchemy room and gives him the book, so he can analyze its contents.



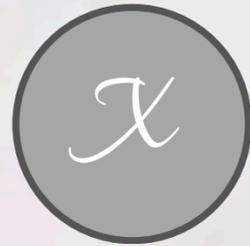
SUMMARY

The quest "The Knowledge Key" begins one day after obtaining the sacred book "Sanguinis Itinera", in Chapter 10. In autumn, at Umbrage Castle, Amicia reunites with Lucas, who is trying to unlock its secrets. He reveals to her that the book is encoded and that only a deciphering key will allow them to understand the Prima Macula and cure Hugo. Fortunately, he has managed to locate this key: it is in a grand library near an abandoned village.



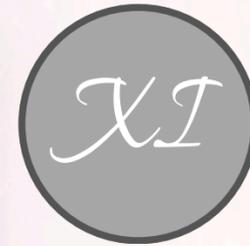
Chapter 9

In the Shadow of Ramparts



Chapter 10

The Way Of Roses



Chapter 11

Alive

Side Quest
The Knowledge Key



INTENTIONS

The intentions behind the creation of the quest "The Knowledge Key" are:

GAMEPLAY

- Accentuate the cooperation between Hugo and Amicia, at the beginning of the quest.
- Offer a survival gameplay sequence with Amicia, emphasizing resourcefulness and the player's ability to adapt in dangerous situations.

NARRATION

- Provide answers regarding the origin and function of the "Sanguinis Itinera".
- Show more of the impact of the catastrophe on the civilians.
- Strengthen the emotional attachment of the player to Hugo and Amicia.

QUEST SETTINGS

Quest Surroundings ⚠

- **Who gives the quest ?** Lucas
- **Where does it take place ?** Great Library of a nearby village to Umbrage Castle
- **Which characters are involved ?** Amicia and Hugo
- **Atmosphere of the location ?** An abandoned place, beginning to fall into ruins.
- **What time of the day ?** End of the afternoon

Gameplay mechanics highlighted ⚙

- **Beginning of the quest :** Cooperation between Amicia and Hugo, using each other's abilities to progress together.
- **Middle/End of the quest :** Use of environmental resources to survive and progress (leaving Amicia alone and temporarily disarming her equipment).

QUEST SETTINGS

Rewards

- **Decoding key** of the "Sanguinis Itinera".
- Information about the **origin of the "Sanguinis Itinera"** (creation, source, functioning).
- Informations about **Laurentius intentions** : to retrieve the decoding key to facilitate understanding the main points of the "Sanguinis Itinera".

Return

- Hugo's head **injury**
- Minor dip in **Lucas morale** (memories of Laurentius past)

QUEST DESCRIPTION

Arrival in the Village – Amicia and Hugo arrive in a ruined village in the late afternoon. She believes that this small exploration might help take their minds off recent events. As they approach the Great Library, they move forward, helping each other while chatting.

Hugo is eager to learn more about the contents of the book. Amicia tells him that she doesn't know the details but is certain it will help him heal quickly. They both also wonder about the history of this sacred book.

Narration

- Introductory Cutscene from the Umbrage Castle
- Context Setting
- Show the objective

Gameplay

- Village Entry
- Co-op Sequences face to obstacles (Environmental Interaction)

Dialogue/Theme

- Origin of the book
- Current emotional state of the characters

QUEST DESCRIPTION

In front of the Great Library – By arriving near the building, they notice that the main entrance is blocked by a collapse. While searching for another way in, they spot a door, but it is locked from the inside. Amicia then decides to let Hugo slip through to unlock the access.

Once unlocked, Amicia observes that the furniture inside has been overturned, likely to slow the rat invasion and provide protection at height. Moved by the villagers' fate, she expresses her empathy. Together, they explore the area, wondering where the deciphering key might be.

Narration

- Interactive cutscene (Camera Focus)
- Environmental Narration
- Telling the Despair of the Inhabitants in the Face of the Black Death (plague)

Gameplay

- Exploration & Environmental Interaction
- Unlocking Access to the Building (with Hugo)

Dialogue/Theme

- Impact of the Plague on the Location
- Empathy/Fear
- Objective Location

QUEST DESCRIPTION

Inside the Library – Hugo notices a deep hole in the floor, likely caused by the fall of a chandelier. Curious, he calls out to Amicia, but as he leans over, a tremor throws him off balance. He tries to grab onto her, but fails, and falls, taking part of his equipment with him.

The rats flood the area, forcing Amicia to find a way to reach him. As she explores the lower level, she discovers a hidden entrance leading even deeper. Intrigued, she decides to venture inside.

Narration

- Passive Cutscene
- Disruptive Element/Unexpected Event
- Game Feel: Loss of the player's current equipment
- Discovery of a Secret Environment

Gameplay

- Game Feel: Light movements in Amicia's Controller
- Arrival of the rats
- Progressing without your equipment
- Resource management found along the way

Dialogue/Theme

- Discovery of a cryptic location
- Anxiety
- Fear of the unknown

QUEST DESCRIPTION

Secret Corridors – The place is infested with rats: so that's here the tremor occurred. In a narrow hallway, Amicia makes her way through and finally spots Hugo, lying up high, surrounded by rodents.

She rushes to him and tries to wake him up. Miraculously, he opens his eyes and asks if it's really her. Reassuringly, Amicia confirms, but then notices his head injury. She uses a piece of fabric from the chandelier to bandage it and retrieves her equipment.

Once Hugo is back on his feet, they resume their search for the deciphering key.

Narration

- Interactive Cutscene
- Finding Hugo / Worry
- Game Feel: Amicia's running toward to Hugo, unconscious

Gameplay

- Game Feel: Light movements in Amicia's Controller
- Chase sequence
- Return to cooperative phase
- Recovering the equipment

Dialogue/Theme

- Hugo's health condition
- Objective location

QUEST DESCRIPTION

In Front of the Annex – They quickly arrive at a closed door leading to a hidden archive room, filled with various rare or sacred books belonging to the owner of the place.

Not far from there, they spot a rat-devoured corpse, which appears to be the owner's. Everything suggests that he was trying to take refuge in this room to escape the disaster.

Fortunately, they find the key on him, the one needed to open the door. Amicia hands it to Hugo, giving him the honor of unlocking it to help take his mind off his recent fall.

Narration

- Environmental Narration
- Tell what happened to the owner of this place

Gameplay

- Exploration/Discovery of an hidden area
- Use of equipment & resources

Dialogue/Theme

- Search for the objective in this area
- Curiosity / Discovery
- Help Hugo to forget his fall

QUEST DESCRIPTION

Secret Annex – By entering in the room, they are surprised by its good condition and the warm atmosphere who radiates. Surprisingly spared from the catastrophe, it provides some comfort to Amicia and Hugo after their recent fright.

Amicia immediately resumes her search and discovers in the drawer of a desk various alchemist documents. Among them, writings detail the history of the Sanguinis Itinera: its creator, its purpose, its preservation over time, and its functioning.

Narration

- Environmental Narration: Changing atmosphere
- Interest Points: Find back their innocence, during a moment of respite

Gameplay

- Exploration/Discovery of an hidden area
- Interest Points : Interaction between the two characters (key areas)

Dialogue/Theme

- Search for the objective in this area
- Curiosity / Discovery
- Help Hugo to forget his fall

QUEST DESCRIPTION

Secret Annex (Discovery) – Amicia finds a letter addressed to Laurentius, in which the author offers to give him the decoding key to the sacred book, carefully guarded by his family for generations.

Laurentius had convinced him to hand over the key to slow the progression of the Macula in a young noble. The owner of the place seemed to be connected to the "Sanguinis Itinera", explaining why he kept it hidden.

Amicia and Hugo take this piece of paper and the documents before heading back to the Umbrage Castle.

Narration

- Passive Cutscene
- Informations discovery
- Understanding the initial situation

Dialogue/Theme

- Decoding key
- Discovery/Clarity

QUEST DESCRIPTION

End Mission – Amicia and Hugo find Lucas in his makeshift laboratory at the Umbrage Castle. Concerned about Hugo's condition, Lucas decides to examine him. Amicia briefly explains what happened and then hands over the decoding key and the documents found in the secret archive room of the Great Library.

She also mentions a letter addressed to Laurentius, which she gives to him as well. A hint of sadness and nostalgia can be heard in Lucas's voice when he thanks her for this information. With these discoveries, Lucas is now able to decipher the Sanguinis Itinera content and hopes to cure Hugo afterwards.

Narration

- Passive Cutscene
- Strengthening of relationships between the different characters

Gameplay

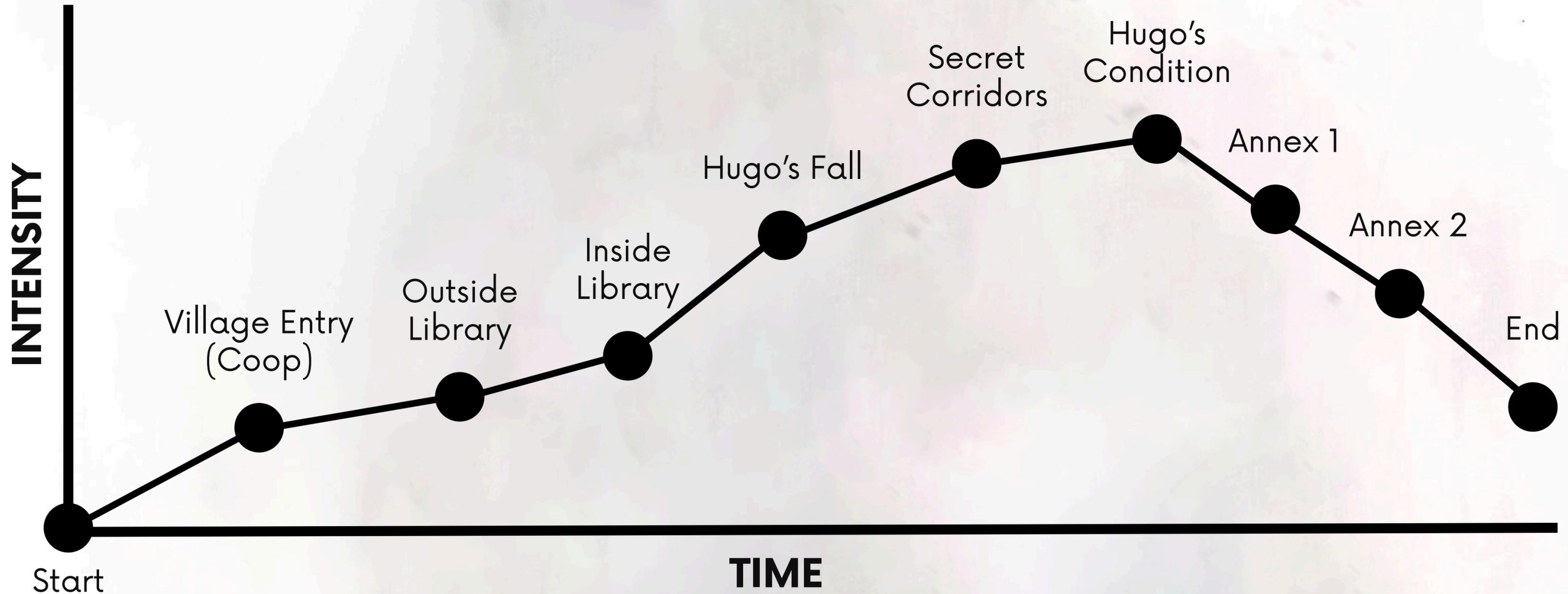
- Objective achieved: end of the quest

Dialogue/Theme

- Take care of Hugo
- Sadness/Bereavement
- Strength/Hope

PACING

The pace of the quest "The Knowledge Key" would be as follows:



DIALOGUE

An example of dialogue has been written for the first few minutes of the quest, during which the relationship between Amicia and Hugo strengthens through the cooperation. Amicia juggles between focusing on the objective, watching over Hugo, and giving him moments of freedom whenever possible. Since the game doesn't offer dialogue choices, some exploration sequences provide interactive points of interest that trigger specific exchanges. Through Hugo's candid questions, Amicia explains with her own words the importance of the "Sanguinis Itinera" in her Hugo's healing quest.



Amicia De Rune



Hugo De Rune



AREA DESCRIPTION

A PLAGUE TALE
— INNOCENCE —

INTENTIONS

The intentions behind the creation of the elements dedicated to the quest "The Knowledge Key" are :

ABANDONED VILLAGE

- Living areas, suddenly abandoned
- Exploration: sense of loneliness
- Environmental storytelling (following the rat attack)
- Small and medium-sized spaces

GREAT LIBRARY

- Fake refuge from the rats
- Progression alone inside the building
- Environmental storytelling (story of the "Sanguinis Itinera" & the owner of the premises in the basement)
- Small and medium-sized spaces
- Dilapidated place that hid a basement inaccessible to the public

VILLAGE DESCRIPTION

The village stretches across a plain bordered by lush green hills, trees, and bushes. At its entrance, fallow fields bear witness to former wheat crops. The place feels frozen in time, as if all life had ceased since the first appearance of the rats, plunging the inhabitants into despair.

The quest "The Knowledge Key" begins with the arrival of Amicia and Hugo in a village, sent by Lucas to find the decoding key. In this first part, the player must reach a point of interest located at the top of a hill, navigating through exploration and puzzle-solving phases. The visual style of the location reflects the typical architecture of the other villages in the game, both in graphical elements (assets) and spatial layout.



Space Management (Level Design) & Level Pacing
Chapter 2 – The Strangers

VILLAGE DESCRIPTION

The village is divided into several zones: narrow alleys, enclosed homes, and artisan workshops placed along the path, where the player must solve puzzles using their sling and/or Hugo to progress. Small spaces provide pauses in the journey toward the Great Library perched on the hill. From the moment they arrive, the player can see their main objective (macro landmark), helping with navigation through the level.

These different areas also tell the story of the inhabitants' shock at the sudden emergence of the rats. For example, one can observe corpses littering the ground or commerce activities abruptly halted. Throughout their progression, the player can find resources that may allow them to upgrade their equipment, a workbench located toward the end of the village, and a collectible in a hidden area.



Space Management (Level Design) & Level Pacing
Chapter 2 – The Strangers

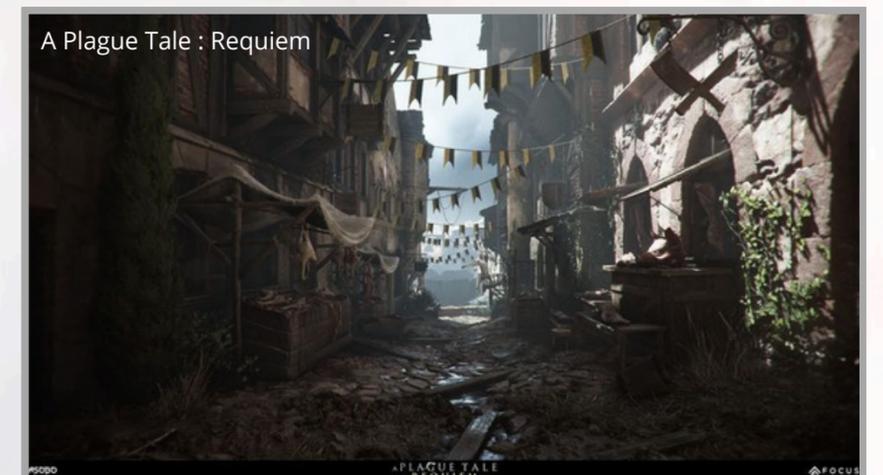
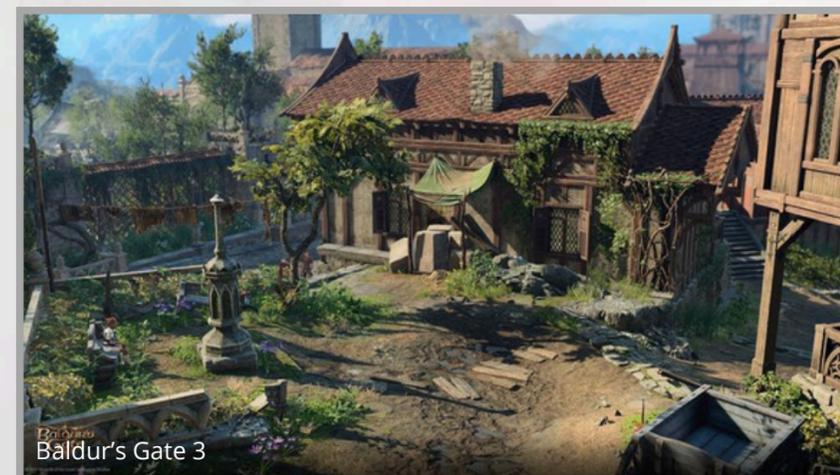
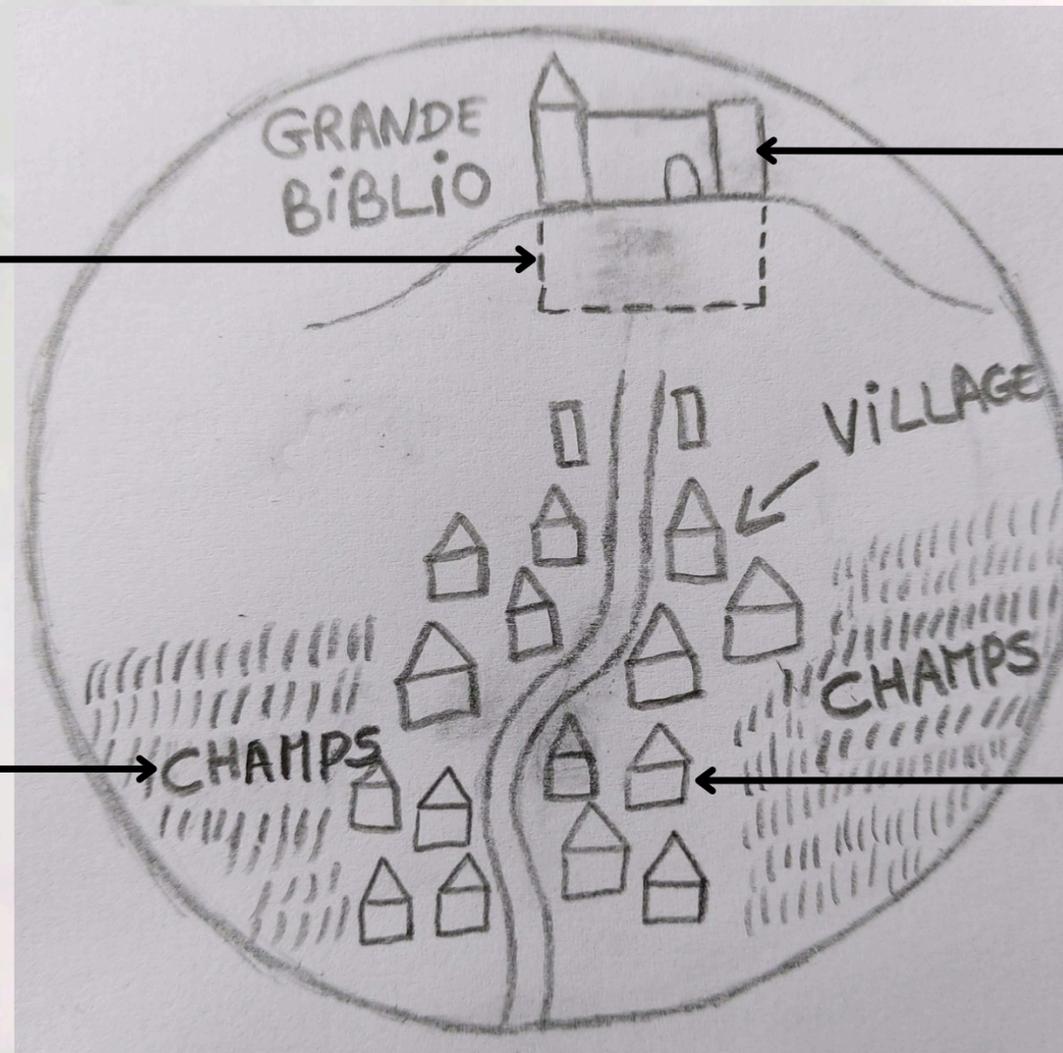
VILLAGE DESCRIPTION

These areas also convey the inhabitants' shock at the sudden emergence of the rats: corpses scattered on the ground, shops abruptly abandoned... Throughout their journey, the player can find resources to upgrade their equipment, a workbench near the end of the village, and a collectible hidden in a secret area.

The level takes place in the late afternoon, enhancing the atmosphere of a peaceful village while suggesting to the player the urgency to act before nightfall. The violin notes convey the characters' emotional emptiness during their journey, while also evoking the warmth and life that once animated the village before the rat attack.



ENVIRONMENT REFERENCES



GREAT LIBRARY

The Great Library is a medium-sized building owned by a noble heir, containing various books accessible to the public on its upper floors. It is located at the top of a small hill, near a village abandoned since the beginning of the plague.

- Location: At the top of a hill, near an abandoned village

This stone-walled building is highlighted by its geographic position relative to the village. It has suffered some structural damage (collapsed beams, walls, decorations) due to the rat attacks since the beginning of the plague.



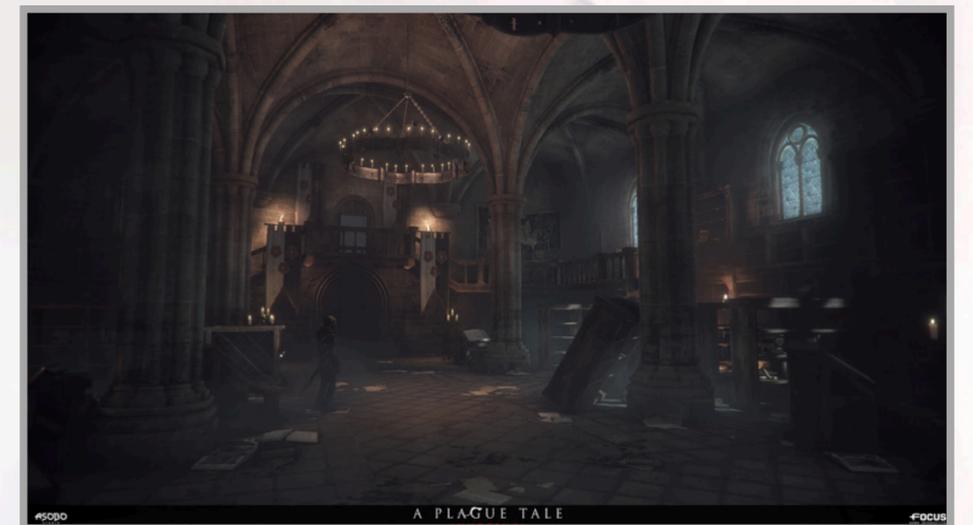
GREAT LIBRARY DESCRIPTION

The level continues in the Great Library, built in the Romanesque style. It too was affected by the rat attack: collapses have weakened the structure (beams, interior walls), and visible damage includes fallen chandeliers that pierced the floor of the main hall and broken furniture. The site served as an improvised shelter, as shown by overturned furniture used to slow the rats, barricaded doors, and objects placed at height for protection. Torch anchor points are also present on the walls.

Completely desperate and trapped by the rat attack, the few survivors took refuge in the Great Library, believing they would be safe there. But when the rats burst from the ground, cracking through the floorboards, they were caught off guard and died in horrific agony, unable to react.



Exterior Materials and Overall Appearance of the Location



Rooms Appearance + Assets
Chapter 10 – The Path of Roses

GREAT LIBRARY DESCRIPTION

The building is divided into two levels:

- The publicly accessible ground floor contains corridors, a main hall, and two medium-sized rooms — one for archives and one for an office belonging to the owner of the premises;
- The hidden basement, accessible through a secret passage in the office room, contains a naturally rocky area, corridors, four archive rooms, and a large locked collection hall filled with shelves of rare books and a cluttered desk at the far end of the room.

There is a distinct atmosphere between the two floors. The ground floor appeared welcoming in its layout, lighting, and colors, while the basement felt darker, more unsettling and oppressive due to the size of the rooms, the lighting, and the color palette.



Rooms Appearance + Assets
Chapter 10 – The Path of Roses



Space Management (Level Design),
Atmosphere of the Location
Chapter 10 – The Path of Roses

GREAT LIBRARY DESCRIPTION

On the ground floor, the corridors are wide but short. The spacious main hall features columns, overturned shelves, and holes in the floor caused by fallen chandeliers and the emergence of rats. The two medium-sized rooms contain broken tables, shelves, and scattered piles of books. A small archive room near the office stores the volumes, while the office itself houses a puzzle element leading to the secret basement.

In the basement, the corridors are narrow but long, some pierced with rat holes. A rocky area, illuminated by a skylight, guides the player to a staircase leading to another corridor. The four medium-sized archive rooms host puzzle sequences involving rats. Finally, a large locked room, bathed in natural light, serves as the collection hall. It contains shelves filled with rare books and a desk holding key documents (letters, information about the Sanguinis Itinera, decoding key).



Space Management (Level Design),
Atmosphere of the Location
Chapter 10 – The Path of Roses

GREAT LIBRARY DESCRIPTION

It is important to note that the corpse of the owner lies in front of the collection room's door, holding the key to the door. Using this key allows access to the room.

Moreover, throughout their progression on this floor, the player can find resources that may allow them to upgrade their equipment, as well as a workbench located just before the large collection room.

During the sequence where Amicia searches for Hugo, violin notes will be used to build tension and induce stress in the player. Once Amicia finds Hugo, the pace will soften to reassure and calm the player in this situation.

