

Customised Angel

Level Design Document

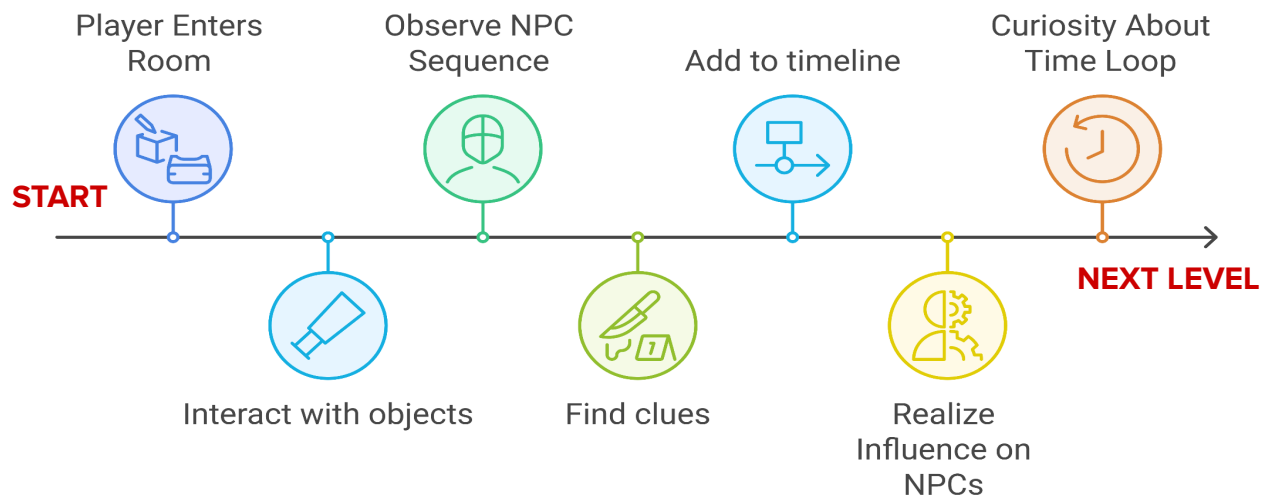
Game Design Approach:

This is a time-loop game, each level must provide clues, interactions, and NPC behaviors that reinforce the storyline. The main tasks include establishing the tutorial level, creating engaging layouts, refining player interactions, and aligning with the game's mechanics and narrative style.

Flow of Game Levels:

Tutorial Level (Initial Loop):

- **Objective:** Introduce players to the core mechanics (telescope, radio, clock) and time-loop concept without overwhelming them.
- **Design:** A simplified layout of the player's room with a few initial interactable props. The player should observe a single, straightforward sequence involving Melanie and one other NPC, allowing them to learn clue-gathering through the telescope and radio.
- **Progression:** Gradual introduction of the telescope mechanic, leading to players realizing they might influence NPC actions.
- **Clues:** Limited clues to avoid overloading, yet compelling enough to prompt curiosity about the loop mechanics.



Progressive Levels (Middle Loops):

- **Objective:** Increase the complexity of interactions, introduce more NPC routines, and reveal deeper narrative layers.
- **Design:** A detailed layout that involves multiple rooms visible from the telescope. Each NPC has a set schedule, and players should use timing to observe different NPC actions. Environmental cues hint at NPC routines.
- **Progression:** Players must combine clues from various loops and strategically use the telephone to unlock more complex interactions.
- **Clues:** A mix of visual and audio clues scattered throughout NPC schedules, with interactions that encourage replaying the loop to capture missed details.

Final Level (Climactic Loop):

- **Objective:** Provide a high-stakes scenario where players apply all learned mechanics to prevent Melanie's death definitively.
- **Design:** The layout remains the same, but player actions and schedules should directly impact the outcome. Key elements must come together in the timeline, pushing players to synthesize previous clues.
- **Progression:** Time-sensitive interactions and limited observation windows make this level challenging, requiring quick decision-making.
- **Clues:** All clues are finally available; players must solve the mystery by correctly piecing together the timeline to reach the game's true ending.

The NPC's Ideas:

NPC 1: The Estranged Ex-Boyfriend

Description: A man in his early 30s, his room is filled with items from his past relationship with Melanie—love letters, concert tickets, and framed photos that are torn or scratched out. The rest of his apartment is barren, with only a few personal belongings scattered around, giving an impression of a life in disarray after their breakup.

Backstory: He and Melanie had a tumultuous relationship that ended when she decided to move on. He didn't take it well, feeling betrayed and abandoned, and has since been

unable to let go. He blames Melanie for his unhappiness, convinced she's the reason he's been unable to move forward.

Hints and Clues:

- **Old Texts and Voicemails:** Messages in which he repeatedly tries to contact Melanie, filled with emotional pleas and, eventually, frustration.
- **Actions:** He's often seen pacing around his room or staring at her window, and occasionally lashes out at objects, indicating suppressed rage.

Motive: He believes Melanie ruined his life and, filled with bitterness, sees hurting her as the only way to regain control.

NPC 2: The Envious Younger Neighbor

Description: A young woman in her mid-20s, her apartment is well-kept but sparse, with a few luxury items on display that seem out of place in an otherwise modest space. She often has fashion magazines open to pages featuring expensive clothing and makeup, and she keeps a notebook with notes on Melanie's style and routine.

Backstory: She has watched Melanie's life closely, feeling envious of her looks, relationships, and seemingly effortless charm. Over time, this envy has grown darker, turning into a deep resentment. She's started seeing Melanie as someone who stands in her way, blaming her for her own perceived inadequacies.

Hints and Clues:

- **Mimicry:** Photos and notes on Melanie's habits, clothes, and routines. Her journal has angry scribbles comparing herself to Melanie.
- **Actions:** She sometimes practices talking to herself in the mirror, copying Melanie's mannerisms or criticizing her appearance.

Motive: She wants to eliminate what she sees as her "competition" and prove she's just as good, if not better, than Melanie.

NPC 3: The Resentful Landlord

Description: A weary middle-aged man in his 40s, the building's landlord lives in a cluttered, neglected apartment filled with repair tools, overdue rent notices, and piles of tenant complaints. His space is scattered with remnants of an old relationship—a broken photo frame with half a woman's face, abandoned jewelry, and a few pieces of women's clothing, hinting at a past that's left him bitter and emotionally drained.

Backstory: Once engaged, the landlord's relationship ended badly, leaving him disillusioned and isolated. Now, he hides behind his work, using it as a distraction. Melanie, however, has been a constant thorn in his side, with her frequent complaints and demands for maintenance. Her assertiveness reminds him of his lost partner, stirring up old wounds and amplifying his resentment. She has come to symbolize the very failures and frustrations he's trying to forget.

Hints and Clues:

- **Overdue Notices and Torn Photo:** Disorganized bills and complaints are piled up, some with Melanie's name circled or angrily underlined, and a broken frame with half of a woman's face suggests unresolved feelings.
- **Actions:** He's often seen muttering about "ungrateful tenants," angrily slamming doors, or trashing items in his room as if trying to rid himself of painful memories.

Motive: His resentment has grown into a deep-seated desire to be rid of Melanie, whom he blames for his ongoing stress and emotional turmoil.

Brief of Tutorial Level:

Step 1: Introduction to the Interface

- **Objective:** Familiarize the player with basic controls and HUD elements.
- **Action:** A brief on-screen message appears, introducing the player to the first-person perspective, basic camera control, and interaction keys (e.g., clicking to interact with objects).
- **Guidance:** A highlight appears around the telescope, prompting the player to interact with it.

Step 2: Using the Telescope for Visual Clues

- **Objective:** Teach the player how to observe NPCs and identify visual clues.
- **Action:** After interacting with the telescope, the player sees an NPC through the lens, carrying out a routine (e.g., a neighbor pacing by the window and setting down an object).
- **Guidance:** A prompt instructs the player to zoom in on the NPC to capture this as a clue. When captured, the clue is added to the timeline UI.

Step 3: Introducing the Timeline Mechanic

- **Objective:** Show the player how gathered clues populate the timeline and help track NPC activities.
- **Action:** A tutorial message appears, explaining the timeline UI, where visual and audio clues are sorted by time and NPC actions.
- **Guidance:** The player is prompted to open the timeline to see their first recorded clue, with a message suggesting they observe additional actions to build a complete timeline.

Step 4: Using the Radio/Audio Clues

- **Objective:** Introduce sound-based clues by having the player eavesdrop on NPC conversations.
- **Action:** A prompt highlights the radio, instructing the player to listen to an NPC conversation. The player hears a snippet indicating possible tension or conflict, capturing this as an audio clue.
- **Guidance:** The audio clue is added to the timeline, and a message encourages the player to use both the telescope and radio to observe NPCs throughout the loop.

Step 5: Monitoring NPC Schedules and Timed Events

- **Objective:** Teach players to recognize NPC routines and time-sensitive events.
- **Action:** As the player continues observing, another NPC action appears at a specific time (e.g., the landlord is seen pacing angrily). A timer on the HUD helps players track events in real-time.
- **Guidance:** The game explains that NPCs follow routines based on the timer, and the player must learn these patterns to solve the mystery.

Step 6: Completing the Tutorial

- **Objective:** Solidify the player's understanding of clue gathering and timeline tracking.
- **Action:** The tutorial prompts the player to piece together a simple sequence of events by observing a few more NPCs. A message encourages them to explore freely before the loop resets.
- **Guidance:** After gathering a set number of clues, the player is notified that they have completed the tutorial level, ready to start the game's main mystery.

By the end of the tutorial, the player understands the basics of using the telescope and radio, tracking clues on the timeline, and observing NPC schedules. They are prepared to start piecing together clues to solve Melanie's mystery.

