

# Intro

This document will go through a narrative that deals with grief and the relationship between a mother, and child and how it changed after the mother's death. The story takes place back in the woods where they used to live before the mother got sick and they moved away to the city. Now the player character returns to the woods where all the happy memories with their mother were left behind. In hopes to reconnect with her for who she was and remember the times they spent among the trees.

**Mother** - Only shown in pictures, with her face out of focus until the very ending of the game. The character can't remember their mother's face which is shown in-game by having the mother's face blurred out. She is the reason the player character is in the woods since she wants to reconnect with the memories of her dead mom. The Mother is the person who held the family together and the most important person in the player character's life and with her gone the player character is left fractured.

*//(We can't see her face because the character can't remember what she looks like and instead remembers small things about her.)*

**Child(Player)** - The main character who is trying to come to terms with reality after losing their mother. Going back to the woods to escape what has happened and instead try to rebuild the happy memories they shared with their mother. When the mother got sick they weren't there for her and never had the courage to say goodbye to her when she was still alive. So the player character is left with an empty space in their life and wants to stay in the happy place inside the woods. Now that they are here they go on a journey to connect with reality and the memories of their mother.

*//(The child starts off happy and upbeat but slowly descends into sadness the more memories you visit amongst the woods ending it all with them forgiving themselves.)*

- The child is the main character and has many dialogues with themselves amongst the trees, reminiscing about how good things were and how happy they felt living here in the woods with their mother and father.

- Later in the game the character talks to the memories left behind by their mother looking at photos or standing in places they used to visit talking about how things are messed up and wrong now. They feel invisible and they are sorry they weren't a better child. The character is going through rough emotions and is in the beginning just trying to latch onto old memories but later has to face the reality of the situation and deal with their trauma.
- The character monologues with themselves to enforce the feeling of loneliness and the concept of living in the past with their good memories.

**The Father** - The father is a background character we only see in photos or hear in passing as a helpful voice in the tutorials, telling the player character how to build fishing rods, build houses, and so on. His role in the game is not the focus since what the player character is looking for is the connection they lost with their dead mom but he is still a part of the happy memories that they share in the woods.

- The Father is never in the focus of the story but is a part of the old memories, he is still alive.

**Photos** - The Photos represent the old memories the character had with their mom and dad, they represent something that can't be had anymore, something lost. We start the game by digging them up and end the game by taking them with us out of the woods.

- The photos will be locations in the woods that the player has to find as they play the game. Small hints are given by the **player character** such as *"Fishing with dad, I remember us going to this relaxing spot by the river together just fishing and listening to the woods."* Or *"A picture of their mother cooking in the kitchen prompts you to build that wing of the house"*

**The House** - The house is one of the characters in the game. It represents the escape from reality, a house full of memories and past happiness, and a dream that the player character is trying to rebuild.

## **Act 1 - Memories.**

*“The game begins with a monologue about the forest, the good times, mom always smiling, and the family always busy with something new. And now the player character is returning alone to the woods, where the memories of mom live”*

Start of the game the character returns to the woods standing outside the old house  
(House is now in disrepair and has to be fixed up).

The character is trying to **rebuild the old home** they used to live in with their mom and dad to reconnect to the old days and reminisce in a dialog to themselves about how **things used to be**.

*(This is the reason why the player character is building more wings to the house; they want everything back to the way it used to be. Their character is trying to escape reality to live happily in the woods.)*

Walking around the woods the character monologues to themselves that they will find happiness here again, seeing the woods as the one place where they were **happy** with their mom. *(This happiness won't last, the same happiness can't be found without their mom).*

As the character is walking through the woods they will reminisce about their parents and the time they spent in the woods, Referring to their parent's deeds and words having their mother and father as inspiration for why we can craft so many things and longing memories we want to stay with.

### **Example**

*(Building the kitchen will make the character talk about their mother's cooking and how the smell used to fill the house.*

*(Building a fishing rod makes them remember their father and how he used to take them camping or as he used to call it “Surviving” in the woods).*

When you start building your home you start talking aloud to yourself about your old memories of your mom and dad, remembering a **box of photos** left buried somewhere in the ground outside.

Digging up the box and opening it the character sets out to visit the locations in the **photos** in order from oldest to newest to reconnect to their past and the times when their mother was still alive.

*//(The later pictures show the mother sicker and sicker giving the character and player some clue to the fate of the mother but still leaving it a mystery of how she died, the older pictures will also be used later on to grant us some closure to our journey where we have to accept what has happened.)*

These photos will be of locations and activities that the mother and the player character used to perform in the woods that you want to revisit/relive, (they can be **actions** (fishing, chopping wood) or **areas** (large trees, water tower) or things your parents used to do at home (gardening and cooking)

*(Many of these photos represent times you spent with your mother and redoing all the activities you used to do in a way means that you are connecting with her again.)*

## **Act 2 - Missing a mother.**

After visiting some of these places you are left with pictures of you and your mom together doing some activity in the woods but you **can't see her face** in the pictures. *(This is to indicate that the player character hasn't accepted what has happened).*

After making their way there the character starts reminiscing about their mom asking why she had to go and that they are sorry they never said goodbye to her and then **breaks down** in tears. In a teary voice, they start talking about how they miss her and wondering where she went? Wishing she was still here since things aren't the same anymore when she isn't around.

They start blaming themselves and if only they did a better job **repairing the house** and being a better person they could have somehow gotten close to her and the happiness they once felt here.

The player character yells out that things are even worse now when she is gone and how they feel like they are invisible at home and have nowhere else to go.

The character starts talking about how they can't even remember her face anymore and wonder why their mother had to leave.

*//(A silence takes over the forest).*

At this point, the silence is broken as we hear a noise behind us in the woods as the player character turns around. Looking into the forest they start hearing grunting bear noises as a **grizzly bear** appears amongst the trees behind them.

*(This will be the first time we meet the grizzly bear in the game and it's an introduction to the story. It now roams the woods).*

### **Act 3 - Where did you go?**

After the close encounter with the bear, you continue to visit more locations with your mom in them thinking there must be something left of her there waiting for you. following one photo you arrive at a **tree with a heart mark** but only one name in it, your **mom's name**, you mark your name in the other half and start thinking about your memories with her and how you still can't remember her. The player character starts crying that she must have died because they didn't notice anything was wrong in time, and that they just want her to return and promise they will be better this time.

Player character thinks they are terrible and maybe just have to look harder to reconnect to their mother in some way. The player character starts thinking that they just have to do a better job at fixing the house and if the house is repaired they will remember their mother somehow. Getting angry over that they did something wrong with the house.

### **Act 4 - I miss you.**

After looking for memories of their mom in many different locations the player character starts asking themselves why they can't remember her, they have tried so hard so why do bad things happen to them? it's unfair, they start getting to the photos of their **mom looking sick**, and they start losing hope thinking that nothing of her remains amongst the trees and how they **don't want to remember her as a**

**sick person** dying in a bed. As they continue to survive and do the things they used to love doing with their mom there is deeper meaning to the daily actions now.

*(Now the actions we do daily in the woods to survive have a deeper meaning and are connected to feelings and memories that the player character is grasping onto in desperation).*

**Act 5** - Goodbye mom.

### **ENDING**

When chasing some of the last photos of their mother trying to hold onto whatever is left of the happy memories and trying to remember her face the player character is starting to realize the truth of the situation. Their mother is gone, **the woods will never be the happy place that they remember**. Running out of pictures of their mom the player character returns to the tree they marked their name next to their mothers. This is the one place that connects them the most and it is here where the player character runs into the grizzly bear again. The **grizzly bear gives** chase as the player character runs away and crawls under a fence, the grizzly chasing after gets stuck in the fence and starts calling out in pain. Hesitating and unsure, the player character returns to **help the grizzly**. After saving it, the grizzly bear starts acting aggressive and is about to attack but is stopped when a cub starts calling out for their mother and the grizzly bear runs away to its child.

As the bears leave the player character is left **alone** and now understands that what they had doesn't exist anymore.

After the attack, the player character falls apart crying, missing their mom, and returns home *(screen fades to black)*. When waking up they look at the pictures now thrown out all over the bed and pick one up of their mom. Looking at it they are still **not able to see her face**, tears fall on the photo and the player character starts speaking out loud how much they miss her and want to see her again, that they are sorry that they didn't say goodbye and know that it's not their fault, they were just scared.

The character starts looking through the pictures that the player has gone through throughout the game and starts **hearing her mom talking to her through the pictures** (*these are just memories being heard inside the player character's head*).

Going through the pictures the player character reaches the part where their mother is getting **sicker**. We start hearing medical equipment and a weak voiced mother speaking to the player character as they cry over the pictures and tell their mom that they love her so very, very much, and miss them every day. as the screen fades to black. (*These are just memories and nothing supernatural*)

We now see the character **leaving the house** taking a final look around and closing the door leaving the woods with the box of photos in their arms monologuing that they will **never forget the times they had with their mom** and that it's okay that things can't go back to how they once were, these memories are a part of them and they will **never forget them or their mother**. As they promise to return to the woods once in a while to visit her.

Riding in a bus now the character reaches for the photo of their mom now stained by tears, but now **finally they can see their mom's face**.

**End**

### **Why this story?**

I believe this journey would fit the game's music, theme, and atmosphere. Having the player take this emotional journey through this beautiful forest filled with memories of a better time. Grief is a serious matter and I believe the atmosphere of this game leaves you sort of with your own thoughts as you play it and the story of the game should reflect this, a character running away to a place that used to make them happy left only with memories of a person they miss.

As a selling point, I think that a singleplayer oriented story is a great choice as well focusing more on the journey and emotions we try to invoke in the player as they play the game. Taking inspiration from games such as Journey and Last of Us where the gameplay fills the empty time between story beats and becomes a sort of therapy for the player.