



LUMA

LEVEL DESIGN DOCUMENT

APPENDIX 2

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1. INTRODUCTION

1.1. PURPOSE OF THE DOCUMENT

This document details the structure of Luma's level design, providing the rest of the team with the information needed to develop tutorials, combat encounters, mechanics, and the placement and function of NPCs and enemies in each level.

1.2. RELATION TO THE GDD

This document complements the Game Design Document (GDD), specifying how the levels reinforce the story, the mechanics, and the player's experience.

1.3. DOCUMENT STRUCTURE

To define each level, I have followed a consistent template across all levels, ensuring clarity and understanding.

- Level objective
- Narrative and setting
- Structure and progression
- Challenges and mechanics
- NPCs and key events
- Items and collectibles
- Level flowchart
- Iteration and testing notes





2. GENERAL LEVEL DESIGN

2.1. PLAYER EXPLORATION AND PROGRESSION

Exploration in Luma is closely tied to the narrative and the character's emotional evolution. Each level reflects a distinct emotional phase following the loss, from the initial shock through the five stages of grief, with environments and mechanics designed to reinforce the player's progression.

Exploration.

- Levels 1 and 2 (Emotional limbo, shock): Exploration is open, allowing the player to move freely and discover the world. Enemies move erratically and darkly, representing the initial chaos and confusion.
- Level 3: There are five islands, each representing a different stage of grief. It is a succession of combat and narrative, with no exploration.

Progression. Progression is strictly linear.

2.2. CORE MECHANICS IN LEVELS 1 AND 2

In levels 1 and 2, exploration and combat are essential. Combat allows the player to collect light to ignite the lanterns.

2.3. CORE MECHANICS IN LEVEL 3

Use the mechanics learned throughout the game to defeat the bosses (Boss Rush).





3. INDIVIDUAL LEVELS

3.1. TUTORIAL: ISLAND OF MÅNE

The Island of Måne is the starting and closing point of the game, serving as the core of Luma's story. It represents her comfort zone and place of belonging. By the end of the game, the island becomes a space of acceptance and farewell.

This level introduces the player to the essential mechanics in a safe environment, while also closing Luma's emotional arc.

Måne is used as a hub throughout gameplay.

Level objective

- Introduce the mechanics smoothly without interrupting exploration too much.
- Make the tutorial feel organic by integrating it into the story.
- Show the first impression of the corruption as a threat, but without it being overwhelming.
- Introduce the shop and how it works.

Narrative and setting

A peaceful environment, but with small hints that something is wrong (for example, small corrupted plants), avoiding an excess of bright, shiny elements.

Structure and progression

The game begins inside Luma's house. In the top-right corner of the screen, contextual messages will appear showing the basic controls following a style similar to Fallout.

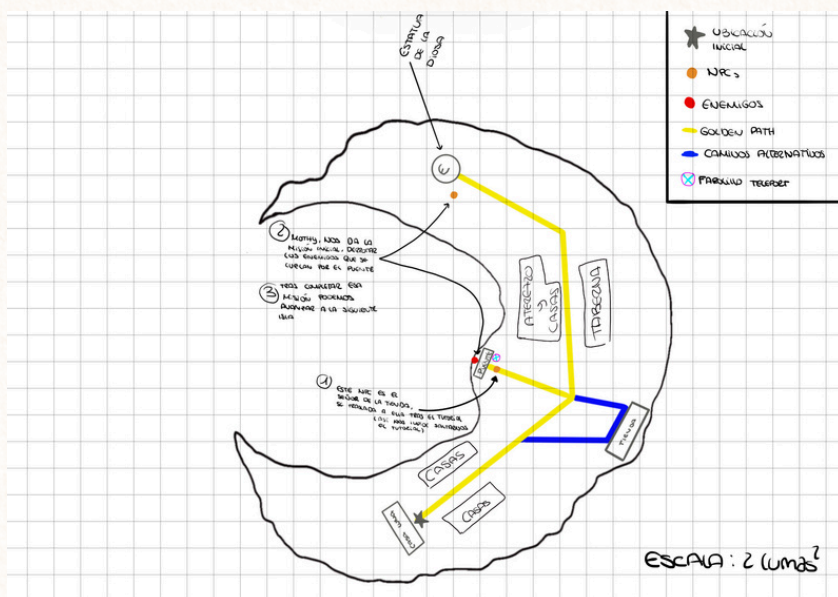


These messages ease the player's learning progression, appearing only when needed. For example:

- At the start: "Use WASD to move."
- When approaching an interactable object: "Press E to interact."
- Before a fight: "Left-click to attack."

This dynamic tutorial system guides the player through their first steps without breaking the pace of the game:

- As the player advances, they come across a wall, where they learn the climbing mechanic.
- Upon reaching the town square with the Statue of the Moon Goddess, the player meets Mothy. After a short dialogue, he gives them the light-collecting orb.
- After this event, a cutscene plays showing the shopkeeper, Pesetón, fleeing from an enemy. The player must rescue him, learning how combat works in the process.
- After rescuing him, he explains who he is and what a shopkeeper does. The player then learns how the shop works.
- The player returns to Mothy and lights the lantern beside him.
- After these events, a portal opens to the next level.



Challenges and mechanics

- Basic movement: walking, running.
- Jumping and gliding: a section with easy platforms.
- Environmental interaction: activating a mechanism to progress.
- First look at the corruption: an enemy combat encounter.
- Light collection.
- Lighting lanterns as a form of progress and narrative marker.

NPCs and key events

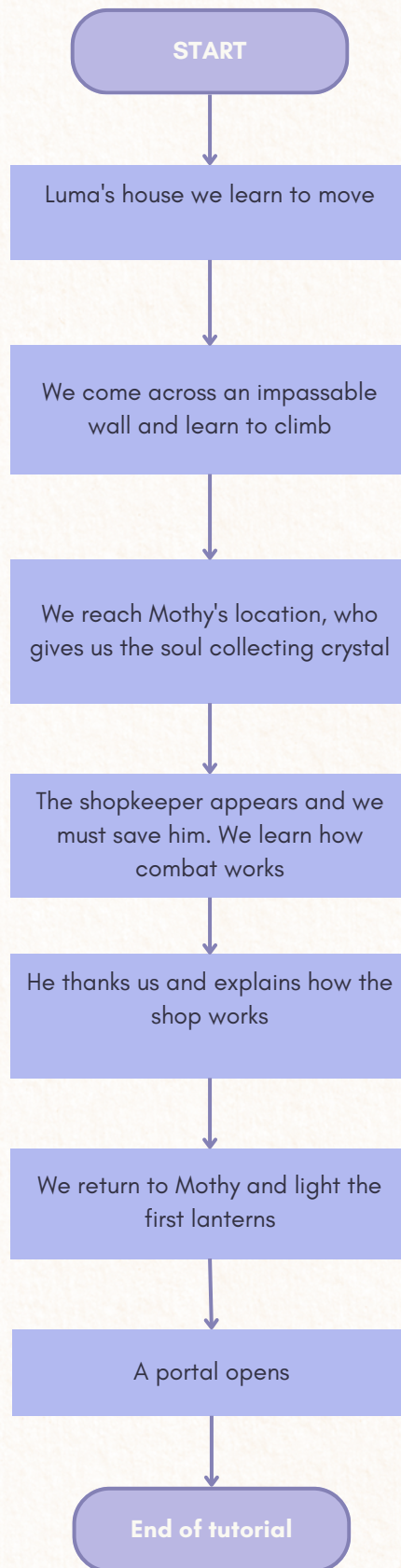
- **Mothy:** An elderly man who gives Luma the collecting crystal, assigns her the first world quest, and the combat tutorial.
- **Aracne:** The first enemy, who sneaks onto the island chasing the shopkeeper. This is where the player learns to fight.
- **Pesetón:** The shopkeeper.

Items and collectibles

- **Music Box:** A music box with the figure of the Goddess Mane slowly spinning at its center. Despite the passage of time, its melody still resonates softly.
- **Broken Mirror:** An ornate mirror with a beautiful, faded landscape on its back. The surface is cracked and shows a distorted reflection.



Diagrama de flujo del nivel



Iteration and testing notes

- The tutorial was confusing and long; players were walking around for several minutes without understanding anything.
- There were no clear signs of where to go, either at the start or after the conversation with Mothy.
- Navigation testing is needed to ensure players understand the layout of the island.
- Pacing evaluation is needed to balance teaching mechanics with free exploration.

3.2. LEVEL 1: ARCHIPELAGO OF HIRAETH

Level objective

- Light all the lanterns on the level.
- Defeat Nyx in the coliseum.

Narrative and setting

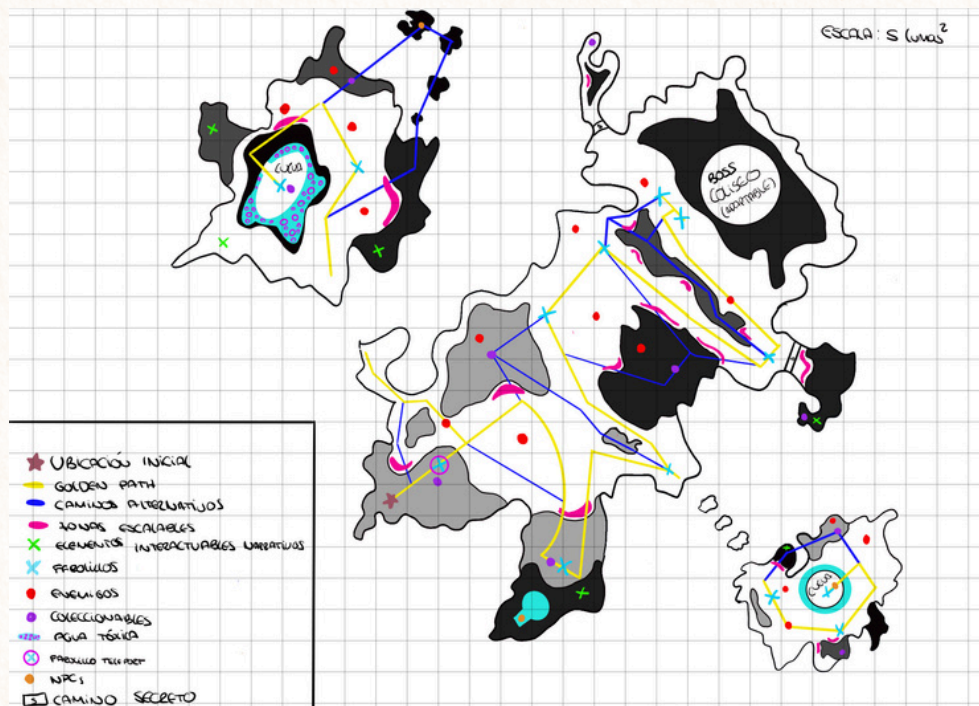
This archipelago contains three islands: the largest, Xesta, and two mid-sized islands of similar scale, Agape and Plate Glass. All of them are wild, covered in dense nature, and populated by simple enemies. As this is an ancient kingdom, many ruins are scattered across the location. The colors are light but carry a grayish undertone.

Narratively, this is the kingdom once ruled by Nyx. She never gave up her power, and this caused her entire people to be wiped out by the corruption. Only zombies of the former inhabitants remain, and they are the level's enemies.

Structure and progression

The structure is linear: the player must light all the lanterns on the level, then defeat the boss, who can only be accessed once the previous requirement is complete.





Challenges and mechanics

- Defeat enemies.
- Collect light.
- Light lanterns.
- Defeat Nyx.

Boss: Nyx

Nyx is an unreachable enemy; the only way to harm her is by killing her subjects, enemies she summons in hordes. The fight consists of three rounds:

- Summons the easiest enemy to defeat from level 1.
- Summons the mid-tier enemy from level 1.
- Summons the hardest enemy to defeat from level 1.

Each summoned horde consists of about 5-6 enemies who take turns attacking, keeping the fight manageable for the player. Once all three hordes are defeated, Nyx is defeated, opening the way to level 2.



NPCs and enemies

- Chapotea
- Maricoquette
- Lily
- Velia (enemy)
- Stingra (enemy)
- Tox (enemy)

Items and collectibles

- **Moon Flower:** A delicate flower that glows faintly under the moonlight, with soft silver petals.
- **Old Amber:** A fragment of aged amber with tiny bubbles trapped inside. Looking closely, you can see the remains of insects caught in its resin long ago.
- **Ceremonial Mask:** A carved mask. Its shadowed, solemn face is adorned with symbols that seem to come alive under the moonlight.
- **Mine's Magic Pickaxe:** An ancient pickaxe whose wooden handle glows faintly silver, as if imbued with arcane energy.
- **Love Letter:** An old letter written in faded ink, with clumsy but heartfelt handwriting. The words speak of an eternal love under the moonlight, promising to meet again someday.
- **Wildlife Necklace:** A delicate necklace made of natural beads and small feathers, designed to honor the connection between creatures and moonlight. It is said that those who wore it could sense the whispers of nature, a bond now nearly forgotten.
- **Carved Ruin:** A fragment of ancient stone with a carved face (to be based on the Nocturnus concept art).

Iteration and testing notes

- Check performance on Xesta.
- Make sure enemies don't attack the player from behind without warning (they should be audible as they approach).
- Make sure the set dressing isn't repetitive.



3.3. LEVEL 2: ISLANDS OF REI

This level is part of Luma's emotional shock stage.

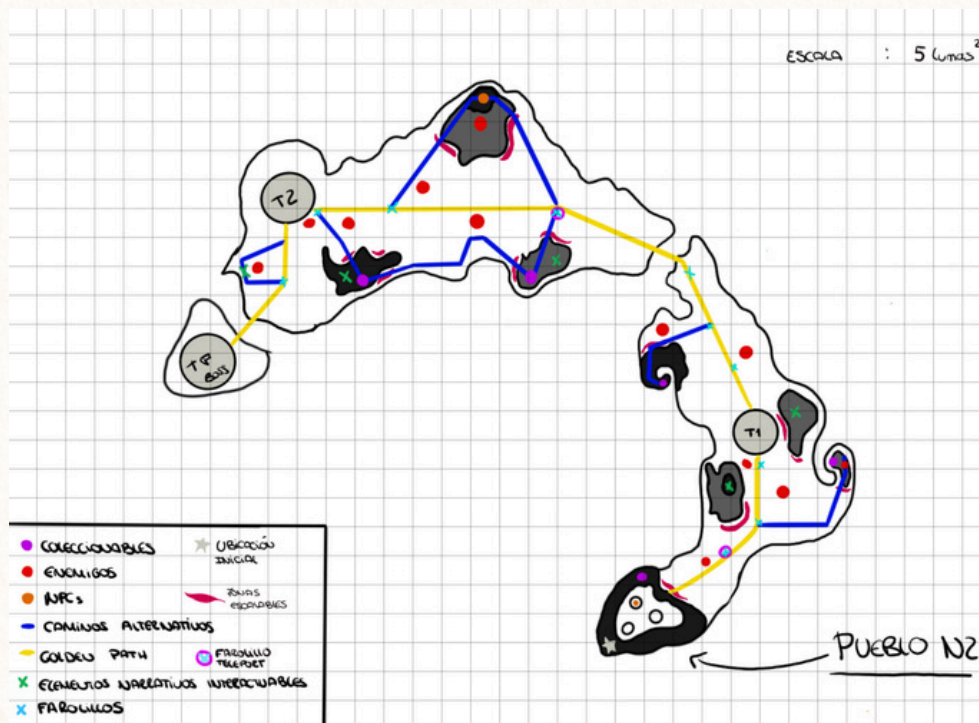
Level objective

- Complete the shrines.
- Defeat Karako.
- Rescue Shiny Paco.

Narrative and setting

The island is covered by a dense fog, symbolizing Luma's clouded mind. Exploring the shrines and torii gates reflects her path toward clarity and progress in her emotional process. Luma is trying to find clarity and accept her pain.

Structure and progression



1. Village of Rinbo

The level begins in the village of Rinbo, where we meet Saponcio, who explains the island's situation. Saponcio asks for our help rescuing his father, who has been kidnapped by the level's boss, Karako.

2. Cherry Blossom Forest Area

After leaving the village, the player reaches the cherry blossom forest area, initially unexplorable due to the dense fog. The player must complete the area's shrine to clear the fog and explore more easily.

3. Bamboo Forest Area

After completing the cherry blossom forest shrine, the player moves on to the bamboo forest. The fog mechanic repeats here: the player must complete another shrine to clear the fog and make exploration more comfortable.

4. Karako's Dojo

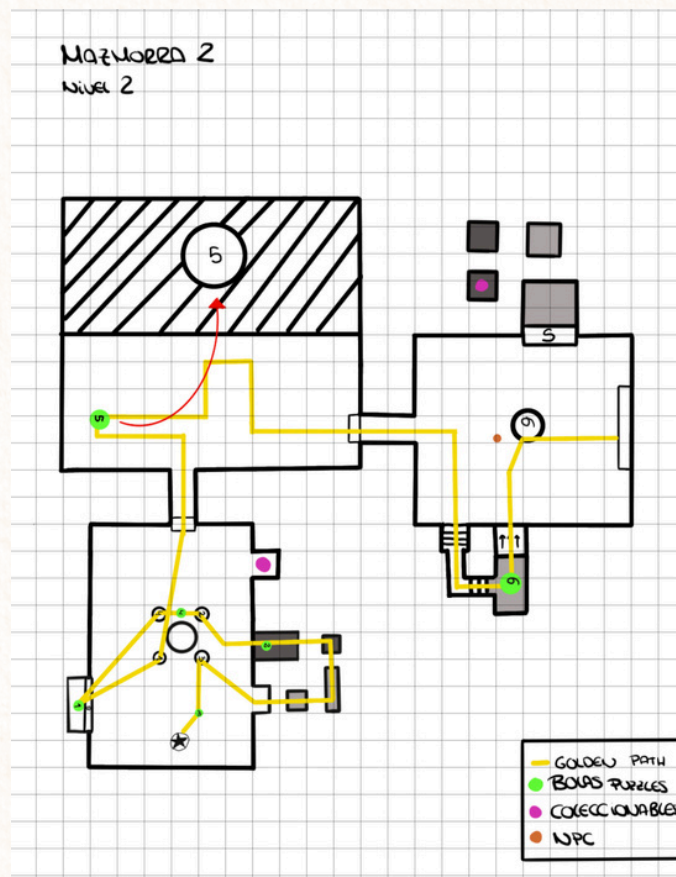
The final area of the level is a small island containing Karako's dojo, where the final battle takes place. After defeating Karako, the player is able to rescue Saponcio's father.

5. Transition to the next level

Once Saponcio's father has been rescued, the player can advance to the next level of the game.



Shrine 1 gameplay



Room 1:

The player must collect and place four balls with unique symbols on the correct pillars, using visual clues from the environment. Placing them in the right order opens the door to the next room.

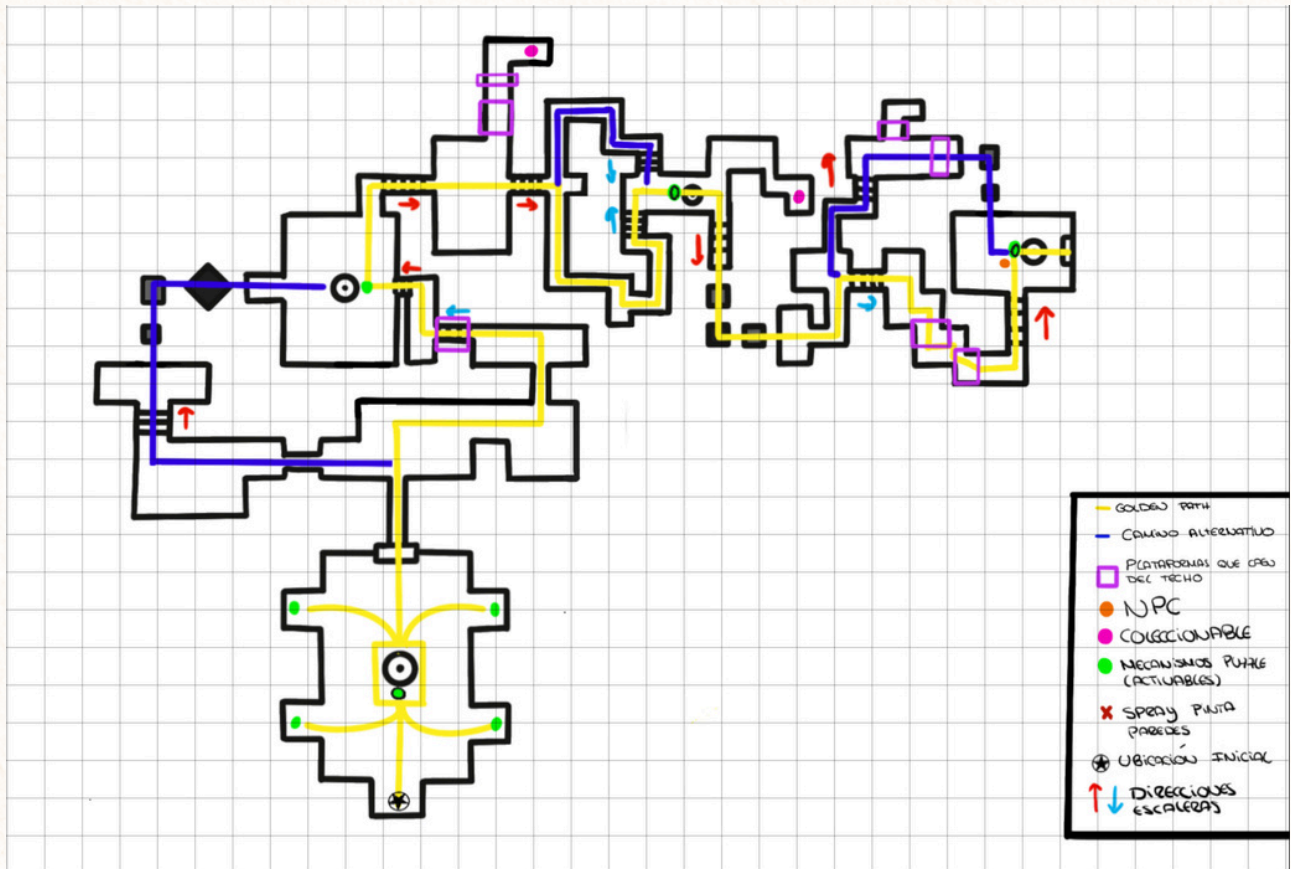
Room 2:

The player must throw a ball into a giant funnel at the center of the room. If they miss, the ball reappears with no penalty. Successfully scoring unlocks the door to the next room. If the player falls into the void, they respawn at the start of the room.

Room 3:

The player must place the ball on a platform, completing the statue of a dung beetle and opening the secret door, allowing the temple to be completed.

Shrine 2 gameplay



Room 1:

The player must solve a gear-and-light puzzle. Four lantern statues can be rotated to project their light onto a central statue with four crystals. The goal is to correctly align the lights to unlock access to Room 2.

Room 2:

The player goes through a false labyrinth designed to create a sense of exploration and confusion, with converging paths and interleaved staircases (marked on the layout with blue arrows pointing down and red arrows pointing up). A spray can is introduced to mark walls and help with orientation.

- **Core mechanics:** solve three cube puzzles with drawings by rotating them until they light up.

- **Reward:** at the end of the labyrinth, an NPC hands over a cosmetic item and offers additional world lore.
- **Penalty:** if the player falls, they return to the start of the labyrinth, where they picked up the spray can.

Challenges and mechanics

- Solving light and gear puzzles.
- Exploring a labyrinth with an orientation mechanic.
- Using a spray can to mark walls and aid navigation.
- Manipulating balls pushed by Luma to solve puzzles.

Boss: Karako

This fight is more about problem-solving than pure action:

- Karako throws projectiles (2 per second).
- Only one projectile at a time follows Luma's trajectory until it disintegrates upon hitting the ground.
- The room contains 4 lanterns that light up as Karako's projectiles hit them.
- If a projectile hits Luma, she dies instantly and the fight must be restarted.
- Once finished, we free Shiny Paco.

NPCs and enemies in this level

- | | | |
|-----------------------|-------------|---------------------|
| • T.E. | • Saponcio | • Damian |
| • Shiny Paco | • Mantisuki | • Furimuita (enemy) |
| • Hana Fubuki (enemy) | • Karako | |

Items and collectibles

- **Estatuilla Kintsugi:** A statue formed from insect parts joined together with gold seams. Local tradition speaks of this union as a symbol of reconstruction and improvement.



- **Sushi Chopsticks:** Carved wooden chopsticks that Luma stole the first time she met Saponcio at his sushi stand. She'd like to show them to her mother when she returns home, because of their beautiful, elegant design.
- **Hourglass:** This hourglass looks like it's about to run out. And yet it's impossible to turn it over; it doesn't seem to work properly anymore. Antiques always have their quirks, and this one seems to have lost something over time.
- **Embroidered Napkin:** An elegant napkin, embroidered with gold thread, used by Saponcio on special occasions at his restaurant. After getting bored at a family gathering, he started drawing his first piece of art on it.
- **Oni Mask:** A mask carved with horns and intimidating features, used in ancient rituals to ward off shadows. Its eyes seem to have seen too much.

Iteration and testing notes

- Adjust the labyrinth's difficulty so the sense of exploration feels challenging but not frustrating.
- Evaluate how effective the spray can is for orientation.
- Make sure the lighting and visual cues are clear enough for the light and ball puzzles.
- Test the flow of the transition between shrines and the "Golden Path."
- It's important that Karako's temple can be seen from anywhere on the level to help orient the player (fog included, we could add some glowing element).

3.4. LEVEL 3: ARCHIPELAGO OF SMITHEREENS

Level objective

- Defeat the five bosses, who are the physical representations of the stages of Luma's grief.

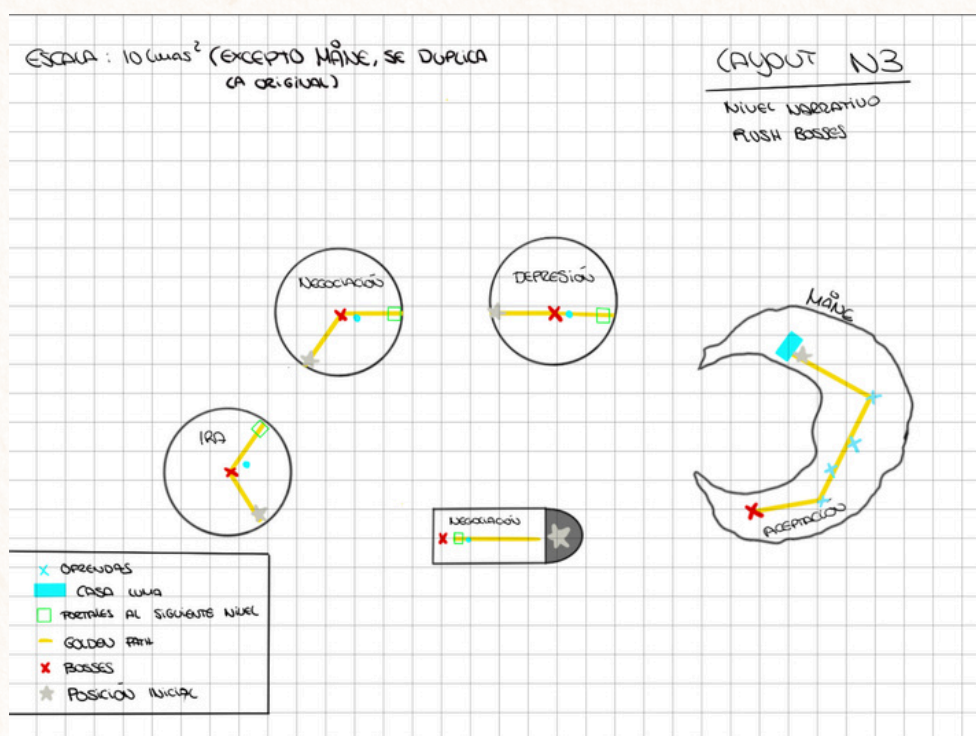


Narrative and setting

- **Denial:** A hallway lined with paintings of Luma and her mother. In complete silence and darkness, only Luma's echoing footsteps can be heard.
- **Anger:** A volcanic arena. Its main attack is falling meteorites, reinforcing the charged atmosphere. We must free Anger from the chains that bind it in order to advance to the next level. The sound design should match the setting.
- **Negotiation:** An arena decorated with dry trees, dominated by purple tones. The only thing at its center is Bargaining, at its croupier's table. A mysterious atmosphere.
- **Depression:** A frozen arena, cloudy, with falling snow. White and blue dominate. Depression is anchored to the ground in the middle of the arena, like the rest of the bosses (except Denial). Ambient blizzard noise.
- **Acceptance:** Found in Måne, right at the goddess's statue. The atmosphere is brighter, dreamlike, and everything moves more slowly. The island's sounds are soft.

Structure and progression

We begin on the island of Denial, moving through the rest of the islands until we reach Måne again, where we find Acceptance.



Challenges and mechanics

- **Negación:** Hay que recorrer un pasillo hasta el final, es un nivel narrativo.
- **Ira:** Caen meteoritos en el mapa, las zonas de impacto están señaladas previamente para que el jugador pueda esquivarlos. El objetivo es romper las 4 cadenas que atan a Ira, pudiendo así, superar el nivel.
- **Negociación:** Este nivel consiste en una partida de cartas meramente narrativa, donde Luma toma decisiones sobre las cosas que habría hecho diferente o como se siente. No tiene impacto en la historia ni cambia su desarrollo. Es otro nivel narrativo que nos introduce mejor la situación emocional de la protagonista.
- **Depresión:** En esta arena, hay un gigante de hielo cosido al suelo. El combate contra Depresión consiste en ser capaces de que ella misma golpee los hilos que la atan hasta caer al vacío. Son 4 los puntos a romper.
- **Aceptación:** Se desarrolla en la isla inicial. Los 4 bosses anteriores nos habrán dado unos amuletos al final de combate que se irán poniendo a lo largo de la isla. Al final, llegamos a la estatua, donde Luma tiene una conversación con Aceptación y salta la cinemática final de juego.

NPCs and enemies in this level

- Denial
- Anger
- Negotiation
- Depression
- Acceptance





4. CONCLUSION AND FUTURE IMPROVEMENTS

- General adjustments following testing.
- Possible changes to improve the player experience.

