



SIGNS OF THE SOJOURNER

OVERVIEW

SIGNS OF THE SOJOURNER IS A SHORT, NARRATIVE-FOCUSED DECK-BUILDING RPG, WHERE TO COMMUNICATE WITH OTHERS YOU PLAY A CARD MATCHING GAME, AS A WAY TO BUILD UNDERSTANDING. THE NARRATIVE TOUCHES ON GRIEF, CONSEQUENCES, AND THE IMPORTANCE OF OUR COMMUNITY WHEN OVERCOMING HARDSHIP.

LESSONS

- ABSTRACT SYSTEMS CAN SAY MORE WHILE USING LESS
- COMPLEX FEELING CAN BE TACKLED WITHOUT RELIANCE ON DIALOGUE
- OUTCOMES FROM PLAYER CHOICES ARE NOT GOOD OR BAD



REPRESENTATIONS OF GRIEF

THROUGHOUT SIGNS OF THE SOJOURNER, RHEA'S CHARACTER TACKLES THE RECENT PASSING OF HER MOM AND MOVING THROUGH THE GRIEF. ALTHOUGH RHEA IS A SILENT PROTAGONIST AND DOES NOT HAVE ANY DIRECT DIALOGUE WITH OTHER CHARACTERS, THE NARRATIVE DEMONSTRATES HER FEELINGS THROUGH HER REFLECTIONS AT THE END OF CERTAIN CONVERSATIONS. THROUGH THE USE OF SECOND PERSON LIMITED LITERARY PERSPECTIVE, TRAVEL EVENT RECOLLECTIONS, AND CHANGES IN THE SOUNDTRACK, SIGNS OF THE SOJOURNER LEAVES ROOM FOR PLAYER EXPRESSION WHILE RHEA TACKLES HER GRIEF. PLAYERS MAY RELATE TO RHEA WHILE SHE IS MOVING THROUGH THIS TIME OF HER LIFE, AS HER ACTUAL DIALOGUE IS ABSTRACTED FROM THE GAME ALLOWING PLAYERS TO PLACE HOW THEY WOULD FEEL ON HER CHARACTER. THIS GIVES OPPORTUNITIES FOR PLAYERS TO ROLE PLAY IN WHATEVER WAY MAKES THE MOST SENSE TO THEM.

BUILDING MEANING IN RPG DIALOGUE

THE CORE MECHANIC OF SIGNS OF THE SOJOURNER REVOLVES AROUND THE WAY RHEA COMMUNICATES WITH OTHERS. ALL PLAYERS INTERACT WITH RHEA BY PLAYING CARDS IN TURN, EACH WITH A SYMBOL THAT REPRESENTS A STYLE OF COMMUNICATION. IF THE CONVERSATION IS SUCCESSFULLY PASSED—THAT IS, NO ILLEGAL MISMATCHES OF SYMBOLS WERE MADE—THEN THE CONVERSATION IS CONSIDERED CONCORDANT. OTHERWISE, THE CONVERSATION IS DISCORDANT. THESE SYMBOLS, AS SHOWN BELOW, BECOME THE BUILDING BLOCKS FOR ROLE PLAY AND CREATIVITY.



ULTIMATELY, THE SYMBOLIC REPRESENTATION OF COMMUNICATION STYLES IN SIGNS OF THE SOJOURNER ALLOW NARRATIVE DEPTH, FURTHER OPPORTUNITIES FOR ROLE PLAY, AND COMPLEXITY TO WHAT IS NORMALLY A STANDARD WAY OF NPC DIALOGUE AND COMMUNICATION.

CHOICES THAT MATTER

AT ITS CORE, SIGNS OF THE SOJOURNER IS A GAME BASED ON CHOICE. WHAT LOCATION SHOULD BE EXPLORED? WHICH NPC SHOULD I TALK WITH? THESE ARE FREQUENT QUESTIONS THE PLAYER MAY ASK THEMSELVES WHILE RHEA IS ON A TRIP. THE TRUTH IS, MUCH LIKE REALITY, RHEA IS FORCED TO MAKE SERIOUS DECISIONS ABOUT WHERE HER TIME MATTERS MOST. THE GAME HAS SEVERAL ENDINGS, DEPENDING ON WHICH CHARACTERS YOU DECIDE TO TALK TO AND BUILD YOUR DECK INTO OVER THE COURSE OF THE GAME. THROUGH MAKING KEY CHOICES THROUGHOUT THE GAME, CHARACTERS WILL ALSO BEGIN TO REVEAL THEIR STORY ARCS AND DEVELOPMENT AFTER CONCORDANT CONVERSATIONS. THE OUTCOMES, BOTH POSITIVE AND NEGATIVE, ALLOW THE PLAYER TO EXPERIENCE THE NARRATIVE THROUGH THEIR UNIQUE PERSPECTIVE

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