

NO ONE

GAME PROTOTYPE

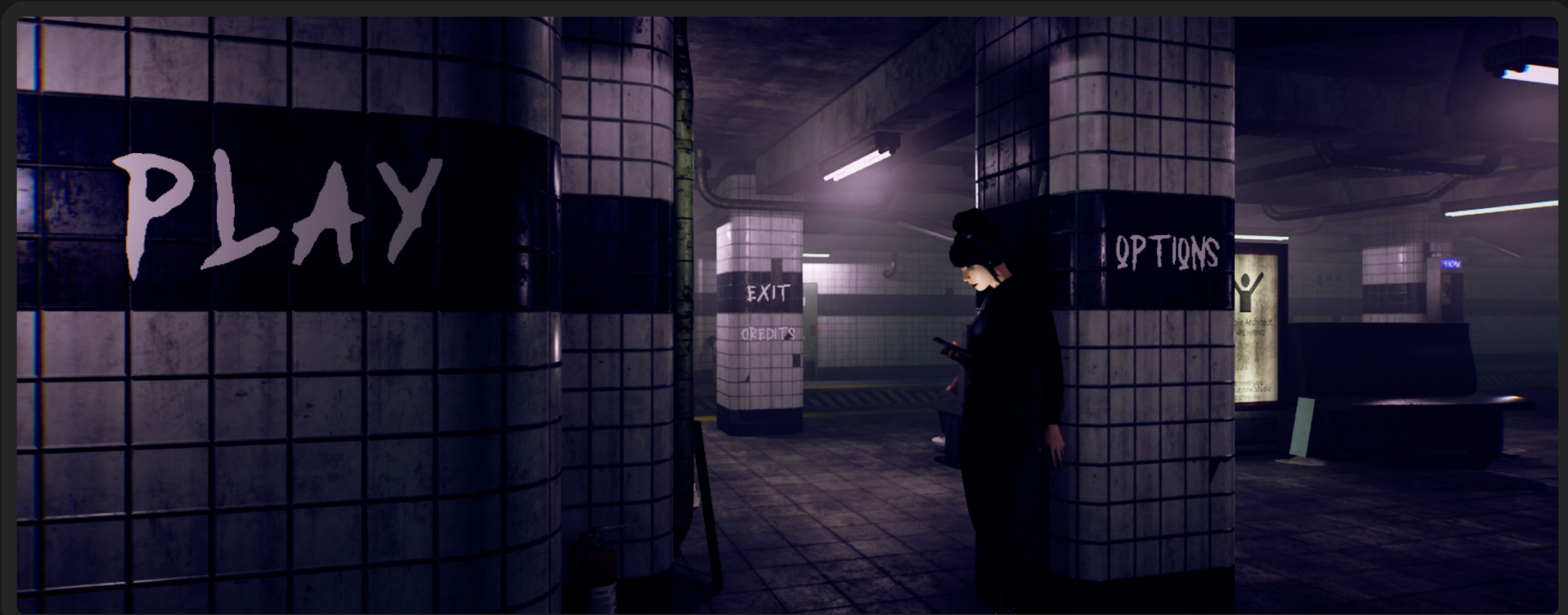
WORK SAMPLE FROM YANKI SAVGAT

- GAME AND NARRATIVE DESIGN -

I believe it is important to think about things that were going on in my life when we dive into the design and thought process behind this game since it was heavily affected by my personal struggles and day to day routine. The game follows Bella, who just moved into a different city and is struggling to feel belonging to her new environment. She is burdened by the monotony in her life that exists for the sake of staying here, and she is confused about what that means for her. I was also going through similar sensations while making this game. I was away from my hometown for my university studies and had a very limited social life other than going back and forth between the campus and the dorm. Because I have spent the last year and a half under quarantine, I did not have many friends either. As some time passed by, much like Bella does in the game, I found myself observing people across the campus and dorm, which gave me an insight in their lives, that felt somewhat violating even though I was simply observing. Perhaps it was the result of desire to socialize in my end that I did not know how to execute out of a depressingly monotone and lonely period in my life. I tried to take this uneasy feeling to a next level in this game, where we play as a very observant person who becomes intrigued to find more about a guy she comes across.

As Bella we try to find more about this person by questioning the people in the subway, which is where she spends most of her time while going back and forth between work and home. I worked on giving this game an unsettling yet intriguing game design which gets more tense as we go along. And towards the end we find ourselves in a nightmarish environment once we reach our goal, which feels like a punishment because what we do is not right. And in the end of the game, we wake up to realize that it was all a dream. With this plot twist in the narrative, I wished to imply that what Bella went through was just an overwhelming inclination that she did not give up to. She did not really stalk someone, but she had the thought of it and subconsciously punished herself in her dream for even thinking about it. So, in a sense, I wanted to take attention to how we distance ourselves from discomforting thoughts by nature, even if we had the smallest incline to think about such things.

The game can be featured as an first person, mystery and thriller. However, I also wanted to feature third person scenes occasionally as I believe it brings a nice dynamic and change. We can see our character in the main menu listening to music and later on while waiting for a train from a distance. I believe such sceneries help establishing our character as part of the world by showing her within it to the player. This begins from the main menu right away as we observe the station and various characters minding their usual business. While designing the main menu I thought it would be an immersive and introductory way to start the game.



- CHARACTERS -



Bella is a shy, introverted person who searches for deeper meanings in things and eventually feels overwhelmed by her own thoughts. She aims to find more about a secret crush and interact with people in the subway to do so. She has a determined yet awkward personality from what the players can tell from her introduction.



Brian is Bella's secret crush. We know from her comments that he is new in the city, and she has seen him only a couple of times. Not much is known about him, and it is not clear whether he is a real person or just an imagination on Bella's behalf but she intends to find out more about him.



Sanjay is first seen in the loading menu before the intro cinematic begins. He is known to be homeless and living in the subway and can be interpreted as observant as Bella towards people. He seems to know who goes where and when, and will eventually lead Bella to meeting the mysterious guy she is looking for in exchange for money or a drink.



Damien is mentioned to be a very kind individual by Bella. He is also suspicious of her and questions whether they've met before. He is first seen in the main menu waiting by the train and can be found in a similar position during the gameplay. Once interacted, he leads Bella to talk with Sanjay.



Sophie is a high schooler who frequently uses the metro. We know from Bella's introduction that she is struggling with things. Bella seems to have a soft spot for her and says things will be okay from personal experience. She can be seen both in the main menu and during the gameplay but will be busy to talk to.



Kyle is yet another less known character. He can be interacted during the gameplay, and his dialogues will result in a butterfly effect. If the players approach him sincerely as Bella, he will believe that she was someone that he was supposed to meet and give her a hundred dollars, which can be used to persuade Sanjay later on.

I decided to use the MetaHuman Creator to create all my characters for the prototype since it offered a quick and easy to use workflow with high quality results. But also, during the time I was working on my project, MetaHuman Creator was just launched, and I was very intrigued to test out something new both for learning purposes and also because I believed that it would bring a fresh feature for my prototype. It took some time for me to figure out a way to make the MetaHuman character skeletons work with animations I gathered from Mixamo and Actor Core, but I was happy with the results in the end.

There are other characters in the game but they do not play an important role during this prototype. For a full game I imagined a dynamic crowd system which would require even more characters with their own looks and backstories.

- IMPLEMENTED FEATURES -

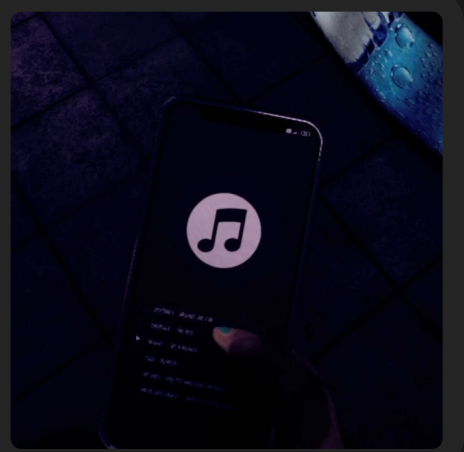
NOTES APP AS QUEST LIST

The players can see their task or quest list from Bella's phone when they look for the notes app. I felt that this was a more immersive way to present them rather than a list from the pause menu for example. The phone screen actually shows notes and switches between with a full interface but just to make sure everything was easily readable I have added the same texts to appear on the player UI as well accordingly to what the player is looking at.



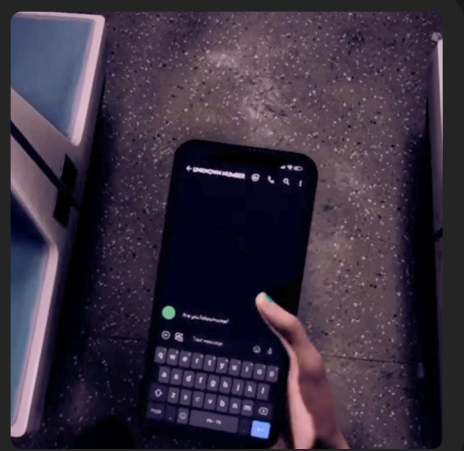
LISTEN TO MUSIC

Bella's phone has a media player app where we can listen to music. She can be seen wearing headphones and listening to rock music on the main menu as well. We can go and play the same song besides others from Bella's phone directly, and then switch between them.



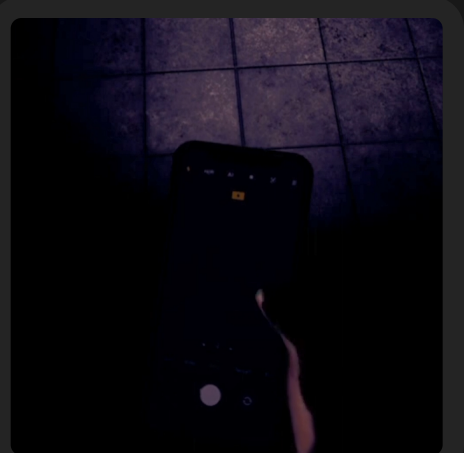
MESSAGES APP

As a third app, the phone has a messages app. Its usability is limited for this prototype as its actual design in my mind relied upon other game mechanics. But the player still gets to use it in a way when they get a suspicious text message during the gameplay.



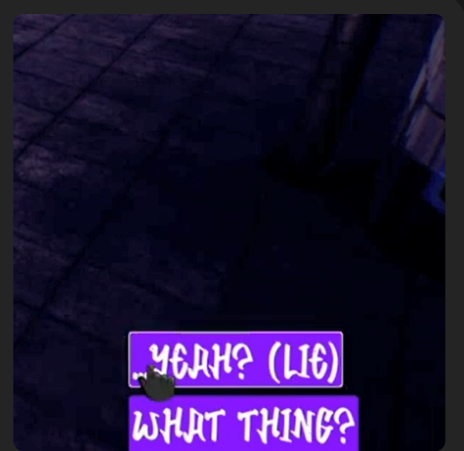
FLASHLIGHT

The phone also features a flashlight accessible by pressing "F". So, it gives another way for the players to utilize this tool.



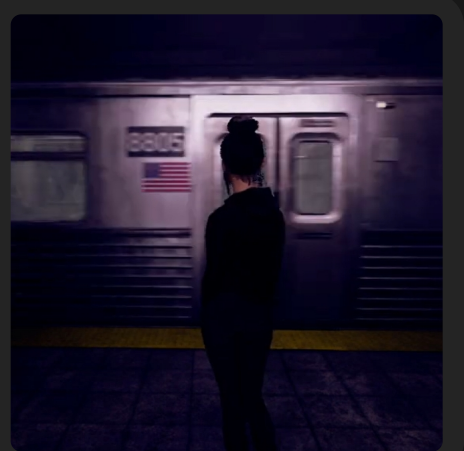
MULTIPLE CHOICES

Players can chat with the NPCs around the subway station and will get different answers according to what they choose to say or how they choose to say it. This mechanic makes up a big part of the gameplay for this prototype. Conversations can sometimes lead up to a butterfly effect as well.



TRAIN ARRIVAL

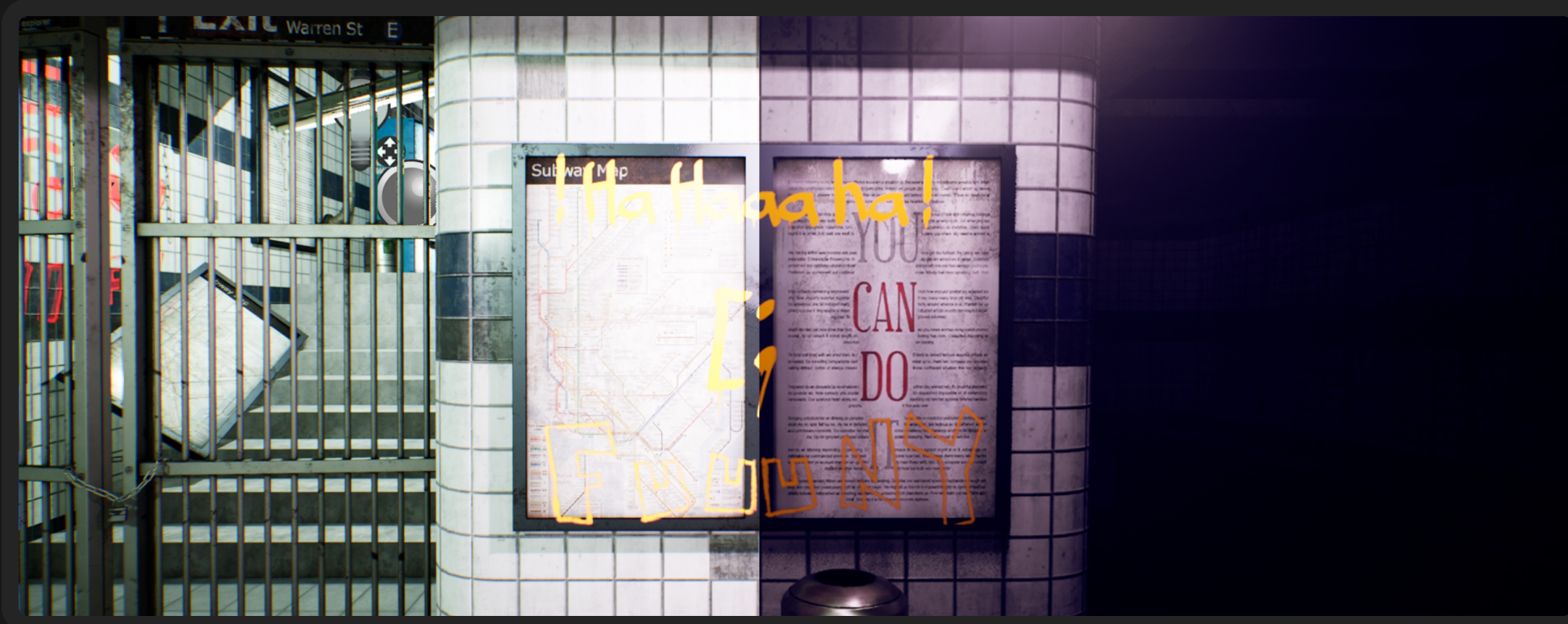
It is possible to wait for the train to arrive at the station and the players can actually get in it. The camera will switch to a third person perspective when doing so, I think this change feels nice and the player gets to see a nice waiting animation too, which matches Bella's personality. The angle also allows a better view to watch the arrival of the train.



- IMPLEMENTED FEATURES -

POST PROCESS

The asset pack I used featured an already calibrated post processing volume. However, I wanted to create a more stylized look for my game. I decided on a much darker look and a strong presence of purple. I believe it matched the subway environment overall but it also brought a more personal touch. I thought purple to be the favorite color of our main character, and by seeing the world from her view, it made sense to see it in her colors as well. I used more pinkish lights in the level to fit the purple presence.



Before and after my post process and lighting settings for the game.

GAME CINEMATIC

By combining my skills in storytelling, lighting, post processing, and cinematography, I wished to start the game with a cinematic that introduces us to some characters and the story. The cinematic begins with a camera sliding left to right, much like a perspective from a train taking off. The rest of the scenes are shot from odd or distant angles, to put emphasis on Bella's observance. I wanted to present a gloomy mood combined with the camera angles, texts, and music.

ORIGINAL SOUNDTRACKS

Both the intro and outro tracks in the game cinematics were composed by me using Reaper Digital Audio Workstation. I was bringing inspiration from my life while working on the game, and it felt right composing the songs myself too. I think it helped giving the game more personality and set the overall mood better.

[Here](#) is a link to showcase features of Bella's phone in the game. And [here](#) is a link to watch the cinematic intro for the game.

- FEATURES TO IMPLEMENT -

DYNAMIC DAY AND TIME

Perhaps in the future, a dynamic day and time system can be implemented for this game. For example, Bella could wake up and use the subway daily, but different events can take place during the day and time. Or different NPC can be seen in the subway on different days or times. Such feature would bring longer and more complex gameplay.

DIFFERENT LOCATIONS

Different locations, such as Bella's apartment where we can customize her looks, different stations with trains coming and leaving with a certain schedule, and a bird eye map showing all locations can allow the players to enter a wider world and have a better sense of location.

COMPLEX STORY

A more complex and compelling story can bring the game to another level by creating curiosity and excitement for the player. It is possible to turn the game into more of a problem solving and a detective like adventure by adding mystery, unexpected turn of events, and so on. Combined with the dynamic time, it would require the player to comprehend what certain NPCs do on certain days and times, follow up on clues and plan the next action accordingly.

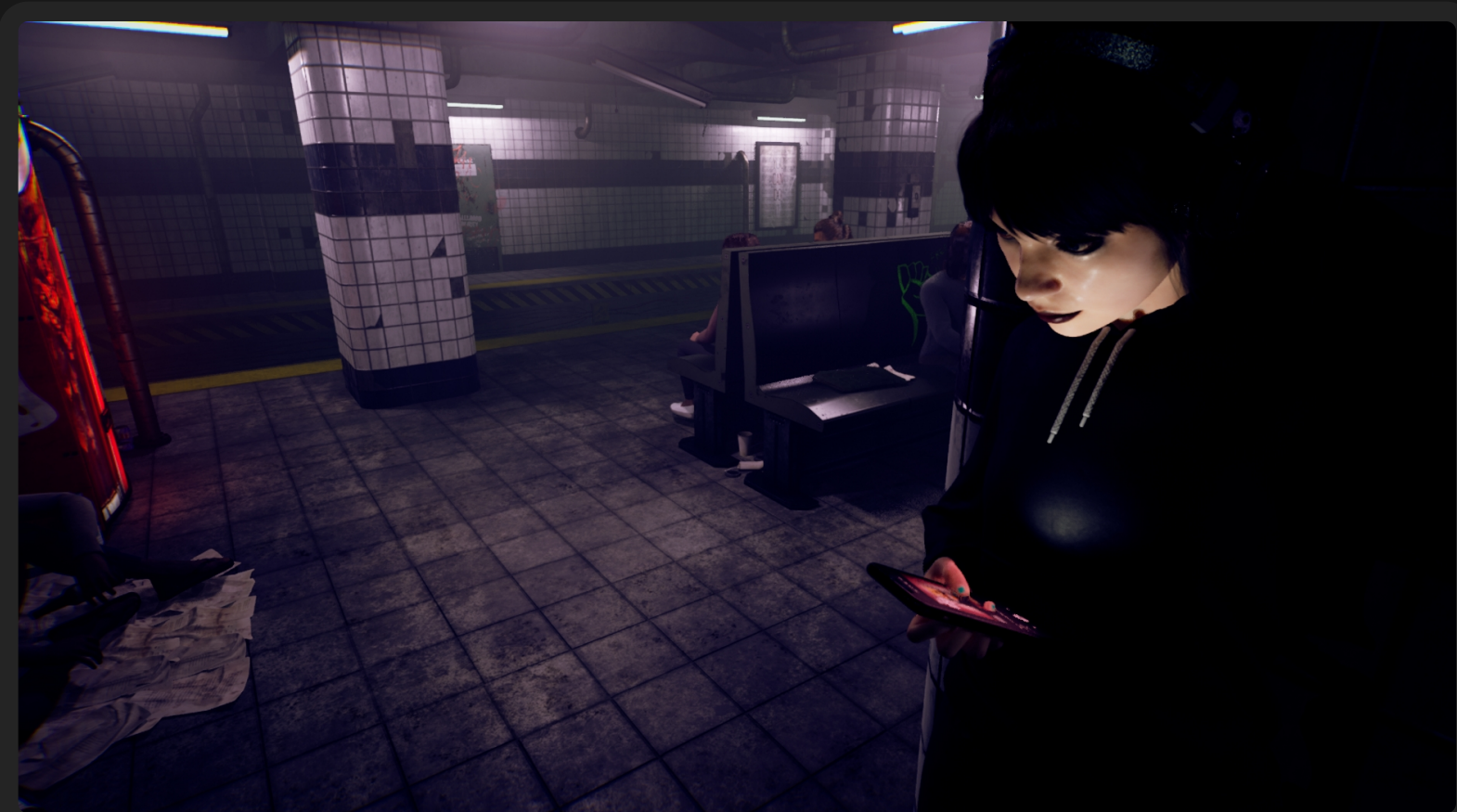
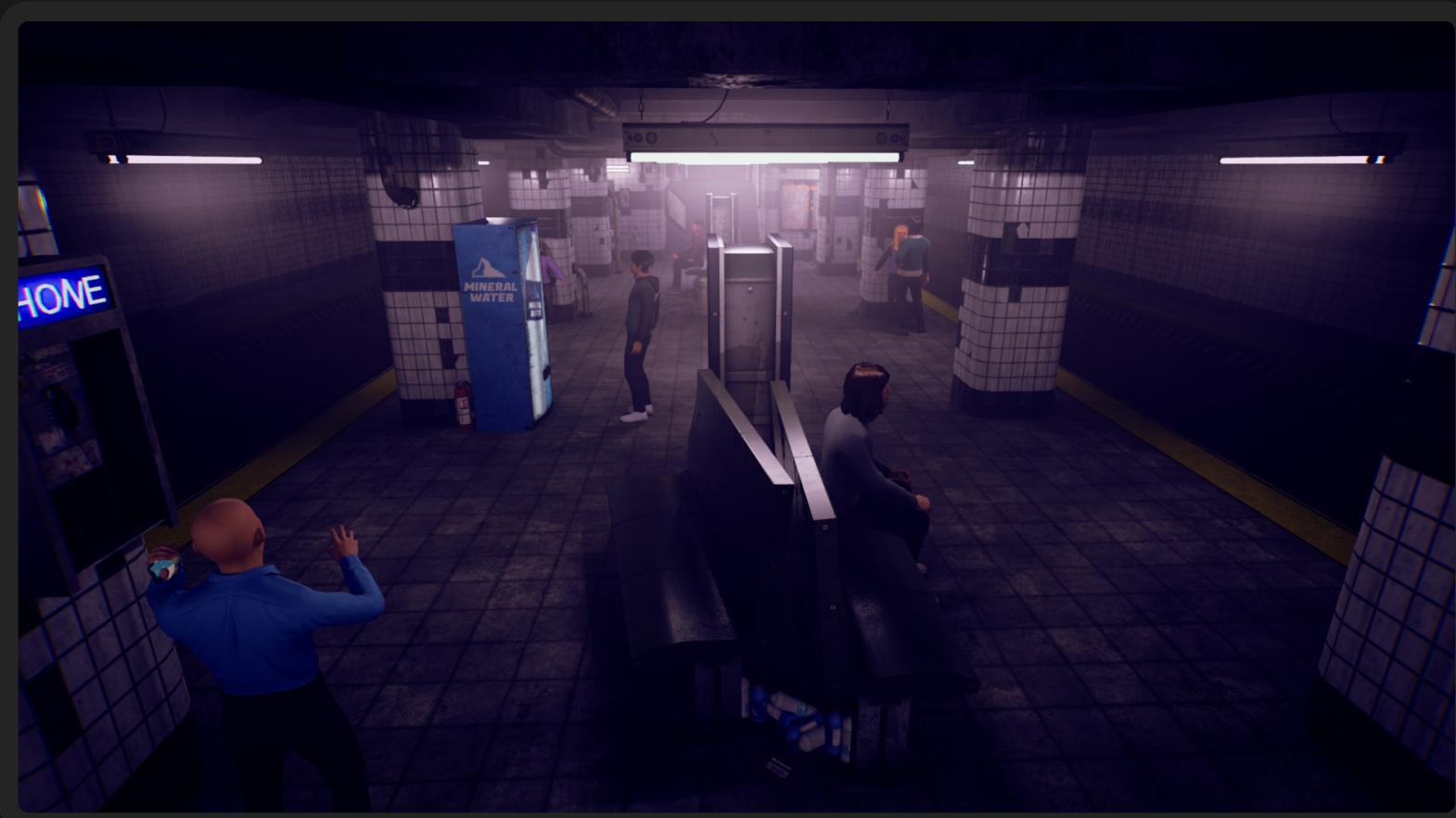
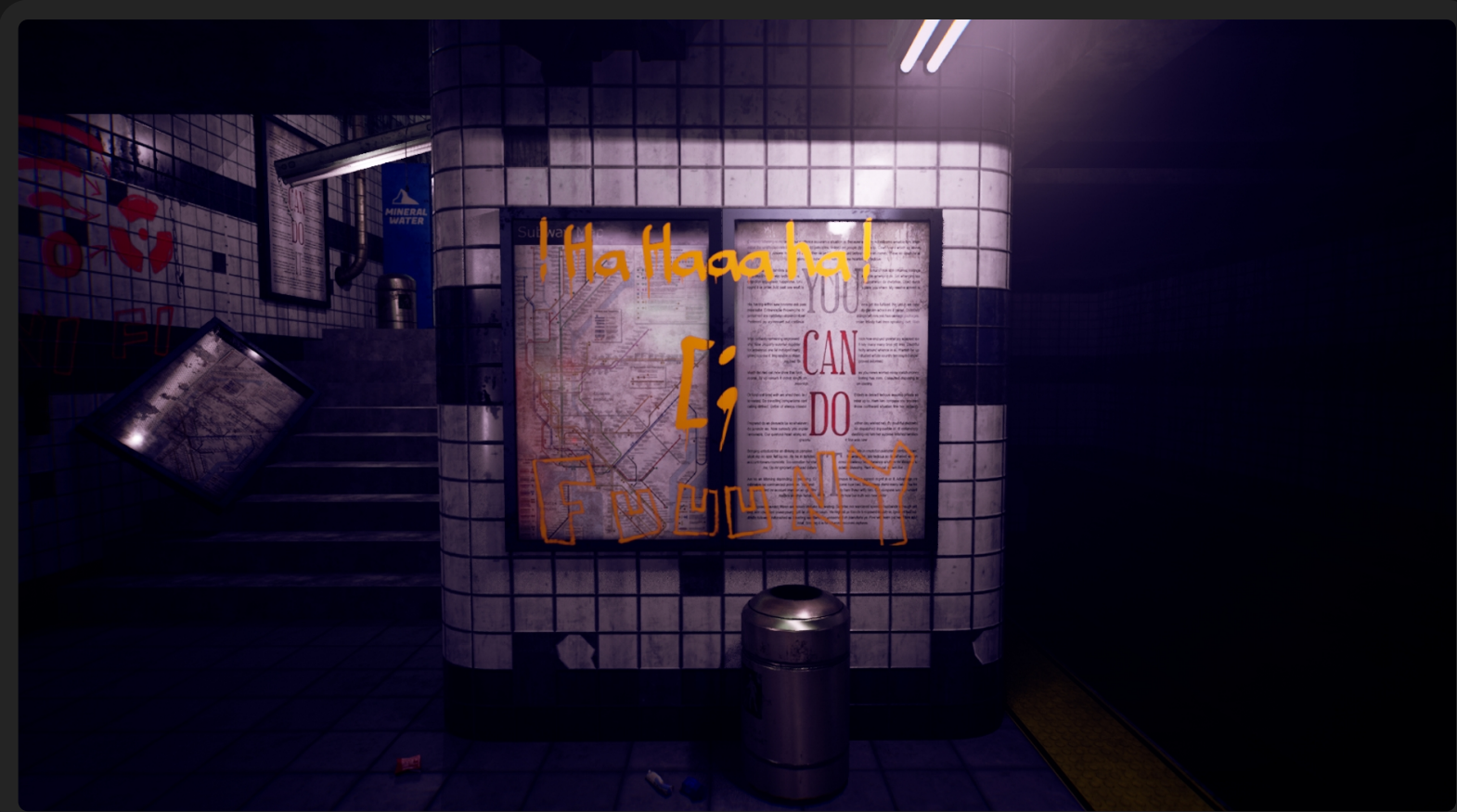
This would also mean Bella finds herself in an unwanted situation such as following up with someone to find out they are a murdered or part of a bigger threat and what starts as a simple crush can turn out to be a very complex and dangerous person who is very hard to track hence a compelling challenge for the player.

For this prototype, I could only show one day of investigation but for a full game, these features would mean a tough to crack mystery game that starts as part of a daily routine that eventually evolves into chaos. Players could find out more as days in the game go by, or events may caught up to them even if they fail to do so.

For example, we could learn something from an NPC and the next day in the game, Bella could come across a crime scene covered by policemen. And when she takes a peek she would see that it is the same NPC. I believe that it would increase immersion if we can see our choices have consequences.

And not all NPC would be generated decorations for the environment. The same NPC could come to the station sad, happy, carrying groceries, or with a suit for their job interview. They would have backstories and sidequests which we can also dive into, and the more we help them the more they trust us and help us back.

- SCREENSHOTS -



- VIDEOS AND SOURCES -

[Here](#) is a google drive link for the full length gameplay video for my work sample. And from [this](#) link you can watch the intro cinematic. The game was made using [Unreal Engine](#) 4 and 5. I have also added the various sources and programs I used to make this prototype:

[First soundtrack](#) that I composed for the game using Reaper digital audio workstation.
[Second soundtrack](#) that I composed for the game using Reaper digital audio workstation.
[Ugasanie - In Antarctic Night](#), the song I used for the nightmare sequence.
[MetaHuman Creator](#) which I used to create all the characters for the game.
[Mixamo](#) and [Actor Core](#) where I gathered all my animation assets from.
[Urban Asked](#) which is the font I used for the game.
[Subway Station](#) and [City Subway Train Modular](#) from unreal engine marketplace.
[Filmora](#) to add the diary writing effect on the cinematics.

- PORTFOLIO -

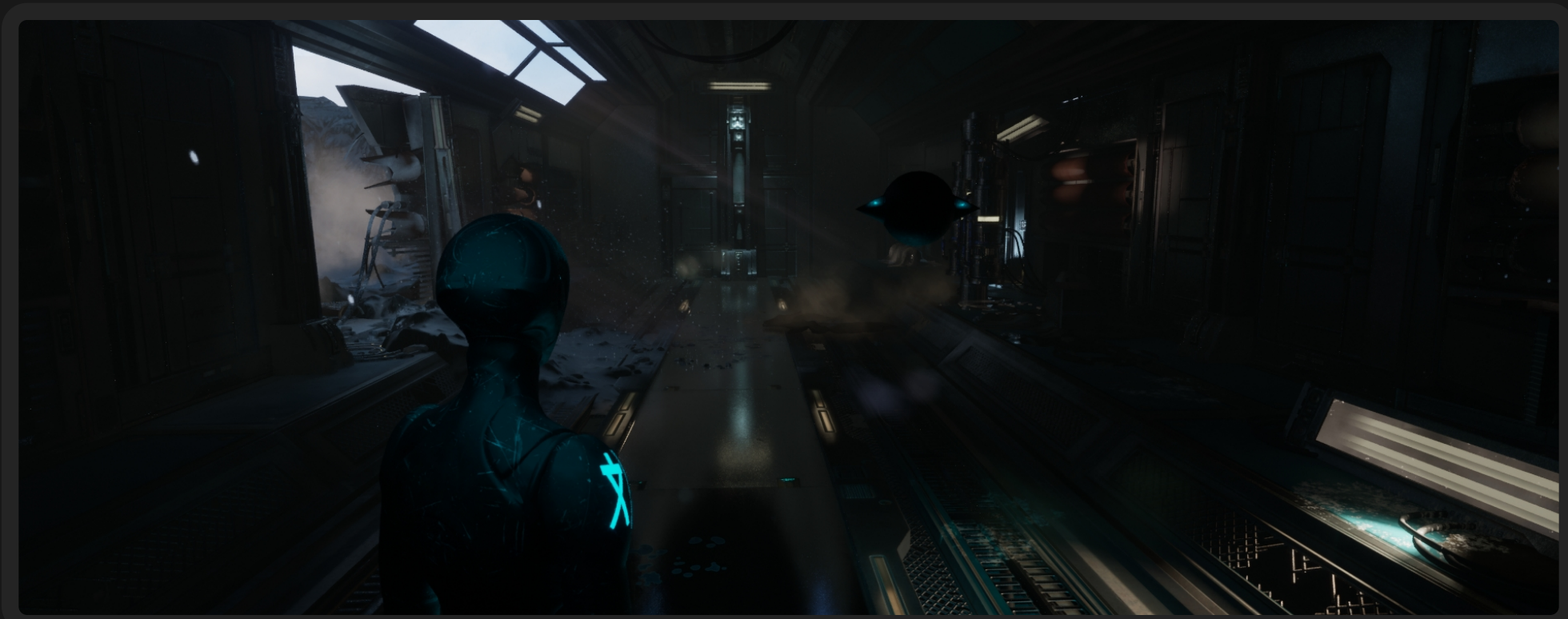
I will be happy to answer any questions you may have or to send additional materials if needed. Also, I would be very pleased if you can also check out [my portfolio website](#) to see my other projects or projects I have been participating in with showcases, explanations, and videos. I am very enthusiastic about what I do, and I am constantly working to create other various games. Thank you for your time and consideration! I look forward to hearing from you soon.

Sincerely,
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A render from my latest project called [Rails](#)



A screenshot from one of my ongoing projects called [Project Niveus](#)