Rainbow Bridge Concept Doc

Name ideas:
- Rainbow Bridge
- Cookie's Adventure
- Cloudy Paws
- Dog's Best Friend
- Colorful Clouds
- Finding Mia/Lily
- Fluffy Finding
- GOD is a DOG
- GOODDOG

Individual Team Member Deliverables:
- Megan:
  https://mechanicsofmagic.com/2023/05/09/team-10-cloudy-paws-rainbow-bridge/
- Everett
  https://mechanicsofmagic.com/2023/05/09/checkpoint-1-concept-doc-17/
- Daniel
  https://mechanicsofmagic.com/2023/05/09/individual-checkpoint-daniel/
- William
  https://mechanicsofmagic.com/2023/05/09/william-checkpoint-1-moodboard-and-directions/

Synopsis

Inspirations

The Rainbow Bridge

There is a bridge connecting Heaven and Earth. It is called the Rainbow Bridge because of its many colors. Just this side of the Rainbow Bridge, there is a land of meadows, hills, and valleys with lush green grass.

When a beloved pet dies, the pet goes to this place. There is always food and water and warm spring weather. The old and frail animals are young again. Those who are maimed are made whole again. They play all day with each other.

There is only one thing missing. They are not with their special person who loved them on Earth. So each day they run and play until the day comes when one suddenly looks up! The nose twitches. The ears are up. The eyes are staring. This one suddenly runs from the group.

You have been seen, and when you and your special friend meet, you take him or her in your arms and embrace. Your face is kissed again and again, and you look once more into the eyes of your trusting pet.

Then you cross the Rainbow Bridge together, never again to be separated.

(Source: Pinterest, an old poem without an author)

Rainbow Bridge

by Steve and Diane Bodofsky,
a couple that operated a ferret rescue

By the edge of a woods, at the foot of a hill,
Is a lush, green meadow where time stands still.
Where the friends of man and woman do run,
*When their time on earth is over and done.*

For here, between this world and the next,
Is a place where each beloved creature finds rest.
On this golden land, they wait and they play,
Till the Rainbow Bridge they cross over one day.

No more do they suffer, in pain or in sadness,
For here they are whole, their lives filled with gladness.
Their limbs are restored, their health renewed,
Their bodies have healed, with strength imbued.

They romp through the grass, without even a care,
Until one day they start, and sniff at the air.
All ears prick forward, eyes dart front and back,
Then all of a sudden, one breaks from the pack.

For just at that instant, their eyes have met;
Together again, both person and pet.
So they run to each other, these friends from long past,
The time of their parting is over at last.

The sadness they felt while they were apart,
Has turned into joy once more in each heart.
They embrace with a love that will last forever,
And then, side-by-side, they cross over… together.
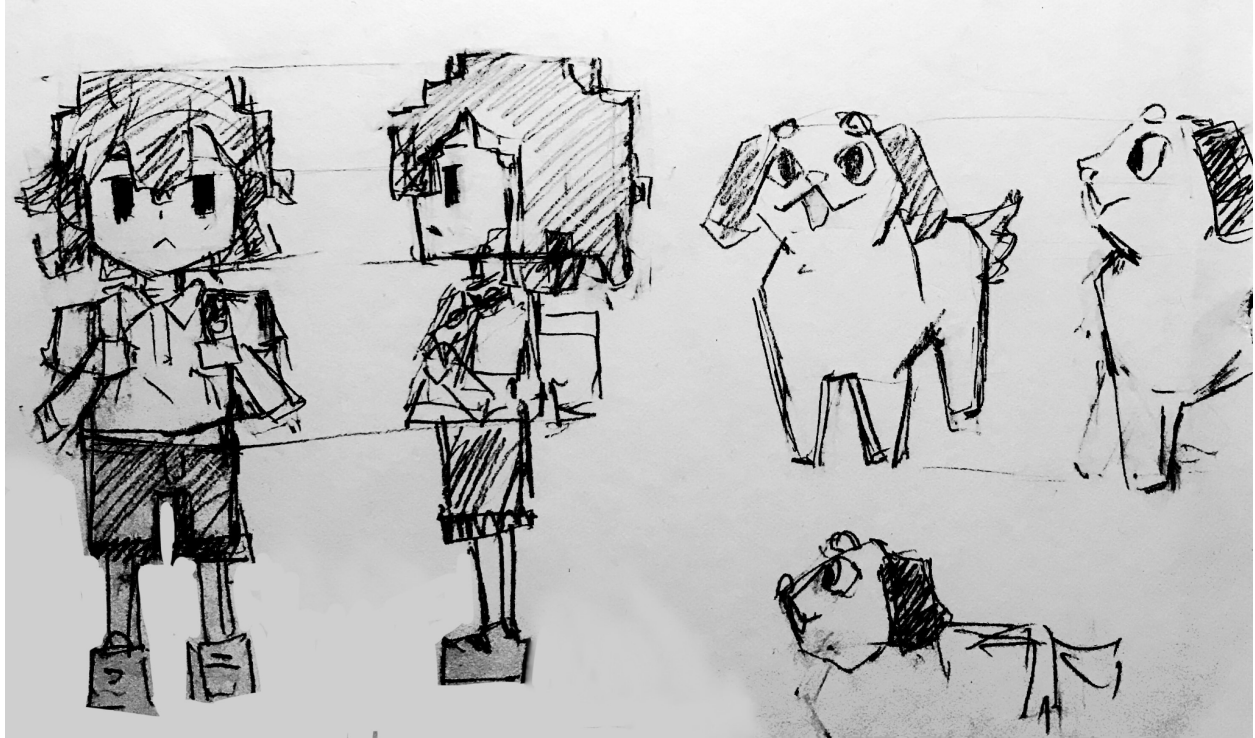
Protagonist - 'Cookie'

You are Cookie, a 9-month-old dog that wakes up among a peaceful grassland amidst colorful clouds. A fluffy dog with three heads and wings introduce themselves as Surebrec, an angel dog that keeps the gate to the rainbow bridge.

Surebrec says that you're now between the Earth and Heavens. Your time on Earth seems to have come to an end. You say that it must have been a mistake, as you're only 9 months old.

Surebrec says there are many more older dogs, but there are sometimes young puppies that come to the Rainbow Greens. At the Rainbow Greens, you can wait until your human friend comes, and if you cross together, you will never be separated.

But you say that Mia's only eight, and you want her to live a long life, that you'll have to wait for so long, and that you will not be happy here even with other dog friends.

You notice that you're less transparent than other spirits of the dogs. You ask Surebrec why that is the case, and they tell you that it might be because there's still a connection between your body and soul.

You ask them if that means there's a way for you to go back, and Surebrec replies that they cannot tell you that.

You are determined to explore the Rainbow Greens and find ways to go back to Earth.

Angel that's trying to lead you to heaven: 'Surebrec'

Potential idea: find the sketchy angel that you have to do some quest/task before he leads you down?

Design Challenges

Integrating Challenge & Narrative. We want to make a game that is challenging and fun for players, and also be rewarding through a heartwarming narrative which is integrated into the challenges. Creating a narrative and designing (fun!) puzzles that match it will be both a technical and design challenge.

Creative Puzzles. This game will be through a largely movement-based puzzle system, and due to artistic time constraints setting will likely be tile-based. Selecting the most essential artistic elements that are core to both gameplay and narrative to produce will be difficult, and integrating

Life and death, even of pets, is a difficult subject matter to tastefully address, so we want to make a game that is light hearted, driven by the in spite of that.

Art Challenges

Heaven? Our setting is a heaven-like space and most characters are spirits. This will be a challenge to universally evoke (or at least evoke for a general audience) in a cute and heartwarming way to match the tone of our story.

Color Palette. Drawing for a 2D world that is largely visually cloud and spirit based will also be difficult, because white can be a difficult color to use. However, the use of rainbows and colors should mitigate this a lot.

https://media.discordapp.net/attachments/1103096070361333810/110538994478613 3062/Untitled_Artwork.gif

Pixel Art. We are aiming for a slightly pixel art/lo-fi look, which is a new art style for the artist, so this might be somewhat challenging.

Technical Challenges

Onboarding. The first technical challenge will be onboarding onto Godot and picking which version and plugins to use to achieve the gameplay we want.

Parallel Development. Afterwards, integrating all of our developers onto one project/allowing it to be developed in parallel will be the major technical challenge our team will face. We may end up distributing work by level or scene, but the core technical elements (e.g. the system for creating a level, keeping track of the narrative, characters, the map, and items will all need to be universal)

Feedback Loops. Finally, We will want instant feedback/responses to player actions, (for things like sparkles, glows, and shadows when hovering and clicking) which must be achieved through either design, art, or technical implementation.

Tone

This is a game highlighting the dedication that our best friends, dogs, can have for us.

The majority of the game will be set in a limbo, superliminal space between our earthly world and doggy heaven. Going into heaven is symbolized by crossing the Rainbow Bridge.

We want to evoke 3 main feelings:

Determination. Throughout all the challenges faced by our protagonist, we want the player to feel a strong drive to continue forward in pursuit of the noble goal of being reunited with their family.

Cozy. This superliminal land does not have hostile enemies. Everyone is incredibly friendly, and merely want the best for you—to cross the Rainbow Bridge into heaven. Unfortunately, your goal of getting back to Earth is the direct opposite of that, so very few angles are willing to help you along your journey.

Growth. Our protagonist enters limbo at a fairly young age, so their journey through the limbo land is also a journey of personal growth. New abilities are learned along the way, giving the player a sense of watching a pet grow up.

Characters

<u>Dogs</u>
Surebrec
- Cousin of Cerberus, but this one's for heaven!
- Fluffy and cute aesthetics, but with three heads and wings
- Guards the gate in front of the rainbow bridge

Ludwig
- Twist on the Movie Beethoven
- A grumpy character who pretends to not be able to hear too well.
- He's the head of paw instruments in Rainbow Greens, but currently on a Strike.

Mochi
- Loves strawberries but afraid of the bigger dogs
- Proud Maltese, and is unwilling to

Aki
- Shiba Inu from Japan
- First one who crosses the Rainbow Bridge

<u>Humans</u>
Mia
- Cookie's human guardian

Hanako-San
- Aki's human guardian

Setting

Rainbow Greens: A vast, colorful and serene grassland filled with vibrant clouds and rainbows. This is the waiting place between Earth and Heavens for dogs who have passed away.

The Gate: The entrance to the Rainbow Greens. This is where Cookie first meets Surebrec and learns about her current situation.

Earth Realm: The world where the main character, Cookie, and her human friend, Mia, originally come from, and the desired destination for Cookie's journey.

I like Everett's idea: "Since there are 7 colors in the rainbow, maybe there could be 7 challenge rooms/levels, where you have to collect all the colors to complete the rainbow and return home".

Perhaps we can associate each level with a color and a memory from Cookie and Mia's past.

- Red Meadow
- Orange Orchard
- Yellow Sands
- Green Forest
    - A dense, emerald woodland where Cookie remembers a camping trip with Mia and her family. Players can uncover memories of hiking, playing fetch among the trees, and cuddling around the campfire under a starry sky, etc.
- Blue Lake
- Indigo Mountains
- Violet Gardens

Gameplay / Mechanics

Our core gameplay revolves around exploring the world and solving puzzles or defeating challenges to advance past certain checkpoints. This is somewhat similar to Pokemon or Undertale, as those games also involve controlling a character and solving puzzles/engaging in battles to progress, so we'll likely implement a similar top-down 2D third-person perspective. Whether the perspective changes during the challenges/puzzles remains an open question.

- At the moment, we haven't gotten into too much detail over what specific mechanics we'll have for the checkpoints, but we think we're planning on them being more puzzle or story based (e.g. some type of brain teaser/strategy type of puzzle, or putting together clues/memories from prior experiences in the game), rather than them being mechanically difficult (like *Celeste*).
- As the game is set on a rainbow bridge, where one end is Earth and the other is Heaven, we're also considering some mechanic where you can choose from multiple paths, one of which brings you to Heaven (a bad ending?) and one of which results in you being reunited with your family.
- We might have a mechanic where you can learn new skills throughout the game, as you're a puppy. For example, you might learn to jump, how to chase squirrels, etc.
- If we decide to go on a route where you collect memories throughout the game, we may include a UI element or POI that allows you to replay memories.

Desired Audience

While Rainbow Bridge is playable by anyone who loves animals, we expect teenagers above the age of 12 to appreciate some of the embedded narratives.