>My project was started in my free time, based on a personal interest in utilizing every aspect of the internet and digital media for storytelling.

I wanted to not only take advantage of the combination of sight, sound, and interactivity that digital media provide but also leverage the interconnectivity of the net to help tell a story.

My inspiration comes from MSPaint Adventures (homestuck), ARGs, creepypastas, and long form podcast stories—to name a few sources.

The web comic, Homestuck, particularly struck me. The way in which it was told was revolutionary. Like one of my favorite multimedia series, the .Hack Conglomerate, Homestuck took the phenomenon of franchising stories across media platforms to 11, telling it’s story through comics, forum posts, videos, games, albums, music videos, audience interaction, and even the website layout.

Another key source, creepypastas, offered direct similarities with my project. However, although a lot of these stories make great use of the potential of web based storytelling, many of them both good and bad suffer from one fatal flaw.

No one can actually play the game.

Now early on this made sense. These stories started as just that, stories. Someone would post a creepy message on a forum and continue to update it as spooky things “happened”. However as these stories have become more elaborate, they have grown to involve games that were actually playable on some level, it’s just that said games are never released and instead only played by the person who created them for use in youtube videos.

By making it so readers can only access the game through video provided by the author, the author maintains direct control over the information that they drip feed to their audience. Authors can use editing tricks to make impossible actions happen in the game ( as Petscop does by splicing together footage to make it look the like game is predicting what the player will do in the future). Authors can slowly release content to make readers go insane with speculation. And authors can maintain a “haunted” sense that keeps readers guessing about the underlying game. Besides, releasing a scary game would be just that, a scary game.

However, I believe there are other ways to to create a creepypasta story, particulary through experimenting with Episodic release. Data miners can’t break into your game to find the end if the end isn’t in the game yet. In fact, the ASSURANCE that someone will eventually hack their way into your files provides another avenue for story telling, one that fits perfectly with the episodic release of the game. Cryptic messages can be hidden in files, impossible areas can be cleared by cheating, and readers can be directed to seek out one of the core components of this kind of storytelling, the audience community. At this point the story starts becoming their story too as they help decipher the clues, go to websites to download what may or may not be a fake game level, and maybe produce supplemental content to help other audience members play the game or follow along with events.