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Fallout 4: Hyacinth Marsh

Version 1.3

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Document Revisions Table

Version	Description	Requestor	Date
1.0	Initial Document	Professor	2/23/2018
1.1	Minor changes to figures and grammar	Professor	2/27/2018
1.2	Minor changes in preparation for draft turn in	Professor	3/04/2018
1.3	Major updates to quest progression	Professor	04/07/2018
1.4	Minor updates to map	Professor	04/25/2018

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Level Design Document

Level Information

Quick Summary

“Hyacinth Marsh” is a single-player level built for *Fallout 4*. It is a stand-alone quest with no direct link to *Fallout 4*’s main storyline. The quest is designed for players of any level and requires no special gear or abilities to complete. The quest has three possible endings and no associated side quests. Players begin the quest in Diamond City, where they meet an NPC named Amelia, who reveals that her sister has been drawn underground into a settlement called Hyacinth Marsh after receiving love letters sent by the settlement’s leader, Maddon Kent. She is concerned that her sister made a mistake in being drawn in by the letters and is now being held in Hyacinth Marsh against her will. She hires the player to go down into Hyacinth Marsh and find her sister.

Hyacinth Marsh is an underground settlement constructed in a natural cave. Players enter it through the cellar of Maddon’s old house on the outskirts of Diamond City. After travelling down a long set of stairs they find themselves at the end of a row of cobbled-together houses along the shores of a marshy underground lake. The bulk of the quest’s action takes place on and around the main ‘street’ of Hyacinth Marsh.

Level Maps

Hyacinth Marsh Overview



Figure 1: Hyacinth Marsh overview map

Map Label	Event Description	Detail Information	Approx. Difficulty (1-10)	Approx. Time	Wow?
1	Hyacinth Marsh entrance	The player's first view of Hyacinth Marsh as they come down the stairs	1	:30	Y
2	Greeting NPC	This NPC greets the player and welcomes them to Hyacinth Marsh	1	1:00	N
3	Shantih - Hyacinth Marsh resident	This NPC can give the player information about where to find Jillian/Cherry. Later in the quest they can council the player on whether to stay in Hyacinth Marsh.	1	1:45	N

4	Ruby – Hyacinth Marsh resident	This NPC can give the player more information about Hyacinth Marsh. After Maddon offers the player a chance to stay in Hyacinth Marsh Ruby will try to convince them to agree.	1	3:00	N
5	Bridge to Maddon's House	The player encounters 4 bloodbugs – 2 hatchlings and 2 fully grown. They will pursue the player until killed.	5	4:00	N
6	Maddon's house	The player can find Maddon here.	1	5:30	Y
7	Jillian's House	The player can find Jillian here.	1	8:00	N

The player will be able to see houses around Hyacinth Marsh, but will mostly see them in the distance. These will be created using “canned” houses from Diamond City and Revere Beach Station as bases to reduce workload. The only houses that can be reached and entered are Jillian’s and Maddon’s. NPCs walk around Hyacinth Marsh to fill space and give the town life. The player can talk to them, but they have no bearing on the main quest aside from giving the player information on Hyacinth Marsh.

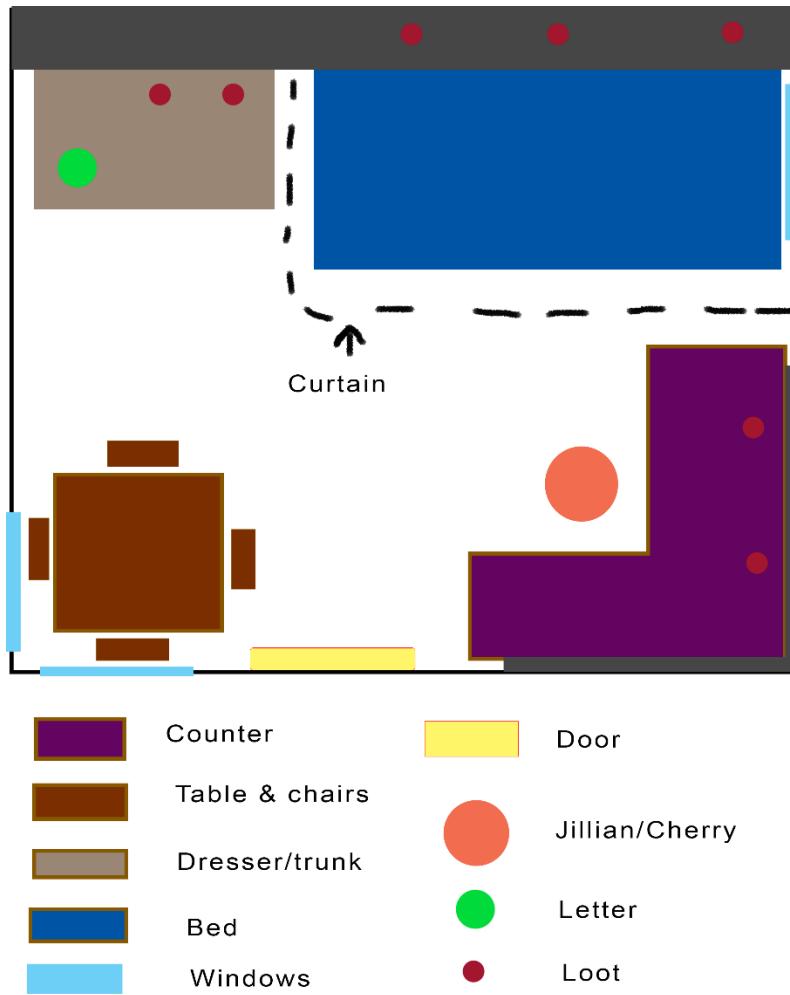
Jillian/Cherry's House

Figure 2: Cherry's House Interior

Map Label	Event Description	Detail Information	Approx. Difficulty (1-10)	Approx. Time	Wow?
Letter	Maddon's letter to Jillian	The player can read this letter from Maddon to Jillian. It is the love letter that incited her to come down to Hyacinth Marsh in the first place. On reading it the player easily understands that the romance is disingenuous.	1	9:30	Maybe (storytelling)
Jillian	Jillian/Cherry	Jillian is an NPC who is central to the quest. She was lured underground by a shady love letter from Maddon Kent and has begun a new life in Hyacinth Marsh as Cherry (a name given to her	1	11:10	Maybe (storytelling)

		by Maddon). The player is sent by her sister to rescue her from Hyacinth Marsh. She tells the player that she voluntarily moved underground and instructs them to tell her sister that she doesn't want to be rescued. During the quest the player learns that Maddon harbors no genuine affection for Cherry, but lured her underground in the same way he lures the other residents of Hyacinth Marsh: by making her promises of being her lover.		
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Jillian/Cherry's house is a small space with a lot of character. Her house gives the player a good understanding of life in Hyacinth Marsh.

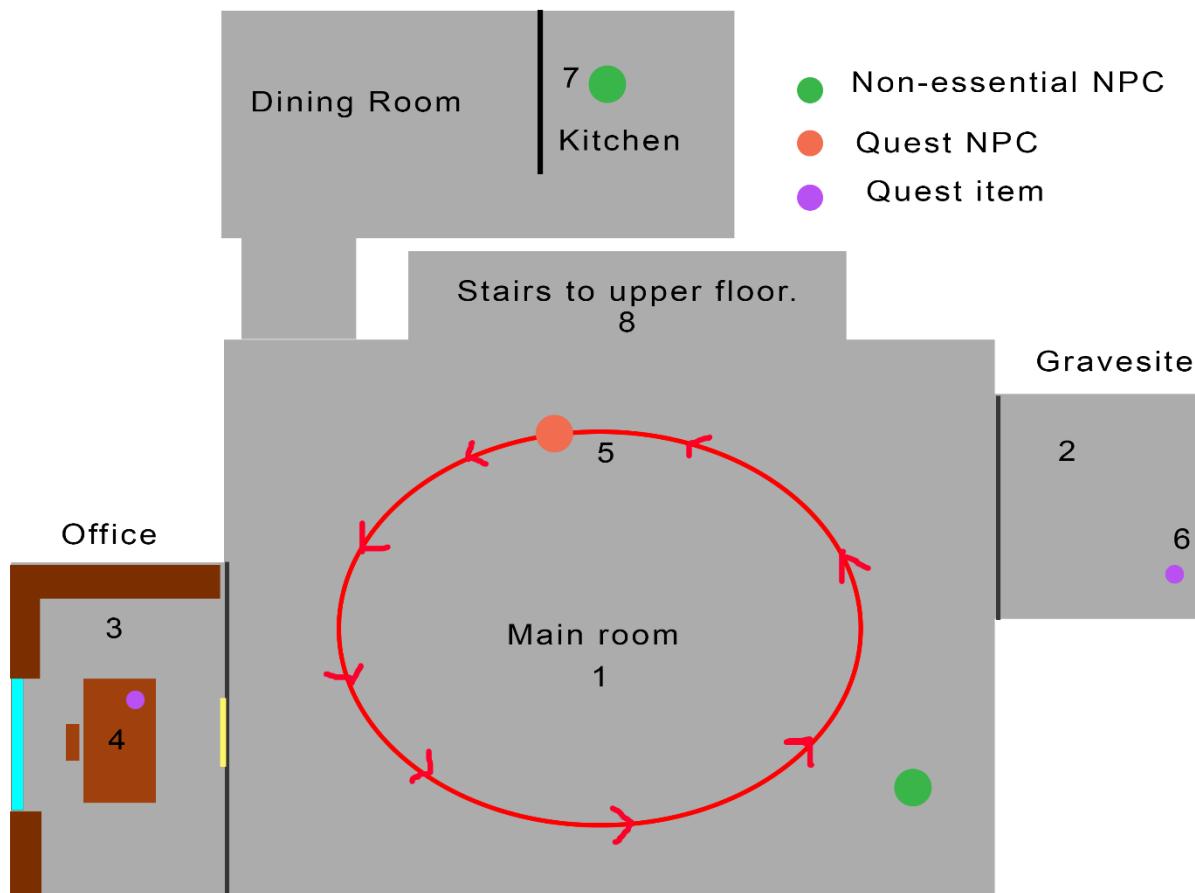
Maddon's House

Figure 3: Maddon's House interior

Map Label	Event Description	Detail Information	Approx. Difficulty (1-10)	Approx. Time	Wow?
1	Main room	The main foyer of Maddon's house	1	14:00	Y
2	Gilly's gravesite	The grave of Maddon's lover Gilly, who he buried in his house after moving to Hyacinth Marsh.	3	14:30	N
3	Maddon's office	Maddon's office. His journal and the key to the storage room can be found here.	1	15:00	N
4	Maddon's desk	The desk's drawer contains 2 items: - Maddon's journal, which the player can read to get more information about Hyacinth Marsh. - The key to the storage room	1	16:00	Maybe (storytelling)
5	Maddon	Maddon walks along the red path laid out around the house's main room. At	4	16:30	N

	various idle points he smokes or looks out the window. Maddon is central to the quest. He is Hyacinth Marsh's ruler and the reason the settlement exists at all. If the player chooses to read Maddon's journal all the way through they can read a chronicle of his descent from a respected member of Diamond City's society to a destitute man addicted to Mentats. In order to feed his addiction he began luring people into his house and drugging them, then convincing them to sacrifice all their resources from the outside world to him. Eventually this practice led to the formation of a cult and the move to Hyacinth Marsh. Maddon uses the residents' money to buy Mentats, which he distributes in low doses to the people of Hyacinth Marsh to keep them placid and happy to stay under the surface with him. In 2 of the quest's 3 possible endings the player must fight Maddon. He is beatable by low-level players but will prove a challenge for them.		
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Maddon's house is the largest building in Hyacinth Marsh and is in better shape than the rest of the houses and spaces the player can enter.

Objectives

- Complete the primary quest
 - Find Cherry and convince her to leave the cult OR find Cherry and let her remain underground.
 - Kill Madden when he refuses to let Cherry leave OR Kill Amelia when you join the cult.
 - Claim a reward for killing Madden OR loot Jillian's body when she's dead.
- Explore & learn about Hyacinth Marsh
 - Read Madden's journal to learn about his history. The journal is located on a terminal in the office.
 - Talk to the other residents and discover why they like Hyacinth Marsh.
 - Read several letters from Madden to the other residents.
- Make meaningful choices
 - Choose to join the cult or not.
 - Choose to tell Jillian/Cherry Madden's motives or not
 - Choose to kill Madden or Amelia

Hooks

- The hook of the level is Hyacinth Marsh itself. In the "Visual Themes" section of the document I explore what makes Hyacinth Marsh so unique, but in broad terms its aesthetic is different from anywhere else in the game. The mystery surrounding its creation and the lives of its citizens is explored through and heightened by environmental storytelling and contextual dialogue from the NPCs.
- Hyacinth Marsh's references to outside literature and history will attract players who enjoy story-driven quests and learning about the game world through interaction with NPCs.

New Gameplay Mechanics

No new gameplay mechanics are required for this quest.

Campaign

Context

"Hyacinth Marsh" is an optional side quest independent from *Fallout 4*'s main quest. Elements of the *Fallout* universe like addictive drugs, brainwashed people, and insane, paranoid leaders are all present in "Hyacinth Marsh" but succeeding at or failing the quest has no bearing on the player's ability to complete the main questline.

The player is introduced to this quest when they encounter a woman named Amelia at Diamond City's noodle stand. She tells the player her sister has joined a cult living in a settlement called Hyacinth Marsh, which is located in a cave beneath Diamond City. The quest's main action takes place in Hyacinth Marsh, though Diamond City does not become inaccessible at any point during the quest.

Backstory

The story of "Hyacinth Marsh" begins months before the player arrives in Diamond City to speak to Amelia. Maddon Kent, the future leader of the cultists living in Hyacinth Marsh, begins taking Mentats to relieve the emotional agony left after the death of his lover. As his addiction to the pills worsens he withdraws into himself and becomes obsessed with T.S. Eliot, who he believes is speaking to him through a copy of *The Wasteland and Other Poems* that he found outside of Diamond City. He believes that Eliot is telling him to build a new kingdom far from the desolation of the post-war world and that its location will be revealed to him via a hint in his poetry. Maddon takes to obsessively wandering the barren plains outside of Diamond City, combing the hills and stretches of ruined ground for the promised place where he will start his new kingdom.

During this wandering Maddon stumbles on a natural tunnel that travels deep into the earth before opening out into a cave with a marsh-like lake at its center. Believing this to be the godly river referenced throughout *The Dry Salvages*, one of Eliot's poems, Maddon immediately decides that this is the place he must settle and begin to gather followers to populate his new kingdom. He christens the cave "Hyacinth Marsh" as a tribute to one of *The Wasteland's* central images. On his return to Diamond City he begins sending letters to residents of the nearby cities and towns enticing them to come join him beneath the ground with promises of affection, companionship, and a paradise free of the intrusions of the corrupt and morally reprehensible Commonwealth.

People begin to arrive and build a ramshackle city on the shores of the subterranean lake at the center of Hyacinth Marsh. When they arrive, each is given a new name by Maddon and ordered to surrender their goods so they can shed their connection to the "stuffed men" in the world above. Maddon begins secretly selling the wares he acquires from those who join his cult to make money to buy Mentats, which he laces into the cult's food as a means of "delivering them to paradise."

Jillian, a wealthy girl from Diamond City, is one of the women he snares into joining his cult after sending her a series of love letters he delivers to her family's mailbox at night when he leaves the cave to sell the cultists' wares for drugs. Her sister Amelia is immune to Maddon's spell and tries to convince Jillian not to go live with Maddon. They fight and Jillian deserts her family in favor of going to live underground. Fearful for her safety, Amelia begins trying to recruit someone to go to Hyacinth Marsh and rescue Jillian.

Aftermath

There are two possible outcomes for the quest based on what the player chooses to do.

- 1) If the player chooses to kill Maddon for Amelia or Cherry – After Maddon's death the directionless cultists enter a period of deep mourning and confusion. However, without Maddon's charisma to bind them together many find themselves disenchanted with what they now understand to be the ravings of a madman and return to the surface. The most loyal among Maddon's followers remain below ground with his body and continue to keep Hyacinth Marsh and its ideas alive.

- 2) If the player chooses to join the cult – The player is given special permission by Maddon to continue on their journey through the main quest on the condition that they come back to visit Hyacinth Marsh every now and then.

Development Schedule

Milestone	Date
LDD	02/23/2018
Hyacinth Marsh layout complete	03/07/2018
Jillian's house & Maddon's house layout complete	03/12/2018
NPCs created, placed and tested for basic functionality	03/16/2018
Navmesh created and combat encounter tested	03/19/2018
Dialogue written and tested in “dry runs” of quest	03/23/2018
FIRST GAMEPLAY TEST	04/02/2018
Gameplay	04/09/2018
Aesthetics detail pass	04/20/2018
Bug free quest ready for testing	04/25/2018
RTM	05/07/2018

Key Theme References

Hyacinth Marsh Exterior (Cave interior)

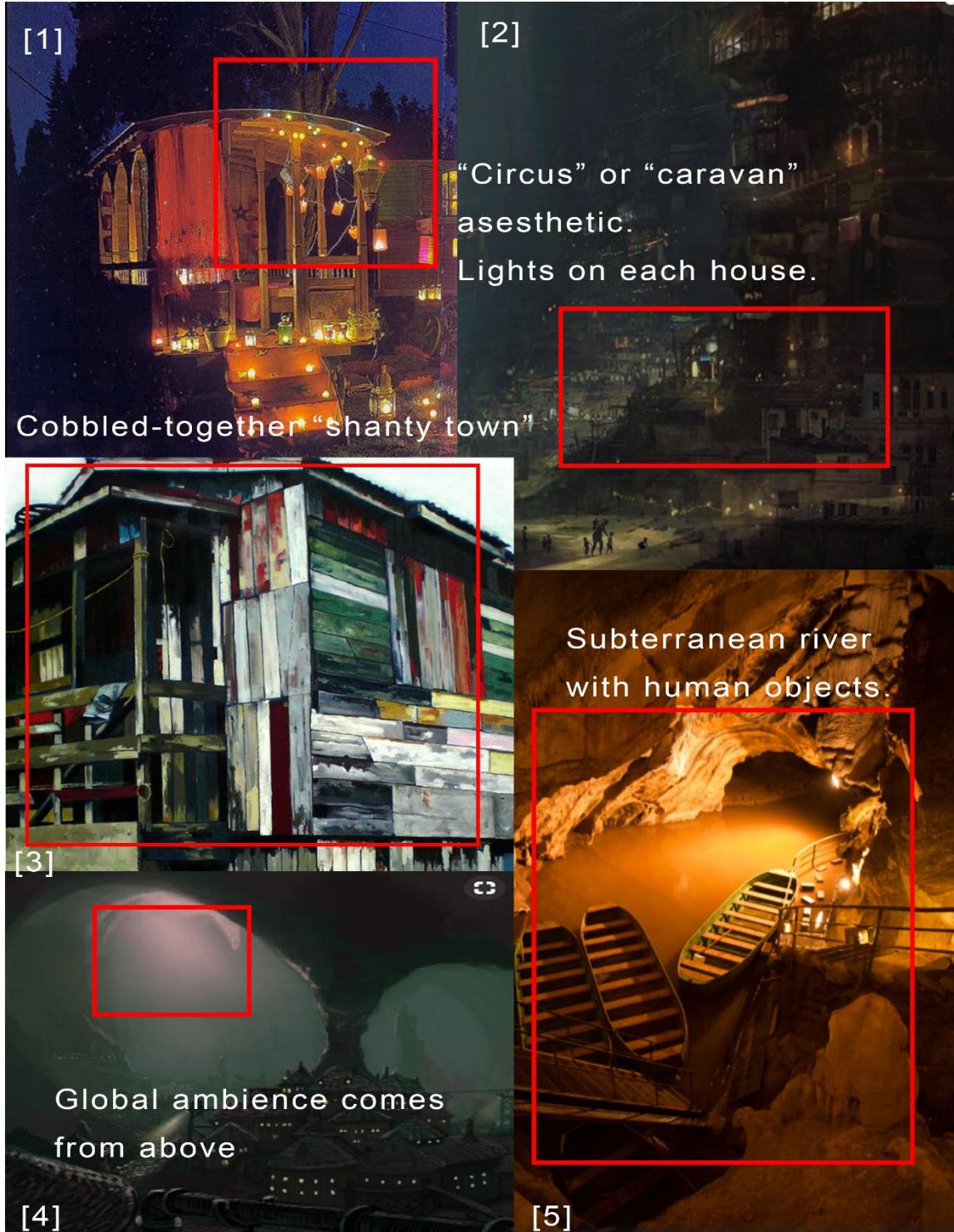


Figure 4: Contact Sheet for Hyacinth Marsh Exterior

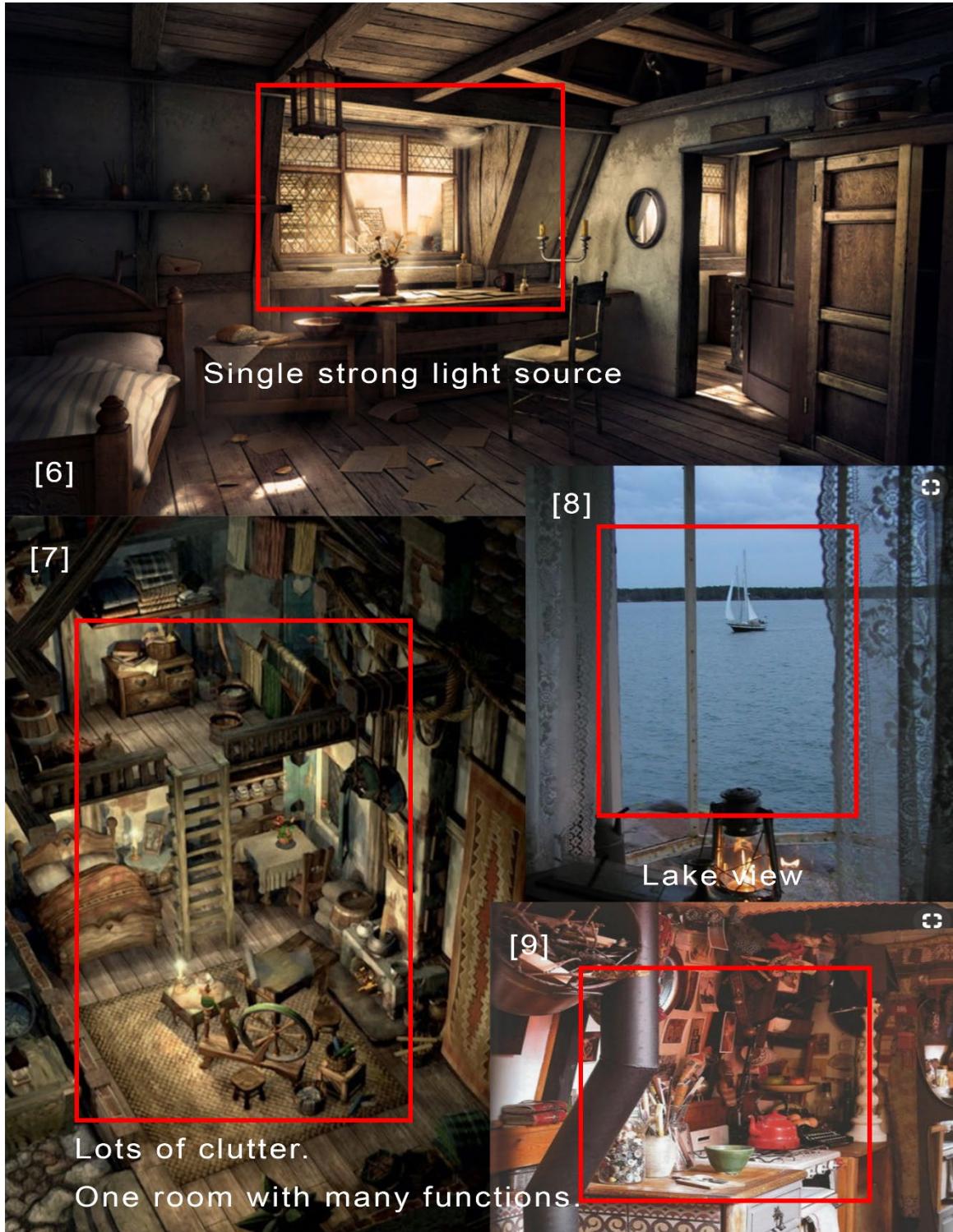
Jillian's House

Figure 5: Contact Sheet for Jillian's House

Maddon's House

Figure 5: Contact Sheet for Maddon's House

Requirements

Map Label	Description	Type	Priority
Amelia	The NPC who starts the player on their quest	NPC	High
Maddon	The leader of the cult in Hyacinth Marsh	NPC	High
Cherry	Amelia's sister	NPC	High
Prufrock	A resident of Hyacinth Marsh – The first follower to join Maddon underground	NPC	Med
Violet	A resident of Hyacinth Marsh – greets the player when they arrive at Hyacinth Marsh	NPC	High
J	A resident of Hyacinth Marsh – regrets coming to Hyacinth Marsh sometimes	NPC	Med
Norton	A resident of Hyacinth Marsh – works in Maddon's house as a cook	NPC	High
April	A resident of Hyacinth Marsh – Maddon's most devoted follower	NPC	Med
Shanti	A resident of Hyacinth Marsh – Wants the player to stay	NPC	High
Maddon's journal	A journal with 15+ entries detailing Maddon's descent into Hyacinth Marsh.	Quest item	High
Maddon's letter to Cherry	A letter from Maddon to Cherry asking her to come underground with him	Quest item	High
Maddon's dialogue	All possible dialogue encounters with Maddon	Dialogue	High
Cherry's dialogue	All possible dialogue encounters with Cherry	Dialogue	High
Amelia's dialogue	All possible dialogue encounters with Amelia	Dialogue	High
J/April dialogue	Possible encounters with these NPCs (not detailed dialogue)	Dialogue	Med
Norton's dialogue	All possible dialogue encounters with Norton	Dialogue	High
Violet's greeting	The greeting Violet gives the player when they arrive in Hyacinth marsh	Dialogue	High
Prufrock/ Shanti dialogue	All possible dialogue encounters with Prufrock and Shanti	Dialogue	Med
Enemy navmesh	Navmesh for Maddon to attack the player.	Navmesh	High
Maddon's navmesh	Navmesh for Maddon to wander around his house	Navmesh	High
NPC navmesh	Navmesh for NPCs of Hyacinth Marsh to wander around	Navmesh	Med
NPC script	Script that will allow Maddon to become hostile if the player confronts him in a fight	Script	High

Appendix A: Quest Summary

Main Quest

1. The player meets Amelia at the noodle stand in Diamond City. Amelia hires the player to find her sister Jillian, who has gone to live underground in a cult located outside of Diamond City.
2. Following Amelia's instructions, the player finds the cave and enters it. They travel down to Hyacinth Marsh and are greeted by Little Gidding.
3. The player asks around by talking to NPCs or exploring Hyacinth Marsh until they find Jillian in her house on the wharf. The player tells her that her sister wants her to return and is worried about her. Jillian protests that she came to Hyacinth Marsh of her own free will and she doesn't want to leave.
4. The player reads a letter from Madden to Jillian. Jillian then instructs them to go to Madden's house to prove that he loves her.
5. The player heads to Madden's mansion to ask him for proof that Jillian is there of her own free will. They find him in his house.
6. Madden tells the player all his followers are there of their own free will but reveals that he harbors no special affection for Jillian. The conversation ends with Madden offering the player a place in his cult if they want it.
 - a. The player can enter Madden's office and find his journal on the desk. Reading this journal reveals more about Madden's past.
7. Madden instructs the player to speak with April and Sweeney, two of his most dedicated followers, to get more information about Hyacinth Marsh.
 - a. April and Sweeney will both tell the player their stories and how they came to live in Hyacinth Marsh.
 - b. The player can also speak to several other NPCs who will tell them their backstories, but only speaking to April and Sweeney will advance the quest.
8. The player will find Amelia standing outside in Hyacinth Marsh when they finish speaking to Madden. When they approach her she will ask what they've learned.
 - a. The player has several options during the interaction with Amelia, but will ultimately be instructed to tell Jillian to leave.
9. The player speaks to Jillian. They can choose to tell her that Madden loves her or not. If the player tells her Madden loves her she will be happy. If they tell her he doesn't love her she will become desperate and beg the player to tell Madden she wants to leave the cult.
10. The player returns to Madden again.
 - a. They can tell him they convinced Cherry to leave, which will incite him to become violent. He will attack the player until killed.
 - b. They can tell him they want to join the cult. Madden will ask them to prove their loyalty by killing Amelia.
11. Depending on who dies either "The Hyacinth Girl" or "The Hollow Men" will be failed.

References

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