

TRY AGAIN

written by

Jake Wylykanowitz & Adam Morina

Address  
Phone  
E-mail

FROM BLACK:

We hear the sounds of a phone ringing. The Designer picks up.

THE DESIGNER (V.O.)  
Hello...yes this is Sophie...  
Of course I've been working non-  
stop on the game...  
Can't wait for you guys to see  
it...oh...  
(Worried)  
You're coming here...TOMORROW?!

We hear The Designer slam the phone down.

THE DESIGNER  
DAMNIT!

We FADE into...

SECTION: DORMITORY / TUTORIAL

A facility of some sort. It's grey. There are BUNK BEDS scattered throughout the room. Only one bed is occupied. Lying on it, asleep, is our protagonist...

THE DESIGNER (CONT'D)  
(Worried)  
Benny, Benny. Wake up. Right now.

Benny stirs, he doesn't get up.

THE DESIGNER (CONT'D)  
(Stern)  
BENNY! Let's go. C'mon man, we  
don't have all day.

PRESET CUT SCENE (No Player Control): Benny jolts awake, but he's still tired. He rubs his eyes and gets up.

BENNY  
(groggy, with a sniff)  
Hey...

THE DESIGNER  
MY PUBLISHER IS COMING TOMORROW! We  
need to run through this last test  
build.

BENNY  
Do I have a choice?

THE DESIGNER

You're not hearing me, today is  
your last day as a test dummy.

BENNY

Really?! FINALLY! I'm going to be  
the lead character in a video game!

GAMEPLAY: Benny starts to run towards his first obstacle. As  
they do, The Designer continues to talk--

Benny continues running --

DESIGNER

(Forced chipper; to  
Herself)

I just hope it works. It's gotta be  
perfect.

(Beat)

I think it builds well...

Beat.

DESIGNER (CONT'D)

(To herself as a train of  
thought)

It's fast-paced. That's-what-  
people-are-into-these-days...so my  
publisher says.

(Beat; If player is  
taking a long time)

I have to trust their word. They  
hired me, they want something  
worthy of being called alpha and  
I'm gonna deliver it even if it  
kills me.

Player loses control of Benny. Benny stops, he looks at the  
TV, flailing his arms.

First checkpoint --

DESIGNER (CONT'D)

Checkpoint system implemented.  
*Checkpoint Riffing/Improv*

SECTION: POST TUTORIAL / AFTER FIRST SWING

BENNY

Hey!

Benny stops running. The Designer train of thought is  
derailed.

DESIGNER  
What's wrong?

BENNY  
You wanna make this faster? Maybe  
cut some of these jumps.

DESIGNER  
(somewhat annoyed;  
patronized)  
...Solid suggestion.

The Designer falls silent -- player is given back control.  
Benny starts running until...

SECTION: STORAGE CONTAINER

DESIGNER (CONT'D)  
(joylessly)  
Container above...

Storage Container falls HARD and kills Benny:

THE DESIGNER  
(After first player death)  
Don't you appreciate the  
checkpoints?!

BENNY  
(deadpan)  
Glad you finally added them.

Player navigates Benny through Container section, he climbs  
to the top.

SECTION: POST CONTAINER, FIRST CAMERA ANGLE CHANGE.

The CAMERA CHANGES to an over the shoulder view.

THE DESIGNER  
I love this camera angle. I think  
it adds more "juice."

BENNY  
"Juice?" What the hell does that  
mean?

Section: BRIDGE

Benny runs through the post-storage section, he's halfway  
across the bridge.

BENNY (CONT'D)  
 You didn't update this bridge at  
 all...?

SMACK! Benny is blindsided by a giant wrecking ball, he's completely annihilated, and RESPAWNS.

THE DESIGNER  
 What do you call that?

We hear The Designer typing; a debug console error appears on screen: ROTATE BRIDGE.

The bridge rotates, turning into a wall running section.

SECTION: WALL RUN

BENNY  
 (Frustrated)  
 Wall running, though? Haven't you  
 already made this...?

DESIGNER  
 (Filled with self-doubt;  
 Annoyed)  
 I guess wall runs aren't really a  
 new idea...

SECTION: WRECKING-BALL/BOILER ROOM

DESIGNER (CONT'D)  
 (Beat, we hear the  
 Designer slam her desk)  
 UGH! YOU THINK NOTHING I MAKE IS  
 ORIGINAL?! You know what--? FINE.  
 Lemme start this section over.

We hear The Designer typing; a debug console error appears on screen: DESTROYING WALLS.

Suddenly, the camera turns back to the side scroll perspective and a wrecking ball comes flying through the boiler room wall, shattering the room to pieces in front of Benny.

Benny takes off running, The Designer is FREAKING out as wrecking balls smash through the level --

DESIGNER (CONT'D)  
 This is derivative!

Part of the structure is shattered by a wrecking ball.

DESIGNER (CONT'D)  
This is uninspired!

More things break!

DESIGNER (CONT'D)  
This part is DEFINITELY NOT making  
the final build!

The Designer continues to list her problems with her work as Benny narrowly makes it through the destroyed boiler room.

He thinks he's made it to the end --

He runs towards the door but the floor beneath him gives out.

BENNY  
(Screaming)  
AAHHH!!!

PRESET CUT SCENE (No Player Control): Benny falls into pitch black darkness, slamming into metal pipes and barriers on his way down. He groans. The only light we have is from the designers RED SCREEN.

PRESET CUT SCENE: Benny stands up --

BENNY (CONT'D)  
WHAT THE HELL WAS THAT??  
Why am I having to deal with your  
mistakes!!

PRESET CUT SCENE: He TURNS AND FLAILS his arms towards The Designer's television.

THE DESIGNER  
(Frustrated)  
THAT'S YOUR PURPOSE. You're a test  
character!

BENNY  
(Angry, mocking)  
If I'm *just a test character*, then  
why bother? So I can wake up  
tomorrow and see that you *still*  
*haven't made any progress?*

DESIGNER  
(Beat; Stubborn)  
I don't want your ideas or  
suggestions. I KNOW what I'm doing.  
Just Keep going.

She scoffs. Benny crosses his arms.

BENNY  
 (scoffs)  
 Whatever you say. You're the  
 designer.

The LIGHTS COME ON.

SECTION: CONVEYOR BELT

Player regains control from the cut scene and runs towards  
 the inert conveyor belts. Benny hops on and starts running.

The conveyor belts FIRE UP--

THE DESIGNER  
 --THERE we go--

--And game assets FLY down the belts, killing Benny  
 instantly. Benny respawns at the top.

Benny tries again, this time he's able to make it to the  
 swing bars of conveyor.

THE DESIGNER (CONT'D)  
 You know what? I shouldn't be so  
 down on myself. This movement  
 system rocks.  
 (Realization:)  
 Let's try it at this angle.

Camera turns to over the shoulder --

Benny continues through the conveyor belt section and makes  
 it to the end.

BENNY  
 (Sarcastic)  
 Oh yeah, people are gonna *LOVE* the  
 constant camera switching.

THE DESIGNER  
 (obtuse)  
 Did someone say something?  
 (beat)  
 Guess not.

SECTION: POST-CONVEYOR

Above Benny are stacks of scaffolding and more facility  
 structures. Benny comes to a summit. A platform with a ladder  
 awaits him.

PRESET CUT SCENE: Benny climbs up the ladder.

BENNY  
 (Exhausted; Bottom of  
 ladder)  
 Aren't really long ladders already  
 played out?

The Designer doesn't answer. The sounds of a train rumbling  
 from the distance.

BENNY (CONT'D)  
 Hello?! Where am I?

BOOM! Benny is blindsided by a train. The impact HURTS. It  
 levels him.

SECTION: SUBWAY STATION

THE DESIGNER  
 (Rubbing it in his face)  
 Surprise! A brand new level...It's  
 a new mock up I made of a subway  
 station.

BENNY  
 Kinda feels out of place--  
 (Cuts off)  
 You know what? Never mind.

The Designer says nothing.

Benny runs through the subway tracks, makes it past the  
 puzzle.

THE DESIGNER  
 Let me try something.

A train light comes from the background, nearly killing  
 Benny.

BENNY  
 AH! SERIOUSLY?!

Benny continues on --

THE DESIGNER  
 IT'S WORKING! YES! Let me try that  
 with the background --

We hear the sounds of typing, debug console command appears  
 on screen: ACTIVATE SUBWAY CARS.

In the B.G., Subway cars come rapid fire into the station  
 from every which way.



BENNY  
 (Surprised)  
 Actually... this place is pretty  
 fun.

THE DESIGNER  
 (Genuine)  
 You like it?! Oh my god, yes. Thank  
 you so much...Think it needs more  
 cars though.  
 (beat, then:)  
 Watch this!

The camera turns to over the shoulder, and two train cars  
 come flying into the station.

THE DESIGNER (CONT'D)  
**Wall run!**

**SECTION: SUBWAY WALL RUN**

Benny takes off wall running along the subway cars, dodging  
 pillars. There's an occasional swing to clear a gap. There's  
 a giant pit below him, yet he's moving with ease.

We hear the sounds of The Designer's keyboard clicking, she's  
 taking notes --

THE DESIGNER (CONT'D)  
 (Distracted; Rambling)  
 So if I take the shipping  
 containers, and combine them with  
 the conveyor belts & have the  
 subway cars moving...YES...there's  
 NO WAY anyone has seen anything  
 like this before...  
*Continued Designer Rambling*

**SECTION: END OF SUBWAY INTO AI LEVEL**

Benny makes it to the end of subway. The Designer continues  
 to type and notes and ramble to herself.

PRESET CUT SCENE: Benny looks up, there's now a GIANT red TV  
 on the wall.

BENNY  
 HEY!

The Designer doesn't answer, she's not listening.

BENNY (CONT'D)  
 I see you're satisfied! Everything works. Can I move to the next build now...?

Benny stops talking, he notices rows of humanoids lined up in the B.G. They look exactly like him.

BENNY (CONT'D)  
 (In Shock)  
 Wait...what the... are these all...me?  
 (No answer)

The Designer finally says something --

SECTION: AI LEVEL

PRESET CUT SCENE: Benny walks through the facility

BENNY (CONT'D)  
 Where am I?

THE DESIGNER  
 Look, Benny...the game still needs a few more tweaks...  
 you...need a few more tweaks.

BENNY  
 I'm confused. You said this was my last test.

THE DESIGNER  
 It is...for your character model. I have to replace you with something more... final.

BENNY  
 (Sad)  
 You lied to me.  
 (Realizing)  
 How long have I been doing this?

THE DESIGNER  
 (sighs)  
 I've been working on this game for 4 years.

BENNY  
 (Stunned)  
 4 YEARS?!

THE DESIGNER  
 Some games take 10...

BENNY  
 (Determined)  
 I am not waiting around for that.  
 I'm getting out of here.

Benny is going on his own, he takes off running.

THE DESIGNER  
 I'm sorry, Benny, but I can't let  
 you go, I need your data.  
 (to AI)  
 Chase him down.

The player regains control of Benny.

Benny takes off running through the level. Old AI versions of Benny appear & start chasing Benny through the facility.

Benny continues running, ignoring her - she continues...

THE DESIGNER (CONT'D)  
 My publisher wants a FRANCHISE. A  
 CUTE character! Marketable, and  
 easy to make a plush out of!

Benny isn't listening, he's being chased down by a terrifying AI, and platforming around obstacles.

THE DESIGNER (CONT'D)  
 This game really just needs an  
*identity*. Look at other  
 platformers. They have something  
 unique that gives them an edge. I  
 have nothing. Well, except you,  
 but...

He makes it to a higher level but the floor gives out and he falls into a pit. The pit is populated by dead Benny's.

SECTION: AI BENNY GRAVEYARD WITHIN AI LEVEL

Benny trudges through the dead, older versions of himself. When he's a quarter of the way through the Benny mud, 4 older versions of him wake up.

THE DESIGNER (CONT'D)  
 (to Herself)  
 Personally, I think you're pretty  
 cool but my publisher is looking  
 for... something else.

The offline-Benny's start chasing Benny through the sludge. He's moving as quickly as he can but it's challenging.

He's barely able to make it and climb up before they reach him.

SECTION: END OF AI/END OF GAME

Benny makes it out of the graveyard. There's only 25-50 meters left...but in front of him is a giant, empty pit and broken bridge.

BENNY

NO, NO! PLEASE, I'M BEGGING YOU.  
PUT ME IN THE FINAL GAME. I CAN BE  
CUTE! I CAN BE FUNCTIONAL!

THE DESIGNER

I wish it were up to me. The  
publisher controls everything.

BENNY

But it's your game. Why do you need  
to listen to them?

DESIGNER

Because this is a huge opportunity  
for me.

BENNY

But that doesn't mean you should  
sacrifice your integrity for the  
sake of a stuffed animal!  
(Beat; Emphasis)  
You're good at what you do.

Beat; The Designer thinks for a moment.

THE DESIGNER

(Matter of fact)  
You know, you're right.

SECTION: END OF AI/END OF GAME

The empty pit starts to rewind, forming a bridge.

Benny takes off running, a bridge forms in front of him,  
making it easy to cross.

At the end of the room is a door, emitting a white light.

BENNY

Oh my god, are you serious?

The Designer lightly chuckles.

THE DESIGNER

Yes.

Benny runs across the bridge.

THE DESIGNER (CONT'D)

Walk through that door to enter the final build.

BENNY

I've actually made it?! I can't believe this...

(Beat)

I'll see you in there!

The Designer is going to say something, but she doesn't. Benny walks into the next build, engulfed by white light.

She stops for a moment before taking a deep breath.

We hear the Designer type a phone number into her phone.

THE DESIGNER

Hey, it's Sophie. I've locked all my features.

(Beat)

Wait 'till you see my main character. I call him Benny, you are gonna love him.

The phone clicks, the TV turns off. She hangs up.

BLACK - END.