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The Thing that Should Not Be A Short Video Game Design

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Setting:

A single room, with a closed door on one side, and the Thing on the other. Lights play softly across the open doorway. The Thing, a black box with a steel, snake-like extension swaying above it, hums softly, like a cobra sensing the call of the snake-charmer.

Gameplay:

The player begins in the room with the avatar of their choice. There are only two choices: walk through the door, or interact with the Thing.

Option 1: Walk Through the Door:

If the player attempts to walk through the door, the lights across the doorway will flash brightly, and intensify. At the same time, the Thing's swaying and humming will intensify. Bright lights flash around it. Clearly, it's trying to attract the player's attention.

From here, the player has two choices:

Option 1a: The player continues through the door:
Go to Winning.

Option 1b: The player interacts with the Thing.
Go to Option 2.

Option 2: Interact With the Thing:

If the player interacts with the Thing, the lights across the doorway will switch to a deep red color. Stepping away from the Thing causes the lights to return to their flashing state.

Interacting with the Thing starts the following dialogue:

Table 1: Dialogue

Thing Dialogue	Player Dialogue	Result
The thing sways in the air, like a snake writhing to the tune of its charmer.		
	Caress the snake's head.	Random result from table 2
	Shake the snake's head.	Random result from table 2
	Hold the snake's head upside down.	Random result from table 2
	Grab the snake's body.	Random result from table 2
	Touch the black box.	Random result from table 2
	Step away from the thing	The lights playing across the doorway return to their flashing state.

Table 2: Snake Results

Seed	Result	Go To:
1	The lights on the door flash red, while the lights on the Thing flash green.	Thing Dialogue, row 1.
2	The lights on the door flash yellow, while the lights on the Thing flash red.	Thing Dialogue, row 1.
3	The lights on the door flash green, while the lights on the Thing flash yellow.	Thing Dialogue, row 1.

Winning:

The only way to win the game is to walk through the door. The flashing lights are a distraction; they do nothing. The only purpose of the Thing is to distract and frustrate the player. It does nothing useful. The door itself is available to be walked through at all times. All the player has to do is ignore the Thing, and leave.

Winning isn't the point. Turning on the light isn't the point

The right
choice
cross you
away



react/recognize owner?
depending on
how it's
treated?
they to get your
attention

random
data
feeds
create
non-
explicit
behavior

fold

fold