



Dragon Age™
KEEP



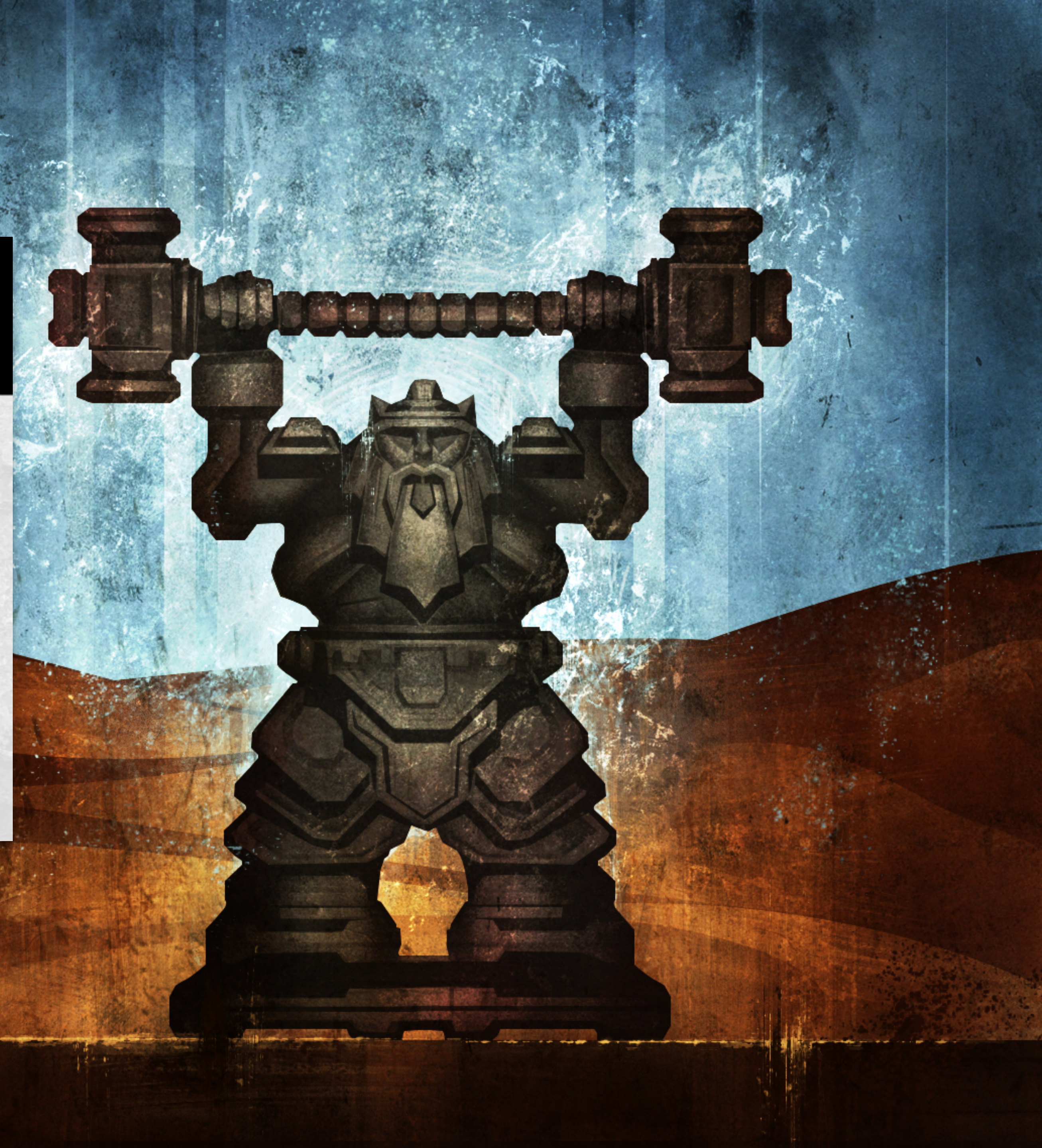
Introductions

Leah Shinkewski
Web Producer, Dragon Age Keep



What you'll Learn

- Tackle the technical cross-platform challenge
- Create amazing web experiences for your players with any size team
- Work with your community to develop better products with a built in following



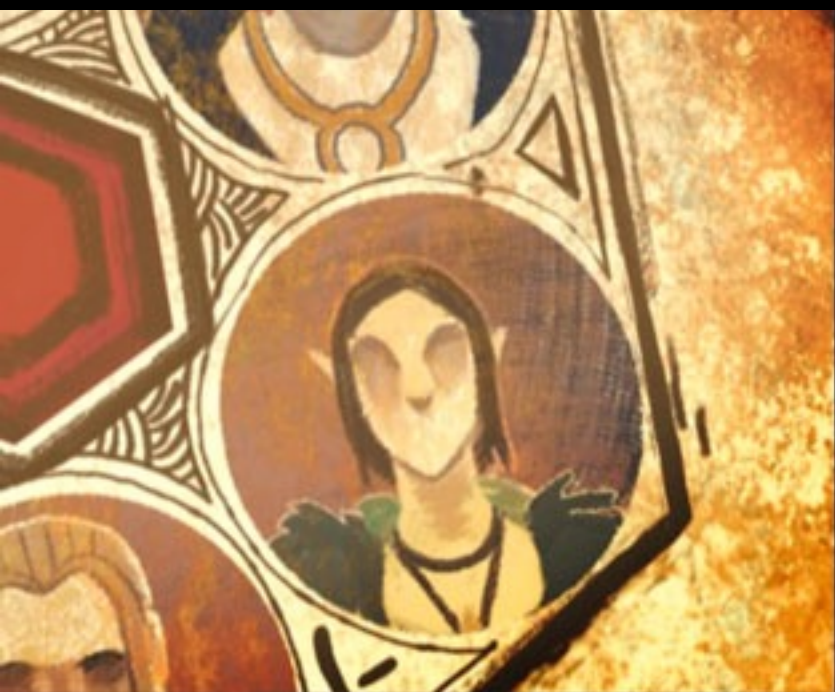


Presentation Outline

1. Choice Matters
2. The Save Game Challenge
 - *The World Vault*
3. The Franchise Ecosystem
 - *The Tapestry*
 - *The Interactive Story Summary*
4. Community Beta Program
5. Closing Thoughts



Choice Matters



?

DID HAWKE SIDE WITH THE MAGES OR THE TEMPLARS IN THE FINAL BATTLE?

Hawke went to the defense of the mages as the Gallows burned.



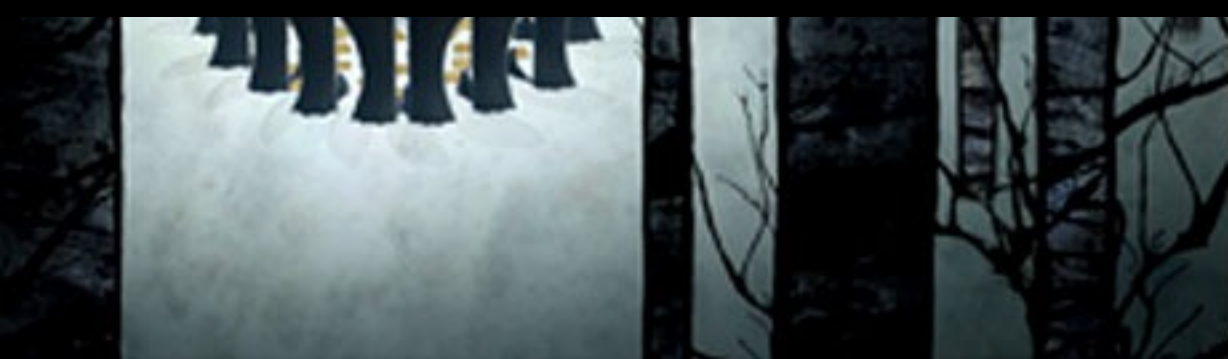
Sided with mages

I never finished Dragon Age II because I couldn't make a decision about the Templars and the Mages and now that I'm using the Dragon Age Keep all of my anxiety about the choices at the end have hit me like a brick wall. even after 3 years I still don't know what to do.

<http://dragonageconfessions.tumblr.com/>



Save Game Challenge



Dragon Age Main Series Timeline

2009

Dragon Age: Origins

The Stone Prisoner (DLC)

Warden's Keep (DLC)

2010

Return to Ostagar (DLC)

Dragon Age: Awakening

Feastday gifts & pranks (DLC)

Darkspawn Chronicles (DLC)

Leliana's Song (DLC)

The Golems of Amgarrak (DLC)

Witch Hunt (DLC)

Ultimate Edition (Compilation)

2011

Dragon Age II

The Exiled Prince (DLC)

The Black Emporium (DLC)

Legacy (DLC)

Mark of the Assassin (DLC)

<http://dragonageconfessions.tumblr.com/>

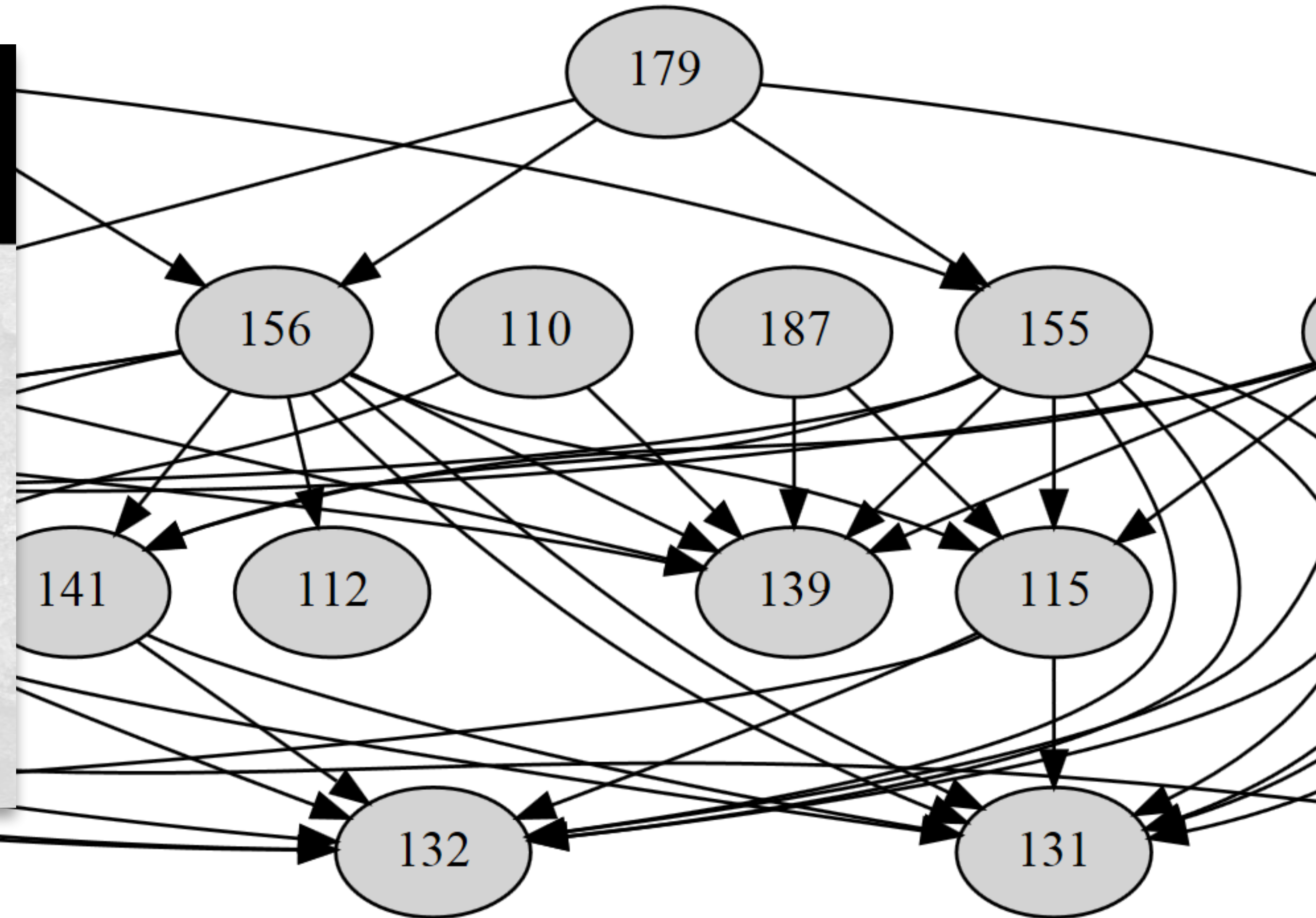
'Ere, he says
he's not dead.

I'm not dead.
I feel happy.
I feel happy.

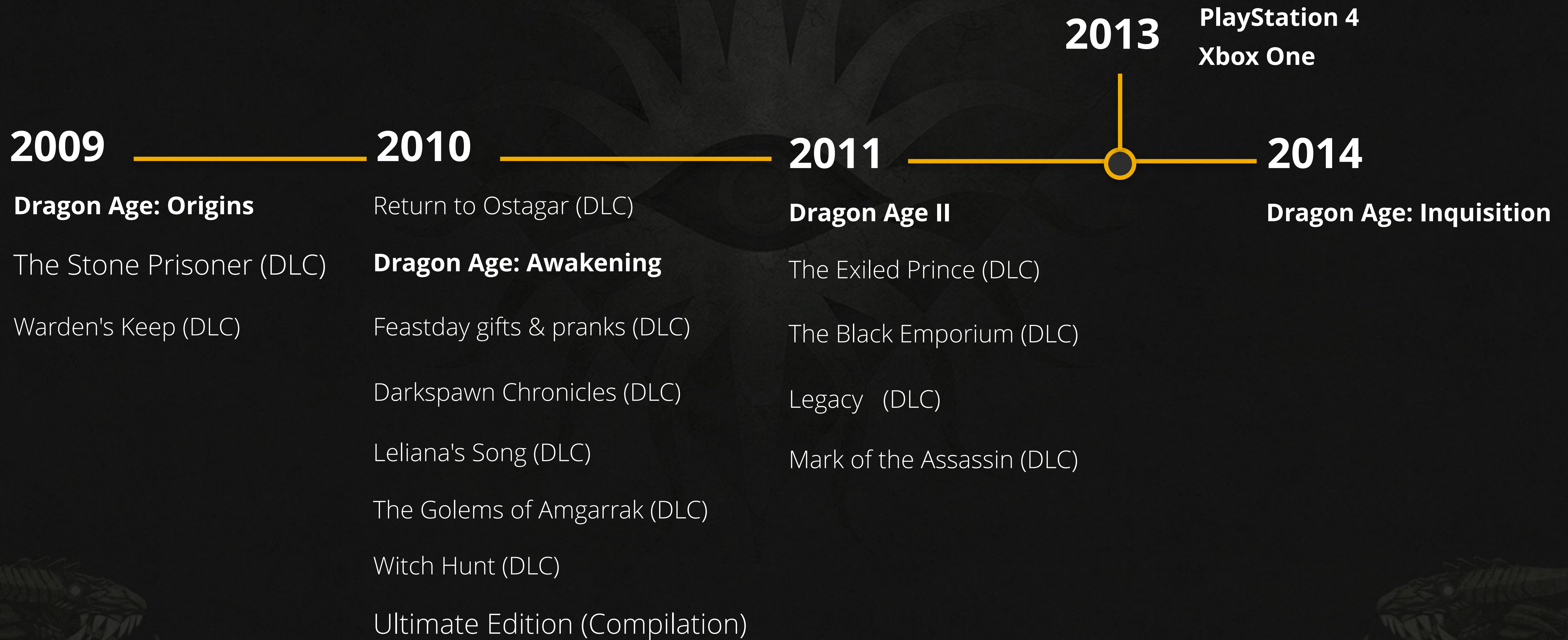
It really pissed me off when I found out that even if you deny Morrigan's ritual and kill the Archdemon, when you import to Awakening your Warden will be alive again with no explanation whatsoever.

Traditional Save Import

- Errors are inevitable
- Logic governing choices are complex
- Fixes require patches to the client
- No guarantee that knock-ons won't be introduced



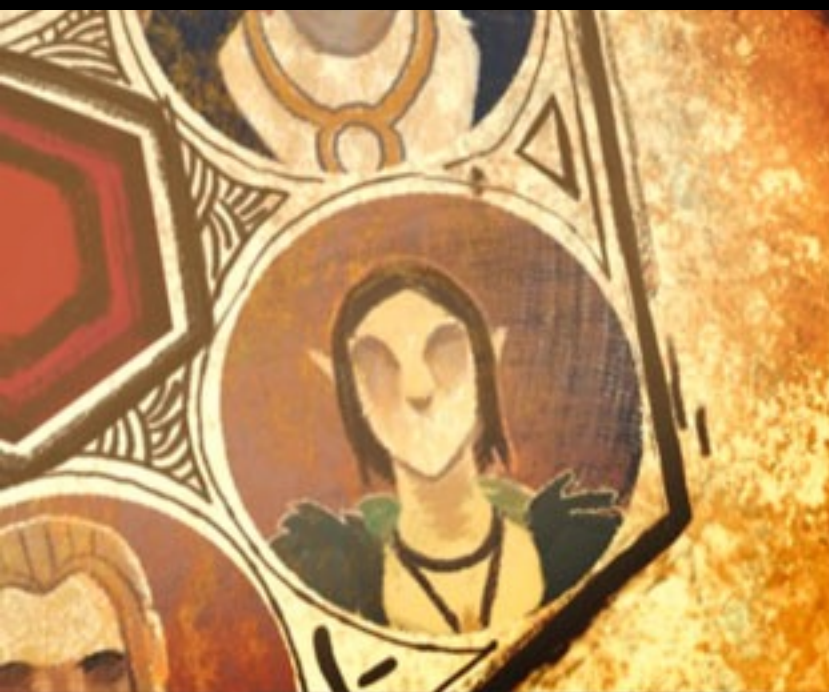
Dragon Age Main Series Timeline





The World Vault

Case Study



Challenge

- Future-proof solution
- Preserve player data after sunset
- Support any platform
- Support multiple clients



Decisions across the franchise

+

Rules behind the plots

=

Always valid world state

Ability to solve for plot conflicts

DAO choices

DA2 choices

DAI choices

+

Plot Logic & Rules

Autosolver



World Vault



Filter 1

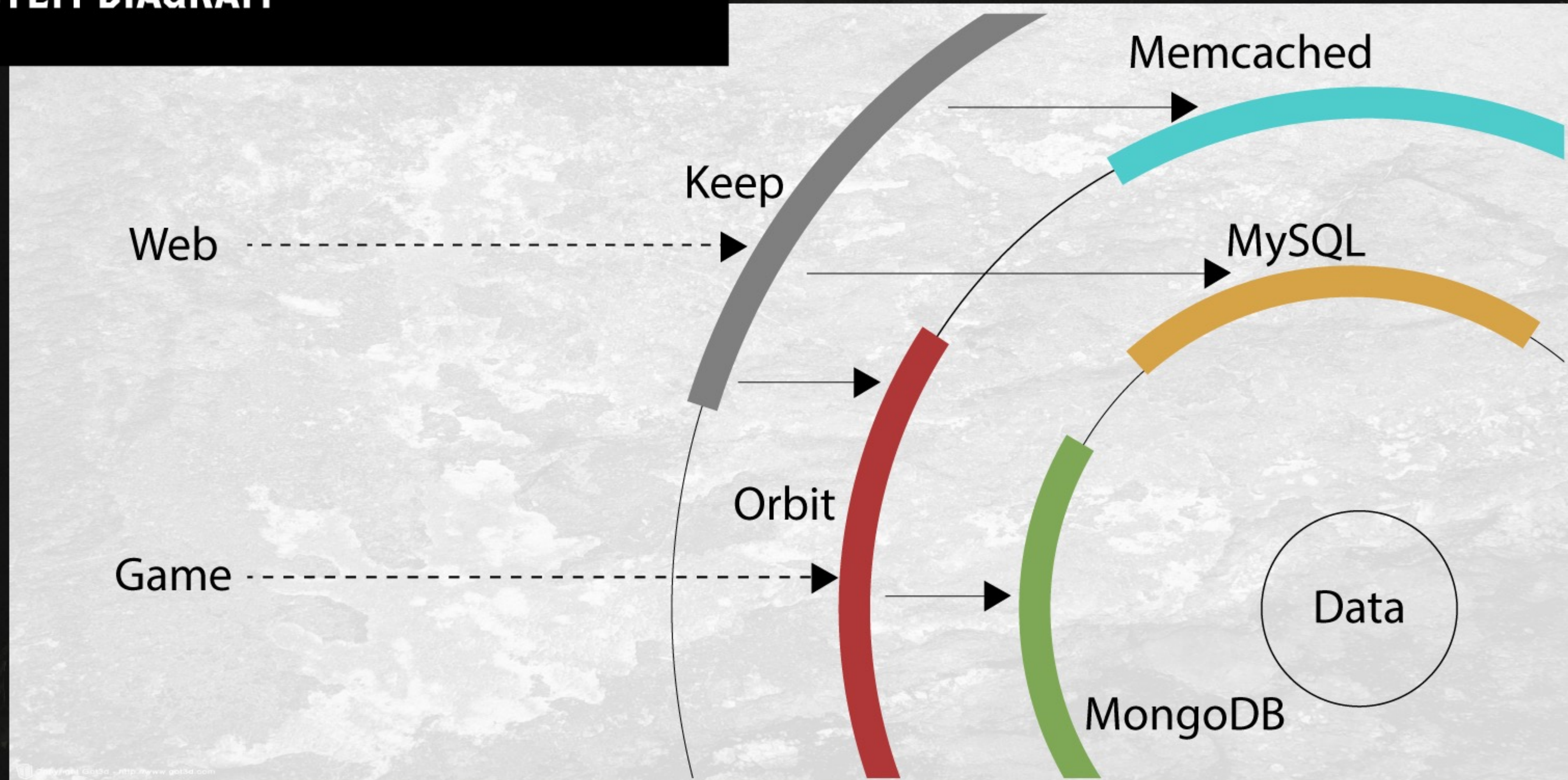
Filter n

Client 1

Client n

Clients only read what they care about

SYSTEM DIAGRAM



WORLD VAULT: PLOT FLAGS AND SOLVER

Player decisions from previous games will continue to matter.

Who killed the Archdemon?

- The Warden
- Alistair
- Loghain

Did Morrigan have a baby?

- No
- Yes, with the Warden
- Yes, with Alistair
- Yes, with Loghain

What happened to the Warden at the end of Dragon Age Origins?

- Sacrificed him/herself killing the Archdemon
 - Pre condition: Warden couldn't have had a baby with Morrigan.
- Is alive and well
 - Pre condition: If Morrigan didn't have a baby, then either Alistair or Loghain killed the archdemon



DRAGON AGE: ORIGINS



Hero



Companions



Prologue



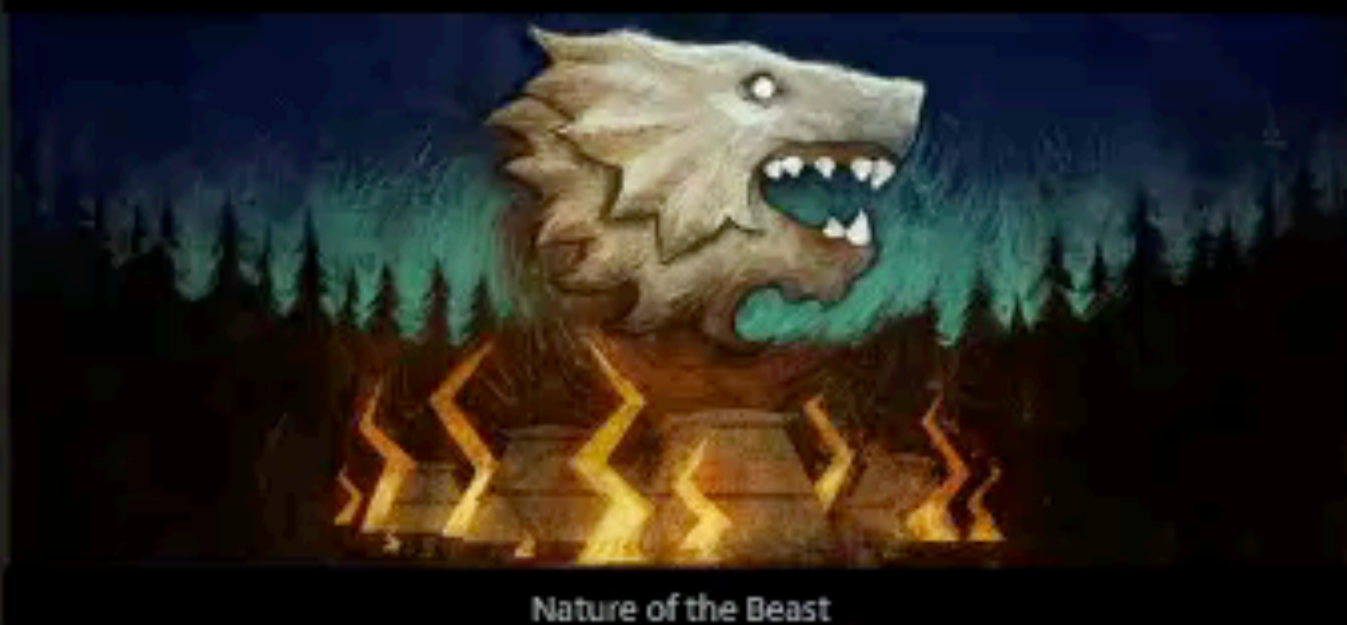
The Urn of Sacred Ashes



The Arl of Redcliffe



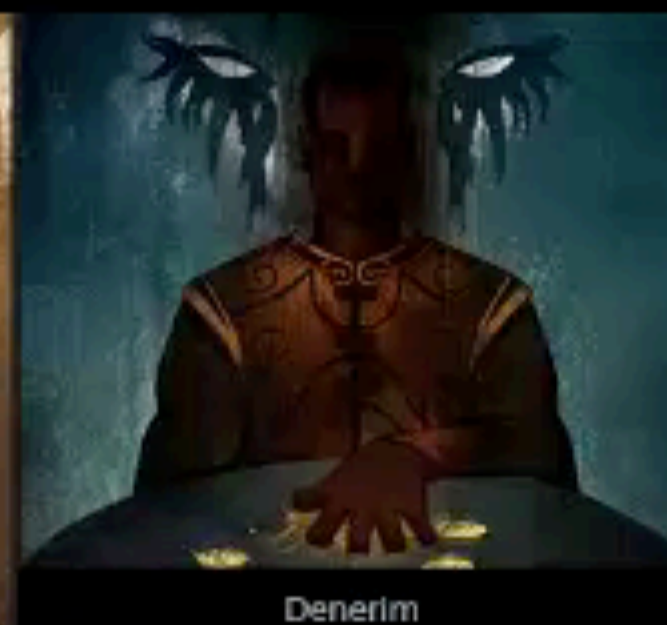
Awakening Expe



Nature of the Beast



Broken Circle



Denerim



The Landsmeet



The Battle of Denerim



Witch Hunt DLC



Paragon of Her Kind



Warden's Keep DLC

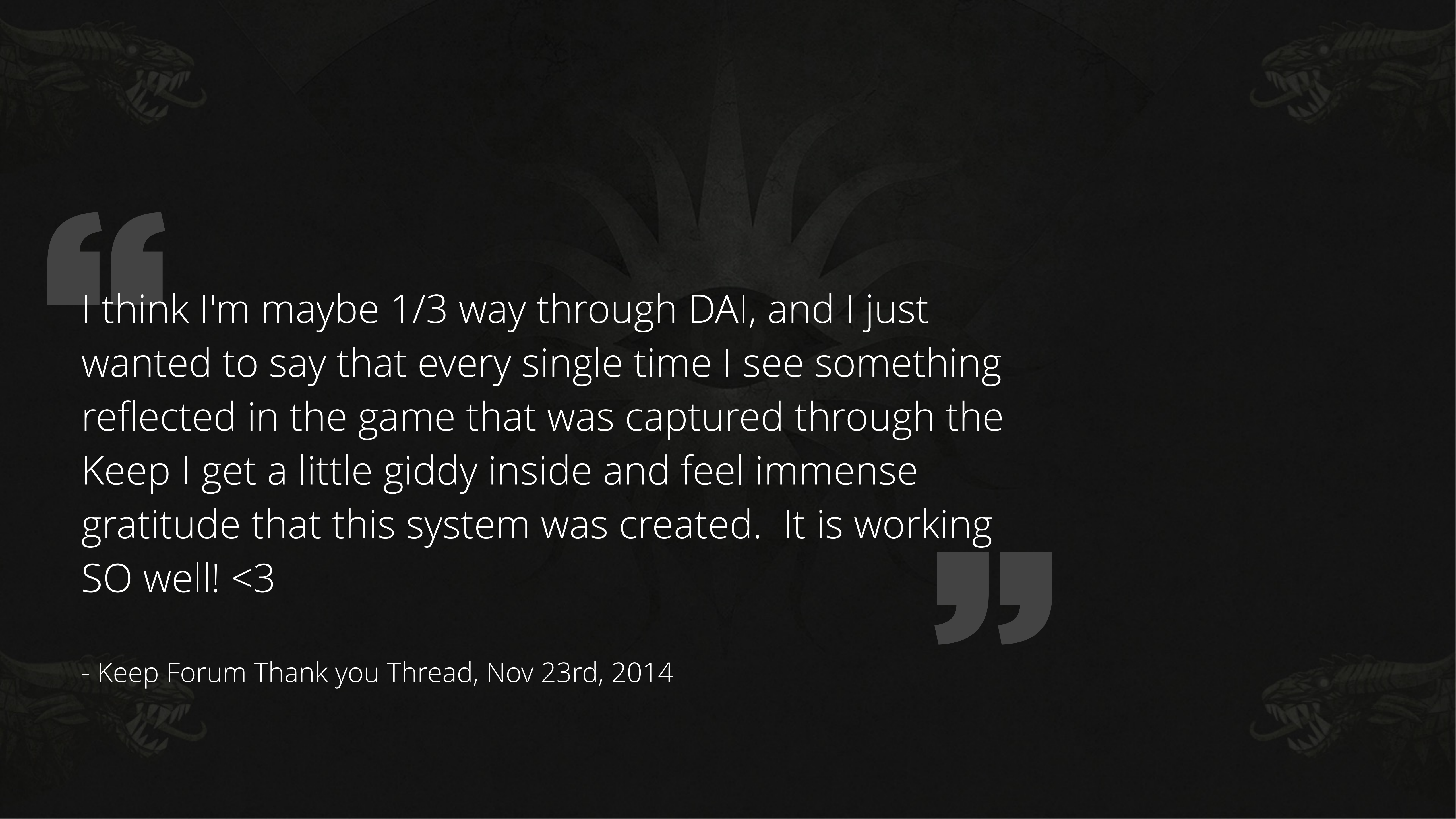


Stone Prisoner

Results

- Players are able to use their save game on any platform
- Carry over what's important to the franchise
- Logic is independent of the client
- Autosolver can manage knock-ons and dependencies





“

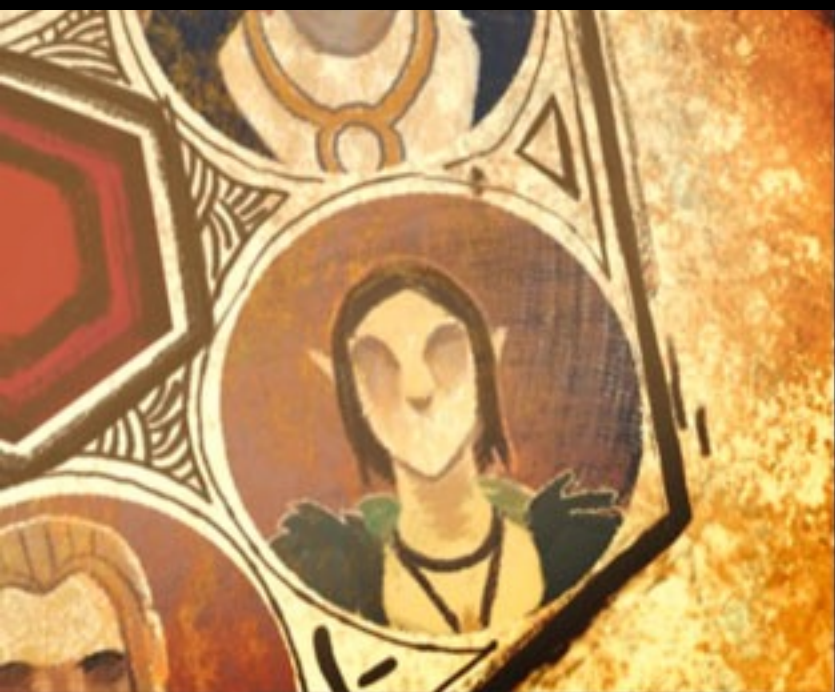
I think I'm maybe 1/3 way through DAI, and I just wanted to say that every single time I see something reflected in the game that was captured through the Keep I get a little giddy inside and feel immense gratitude that this system was created. It is working SO well! <3

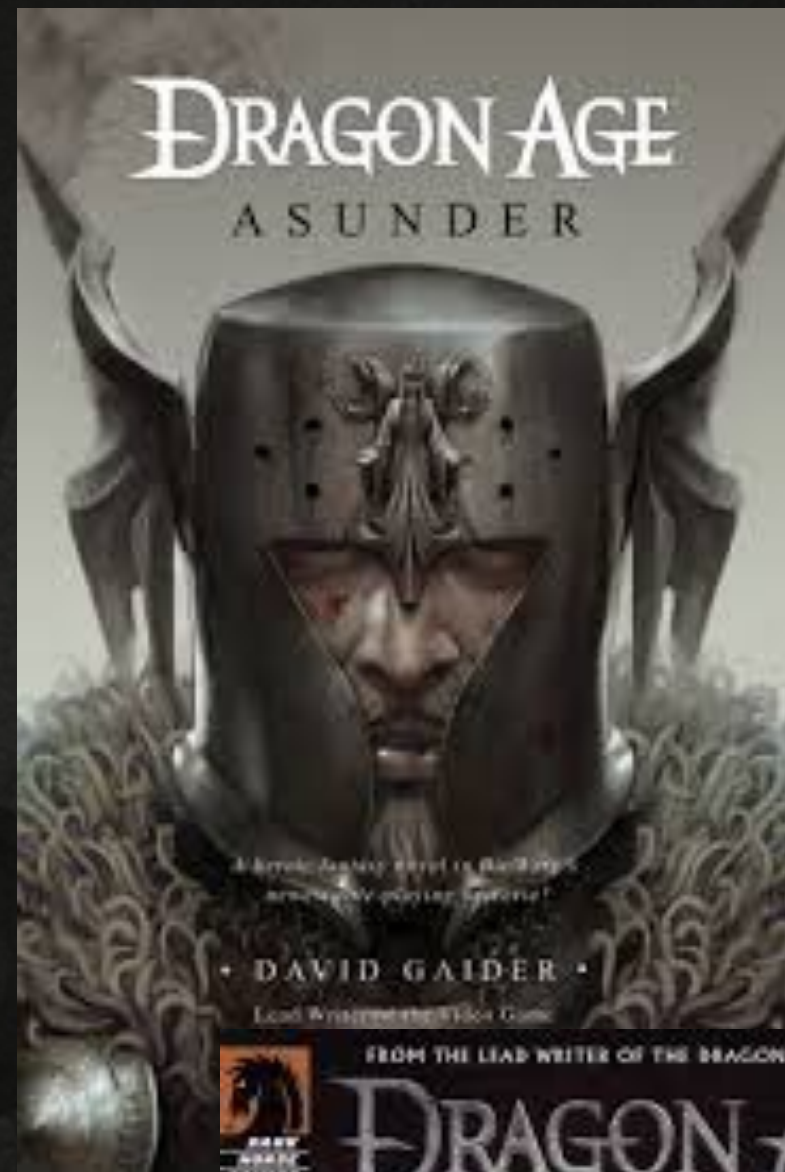
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- Keep Forum Thank you Thread, Nov 23rd, 2014



Franchise Ecosystem

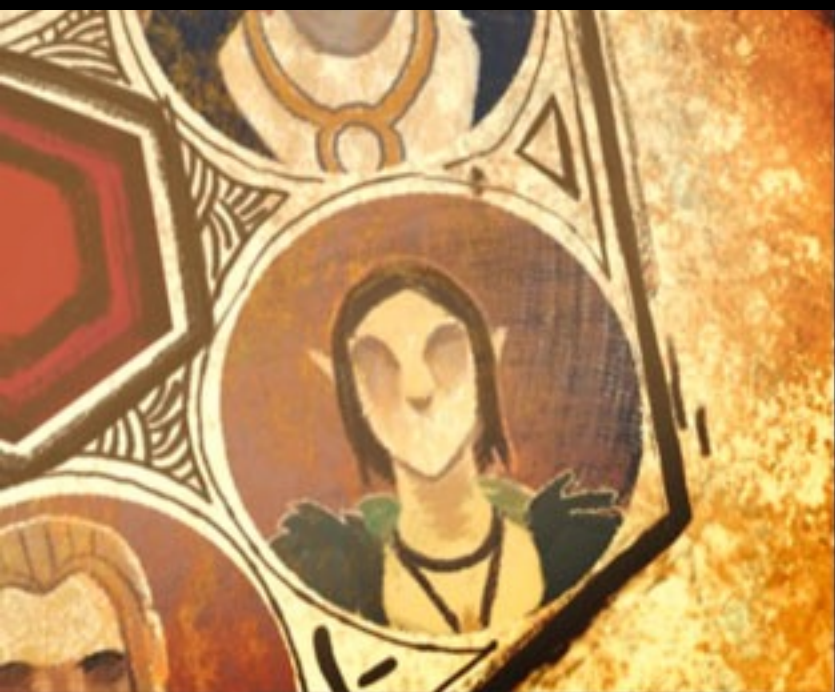






The Tapestry

Case Study





The Challenge

- Allow players to customize their World State
- Make conflicts & knock-ons less confusing to navigate
- Create an experience not a tool
- Cater to new and existing Dragon Age fans

Set up your World State so your story continues in the next Dragon Age game. All your decisions and choices can be edited and saved. When you're totally satisfied you can export it to your game.

My World State

DRAGON AGE: ORIGINS

DRAGON AGE: II

DRAGON AGE: III

Canon User Auto-Solved

91: What sex was the Warden? Male

92: What race was the Warden? Dwarf

93: What class was the Warden? Warrior

94: What background did the Warden have? Dwarf Noble

126: Did the player poison the Urn of Sacred Ashes? No

118: Was Leliana alive at the end of DAO? Yes

128: Is Isolde alive? Yes

119: Was Zevran alive at the end of DAO? Yes

129: Is Connor alive? Yes

130: Was Redcliffe destroyed? No

95: Was Loghain executed? No

96: Was Alistair executed? No

97: Did Morrigan have a baby? With Warden

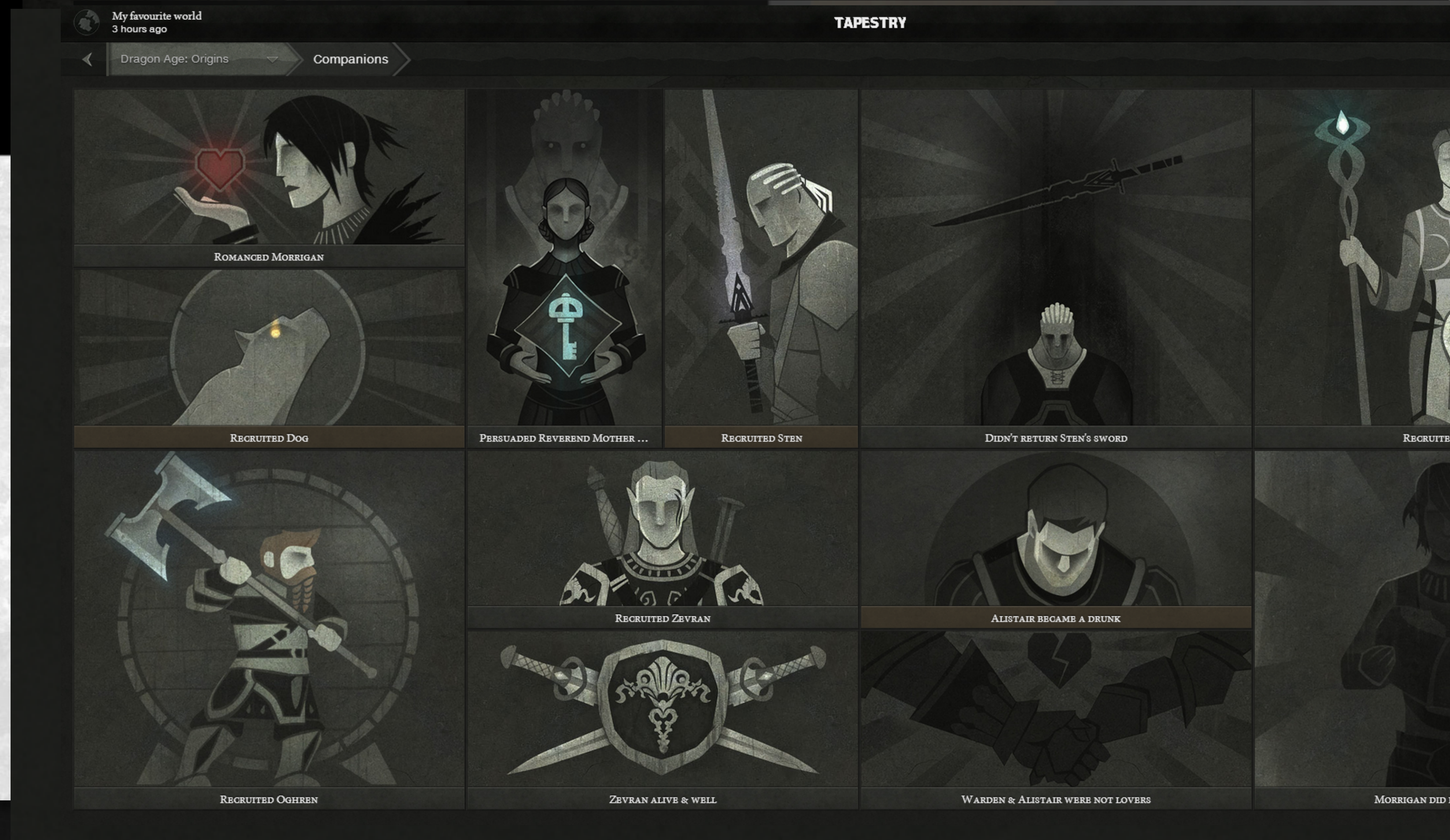
98: Who killed the Archdemon? Warden

99: Who did the Warden romance? No one

100: Did the Warden enter the Eluvian Portal? No

The Process

- Ideation & Research
- Prototype
- Development
- Refinement
- Beta program



Results

- On the right track with the concept of the Tapestry
- Complex logic was simplified to the player
- Imagery aided in memory of the plots
- Able to take what was developed and start the beta program

My favourite world
3 hours ago



Dragon Age: Origins



Companions

TAPESTRY



REVEREND MOTHER ...



RECRUITED STEN



DIDN'T RETURN STEN'S SWORD



RECRUITED WYNNE



RECRUITED ZEVRAN



ALISTAIR BECAME A DRUNK



MORRIGAN DID NOT HAVE



ZEVRAN ALIVE & WELL




WARDEN & ALISTAIR WERE NOT LOVERS



MORRIGAN DID NOT HAVE

RECRUITED OGHREN



“

What I saw was a lot more then I expected, I was thinking it would be like the game set up from mass effect 1 or a list of tick boxes.

I was really impressed at first glance I love the art style so much.

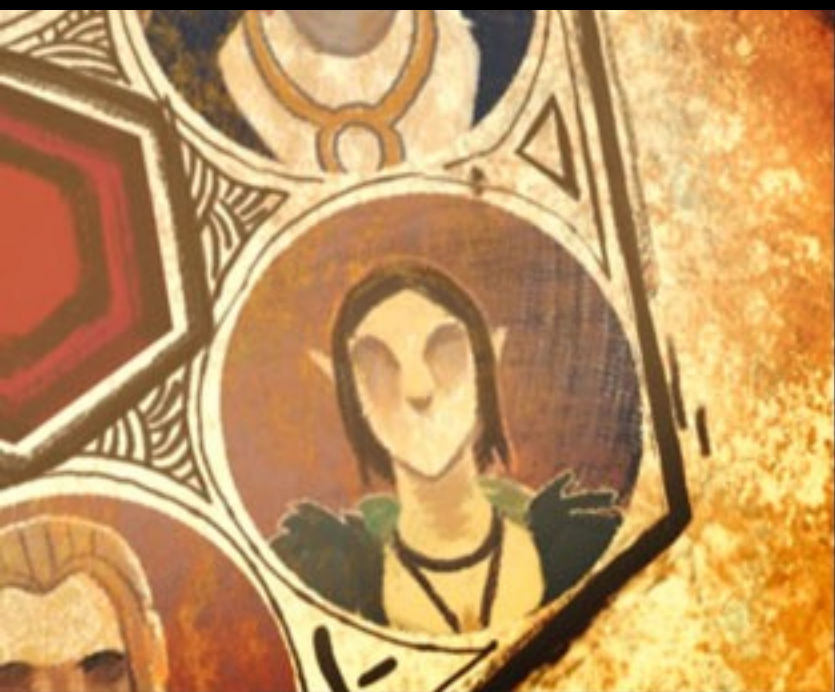
”

- Beta Feedback, First Impression Survey



Interactive Story Summary

Case Study



**1,427,247,692,705,959,881,058,285,9
69,449,495,136,382,746,624**

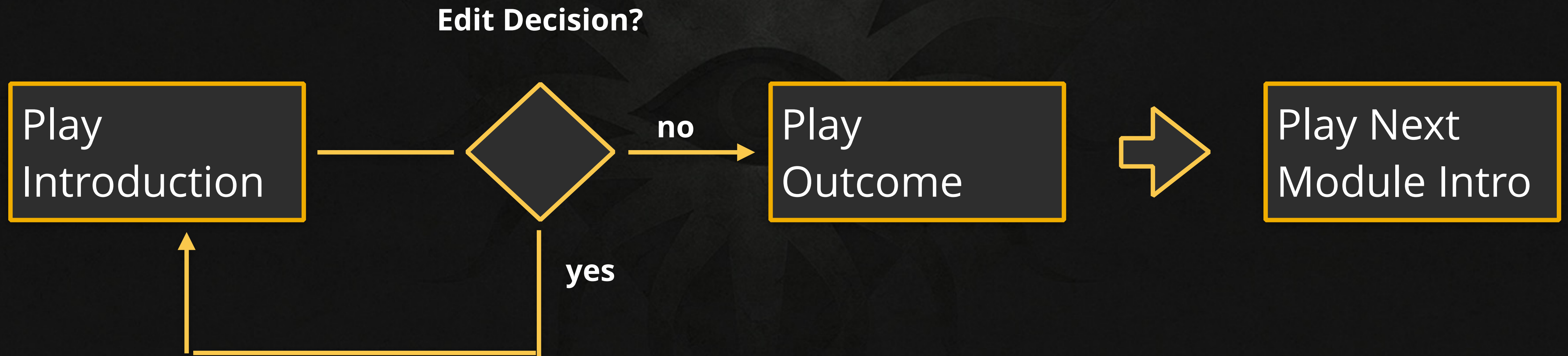
Total number of valid World States

The Challenge

- Get caught up on the Dragon Age story so far
- Set a few high-level choices in real-time
- Work across modern browsers and devices without using plugins
- Must be localized in 8 languages with English, French & German audio



Interactive Story Summary Experience



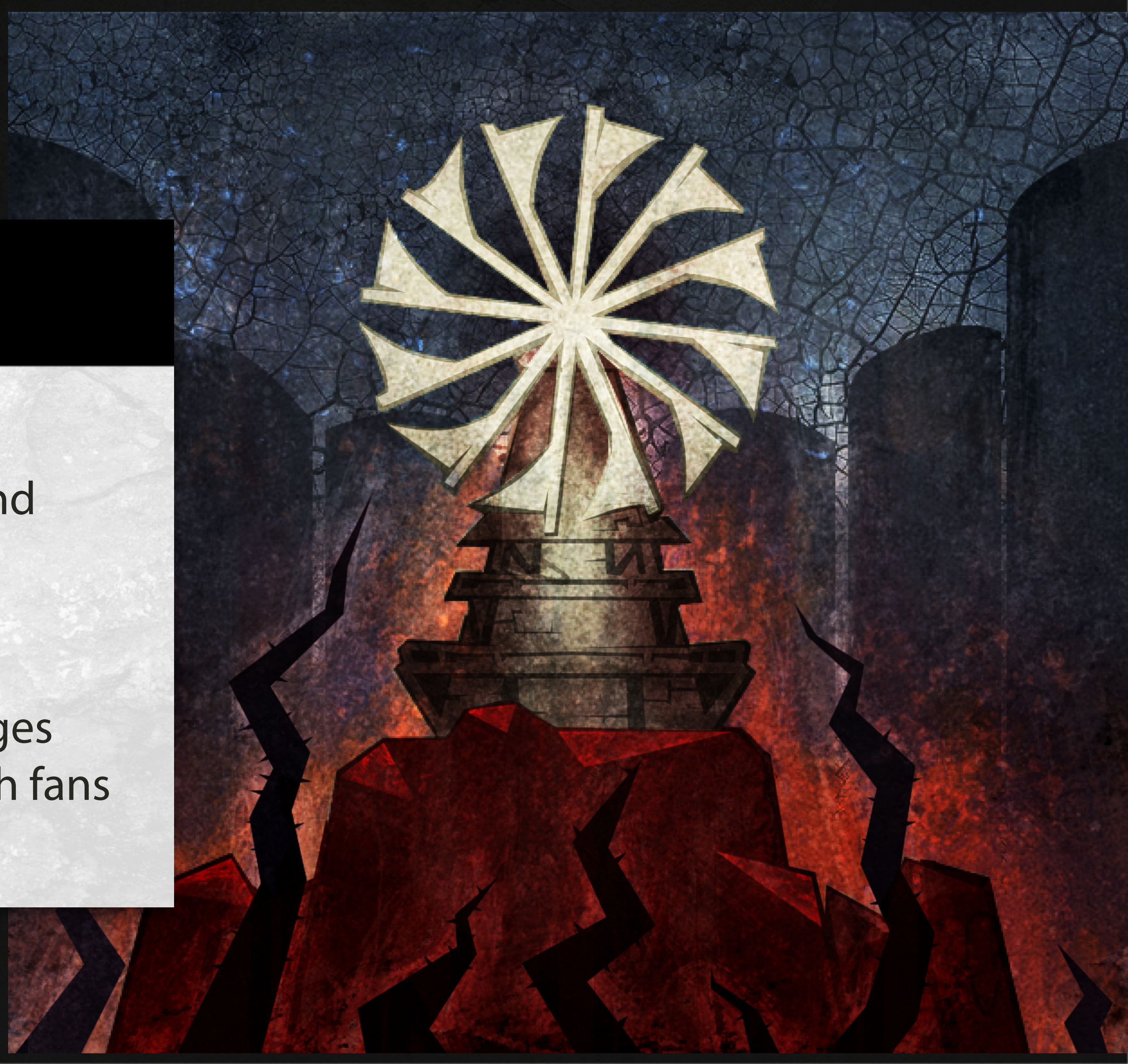
The Process


- Develop Script
- Create Art Assets
- Set-up ISS in the World Vault
- Provide API end-points
- Create player and animations
- Integrate back into the Keep



Lessons

- Integration with the World Vault straight forward & allows for stand alone development
- Player technology can be easily adapted for future needs
- Able to hit the technical challenges
- Varric narration was a big hit with fans



The background of the slide is dark with a subtle, repeating pattern of dragon heads in the corners and a large, faint sunburst or starburst in the center. The quote is presented in a clean, white, sans-serif font. Large, stylized quotation marks are positioned to the left and right of the text. The overall aesthetic is dark and thematic, consistent with the Dragon Age franchise.

“

The Dragon Age Keep is as good as any companion app I have seen if not better. The storytelling approach featuring the voice of Varric Tetras and the illustration of the Interactive Story Summary gives it an edge puts it ahead of other companion apps available.

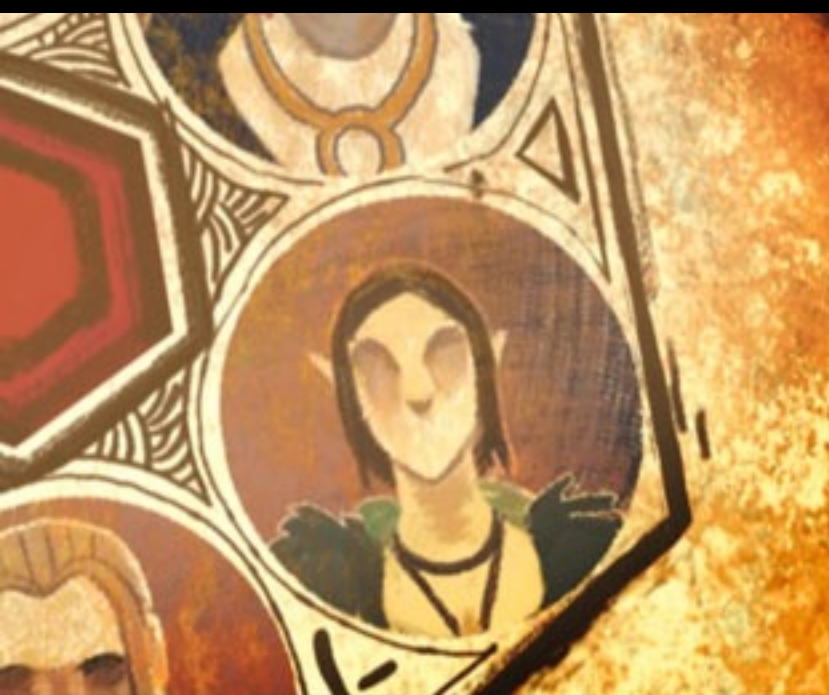
”

- Theodore Senene, Dragon Age Keep Review , leviathyn.com



Community Beta Program

Case Study



The Challenge

- Get valuable feedback from a variety of fans
- Ensure we're able to respond and adapt to feedback
- Manage feedback with a small team
- Prepare for load at launch



Beta Onboarding Flow

Login to the
Keep

Keep Beta Site

Accept NDA



Read Beta
Welcome
Post

Lobby Forum

Confirm
Participation

Keep &
Beta Forums

Wait



Receive
Welcome
Email

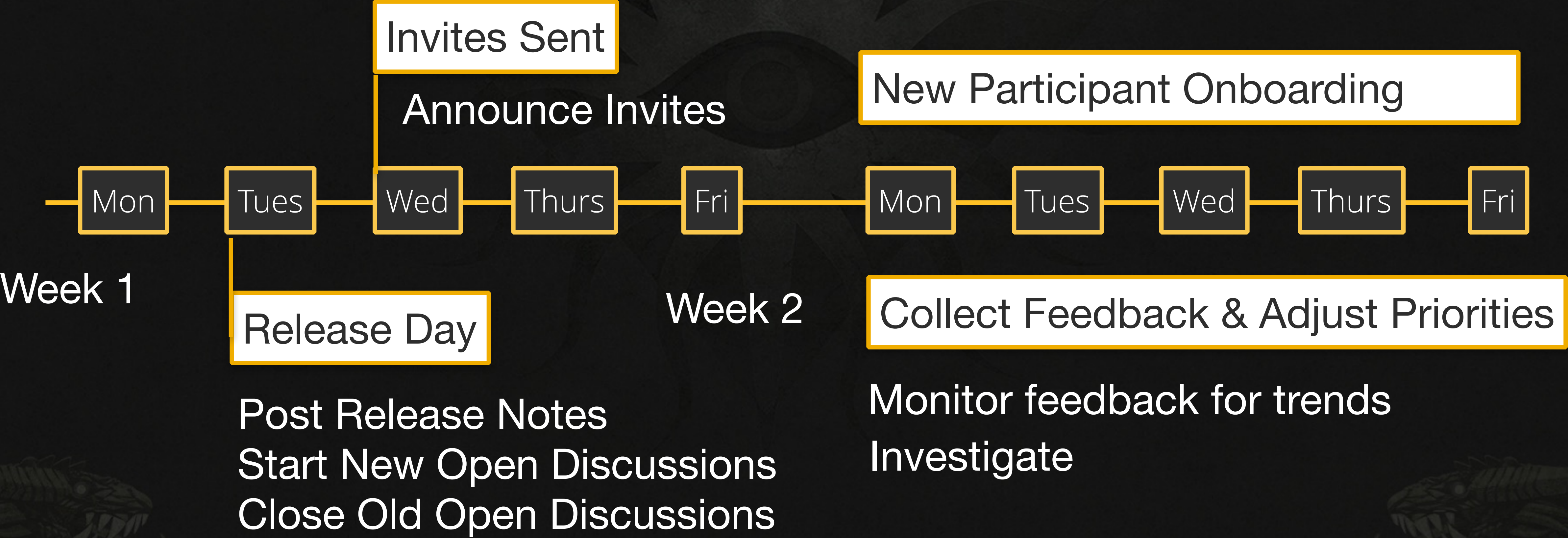
Access Keep
& Beta
Forums



The Process

- Agile Development
- 2-Week Release Cycles
- Cohort-based Invites
- Open Discussions
- Continuous Feedback
- Entire Dev Team Involvement

Release & Beta Invites



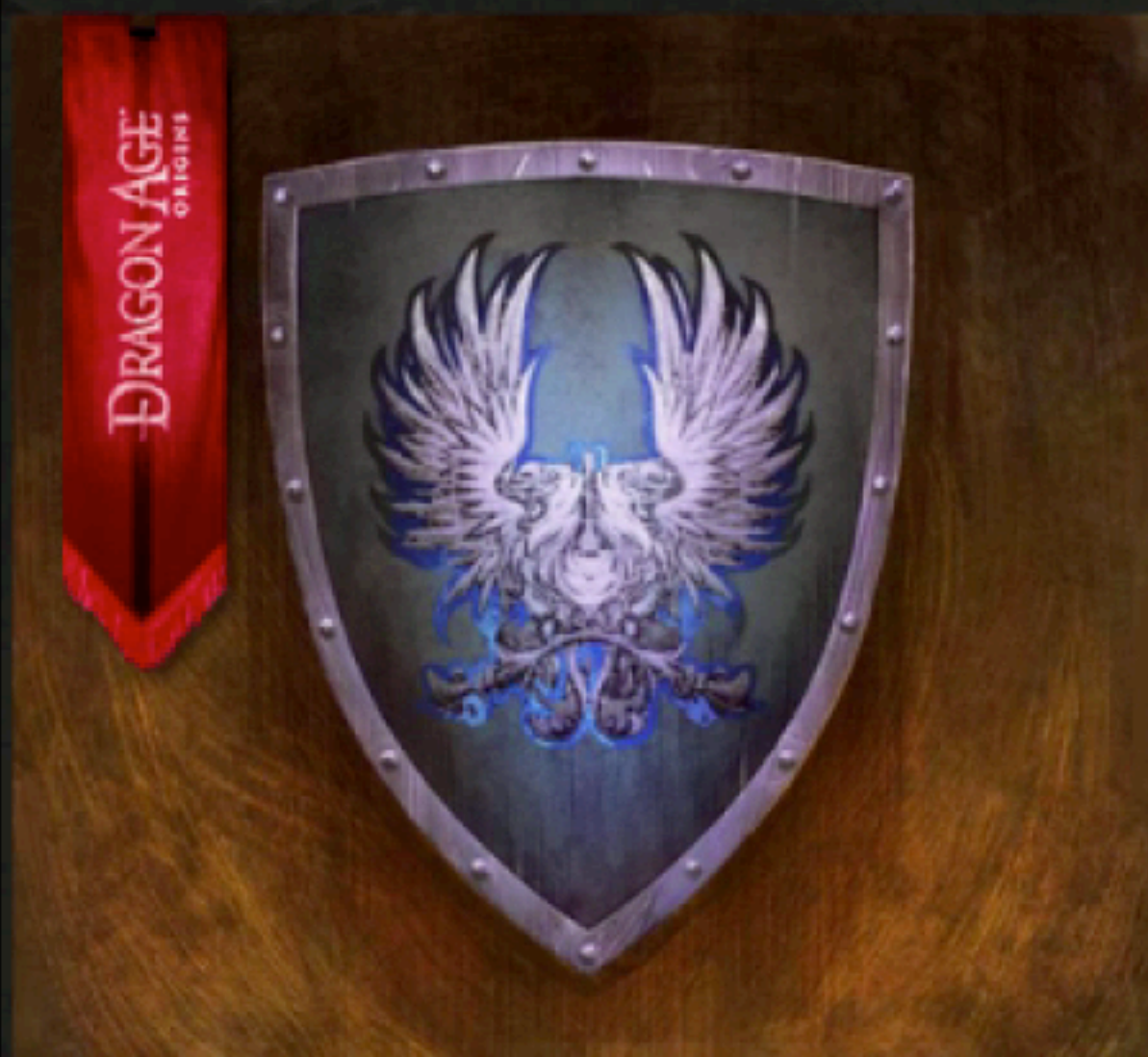
Getting Feedback

- Beta Feedback Button
- BioWare Forums
- Google Analytics
- Surveys
- Dedicated Email Account
- Role-gating system on Keep
- Twitter & Twitch



DRAGON AGE: ORIGINS

Need to export



Hero



Companions



Prologue



The Urn of Sacred Ashes



The Art of Redcliffe



Awakening



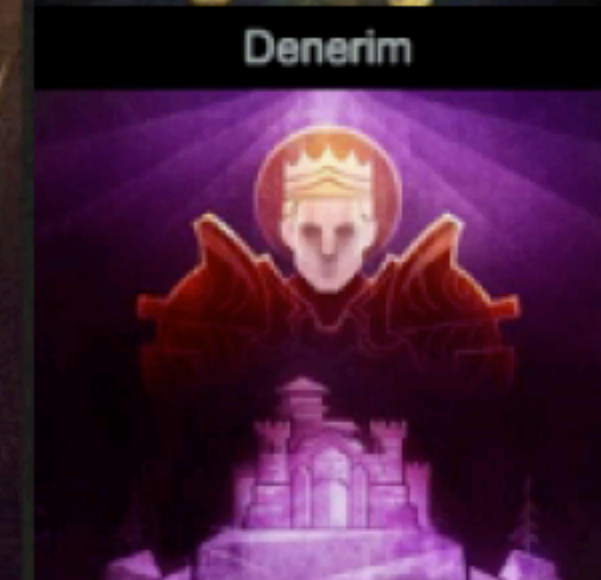
Nature of the Beast



Broken Circle



Denerim



The Landsmeet



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Witch Hunt DLC



Paragon of Her Kind



Warden's Keep DLC



Stone Prisoners



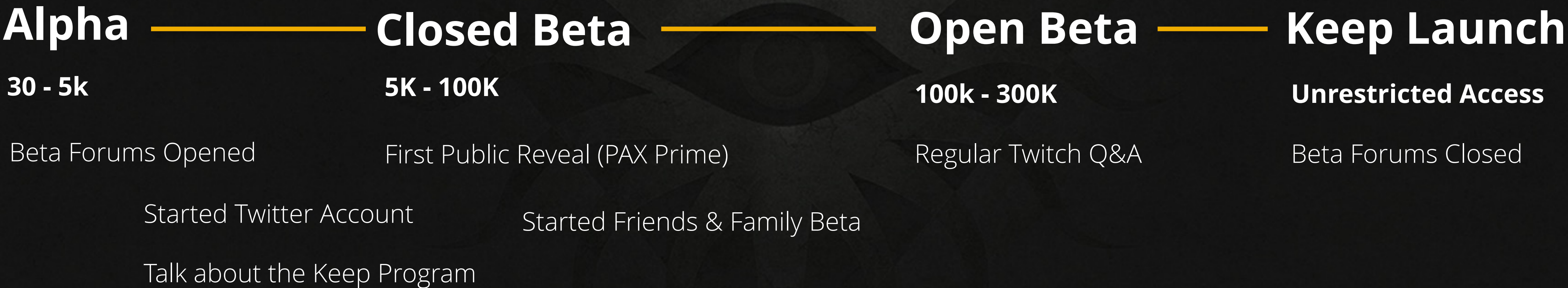
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I've lurked around the forums but never posted, so I'm happy I can geek out about DA and actually get listened to!

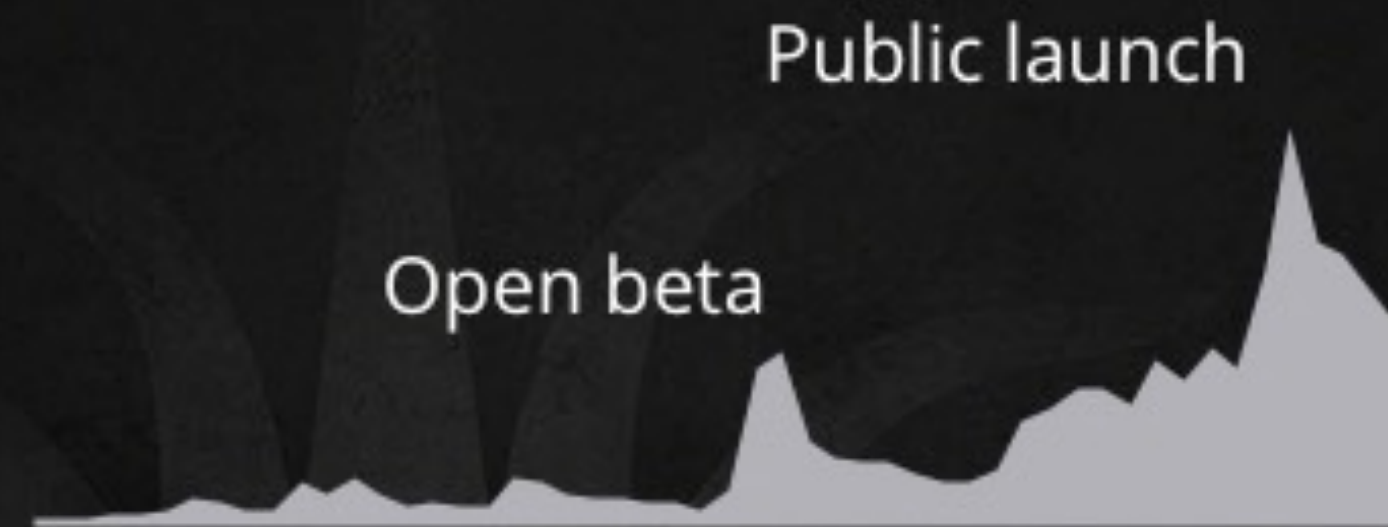
- Introduce Yourself Beta Forum Quote

”

Beta Program Phases



Beta Program Results



6.5 MILLION

Session on the Keep

350k+ world states created

51,671

Feedback received

Average of 575 items per day

300,000

Beta program sign-ups

85,000

Unique users on Keep forums

With 875,000 pageviews



Over 130k+ views on Keep YouTube collaborations

10k social mentions during launch

COLOR

"The color of the Keep is a bit bland. It's very pretty and clear cut, but the color is a bit sad."

SYNCING

"I love seeing my custom Warden!"

DETAILS

"No music or sound, whatsoever. I'm sure you guys are aware of this, but I thought I'd report it."

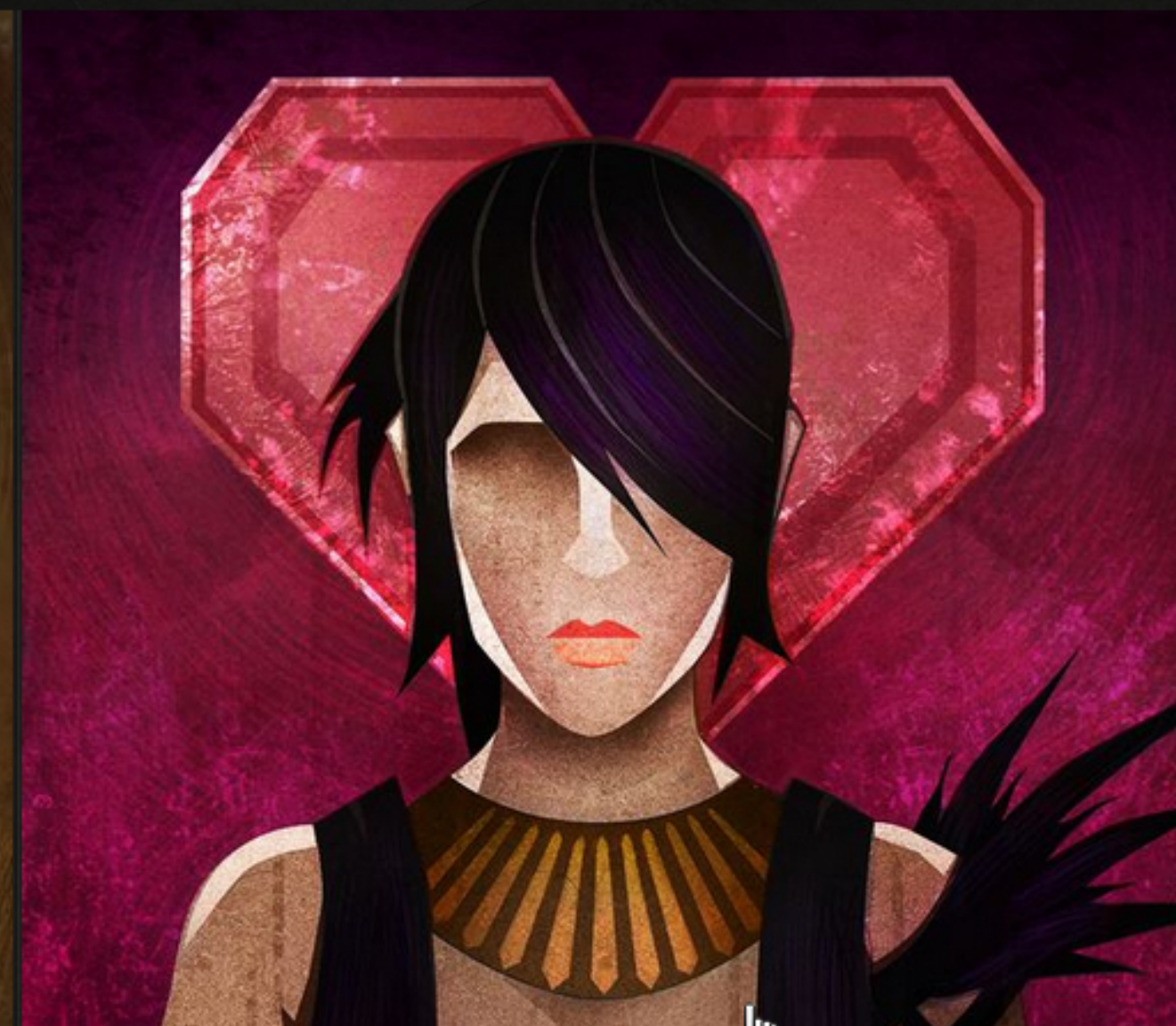
CHOICES

"Where is if you gave Leliana a nug!?"





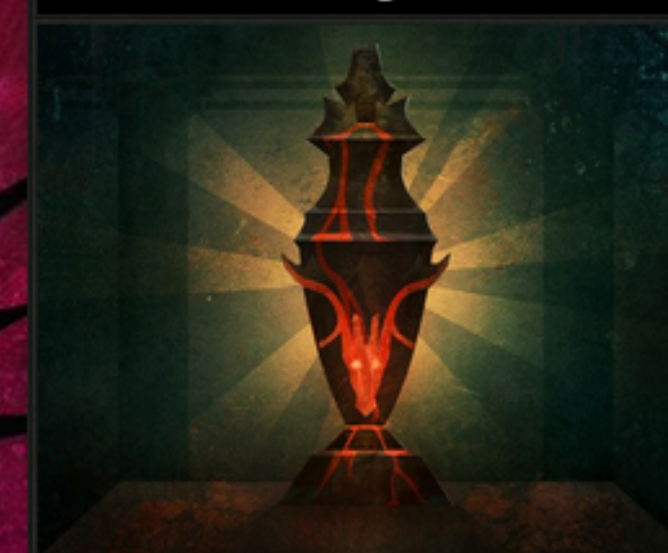
Hero



Companions



Prologue



The Urn of Sacred Ashes



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Paragon of Her Kind



Warden's Keep DLC

Stone f



DID THE WARDEN RETURNS STEN'S SWORD TO HIM?

Confirm World State Change



This choice had dependencies on other choices. In order to make your world state valid, we must adjust the following choices. Would you like to continue?

1

Did The Warden Recruit Sten?

Original Choice

Sten did not join the Warden's struggles against the Fifth Blight.



New Choice

Sten joined the Warden's group lending his might against the Blight.

YES, MAKE CHANGES

NO, CANCEL CHANGES

CHOOSE THIS ANSWER





PROFILE



Lauger76

Member since: November 2014

Log out



WORLD STATE

Editable State 5

Modified: 1 minute ago

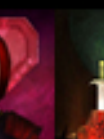
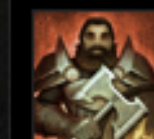
This is the description of the world state with a maximum of two hundred and fifty six characters and it goes into this space.



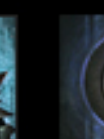
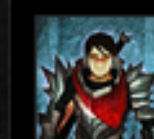
LOAD ANOTHER WORLD STATE



Dragon Age: Origins
Oghren Mahariel
Warrior Level 15



Dragon Age II
Lilian Hawke
Warrior Level 7



USED ON NEW DA INQUISITION GAME

Copy of

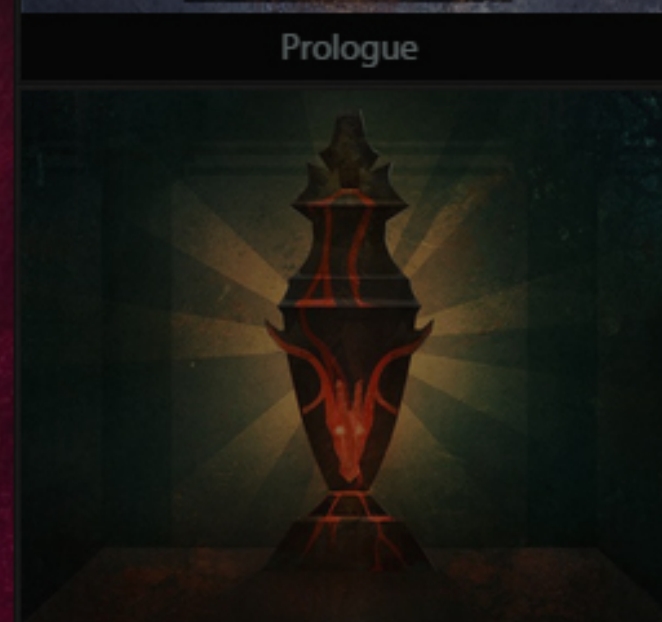
Editable State 5



Companions



Prologue



The Urn of Sacred Ashes



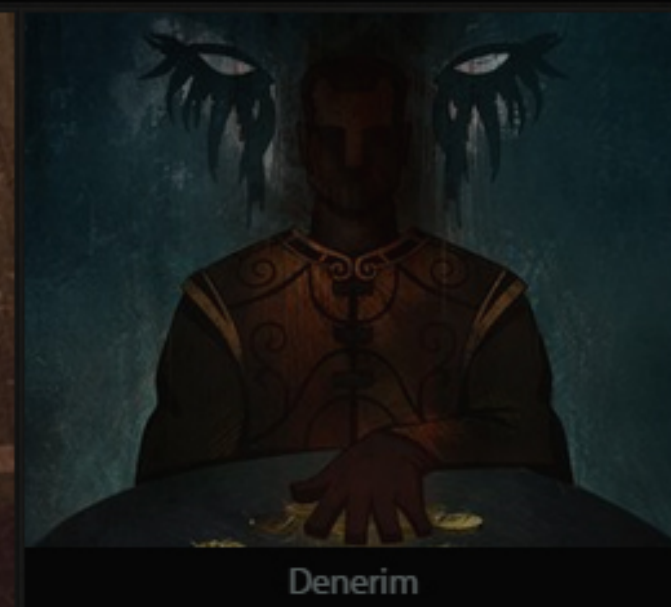
The Arl of Redcliffe



Awakening



Broken Circle



Denerim



The Landsmeet



The Battle of Denerim



Witch Hunt DLC



Warden's Keep DLC



Stone f

Drag a thumbnail in the slot to replace the world state that is currently loaded in the Keep :

LOADED IN THE KEEP:
Editable State 5



Once you loaded a World state in the Keep, you can start editing your choices in the Tapestry

EDIT IN TAPESTRY

Editable State 1



Editable State 2



Editable State 3



Editable State 4



Editable State 5



Editable State 6



Copy of Shared State 4



(Empty Slot)



(Empty Slot)



(Empty Slot)







Xhalax Sevatarion @morbius_sire · Jan 7

What more could anyone ask for or want in a life partner? #DAI @dragonage
@DragonAgeKeep



RETWEET
1

FAVOURITES
5





Stacy @StayAnyxa · 16h

#IPlayBioware because to be part of the DA
Keep as it's evolved has been beyond even
the excitement of my 20+ hours in the
Hinterlands !

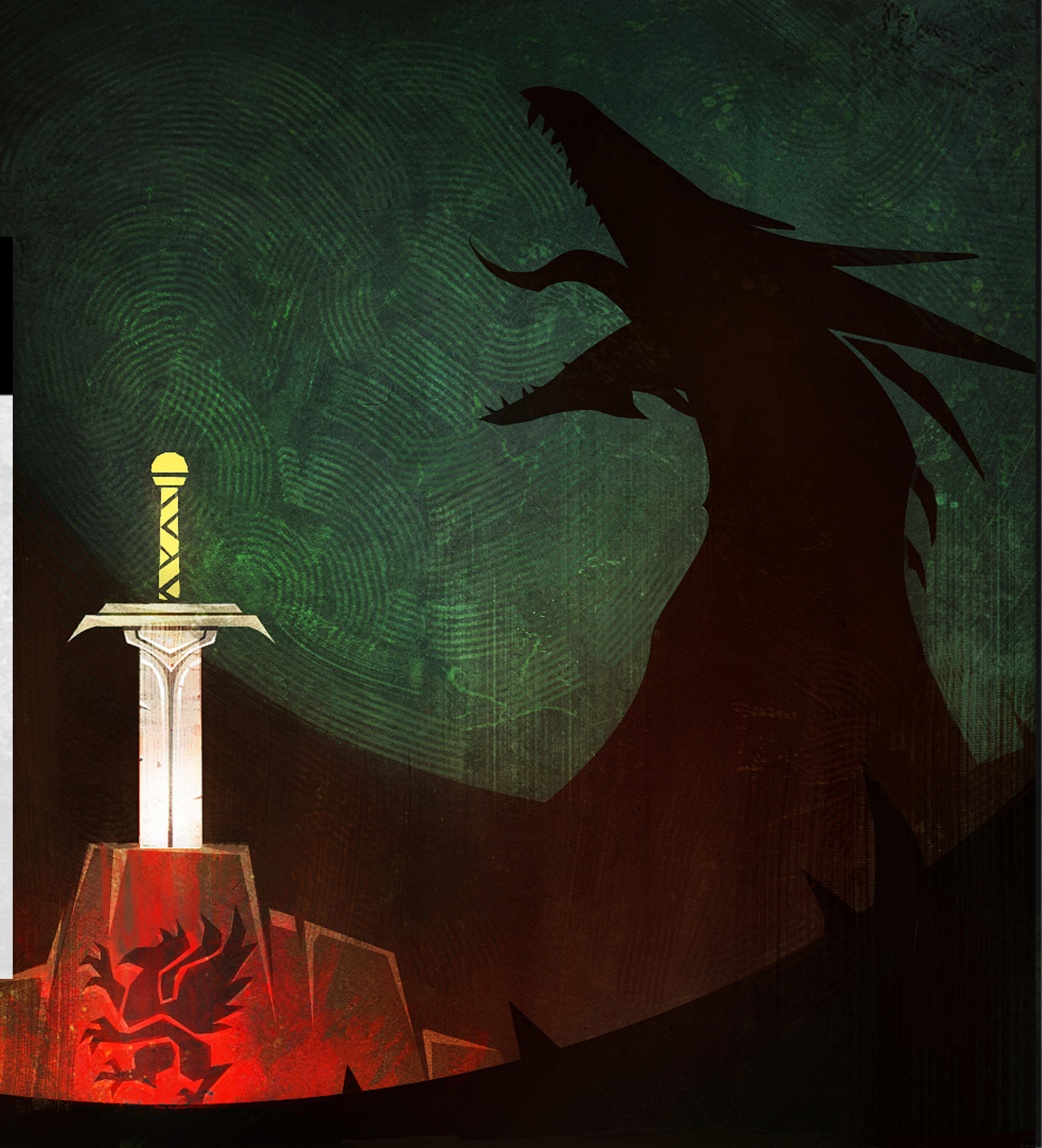


1



Lessons

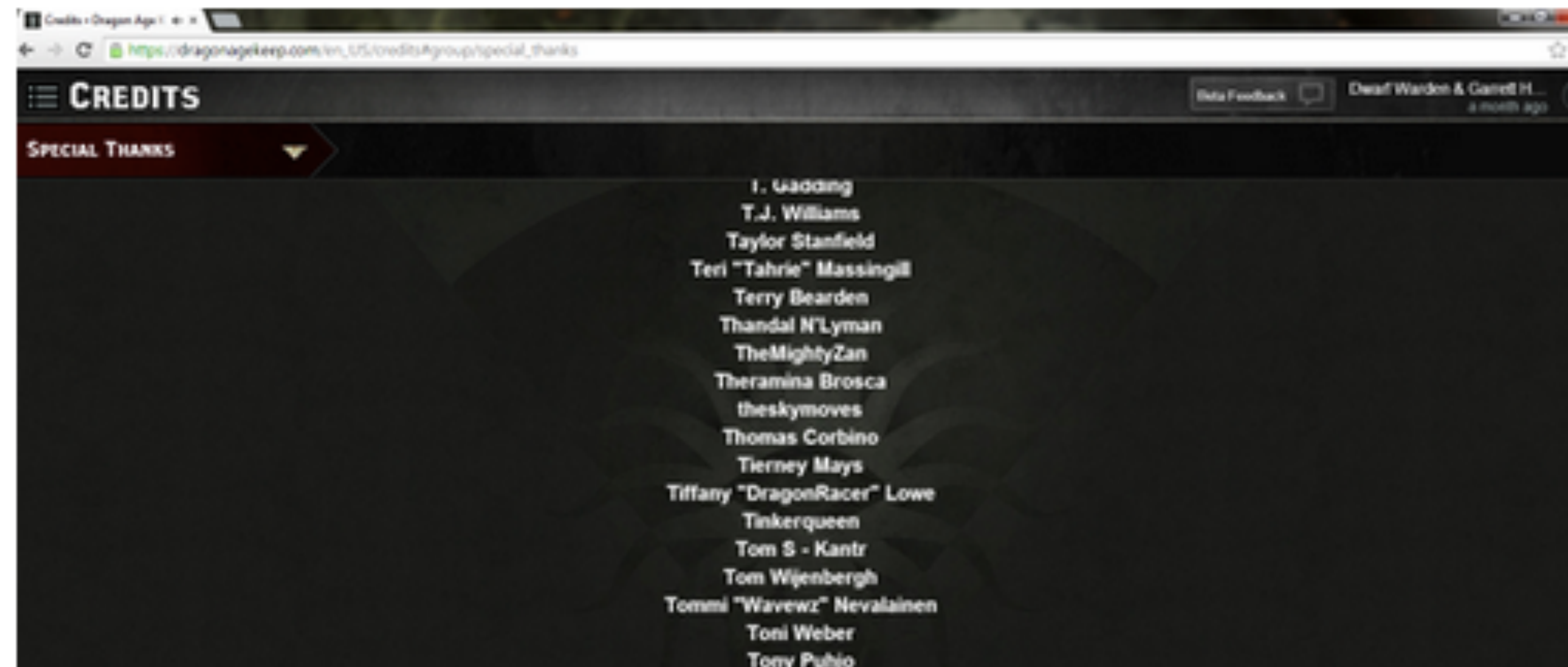
- Design a program around what your product needs
- Get feedback in the moment
- Encourage your whole team to get involved
- Find common themes and investigate
- Communicate openly during the process





DragonRacer @TiffanyMLowe · Jan 21

So proud & honored to be a part of this. <3 you, @DragonAgeKeep @bioware @dragonage #praisejustin

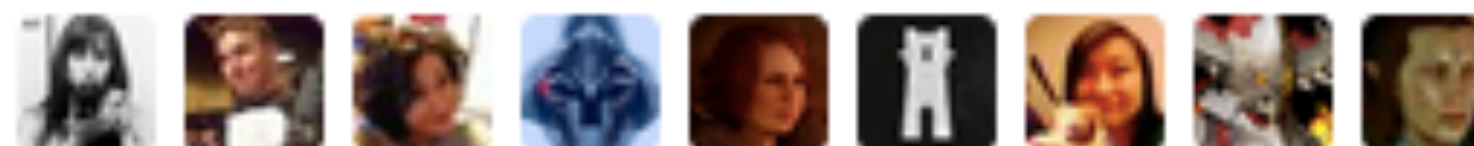


RETWEET

1

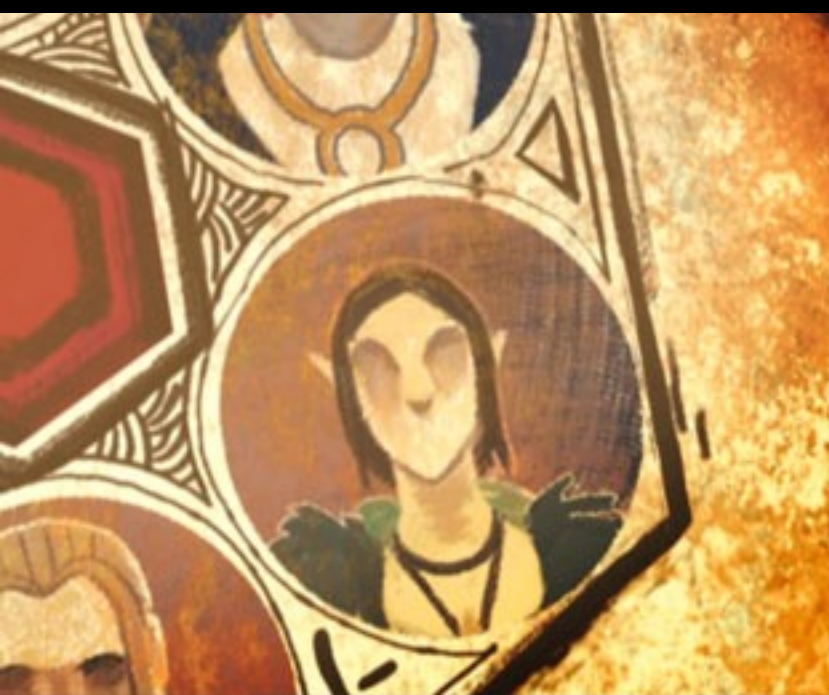
FAVOURITES

9





Final Thoughts



Closing Thoughts

- Don't just solve the immediate problem find the opportunities
- Preserve the investment players have made in your franchise
- Find ways to include your community in the development process





QUESTIONS?

Thank you!