

Hi, My Name Is

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v1

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FADE IN

The screen begins totally black, no words or controls are visible as audio begins to play.

[REDACTED]
Hi, my name is [SUPER LOUD STATIC]
and thanks for listening, I really
mean that.

[REDACTED] takes a deep breath, clearly getting ready to start talking.

[REDACTED] (cont'd)
Okay, well when I was younger,
maybe...10 or 11, I went to therapy
to try and help overcome a lot of the
anxiety I was dealing with that was
making me a bit of a nervous wreck.
It helped! I mean for the most part
but hey, it did what I needed it to
do. Now, I was and sometimes still
am, terrible at dealing with
unexpected changes or pressure. It
starts small, my chest feels heavier
and then...my brain starts getting
loud and when I say loud I mean LOUD.
Picture a bass boosted speaker
pressed up against your head with
someone slooooowly turning the volume
up, up and up!

As [REDACTED] discusses the loud sound, the loud static plays on top of the audio for a brief moment, slowly rising in volume and then cutting out. There's a shaky laugh, followed by a cough and a short pause.

[REDACTED] (cont'd)
It uh, it sucks! I have to say to
myself, [SUPER LOUD STATIC], you can
do this, you can get through this but
it usually doesn't work. These
feelings start and I didn't know how
to deal with them. This tidal wave of
anxious insecurity was crashing
against me day after day after day
until I broke. This numbness took
over, like a seed in my mind slowly
growing and stretching to reach every
corner of my being until all that was
left was a blank, null grey void
of...existence.

As [REDACTED] continues to speak, the black screen slowly starts to fade into a seemingly endless grey hallway. No textures, no details, nothing. Just a never-ending box. Text flashes on screening telling the player to press W to walk forwards. This is the only action they can currently do besides listen.

[REDACTED] (cont'd)

I did what I thought I was supposed to do, what I had latched onto with as much strength as I could muster: I kept my Eyes Forward and I walked on. I suppressed whatever I needed to in order to keep moving, to keep myself from falling into what I would later describe as the Null, this terrible depression that disguised itself like an alien threat. Hell, I can feel it now because well that's the problem: it can't be stopped, killed or ignored. No matter how long you walk, how much you keep it out of sight or how much you suppress it, the Null always wins, the depression always comes back.

The grey walls of the hallway slowly turn to a deep black throughout the ongoing monologue. There's a second pause followed by a breath in and out as the halls return to grey.

[REDACTED] (cont'd)

This sounds grim and it is but there are ways to fight it off. It took me a long time to find that for myself, I mean i'm still learning how to get better, how to feel better."

The walls start to turn to a brighter shade of white.

[REDACTED] (cont'd)

Stories and games, they kept me sane and alive for a long long time. Books and stories always fascinated me, these worlds being built just through words and imagination and the best part was: people were happy! The good guys would win, the kingdoms were saved and the bad guys, these malevolent forces, were sent packing. Every kid wants superpowers but I just wanted to be one of those heroes because they won.

(MORE)

[REDACTED] (cont'd)

They beat their impossible challenges and at the end of it, their friends were by their side. I always wanted to write stories but as soon as I would try, The Null made sure to show just how bad I was and how it wouldn't matter.

The walls start to fade back to black as the player's vision is slowly obscured back to the black screen.

[REDACTED] (cont'd)

I listened to it. I hate myself for it but I did and it kept those worlds locked away in the grey void of depression. Instead, I read others works and threw myself into them as deeply as I could just to escape myself. The grey was everywhere and all I needed was colour. Just something to make my brain realize that if it wanted to, it could be just like everyone else around: it could be FUCKING HAPPY.

The walls change into red along with red lights for a couple of seconds as the players vision is revealed once more. There's a deep breath and the walls return to grey.

[REDACTED] (cont'd)

I kept making these stories in my mind, building worlds and tearing them down but I refused to share them with anyone. They were mine, my small escapes but I knew they were worthless. If I showed them to somebody, they'd know how messed up I felt like I was. I couldn't let anyone in like that, honestly it's still a challenge for me. I took me a long time, pretty much until I was 15 or 16, to start writing details down in full. I started building worlds whenever my mind was clear, when the Null was starting to force it's way back in. It was every walk home from school, every quiet moment before I fell asleep...whenever I started feeling like that dark pit was rising up to swallow me whole, I told the stories to keep it at bay.

Walls start changing from grey, to white, to grey again.

[REDACTED] (cont'd)

And I knew just what to make. I made heroes, the same ones who'd always win but I wanted to try and make sure they'd have a hard time with it. I started with a group of six, six messed up people suddenly given more power then they knew what to do with but who wouldn't necessarily jump straight into doing the right thing. They were selfish, scared and overcompensating for what they felt they were missing in their lives. It's not a new concept by any means, but they were mine. Original ideas are tough to find, but I wanted to make them feel like they came from my mind. Whether or not that really worked, I continued to write about them. I started developing their characters arcs, trying to dig deep into the emotional gears grinding in their minds but I had to have a little fun besides just that. It kicked off my tradition of having some wildly strange plots involving some pretty damn convoluted plot devices like simulated worlds and skeleton angel robot that was sleeping in the Sun. The ideas always start in a messy state but over time, the ideas that worked stuck around and solidified into a world I called The Six Initiative: Six people unwillingly given a device that would alter their genetic structures to act as a new evolution of humanity. The people who gave them this gift were coming though and they'd need to decide for themselves whether or not they wanted to ascend to the stars or stay in their current lives.

The roof of the hallway disappears as the sunlit horizon is revealed.

[REDACTED] (cont'd)

I didn't show it to anyone though, I kept it to myself for a couple of months until my uncle came to visit. He lived in Israel which meant I really didn't get to see him too often.

(MORE)

[REDACTED] (cont'd)

When he came, it was always a blast and for some reason, he asked me about what I liked to do in my own time. I mentioned movies and video games but for some reason I mentioned the writing and...he was interested. I still don't get it really but he was! So I...I just started speaking and out came practically everything. Character traits, flaws, arcs and cool designs or uses for their powers. He liked it, gave me some advice and told to keep working on it. Even if it didn't lead to anything, it was something I clearly liked doing and I should keep at it.

The sides of the hallway disappear, showing off more of the horizon and nice day.

[REDACTED] (cont'd)

I can't properly describe how I felt here but I was happy, and I mean really happy. The null was gone and I knew what I wanted to do: I was gonna turn this into a game or comics, movies or tv but something! I was going to apply myself, learn from the movies, shows and books that I loved so damn much and make sure I made something of myself.

The floor disappears from view as calm music plays in the background.

[REDACTED] (cont'd)

The next year I spent a summer in Philadelphia, my first time away from my family in another country to try and learn Game Design and writing. It was terrifying but I met some awesome people trying to do the same thing and...I told them about my ideas. After years of being tight-lipped about them, my uncles words rung in my brain and I let them in. They really liked the ideas and helped me workshop them into a much more grounded version. Abe, an illustration student, sketched a couple of the characters out.

(MORE)

[REDACTED] (cont'd)

Seeing the world that had been stuck inside for so long be put to paper like that...it was incredible. We kept writing, drawing and putting the pieces together while I was there and once I came back home I knew what my plan was. I was going to write, make these worlds into games or any form of media to get them out there and it was all thanks to my uncle. Without him, I don't know how much thought I would've put into all of this.

The sun shines brightly as the player can see the entire horizon stretching out before them. It's a moment of peace, serenity and purpose. There's a pause from [REDACTED], letting the player enjoy what they felt before continuing.

[REDACTED] (cont'd)

I found out later he had been diagnosed with pancreatic cancer. A few months later he was dead. There's a lot more I could get into about his passing. I could talk about shouting to the sky, questioning my beliefs, religion and my ideas of faith and God. I could talk about refusing to say any form of prayers giving worship to the being my uncle was so devoted to and who returned his thanks by taking him away from his family. I could talk about curling up on my floor in tears, trying to do everything in power to keep my head together and be there to support my mom after the loss of her brother... but that isn't this story, it's another tale for another time.

Each section reappears as the loud static sound begins to play, getting louder as each part of the hallway returns. The noise is unending, giving that feeling of the Null crashing into the players world and trying to drown them in its endless abyss.

[REDACTED] (cont'd)

I got through it thanks to my friends being there for me but it crushed my whole family for a long time. A part of each of us died with him and 9 months later his father, my grandfather passed away too. It hurt. It hurt a lot but I couldn't cry.

(MORE)

[REDACTED] (cont'd)
No tears, no strong emotions. Just...
null.

The screen begins to slowly get obscured with darkness once more.

[REDACTED] (cont'd)
After my grandfather was gone, the stories became worse and worse. Each death started making it harder to really care about the stories. I felt like I was losing my mind for a long time and at some points I really came close to it. I graduated high school, went to cegep and surrounded myself with new friends but that itching depression was there at all times. Once my grandfather passed away, the Null wasn't a threat kept at bay anymore. The heroes had fallen, the bad guy won and I wasn't a fun person to be around sometimes.

The screen goes completely black. There is no music. There is no input or signs of responses to the players actions. There is nothing to distract them from the words being spoken. They need to listen.

[REDACTED] (cont'd)
I sat down one day and tore myself to shreds, mentally that is. I forced myself to stand back up, to get myself under control and to make sure that I wouldn't let the depression, the Null win. There was a global pandemic going on and I was stuck with my own thoughts but I would be damned if I would stop doing what I loved. I swore to myself that I would keep writing. Good or bad, small or large, sensible or nonsensical: I would keep writing for my uncle, for my grandfather and the people in my life who had told me that maybe I was somewhat decent at it. I know it sounds corny, like something out of a movie and maybe it was or maybe that never happened. This is still just a story. It's my story, but I'm telling it how I feel it needs to be told.

The screen flashes back to the sunrise as the hallway explodes away violently, the calm music coming back in full swing.

[REDACTED] (cont'd)

This doesn't mean things are magically alright now though, I'm still terrified and full of anxiety. It won't go away but I know that. As much as I hate it, the Null is part of me and always will be. I've got worlds on my side though and I always will.

The screen starts to fade to white.

[REDACTED] (cont'd)

I didn't write this for anyone but myself, I want to make that clear. I've needed to tell this story for a long, long time and this was a good opportunity to do so. This is barely a game, it's not much of an experience and god knows the audio mixing might be a bit rough. This is a story, it's my story but it's a lot of other peoples too. People are hurt inside but that's okay, it's how the world is. Keeping your eyes forwards works but you can't let the past just fade away. The people you meet, the friends you make, the family you keep...it all makes you into who and how you are.

There's a tired sigh of...acceptance. It's not defeat but it's not victory, it's the sound of someone knowing their own situation and acknowledging the battles they're going to be facing for the rest of their life.

[REDACTED] (cont'd)

Ending this story feels...hollow, mainly because it's not over. I'm still [SUPER LOUD STATIC], I still suffer from depression and that won't change. I hope I got a message through with this, even if it's just a feeling of confusion I hope something was felt by you. This is messy, it's honest but it still lies and I think that's about as accurate as I could write this.

(MORE)

[REDACTED] (cont'd)
Confessions of flaws aren't fun, there's no climactic action scenes or cool set pieces. Acceptance is a long walk that feels like it's going nowhere but once you look back, you can see just how far you've come. For now though, I think the only way to end this is with how I started it.

There's a pause as the end title screen appears. It's a white background with the following black text above it as [REDACTED] speaks clearly and confidently.

[REDACTED] (cont'd)
Hi, My Name is Harry Marshall and I'm still here.

Fade out to the same white screen with another message.

DEDICATED TO GERRY AND ISRAEL YAMPOLSKY: THE REASONS I WRITE.

FADE OUT