

Game Narrative Plan – "Mute Ox"

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Introductory

English is not the author's first language, and in this module, I used ChatGPT to assist me in my English translation work, and to ensure that I could clearly convey my point of view, as well as the artistry of some of the artistic (e.g., poetry, NPC's conversations that appear in the short film) passages in that work, I trained a chatbot AI that could assist me in my work.

Also, in order to ensure that the module was submitted in an aesthetically pleasing format, I submitted the final work to ChatGPT to organize all of the ideas and to ensure that the content had not been altered too much. You can check out my specifications for ChatGPT on the last page to see if they are within the limits of the module. Thank you for your patience in reading the introduction!

I. Game Background and Narrative Setting

Story Background:

In some unknown corner of the world—or perhaps a familiar place you've never truly seen—the tale of the "Mute Ox" unfolds. This story could happen anywhere, yet it reflects the timeless dance between those who control and those who are controlled. You can choose to accept this control, chasing the idealistic "Peach Blossom Island," or wait for divine intervention, wandering between labour and reality. Perhaps you'll grow

under oppression, break free from the cage, or pick up the whip and continue the next cycle of control. It's a loop—one no mute ox can escape.

On a modern English farm, the mute oxen—humanoid creatures with ox heads dressed in suits and ties—labour tirelessly across various factories and farms. They produce milk, beef, leather, plough fields, grind mills, and transport goods. They have no memory of their past and lack horns. Their lives revolve around Cash Cow Town, where overseers spread myths about "Peach Blossom Island"—a promised land of freedom and rest. But even the overseers aren't sure if it exists. One thing is certain: it's a dream too tempting to resist. In truth, even the overseers are unsure whether Peach Blossom Island truly exists.

In the author's native language environment (Chinese), "Mute Ox" actually denotes another kind of reference, which is written as “哑牛 (yǎ niú) ” in Chinese, from a collection of short stories by the Chinese writer Cao Wenxuan, which depicts the story itself:

Although the mute ox can't speak, he always brings all kinds of happiness to the people around him. But one day, the kind and happy Mute Ox is wrongly accused of being a thief.

The impression I get from cows is usually that they are honest, loyal and responsible. In farming societies, cows are often used to plow fields and push mills, and when they are no longer needed by humans, their flesh is dissected and sold, and their skins are cut off to make clothes or roofs, and cows serve humans throughout their lives, and the only thing humans give back to them is grass and water.

The bull has a strong body, especially in the Spanish bullfighting ring, which is still essentially a way to entertain humans, but it also showed me their bravery and spirit of resistance. This also inspired me to portray the character of the "mute bull".

World Overview:

- a) **Cash Cow Town:** A metaphor for societies under relentless capitalist exploitation. The mute oxen serve the factories and farms in endless cycles of labour. In business terms, a "cash cow" refers to ventures that generate stable profits, but here it symbolises people or groups drained of value. For creators or those invested in, this metaphor implies being stuck as a perpetual "golden goose." Cash Cow Town uses the myth of Peach Blossom Island to lure and exploit workers, even as the managers themselves question its existence.
- b) **Springtime of the Cattle:** A collective of workers, including the mute ox and Ox-22, responsible for production in Factory 848. This name is inspired by the

1848 European revolutions—often called the "Springtime of the Peoples"—symbolising the awakening of the oppressed and the fight for justice.

- c) **Little Peach Garden:** A place within Cash Cow Town often whispered about among the workers. It serves as both a fleeting respite and a dangerous trap. Here, oxen can drink from the garden's water, which induces hallucinations, showing visions of Peach Blossom Island. The scenery is intoxicating—dreamy colours and soft light. Yet, as the oxen wake, the factory's grim walls return. Little Peach Garden represents escapism, offering fleeting hope but reinforcing control through illusion. The flowers in the garden change depending on the player's state—vibrant during hallucinations, withered in clarity.
- d) **Peach Blossom Island:** A legendary utopia representing hope and liberation. In the author's culture, peach blossoms often symbolise happiness and beauty, appearing frequently in poetry and art. This lends the name "Peach Blossom Island" an idealistic allure. Its existence is unclear, but the dream persists.

Core Narrative Themes:

- a) **Oppression and Rebellion:** The mute ox's journey reflects the slow awakening and struggle of the oppressed.
 - b) **Illusion and Reality:** Peach Blossom Island sits at the boundary between myth and truth, challenging the player to discern fantasy from reality.
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II. Character Design

Protagonist – Mute Ox:

- a) **Background:** A humanoid ox without memory or horns, unable to speak. Clad in a suit, the mute ox labours day and night, longing for Peach Blossom Island.
- b) **Traits:** The mute ox earns wages through labour, gradually uncovering secrets about Peach Blossom Island and Cash Cow Town.
- c) **Growth Mechanism:** Through tasks and interactions, the mute ox either awakens or sinks deeper into submission. Player choices shape their fate.

Supporting Characters:

- a) **Ox-22:** A cheerful and capable worker from the Springtime of the Cattle, serving as the mute ox's friend and guide.
- b) **Supervisor:** The factory overseer, representing capitalist control, who uses the

myth of Peach Blossom Island to maintain productivity.

- c) **The Enigmatic One:** A mysterious figure offering cryptic clues about Peach Blossom Island, sometimes aiding, sometimes obstructing the mute ox.
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III. Four-Act Narrative Structure

Act One: Dusk After the Rain, Fragrant Nightfall

The mute ox arrives at Factory 848 in Cash Cow Town, where daily work begins. Over time, they bond with other oxen. Ox-22 quietly introduces the Springtime of the Cattle, planting seeds of belief in Peach Blossom Island. Players perform basic tasks—transporting goods, cleaning—experiencing the drudgery of labour. This act doubles as a tutorial.

Act Two: Misty Rivers, Miasma in the Forest

Exhausted, the mute ox is led to Little Peach Garden by the supervisor. Drinking from its waters causes hallucinations—visions of Peach Blossom Island within reach. But awakening brings the factory's cold reality. Ox-22 hints that the myth of Peach Blossom Island may be a tool to exploit workers. Players choose whether to keep believing or pursue the truth.

Act Three: Tilling New Fields, Counting Coins

A small strike unfolds, forcing the mute ox to decide between rebellion or continued compliance. Aligning with Ox-22 exposes the emptiness behind Peach Blossom Island's myth. Suspicious, the supervisor assigns spies to watch the mute ox. If distrust grows, Ox-22 dies, ending paths toward rebellion.

Act Four: Towers of Dreams Built from Sand

If Ox-22 survives, the mute ox leads a full revolt, seeking their horns, voice, and identity across the farms. In the end, they lead others toward liberation or continue the cycle as a new leader.

- a) **Disbandment:** Without full recovery, the mute ox disperses the workers, each seeking their path.
- b) **Reconstruction:** With Ox-22's counsel, they rebuild Springtime of the Cattle and board a train called "Homeward," continuing the search for Peach Blossom Island.
- c) **Liberation:** Ignoring Ox-22's advice, they embark on a ship called "Stars," pursuing freedom elsewhere.

If Ox-22 dies, the mute ox is offered the role of supervisor. Riots ensue, and the mute ox is handed keys to leadership.

- a) **Continued Labour:** Without full recovery, the mute ox keeps the keys, honoured as a model worker, believing in Peach Blossom Island.
- b) **Rising Oppressor:** Fully restored, the mute ox ascends to power, convinced Peach Blossom Island lies under the whip's control.

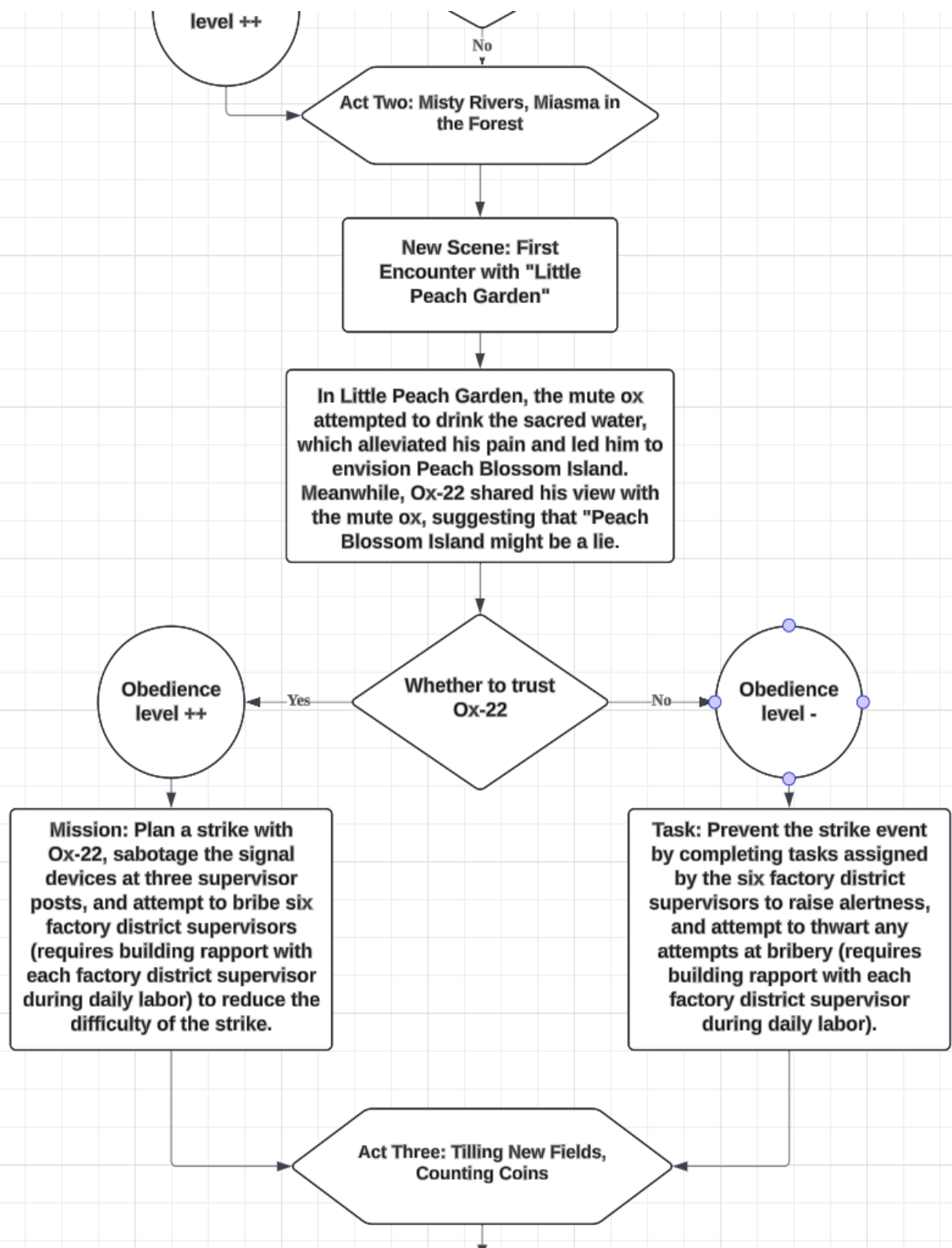
Special Ending:

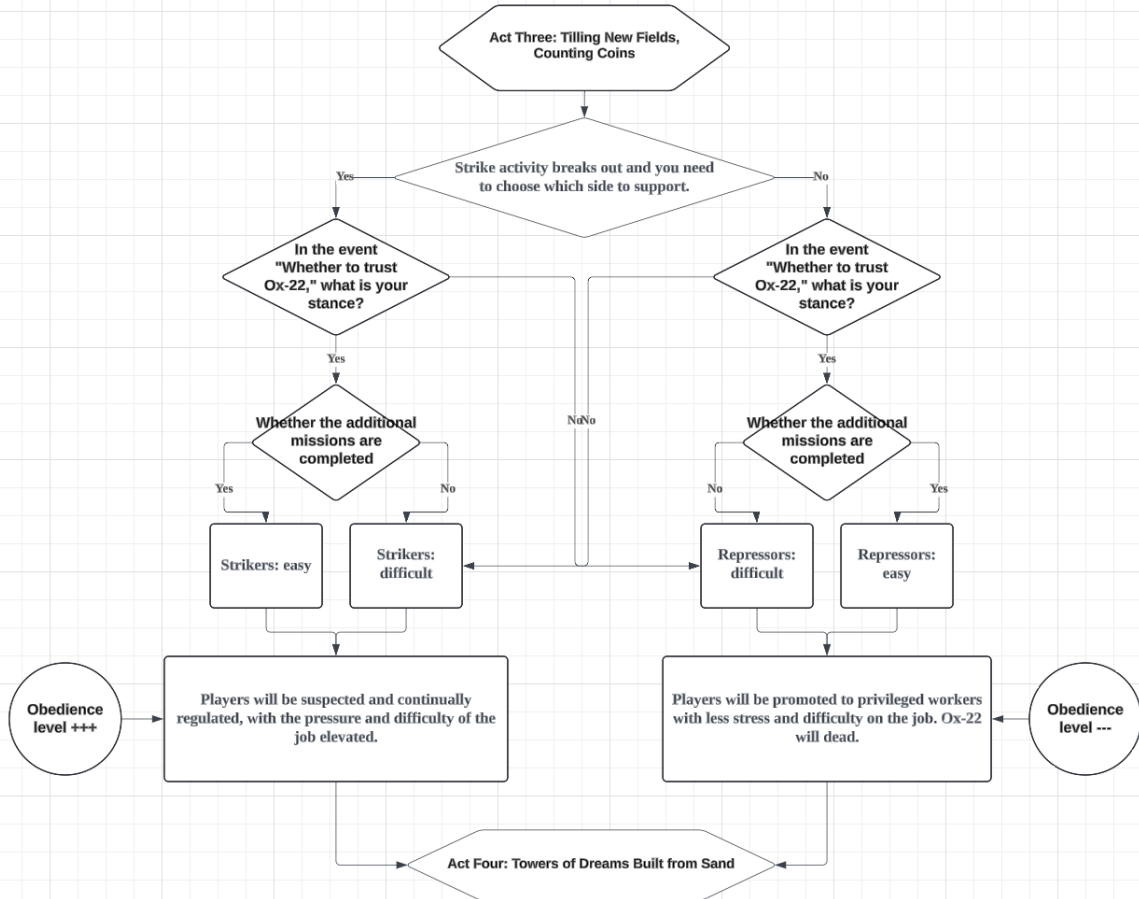
Drunken Dream – After becoming addicted to the sacred water of Little Peach Garden, you trigger this ending by speaking with the Enigmatic One during Act Four, initiating a cutscene. "You have truly arrived at Peach Blossom Island. Everything before you mirrors the visions from your dreams, perfectly identical. Your senses blur, and your body begins to relax—but none of that matters now. Everything you have strived for until this moment blooms alongside the enchanting peach blossoms."

IV. Visual and Narrative Style

Visual Style: Cash Cow Town reflects industrial, modern farms—dark, muted tones contrasted by Little Peach Garden's vibrant hues.

Narrative Approach: Environmental storytelling and character interaction highlight psychological changes, like cracks in the factory or luxurious offices that grow gaudier with power shifts.





Game Development Draft – "Mute Oxen"

1. Cutscene Script (Act 1 Opening Scene)

Scene:

Cash Cow Town, 848 Factory District, at dawn. The factory is silent, shrouded in thick gray fog, with only the distant rising sun faintly illuminating one corner. A cold wind blows, carrying the scent of rust and leather.

Camera Moves:

[Wide Shot]

At the edge of a vast farm, a massive factory stands alone, indifferent and oppressive. In the distance, a group of mute oxen workers slowly march toward the factory with heavy steps. Each step elongates their shadows until they vanish beneath the factory's enormous silhouette.

[Medium Shot]

The mute oxen wear worn-out suits, heads bowed, backs slightly hunched, silent. Each ox has an identification tag hanging around its neck, softly clinking in the morning light. The numbers are sharp and clear, resembling unbreakable chains.

[Close-up]

The camera lingers on the protagonist, "Mute Oxen-17." He raises his head slightly, eyes fixed on the tightly shut factory doors ahead. The number 17 glimmers faintly in the dim light, as if silently narrating his identity.

Narration (Deep Male Voice):

"I am just another nameless ox, no different from the others..."

The screen transitions, showing a series of sketch-style scenes:

A line of mute oxen setting off, their silhouettes blurred in the morning light.

A bird's-eye view of the factory, with the supervisor coldly overlooking from a high platform.

"Look into my eyes and tell me..."

The sketch zooms in, focusing on a lone mute ox facing away from the camera, appearing isolated and helpless.

"Who... is innocent?"

The camera slowly zooms in as the mute ox turns around, a faint, uneasy smile emerging.

The screen fades to black.

Scene Transition:

[Overhead Shot]

Inside the factory, the supervisor stands on a high observation platform, his gaze sharp as he surveys the mute oxen entering one by one.

[Protagonist's Perspective]

Ox-22 walks beside Ox-17. The two march silently, the air heavy with tension.

Ox-22 lowers his gaze, cautiously observing the supervisor's movements. After confirming they are unnoticed, he quietly nudges Ox-17 with his elbow.

Ox-17 flinches slightly, lifting his head to glance at Ox-22.

Ox-22 smiles softly, discreetly slipping a dirt-stained coin into Ox-17's hand. Their eyes meet, sharing a brief but warm moment of silence.

[Wide Shot]

The mute oxen gradually enter the factory. The heavy iron doors slowly close, returning the factory to its former silence. The faint sound of machines starting echoes in the distance.

2. Task System and Dynamic Event Examples

Task Title: Clean the Mill in District 848

Description:

The factory supervisor issues a cleaning order, requiring the removal of accumulated feed and waste to restore normal operations.

Task Flow:

- Enter the factory.
- Collect tools (broom and shovel).
- Clean the following three designated areas:
 - Machining Area
 - Feed Storage Area
 - Cattle Pen Enclosure

- Report back to the supervisor upon completion.

Branching Event:

During cleaning, Ox-22 approaches Ox-17, showing a faded photograph of a mute ox being whipped by the supervisor. This triggers the side quest [Secret of the Springtime of the Cattle].

- **Choice 1:** If the player ignores Ox-22, the task ends normally, earning standard rewards and increasing compliance.
- **Choice 2:** If the player listens to Ox-22, a task branch is triggered, leading to the Little Peach Garden area. Compliance decreases, and awareness increases.

3. Character Interaction System Example

Scene 1: Noon Break – Factory Rest Area

Ox-22 sits alone on a bench, gazing into the distance, eyes filled with confusion and worry.

Ox-22 (Sign Language):

“17, have you ever heard of the Springtime of the Cattle?”

Dialogue Options:

- [Listen] – Continue the conversation.
- [Shake Head and Leave] – End the conversation.
- **Choice 1 (Continue Conversation):**
Ox-22 speaks softly:
“They say Peach Blossom Island doesn’t exist. We’re just being tricked by the people in town to keep working.”
- **Choice 2 (End Conversation):**
Ox-22 pauses for a moment, sighs softly, and lowers his head to continue eating.

Scene 2: Evening – Outside the Factory

Ox-22 stands by the worn-out railway tracks, holding a rusty key stolen from the supervisor’s office high in the air.

Ox-22 (Shouting):

“Our voices are buried here! Today, we take back what is ours!”

Dialogue Options:

- [For Peach Blossom Island!]
- [For Freedom!]
- **Choice 1:**
Ox-17 whispers, "For Peach Blossom Island..."
- **Choice 2:**
Ox-17 shouts loudly, "For Freedom!"
Leading other mute oxen to charge toward the factory supervisor's post.

4. Environmental Narrative Elements

Dynamic Scene Changes Example:

- Cracks on the factory walls gradually widen as the game progresses, hinting at unrest and the collapse of the system.
- Flowers in Little Peach Garden change color based on player state:
 - **Hallucination State:** Pink, glowing softly.
 - **Sober State:** Withered, dim.

In Act 3, the survival or death of Ox-22 affects scene layouts and visual effects:

- **If Ox-22 survives,** more vibrant flowers appear in the scene. Posters on the walls are more frequently vandalized or torn, and signs of damage appear in the management office. Scene contrast increases.
- **If Ox-22 dies,** fewer flowers are present. Posters remain clean and intact, and scene contrast decreases.

Interactive Elements:

- Players can read old newspapers in the factory, detailing stories about Peach Blossom Island. However, the content is often blurred or edited, suggesting the truth may be hidden.
- In the factory's monitoring room, an unsent letter from the supervisor reveals:
"Peach Blossom Island may be just a myth, but it sustains the hope of the cattle. We must continue this lie."

5. Act 3 Cutscene Draft (Ox-22's Death or Survival)

Ox-22 Death Storyline:

Scene: Little Peach Garden, night. Flowers sway gently in the moonlight, with flames in

the distance gradually dying out. Mute Oxen holds Ox-22's weakened, breathless body in his arms.

Camera Moves:

[Close-up] [Special Focus]

The supervisor's boots step through pools of blood, passing by the fallen bodies of mute oxen.

[Medium Close-up]

The silhouette of Peach Blossom Island faintly appears on the water's surface, bright yet distant. A single droplet falls, morphing into the devastated remains of the factory after the uprising.

[Wide Shot]

Mute Oxen kneels beneath a poplar tree, silently watching over Ox-22 with a complex expression.

Ox-22 (Weakly):

"Perhaps... one day, we'll really make it there..."

"But... you've missed that chance."

[The screen gradually fades out, leading into Act 4. Scrolling text appears:]

"Let me see it once more, just once."

"That pot of flowers jumping from the building."

"Carrying the sunset into the abyss."

"Let me see it once more, just once."

"The hollow, low walls."

"Filled with bundles of straw."

"Cry for one more night."

"And there will be no tomorrow."

"Cry for one more night."

"And things will stay the same."

6. Rebuilding the Springtime of the Cattle – Ending Script

Scene Setting:

Time: Just before dawn, as mist envelops Cash Cow Town. The sky over the factory remains dark, with faint glimmers of light on the horizon.

Location: At the intersection of the factory ruins and the fields, hope begins to take root amid the rubble.

Scene 1: The Ruins in the Morning Fog

[Wide Shot]

The factory lies in ruins. Cracked walls, crooked iron gates, and shattered signs scatter across the muddy ground. The sign still faintly reads "848 Factory District." Mute oxen gather in small groups at the edge of the fields, quietly watching the destroyed factory, awaiting Ox-17's words.

[Medium Shot]

Ox-17 stands atop a discarded piece of machinery, wearing tattered clothes. A rusted iron key glints in the sunlight. Blood stains his horns as he raises the key, his voice hoarse but resolute.

Ox-17 (Firm but Calm):

"This marks the end of Cash Cow Town, but it's the beginning of our rebuilding. The Springtime of the Cattle has not perished. With time and patience, the peach blossoms will bloom once again."

[Close-up]

Ox-22 stands beside Ox-17, his face tired but eyes bright.

Ox-22 (Smiling):

"Hey, 17... You know, I never thought we'd get this far. But you did it. You led us out of this prison... You pieced yourself back together, and pieced us back together, too."

Ox-17 (Softly):

"No, 22. We did it together. Peach Blossom Island may have been a lie, but freedom and hope are real. Perhaps, the moment Cash Cow Town crumbled... Peach Blossom Island was born."

Scene 2: The Call to Rebuild

[Wide Shot]

Mute oxen begin clearing the ruins, building new farms and workshops. In the fields beside the factory, barren land is gradually cultivated. Young green crops sway in the sunlight.

[Dynamic Camera Movements]

- A group of mute oxen erects new wooden posts, constructing fences.
- Ox-22 leads others in repairing tools, as old machinery gradually comes back to

life under the hammer's strike.

- An elderly mute ox hums an old tune while sitting on a stone. Slowly, other oxen join in, and the melody echoes across the fields.

Scene 3: The Train to "Homecoming"

[Wide Shot]

At sunset, a newly built Springtime of the Cattle headquarters stands atop the ruins. A modified freight train stops on temporary tracks, with a hand-painted sign reading "Homecoming" hanging from the engine. Mute oxen board the train one by one, while Ox-17 stands by the door, patting each comrade's shoulder.

Ox-22 (Jokingly):

"We're really going to take this train? Looks like it could fall apart at any moment."

Ox-17 (Laughing and Patting the Train):

"Don't worry, 22. It may be old, but it will take us to the next destination. Perhaps the real Peach Blossom Island lies somewhere along the way. The real island might always be ahead of us... but it's not here, not where the journey ends."

[Close-up]

The player boards the train last, the iron doors slowly closing. The camera pans upward as the train whistle echoes across the fields. The wheels begin to turn, carrying the Springtime of the Cattle toward the horizon.

[Long Shot]

The train departs from the factory ruins, heading toward the distant fields. The sunset paints the sky red.

Gradual Subtitles Appear:

You've stepped onto her Peach Blossom Island,

Silent, still, without a word or a fight.

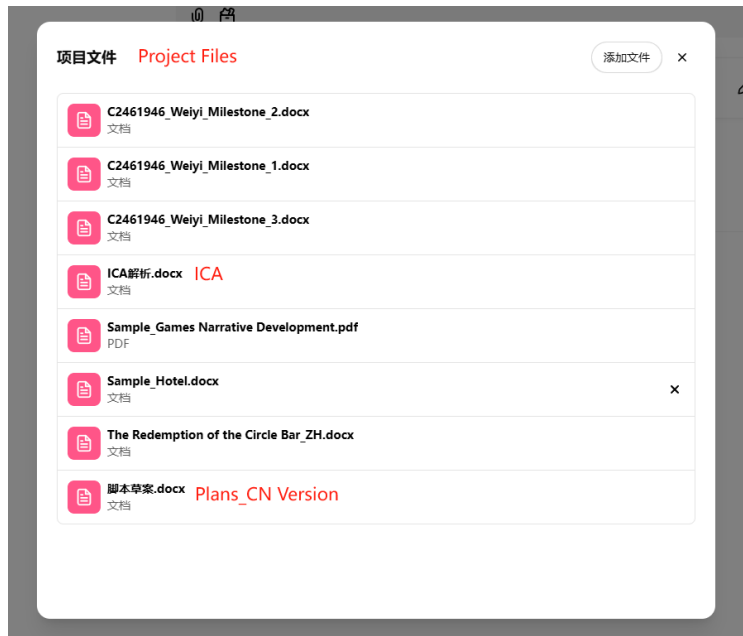
Singing softly, dancing light,

At the journey's end, there lies your homecoming,

And within it, hope's eternal light.

[The screen fades to black, as the music softly fades out.]"

AI generates content:



I introduced my three milestones, my personal analysis and summarization of ICA, two reference works, a first draft of the core elements of the plot, and the Chinese version of the script plan (which includes poetry and dialogues).

The purpose of this is to make it easy for the AI to read some of the terms, such as “mute ox”, “bill cow town” and so on.

1. Literary translations of parts of the poems shown in episodic cli ps.

镜头缓缓淡出，进入第四幕。出现滚动字幕：↵

再让我看一遍把，一遍就好↵

那盆跳下楼的百花↵

带着夕阳走进深渊↵

再让我看一遍吧，一遍就好↵

那空心的低矮城墙↵

被一团团稻草填满↵

↵

再哭一夜↵

便再无今宵↵

再哭一夜↵

便一如既往↵

[The screen gradually fades out, leading into Act 4. Scrolling text appears:]↵

"Let me see it once more, just once."↵

"That pot of flowers jumping from the building."↵

"Carrying the sunset into the abyss."↵

"Let me see it once more, just once."↵

"The hollow, low walls."↵

"Filled with bundles of straw."↵

"Cry for one more night."↵

"And there will be no tomorrow."↵

"Cry for one more night."↵

"And things will stay the same."↵

字幕渐显: ↓

"你登上了她的桃花岛" ↵

不听，不说，不挣扎 ↵

你唱着歌，跳起了舞 ↵

列车的尽头，是归途，亦是希望" ↵

[屏幕渐暗，音乐淡出] ↵

Gradual Subtitles Appear: ↓

You've stepped onto her Peach Blossom Island, ↵

Silent, still, without a word or a fight. ↵

Singing softly, dancing light, ↵

At the journey's end, there lies your homecoming, ↵

And within it, hope's eternal light. ↵

[The screen fades to black, as the music softly fades out.] ↵

Literary translation of the following into English:

"你登上了她的桃花岛
不听，不说，不挣扎
你唱着歌，跳起了舞
列车的尽头，是归途，亦是希望"



Here is a literary translation of the text:

"You boarded her Peach Blossom Island,
Not listening, not speaking, not struggling.
You sing a song, dance a dance,
At the end of the train, there is the homecoming, and there is hope."



Here's the scrolling credits that appear at the end of the story,
please translate it in a more artistic, or poetic, writing style

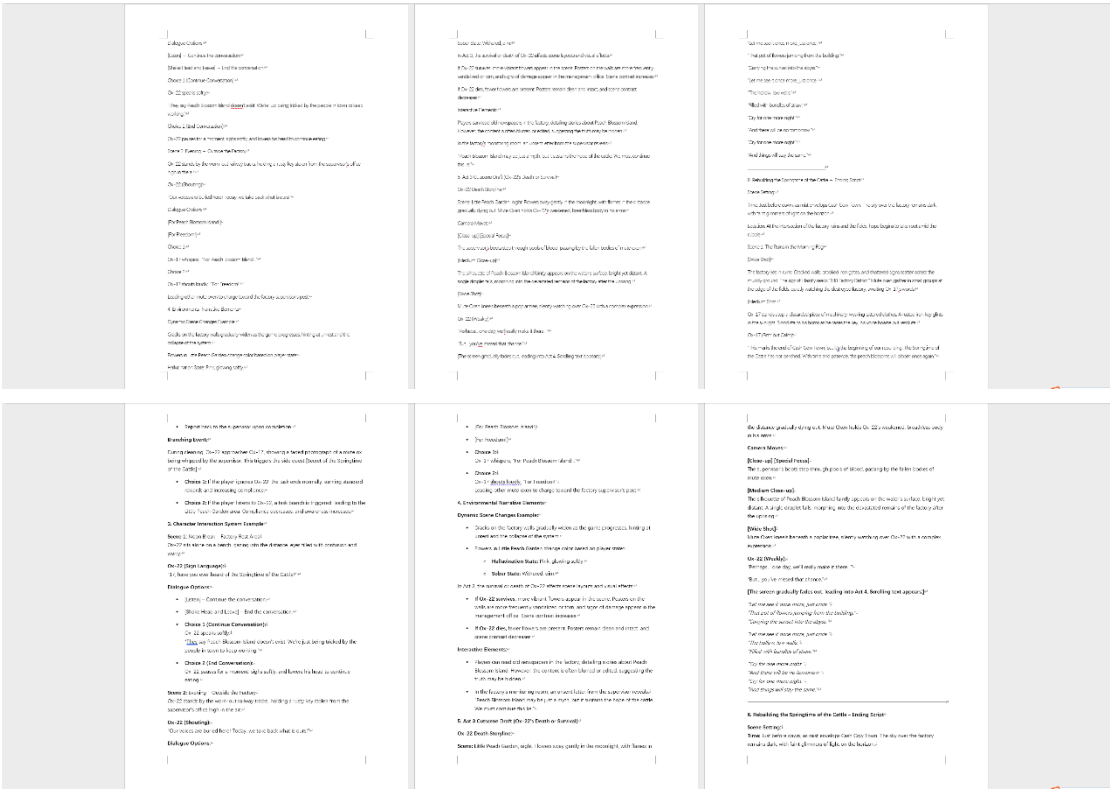


Here's a more artistic and poetic translation of the scrolling credits:

"You've stepped onto her Peach Blossom Island,
Silent, still, without a word or a fight.
Singing softly, dancing light,
At the journey's end, there lies your homecoming,
And within it, hope's eternal light."



2. Supporting Typesetting



Can you help me reformat the document called 'The Redemption of the Circle Bar'? Please refer to the ICA and other references to ensure that it is aesthetically pleasing.

Certainly! I can assist with reformatting "The Redemption of the Circle Bar" document to ensure it has a clean, professional, and aesthetically pleasing layout, using the ICA document and other reference files as a guide.

Here's a proposed structure and formatting for your document:

The Redemption of the Circle Bar

I. Game Background and Narrative Setting

Story Background:

In some unknown corner of the world—or perhaps a familiar place you’ve never truly seen—the tale of the "Mute Ox" unfolds. This story could happen anywhere, but it ultimately represents the relationship between the oppressor and the oppressed. You may choose to accept this domination in pursuit of an ideal—searching for the mythical "Peach Blossom Island"—or wait for divine intervention. Lost between labor and reality. Or perhaps you will

Circle Bar” for clarity and aesthetics:

1. Title & Heading Formatting:

- **Title** should be **centered** at the top of the page and **bolded**.
Example:

bash复制代码

The Redemption of the Circle Bar

2. Section Headings:

- **Section titles** like **Game Background and Narrative Setting, Character Design**, etc. should be in **bold**, and should have a larger font size (e.g., 16pt) to stand out.
Example:

mathematica复制代码

I. Game Background and Narrative Setting

3. Subheadings:

- Any sub-sections, like **Story Background, World Overview**, etc., should also be **bolded**, but at a slightly smaller size (e.g., 14pt).
Example:

shell复制代码

Story Background

4. Paragraph Formatting:

- Use **justified text alignment** for better readability and a professional look.
- Ensure there is **consistent line spacing** (1.5 or double line spacing for readability).
- Use **short paragraphs** (around 4-6 lines) for better flow and easy navigation through the document.

5. Bullet Points or Numbered Lists:

- Use **bulleted or numbered lists** for any elements you need to highlight, such as **character traits, game mechanics**, or **story structure**. Example:

给“ChatGPT”发送消息

