



## The State of Accidental Woman Development Report

ThaumX — August 9<sup>th</sup>, 2018

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### A Moment to Say Thanks

I just wanted to take a brief moment to say thank you to everyone who has helped the Accidental Woman project go so far. It wouldn't be possible without you, so from patrons to sadflowers, thank you!

## Since Last Time...

It has been a while since the last state of the game report, so quite a lot has happened since the last one. For the most part, I've just been busy working on the game and didn't want to spare the time to write out one of these reports. Still, it's useful to take a look back and reevaluate plans every once in a while. Mistakes usually aren't terrible unless you fail to learn from them, and the process of reviewing things for this report helps point the ones I've missed and reinforce the ones I already know about. Also, as part of my commitment to being open to the community—some would say too open—I get to share those mistakes with you. It may not be the best advertising to discuss one's shortcomings and mistakes, but it seems like the better approach when it comes to ensuring long-term success. Also, it's reassuring to know that you guys will be able to poke me with a stick if you see me starting to repeat a mistake in the future!

In addition to the mistakes, of course, there has been some great progress and unexpected advancements. We can say that we have some really unique elements in the game compared to other adult games, and we can also say we have a few "firsts" as well (in fact, there's enough of them that I'm having trouble remembering them all). Of course, all this extra work isn't for bragging rights, and it isn't about saying that AW is better than some other game out there. Really, it's about making a better H-game; if some of our work with AW helps inspire better games in the adult genre... that would be truly great as well. The cool thing is that it seems we're already starting to have an effect, at least in the text-based genre.

I'm excited to continue working on Accidental Woman, and I'm looking forward to being able to share my future progress with all of you.

## Let's Talk Code For A Minute — *why progress can seem slow*

There is a **lot** of new code in AW since the last report. Aside from the noticeable changes, there's plenty of extra work in the code that isn't obvious, especially when it comes to making modular and expandable systems. One of the more exciting things that has happened recently is the first release with a working custom content loader. Not because it means there will suddenly be a flood of mods, but because it gives me a chance to show you some of that extra work in a way that you can experience without needing to read JavaScript.

Many of you are probably familiar with the term "hard coding" or "hard coded", if only as something generally considered bad. Oogle is your friend if you want to know more, but essentially, it's producing very rigid and inflexible code. It's a lot of work to maintain, expand, and reuse. New programmers often end up doing it because of inexperience, but it still remains more prevalent in games than you'd expect. The reason is that hard coding is *faster* in the short term. You can code something quickly, and from the user's perspective it seems fine, at least at first. There is a lot of "promise" that proves hard to realize, because expanding on the early basic features that show promise becomes more and more of a nightmare. (It's called technical debt.) But in the beginning, it comes together quickly.

When you compare two projects—or two games in this case—the game building up a lot of technical debt is going to be the one that looks more promising, generally looking more complete with more gameplay and content. It's simple math, really; if it takes you half the time to code functionality into the game, you'll have a lot more time to work on more functionality and content. Of course, this usually doesn't hold out in the long run... mounting technical debt dramatically slows development, and people start to notice the time it takes to add seemingly-minor functionality. Usually it doesn't turn out well. Meanwhile the more honestly programmed game chugs along without much change in pace.

Just like with that comparison, there is a difference between having a modular content framework and more standard approach. Again, the more complex one is slower out of the gate because of the extra work needed to program flexible functionality. While the standard project can chug along without much of

a change in pace, an expansible framework becomes much faster at adding game content past the framework stage. (This is also what makes custom content possible without a very difficult to use API.) That's what we're aiming for with AW, and what I was talking about when I mentioned the non-obvious code work in the first paragraph above.

Many times, for a game with a narrow scope, a more standard approach is perfectly sufficient or even desirable. That isn't what we're shooting for with AW though. To put it simply, the planned version of AW just wouldn't be possible without these approaches.

### What's New?

Quite a bit has been added since the last State of the Game report. Sleep, Working, Improved UI, End of Week, Sex Scenes, Female Start, Revamped Clothing, Expanded World, New Stores, Parser System, Home Items, Inventory System, and much more. In terms of (story) content, there hasn't been a ton of growth. Mostly because the focus has been on the code and playability rather than the prologue story. I did start work on writing the female prologue early, as there has been so much demand for it. Overall the game's framework is really coming together, and we've started the final stretch for the essential framework components.

### General Update

I went ahead and rebuilt the game's website from scratch. The old one was just so bad performance-wise that it had to be done. When I got some spare time I started the switch, but still need to finish moving the blog content. Patreon has had the usual events of tomfuckery, but nothing too major. We made a switch to up-front charging, which has made funding more stable without the pledge & drops to get access to patron rewards.

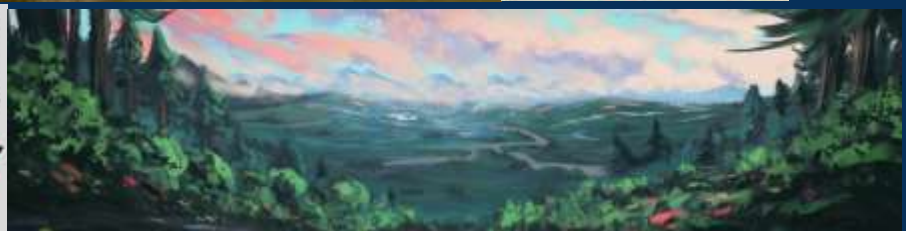
I started doing a dev blog topic poll, which seems to be successful. I slowed down a bit with longer posts during the nightmare period from the end of May to early June, but I want to get back to doing longer posts more regularly. To be honest, so much of the technical side of development has been discussed, there isn't a ton left to do a feature on.

It also turns out to be surprisingly difficult to hire (reliable) help. Whether artists or writers, it's been a challenge, which is somewhat surprising given the rates I've been offering. I also underestimated the amount of work that goes into searching for people, doing opening communication, negotiation, coordinating things. After having several drop outs in the spring—wasting my time in the process—I haven't been pursuing outside help nearly as much. In the long term it's still a necessity of course, but taking things a lot more slowly in the hopes of reducing wasted time. If you know someone who can draw or write (for CCG!)... If they're reasonably reliable and it seems they'd like some work, send 'em my way.

### Artwork Update

I've been working on the game art a lot more myself for some of the essential assets, which in some ways is quite nice. (And not just because I like to draw.) We haven't had anything resembling a staff or regularly-commissioned artist, though I've had some graphic design help from Besty for some of the game's logo/location work. I also did some work on a paper doll setup for clothing, which is really intended as more of a visual indicator than a true representation of what the character looks like. While I've only added a few pieces of scene art to the game over the last few months, and no new portraits, the artwork for things like businesses and items can play a big role in the general perception and immersion in the game world.

I'm currently looking for a background artist to work on the location images, but I'm also going to start spending more time looking for an artist for the PC portrait. Here's a small selection of the art added to the game since the last report...



## Project Funding

Project funding has been fairly stable, moreso after the switch to upfront charging at the beginning of July. The recent Patreon shenanigans of switching to a foreign bank to process pledges without telling anyone resulted in a predictable drop in funding, some of which returned, some of which didn't. To the right is a chart of funding for the last six months courtesy of Graphtreon. Of course, Patreon's data is pretty notoriously unreliable, and doesn't include all the expenses/fees and such. The processing fees from Patreon's charging vendors have been some of the highest I've seen, with rates higher than 5% not uncommon. Maybe this latest change will help with that...

(Also, thanks again for your support!)



## Unlife of an Erolich

I had started spending a ridiculous amount of time per week working on the game. Of course, I still spend a ridiculous amount of time working on the game by just about anyone's standards... I was averaging over 13 hours per day for a few months there, it's almost like I was playing a Japanese salaryman Death March simulator. I'm trying to limit myself to a healthier amount of work per week, as it's no good if I get seriously ill or have other problems from overwork. Honestly, I've always had a strong work ethic, especially after my time in the USAF. It's never been an issue for me before though, I think because there isn't a set standard of how much work I should do, and because I generally enjoy the work, it's harder to keep a reign on things. This is going to be something I'll have to continue working on in the near future, and I've already set up an appointment with a therapist to help me better manage my work habits. Being a workaholic is strange, I'm not even sure if that label actually applies to me. I'm just going to keep an open mind and try to move in the right direction. I'll try to post an update when I learn more from the therapist evaluation.

## Progress Report

Time to break things down a bit and look at how progress compares to the initial plans. The original plans for development called for development lasting over three years (including the planning phase and preliminary work); three years from the first public release. This puts the 1.0 date at August of 2020. We're one year in to that three-year cycle.

The finished 1.0 game is a complete, playable game that can be played to completion and has all the game mechanics and framework installed. It should be able to "take on a life of its own" in the form of mods and custom content, though from the beginning I've thought I would like to continue past 1.0 with further expansion of the game. In any case, I don't want to work on a game that has some indefinite finish point in the future, or that may never be finished, because that feels unfair to supporters in a crowdfunded model. I'd rather focus on creating a complete game, and add to it later if possible. There are a ton of extra things that would be exciting to have, from big-ticket items like having a futa character, to smaller things like expanded story sequences or fetish content.

This progress report is all about getting to that 1.0 stage

## Writing

As far as writing is concerned, it's a little mixed. This is largely my fault, because in several ways I didn't follow the initial plan for what writing to focus on and in what order. So for example the standard (male start) prologue is behind, but we have some female start prologue content which wasn't planned to have been written yet. We also have content in other areas that is ahead such as in guide items and tutorials, as well as some other areas that are a little behind (sex scene content). Overall I'd peg the writing as being somewhat behind, but not to a significant degree... particularly when compared to the amount of writing planned. So far it's mostly been that the extra time set aside for writing gets taken by one thing or another, but as writing becomes more of a priority, that will be less of an issue.

Behind: Male Start Prologue, Sex Scene Actions

Ahead: Female start Prologue, Encyclopedia Entries

**TOTAL: Behind 2 to 3 weeks**

## Interface

Like writing, the interface is really mixed in terms of what is behind and what is ahead. This is mostly because it's difficult to predict what interface elements will be most important, and what interface elements people will be unhappy with if left as a placeholder. I've tried to focus on your feedback in terms of where work is directed in this area, so it's a bit of a mix.

As far as general design and coding goes, most of the interface items are ahead. Particularly when it comes to specific menus like the wardrobe or grooming. Some items, however, are behind, namely the character and social menus (which are partially framework). There are of course plenty of items in need of polish, but in general polish can (and should) wait until later in development.

Behind: Character and Social Menus, End of Week Summary

Ahead: Several Menus, Main Interface Components

**TOTAL: Ahead 2 weeks**

## Code Nuggets

Probably the largest "behind" area—at least to the original schedule—is the coding. However, after the schedule revisions discussed in the previous state of the game report, we've been doing well. The main change was to expand phase 2 to include the buffer zone of extra time that I included in the end of the schedule. With that extra time shifted, we're slightly ahead of the expected schedule. This is largely due to the AI progressing well and the extra buffer time for uncertainties with the AI that I had included. We also have a few items ahead of schedule, such as the custom content loader, and some bonus minor items like lactation and swimwear.

There are still a few areas that are slightly behind, or that were left not quite complete while waiting for other areas of the framework to be complete. These are mostly minor, however, so not a huge impact on the schedule. The most notable is the job object system, and some loose ends with the home system. Mostly just small things that individually don't amount to much, but combined are a few days of work. As far as the engine goes, we're doing quite well, and the major engine challenges have all been resolved. I'm counting mobile compatibility separately, as it's both a challenge and also more of something nice to have rather than required.

Behind: job object class/methods, a couple home system items, other minor elements

Ahead: AI thus far, custom content, some extra utilities, data/npc handling

**TOTAL: Ahead 1 Week**

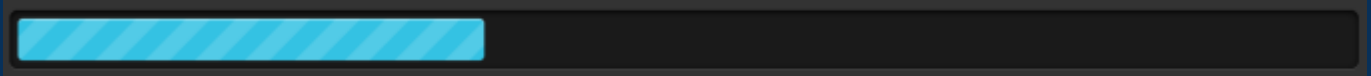
## Art

Art is tricky, because it's one area that I don't have direct/complete control over. While I've been adding some supplemental art assets, some of the more basic items like NPC and PC portraits are behind. Working with artists didn't have nearly enough time allocated to it overall in the schedule, and on top of that reliability of artists can be questionable at times. However, I'm certain there's a ton of great people/artists out there just waiting for me to find them. Also, with additional funding I will be able to afford more expensive artists and/or offer bonuses for reliability. I've used some art funds on extra writing commissions, but I've also put some aside as well.

I don't think that this will have a huge impact on the schedule overall, and I'm also at a loss for exactly how I should calculate this in terms of direct impacts. Having decided to switch to a templated set of portraits with options rather than numerous unique portraits also reduces the total time it should take.

## Overall Progress

The total result of all the above is that we're pretty close to right on schedule. The impact of work reduction in the future (not working 13-hour days, 7 days a week) will probably result in slippage... but right now we're doing well.



Completion: 35%

That's all I have time to write, thanks for giving it a read, and thanks yet again for your continued support, it means the world to me!

o/

ThaumX