

# Puzzle 1: Frozen Corpse Puzzle

## Overview

This puzzle takes place in a cabin, where the player finds a locked metal door gripped by a frozen corpse. The corpse's fingers are fused to the handle due to extreme cold. The player must remove the body's grip in order to proceed.

## Design Goals:

1. Encourage player agency by offering two distinct solutions with consequences.
2. Use the horror atmosphere to reinforce tension, each choice has a risk.
3. Integrate the game's resource management system, where fire is both a tool and a limited survival resource.
4. Leverage the toolset:
  - Trigger Box: Detects when the player is near the door.
  - Interactable Objects: Clicking on objects allows for movement and manipulation.
  - Text Displays: Provides context, hints, and feedback.

## Breakdown

### Phase 1: Player Discovery

- The player approaches the door, stepping into a **trigger box**, which **displays a text prompt**:  
*"The door won't budge. Something is blocking it."*
- Clicking the door **zooms in** on the handle, revealing the frozen corpse's fingers fused to the metal.
- Clicking on the corpse's hand triggers an inspection prompt:  
*"The flesh is frozen stiff. The only way to free the door is to break the grip."*
- At this point, the player **can rotate the fingers** (using the interaction system), but they won't move due to the ice.

### Phase 2: The Two Solutions

#### Solution 1: Brute Force

- Nearby, the player spots a **crowbar** leaning against the wall.
- Clicking the crowbar **adds it to the inventory**.
- Clicking the corpse's hand **while holding the crowbar** triggers a new text prompt:  
*"If I strike the wrist, the fingers should break off... but the noise..."*
- The player confirms the action. A loud cracking sound echoes through the cabin.

- The fingers snap, releasing the door handle.
- A distant, inhuman **breathing noise** begins, implying **something heard them**.
- From this moment on, the player is at a higher risk of encountering the Wendigo in later areas.

### Solution 2: Controlled Fire

- Inside the cabin, the player can find **a can of kerosene** and **a box of matches** (both interactable).
- Clicking them **adds them to the inventory**.
- Clicking the corpse's hand **while holding the kerosene** triggers a text prompt:  
*"If I thaw the fingers, I can open the door quietly... but I might need this fuel later."*
- The player confirms the action. They use a match to ignite a small flame, gently thawing the fingers.
- The player **can now rotate and move the fingers manually**, freeing the door without making noise.
- No immediate danger, but the player loses a valuable heat source, making survival later more difficult.

## Puzzle 2: Blood in the Snow Puzzle

### Overview

The player follows a wounded traveler's bloody footprints deep into a cave system, only to find that the path splits into two tunnels, one leading to safety, the other to certain doom. The puzzle forces the player to interpret environmental clues and a cryptic message to make the right choice.

### Design Goals:

- Encourage exploration. Players must examine details to make an informed decision.
- Use environmental storytelling. Clues tell a story of what happened to past travelers.
- Introduce tension & consequences. Choosing wrong adds a permanent gameplay consequence instead of a simple fail state.

## Breakdown

### Phase 1: Player Discovery

- The player follows bloody footprints through a cave, lit only by pale blue ice reflecting from above.
- The footprints **split into two tunnels**:

1. Left Tunnel – A narrow, winding path with blood streaks vanishing into the darkness.
  2. Right Tunnel – A wider, smoother passage with strange symbols carved into the walls.
- A **trigger box** activates as the player approaches, displaying:  
*"The storm howls outside. There's no turning back."*

### **Environmental Clues:**

- Clicking the bloody footprints in the left tunnel gives:  
*"The steps are uneven... whoever walked this way wasn't alone when they reached the end."*
- Clicking the symbols on the right tunnel's wall gives:  
*"Scratched into the stone... these weren't made by tools. They almost look like warnings?"*
- Clicking a discarded boot near the left tunnel reveals:  
*"The leather is torn. Something took a bite out of it."*
- Near the right tunnel's entrance, a broken lantern is half-buried in the snow. Clicking it gives:  
*"The glass is cracked, but the oil inside is fresh. Someone made it through here."*
- Finally, the player finds a blood-streaked message scrawled on the cave floor:  
*"KEEP TO THE MARKINGS."*

The player now **must decide which tunnel to take.**

## **Phase 2: The Choice & Consequences**

### **Option 1: Left Tunnel (Wrong Choice)**

- The player clicks the tunnel entrance. The screen fades to black as they step inside.
- The passage twists sharply, and the sound of wind fades.
- After a few steps, the footprints suddenly stop.
- A soft clicking noise echoes ahead.
- If the player continues forward, they see a dark shape shifting at the edge of the light.
- Before they can react, the screen cuts to black, and they wake up back at the fork... but something has changed.
  - From now on, a new survival mechanic is introduced:
  - If the player lingers in open areas for too long, they hear the wind whispering their name.
  - Staying still for too long causes shadows to move at the edge of the screen.
  - This adds either a sanity decrease, or a passive horror element to the rest of the game ( or temporary?)

### **Option 2: Right Tunnel (Correct Choice)**

- The player enters the tunnel with the markings.
- The passage narrows, and the air feels eerily still.
- The symbols glow faintly as a gust of wind rushes past, but nothing follows.
- As the player continues, they find a skeleton curled against the wall, clutching a journal.
  - Clicking it gives:  
*"The last page is torn... but the first few words remain: 'The marks keep it away...'"*
- The tunnel opens into a larger cave, where the player finds a usable supply cache.
  - Inside is a flare gun. (Or other really useful tool)

## Puzzle 3: The Chamber Puzzle

Deep within an ancient, hidden cave, the player discovers a sacred burial site for a forgotten tribe. At the center of the cavern stands a Wendigo effigy, carved from twisted wood and bone. Surrounding it are six standing stones, each engraved with a tribal symbol representing different spirits. A massive, ancient wind instrument (like a bone flute organ) sits at the far end of the cave.

### Design Goals:

- Non-verbal storytelling, the puzzle tells a story through architecture and mechanics.
- Encourages curiosity, players must piece together the solution through trial and observation.
- No immediate danger, solving it is about understanding patterns & relationships.

## Breakdown

### Phase 1: Player Discovery

- The player enters the **cavern**, and a **trigger box** activates, causing:
  1. The **effigy's eyes to faintly glow**.
  2. A guttural **hum** to fill the air.
  3. A **text prompt** to appear:  
*"The hunger stirs. Silence it, or be consumed."*
- The cavern features:
  1. **The Bone Flute Organ (might be something simpler like a string instrument made of bone/hair)** – A massive, ancient **instrument made of carved bones**. Pressing its keys **plays eerie, hollow notes**.
  2. **Six Standing Stones** – Each features a **different tribal spirit symbol** (~~Wolf, Raven, Fire, Ice, Death, and Hunger~~) (Fire, Snowflake, Food, Wendigo Skull).

3. **A Tribal Inscription (Clue)** – Found on the cave wall, partially obscured. Clicking it reveals:

*“Only the spirits can quiet the hunger. Their voices must rise together.”*

## Phase 2: Solving the Puzzle

### Step 1: Understanding the Symbols & Sounds

- Each **standing stone** represents a **spirit** and has **three symbols** that can be rotated.
- Each **bone flute key** plays a distinct **low, resonating note**.
- Playing **certain notes** causes **specific stones to glow faintly**, this signals their **connection**.
- Clicking a **stone while it vibrates** displays:  
*“This spirit hears the call... but something is missing.”*

### Step 2: Aligning the Ritual

- The **correct solution** is to **match each standing stone’s symbol** to the **right flute note**.
- The **inscription suggests a connection between spirits**—certain symbols **must be paired together**.
- The player must **align the stones to the correct spirit symbols** and **play the right melody** to complete the ritual.

### Step 3: The Wrong Choice (Failure Consequence)

- **If the player mismatches symbols or plays an incorrect melody:**
  - The **effigy twitches slightly**.
  - A deep **growling breath** echoes from the cave walls.
  - A **shadow moves at the cave entrance**—but nothing is there when the player looks.
  - A text prompt warns:  
*“The hunger listens.”*

## Puzzle 4: The Silent Feast Puzzle

### Overview

The player stumbles upon a ruined cabin deep in the woods. Inside, a long dining table is set with decayed food, and at the head of the table, a chair sits slightly pulled back. The room is unnervingly still. A note nearby reads: *“Only the guest may leave.”* The player must figure out how to unlock the only exit without disturbing the unnatural stillness of the room.

### Design Goals:

- Build tension through environmental storytelling and psychological horror.
- Try to test the player's intuition mixed with how they value food so far in the game.
- Encourage players to engage with the environment through deduction.
- Use existing mechanics: interactable objects, trigger boxes, text feedback.

## Breakdown

### Phase 1: Player Discovery

- The player enters the cabin, triggering an automatic lock on the door behind them.
- A text prompt appears: *"The air is still."*
- The table is set with rotting plates of food, some half-eaten. A large chair sits at the head, pulled slightly back.
- Clicking on the note reveals the message: *"Only the guest may leave."*
- The player can interact with several elements, including:
  - The plates of food.
  - The chair at the head of the table.
  - An empty plate near the chair.

### Phase 2: Solving the Puzzle

Key Clue: The note implies that disturbing the scene incorrectly could have dire consequences. The solution is in understanding who the guest is and what must be done to allow them to leave.

#### Wrong Interactions (Failure Consequences)

- **Touching the food:** Clicking on any plate causes a shadowy figure to appear at the edge of the player's vision. The room darkens momentarily, and then nothing happens, yet. However, from this point on, whispers will occasionally play in the background as a lingering consequence.
- **Sitting in the chair:** Clicking the chair plays an animation of the player pulling it out further and sitting. The screen distorts slightly as the walls appear to close in. The player is now stuck in an infinite loop, with every attempt to stand resetting them in the chair. The only way to break free is to hurt themselves. (Or reload a save)

#### Correct Solution: Offering a Meal

- The correct way to solve the puzzle is to place an offering on the empty plate. The player must select a ration from their inventory and place it on the plate.
- When done correctly, a text prompt appears: *"The guest has been served."*
- A moment of silence follows, then the chair at the head of the table slowly moves back on its own.
- The cabin door unlocks with a quiet *click*. The player is free to leave.

### Phase 3: Lasting Consequences

- If the player solved the puzzle correctly, they can leave safely. However, they have sacrificed a valuable ration of food.
- If they disturbed the feast in any way (touching the food, sitting in the chair), ambient horror elements will persist for the rest of the game. Whispers, flickering shadows, and brief glimpses of figures watching them will subtly reinforce the presence of something unseen.

## Puzzle 5: The Frozen Echo Puzzle

### Overview

Deep within a mountain pass, the player encounters three wind chimes, one made of bone, one of ice, and one of metal. A stone tablet nearby bears an inscription:

*"The wind carries voices."*

As the wind howls through the chimes, whispers from the past can be heard. The player must listen carefully and arrange the chimes in the correct order to open a hidden path.

### Design Goals

- Create an audio-based puzzle that encourages close listening and environmental awareness.
- Use subtle horror elements, reinforcing the theme of spirits and lost travelers.
- Offer a tension-building failure state rather than instant punishment.
- Use the wind mechanic as both a puzzle clue and an atmospheric storytelling element.

### Breakdown

#### Phase 1: Player Discovery

As the player walks through a narrow mountain pass, the **wind begins to howl strongly and unnaturally**.

They soon find **three wind chimes** hanging from wooden posts:

1. A chime made of bones.
2. A chime made of ice.
3. A chime made of metal.

Clicking each chime plays a unique sound, and faint whispers accompany the wind when the right one is struck.

A stone tablet nearby reads:

*"Three voices call. Only the lost may show the way."*

Clicking the stone again reveals etched markings, showing faint scratch-like tally marks, hinting at past victims.

## Phase 2: Solving the Puzzle

The player must determine the correct chime order by listening to the whispers when each is played. The correct order will:

- Cause the whispers to grow more coherent, forming fragmented words.
- Make the wind momentarily die down, signaling progress.

### Correct Solution:

- The chimes must be arranged in the order of those who were lost to the Wendigo first to last.
- Listening carefully reveals the bone chime speaks first, followed by metal, then ice.
- This symbolizes the first deaths (bones), then survivors left behind (metal weapons/tools), and finally, those who froze (ice).

### Failure Consequence:

- Playing the wrong sequence makes the whispers grow erratic, eventually turning into a low, guttural breathing sound.
- The wind begins picking up violently, and shadows flicker along the ridgeline.
- If the player repeatedly fails, the next time they enter an exposed area, they will hear heavy footsteps behind them, though nothing is there.

## Phase 3: Resolution & Reward

If the player successfully arranges the chimes:

- The wind abruptly dies, leaving an unnatural silence.
- A section of the snow-covered rock face shifts, revealing a hidden path forward.

If they failed too many times, they proceed, but from now on, in open areas, they occasionally hear **a distorted echo of their own footsteps** following them.

# Winter's Hunger – Puzzle Asset List

## High-Priority Assets

### Frozen Corpse Puzzle

- Crowbar – Can be picked up and used for brute force (Visual)

- Kerosene Can & Matches – Needed for thawing fingers (Visual)
- Locked Metal Door – Unlocks when the puzzle is solved (Visual)
- Interactive Hand Model – For close-up manipulation (Visual)
  - Needs to be rigged, with 1 pose wrapped around the door knob.
- ~~Ice Break Sound Effect – When fingers snap with crowbar (Audio)~~
  - We have this
- ~~Small Fire Sound Effect – For kerosene burning animation (Audio)~~
  - We have this
- ~~Distant Breathing Sound Effect – Triggers when brute force is used (Audio)~~

## Blood in the Snow Puzzle

- ~~Interactive Footprint Trail – Fades and reappears based on wind (Visual)~~
- ~~Blood Stained Note – Contains the player's clue (Visual)~~
- Discarded Boot Model – Adds environmental storytelling (Visual)
- Lantern with Flickering Flame – Indicates the correct path (Visual)
- ~~Scratching Sound Effect – Plays when the wrong tunnel is chosen (Audio)~~
  - Distant Wendigo howl will be used instead (the already finished one)
- ~~Gust of Wind Audio – Plays when the correct tunnel is entered (Audio)~~
- ~~Distant Shadow Flickers – If the wrong path is taken (Visual)~~
- ~~Jump Scare Sound Cue – Plays upon entering the wrong tunnel (Audio)~~

## Frozen Echo Puzzle

- Bone Wind Chime – Plays a hollow, eerie sound (Visual & Audio)
- Metal Wind Chime – Plays a deep, resonating sound (Visual & Audio)
- Ice Wind Chime – Plays a high-pitched, brittle sound (Visual & Audio)
- Stone Tablet with Inscription – Displays hint: “The wind carries voices.” (Visual)
- Trigger Box for Wind Howl Audio – Increases intensity near chimes (Programming)
- ~~Whispering Audio (3 Variations) – Hints at the correct chime order (Audio)~~
  - Just going to use the stone tablet as the hint, with a different hint
- ~~Chime Rope Animation – Slightly sways when interacted with (Visual)~~
- ~~Hidden Pathway Entrance – Unlocks after the puzzle is solved (Visual)~~
  - Will just have the previously made metal door hidden around a corner and play a sound queue when the puzzle is completed and the door unlocks
- ~~Heavy Footstep Audio – Triggers when player repeatedly fails (Audio)~~
  - We have this already

## Silent Feast Puzzle

- ~~Rotting Food Plates – Visually distinct to add tension (Visual)~~
  - No plates, we have bad food we will use
- Large Dining Table – Centerpiece of the puzzle (Visual)
- “Guest Chair” – Moves upon correct solution (Visual)

- ~~Shadow Figure Silhouette~~ — ~~Appears at the edge of vision upon wrong interaction (Visual)~~
- Creaking Chair Sound Effect – Plays when the chair moves (Audio)
- ~~Faint Distant Footsteps~~ — ~~Soft ambient horror cue (Audio)~~
  - We have this
- ~~Whispering Sound Effects~~ — ~~Plays if the player interacts with the food (Audio)~~
  - Addressed elsewhere

## Echo Chamber Puzzle

- ~~Interactive Standing Stones~~ — ~~Each has symbols that must be rotated (Visual)~~
  - Will use existing stones and use symbols that we already have
- Bone Flute Instrument – Plays distinct eerie tones (Visual & Audio)
  - Making it a harp for simplicity of design
- ~~Tribal Symbol Markings~~ — ~~Glow when puzzle progresses (Visual)~~
  - Will substitute with something else
- ~~Wendigo Effigy~~ — ~~Slight movement when puzzle fails (Visual)~~
  - Very cool but too complicated
- ~~Low Growl Sound Effect~~ — ~~Triggers upon incorrect solution (Audio)~~
  - Will use howl instead
- ~~Wind Rushing Through Cave Audio~~ — ~~Background atmospheric tension (Audio)~~
  - We have this

## Medium-Priority Assets (Enhance Atmosphere & Provide Optional Feedback)

### Frozen Corpse Puzzle

- Frozen Corpse Model – Must be detailed with frostbitten skin and rigged fingers (Visual)
- Small Flickering Flames Animation – Effect for thawing hands (Visual)
- Corpse Subtle Breathing Effect – Before realization it's frozen dead (Audio)

### Blood in the Snow Puzzle

- Wind Directional Audio – Guides player toward the correct tunnel (Audio)
- Faint Silhouettes in Ice Reflections – Subtle horror element (Visual)
- Dripping Blood Sound Effect – Ambient sound near the boot (Audio)

### Frozen Echo Puzzle

- Faint Shadow Figures on Ridgeline – Appear when the wrong order is played (Visual)
- Wind Howl Variation Sounds – Different intensities based on progress (Audio)
- Subtle Chime Distortion Effect – Plays when a wrong sequence is used (Audio)

## Silent Feast Puzzle

- Table Surface Blood Stains – Some barely visible, hinting at past events (Visual)
- Slight Chair Movement Without Player Input – Subtle horror element (Visual)

## Echo Chamber Puzzle

- Effigy Slight Twitch Animation – If incorrect choices are made (Visual)
- Breathing Sound Near Effigy – Intensifies with wrong puzzle choices (Audio)
- Ritual Fire Pit Model – Only ignites when puzzle is solved (Visual)

## Low-Priority Assets (Enhances Detail & Atmosphere)

### All Puzzles

- Snowfall Particles – For immersion in outdoor puzzles (Visual)
- Cold Breath Particles – Indicates freezing conditions (Visual)
- Distant Wolf Howls – Adds tension to forest areas (Audio)

## Silent Feast Puzzle

- Old Wooden Cabin Interior Model – Background asset (Visual)
- Subtle Flickering Lantern Light – Adds tension (Visual)

## Echo Chamber Puzzle

- Ancient Inscription (Additional Clue) – Optional lore hints (Visual)
- Soft Rattling Sound – Plays when the player moves through the cave (Audio)

## Frozen Echo Puzzle

- Wind Sound with Distant Screams – Optional horror effect (Audio)
- Subtle Glowing of Chime Strings – When correct chime is selected (Visual)

## Blood in the Snow Puzzle

- Distorted HUD Effect – Used after choosing the wrong tunnel (Visual)
- Icicle Drop Sound – Adds realism to caves (Audio)