

ANESTHESIA

By El Schaefer of Giga Grunts

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Game Overview: A horror game with puzzle and evasion elements. A young girl, trapped in her own mind as she undergoes surgery, navigates a surreal dreamscape as she confronts her fears of the illness which has controlled her life.

Player Character: Jennie

Full Name: Jennifer Anne McCarter

Alternate Titles: Jennie, Bunny

Pronouns: She/Her

Age: 10 (“and a half”)

Height: 4’3”

Eyes: Blue

Hair: Blonde

Ghost: An extended period of hospitalization and treatment for a severe illness has made her feel weak, incapable, and trapped, much to her frustration at her situation and herself.

Want: To escape the hospital, to not need treatment - to stop the hurt.

Need: To overcome and move past her experience with illness. To accept what has happened, to embrace the pain and grow from it instead of running and becoming trapped by it - life can’t go back to the way it was before, but it can get better.

Arc: Jennie’s arc is defined by her fear of her illness and denial of how her experience has affected her physically and mentally, and the need for compassion and acceptance.

OPENING CUTSCENE [FULLY VOICED]:

Black screen, sounds of hospital machinery, surgical prep, overlapping voices, steadily increasing.

DAD: We'll see you on the other side, Jennie. (reassuring, hiding fear)

MOM: Don't be scared baby, it'll all be over soon. (suppressing panic)

DAD: You'll be just fine, okay? (solemn, supportive)

DOCTOR GOREN: Is Room 6 prepared? (direct, focused, intent)

Noise of doors opening, an alarm

MOM: You'll be all better when you wake up, bunny. (calling out, one final reassurance)

NURSE TAMMY: I need you to take a deep breath now, okay? (steady, guiding)

DOCTOR GOREN: Alright - begin administering anesthesia. (focused, assertive)

NURSE TAMMY: Okay Jennifer, I need you to count backwards with me – 10, 9, 8, 7, 6, 5, 4 – (kind, guiding – fading out)

GAMEPLAY [NONVERBAL BARKS]:**Tutorial:**

Player (JENNIE) wakes up with a start in their hospital bed, the hospital now transformed into a surreal dreamscape

JENNIE: Wha...where am I? (confused, waking up)

JENNIE: Is this the hospital? What's going on? (more alert, concerned)

Player tries to move first time

JENNIE: A-ahh – right, won't be going anywhere without my IV... (initially surprised, edged with resentment)

Player moves about the room

JENNIE: Why am I still here? I thought they were going to let me out after... (confused, anxious, driven)

Player finds first keycard

JENNIE: Nurse Tammy's key card – but where's Nurse Tammy? (musing, concerned)

Player tries to open the door (without keycard)

JENNIE: Only the nurses could open the door – anyone else could bring in germs, they said. (solemn, resentful)

JENNIE: How did they get in again...? (fuzzy, trying to remember)

Player unlocks the room door (with keycard)

JENNIE: The nurses said I shouldn't leave on my own... but they aren't here right now. (resolute)

Player leaves the hospital room, entering the abandoned, dreamlike ward

JENNIE: The isolation ward... but where is everybody? (surprised, concerned, maybe a bit underwhelmed initially after hyping herself up)

JENNIE: Why am I still here? They *said* I'd be all better when I woke up... (frustrated)

Player steps on the first pressure plate, opening the next door

JENNIE: I knew there was something special about the tiles! (surprised, vindicated)

JENNIE: I wonder what else they can do... (curious, excited)

From outside, the player hears the sounds of the monster, their first clue toward the greater threat

JENNIE: Wh... what was that noise? (surprised, concerned)

Player nears the first stamina refill station

JENNIE: The nurses got my meds at these.

JENNIE: Maybe I can figure it out – I watched them do it lots of times...

Player nears the first cart (carts are used in puzzle solving)

JENNIE: One of those carts the nurses push around. (mild surprise)

JENNIE: It looks pretty heavy – I wonder if I can move it... (musing, curious, somewhere between apprehensive and excited about the challenge)

Player finds the first area where they need to crouch

JENNIE: Hmm... maybe I can get through if I scrootch down. (thinking it through, cautious)

Player finds a puzzle they need the Resonance system (hints revealed by glowing IV bag) to solve

JENNIE: It's so dark in here – the IV helps a bit though...

JENNIE: Maybe if I adjust the flow – I think the nurses did it like this...

Hook:

Player enters the eyeball room (first encounter with major dream entities)

JENNIE: What the he- what is this? Why is everything so weird now? (distressed, confused)

JENNIE: ...stop LOOKING at me! (creeped out, scared, growing angry)

Player walks down the hallway toward the hub

JENNIE: I don't remember this hallway... where is it going? (confused, working it out, brave face)

Player tries to walk back the way they came (prevent backtracking)

JENNIE: No, I... I won't go back there. (driven, hiding shakiness)

Player hears the monster again as they move down the hall

JENNIE: Those noises again – what could it... (curious, wondering)

EVENT: As the player goes to pick up a keycard, the monster is revealed, coming out of the shadows with a roar and beginning to chase the player until they reach the hub area.

Hub:

Player enters the hub, ending the chase with the monster

JENNIE: What is that? That monster... (panicked, processing)

JENNIE: I can't let it hurt me – I can't stay here any longer. (desperate, fearful, resolute, regaining composure)

Player tries to leave hub the way they came (prevent backtracking)

JENNIE: But I just- how is it locked?! (shock, anger, distress)

JENNIE: Great – now I'm even *more* stuck here. (sarcastic, resentful, frustrated)

Player approaches founder's statue (developer easter egg)

JENNIE: "Johnathan Wickersham III Community Hospital..." (parsing it out slowly)

JENNIE: I can see why people just call it John Hospital 3. (deadpan)

Player approaches floating eyeballs (randomized responses from list)

JENNIE: ...what is this, a staring contest? (uncomfortable, angry)

JENNIE: I'm tired of everyone watching me... (tired, resentful)

JENNIE: What are you looking at? (defensive)

JENNIE: I don't need any more check-ups, thank you... (sarcastic, downbeat)

Player sees the entrance to Room 6, the final level

JENNIE: Room 6 – that's where they were trying to fix me. (recognition)

JENNIE: I wonder what else it could fix... (curiosity, making connections)

Player tries the door to the final area (without keycard)

JENNIE: Locked – of course. (disappointed but not surprised)

Player opens the door to the final area (with keycard)

JENNIE: I hope I'm right about this... (fearful but resolute)

Development 1:

As the player travels through certain points in the level, Jennie considers the monster and her situation

JENNIE: I'm not getting out of here – not unless I do something about that thing... (scared, dreading)

JENNIE: I need to get out of here, fast – if I get hurt again... (pushing down panic)

JENNIE: I can't just hide - I need to do SOMETHING to get out... (frustrated, desperate)

Player approaches dream objects

JENNIE: What is this stuff? What is it doing here? (confused)

JENNIE: I don't think the nurses would like this stuff in their way... (half sarcastic, half genuinely concerned)

Player finds the next key card

JENNIE: Another nurse's card – "Nurse Supervisor Williams..." (curious, pensive)

JENNIE: Maybe *this* one will let me out... (flat hope)

EVENT: As the player moves back through the level, the monster appears, the player having to hide from it and observe its behavior

Player escapes the monster and exits the area to continue

JENNIE: The monster – was it... scared? And what is that under all the... goop? (fearful, confused, curiosity breaking through)

Development 2:

Player finds the Level 3 key card

JENNIE: Doctor Goren's card... this should get me where I need. (hopeful, determined)

Player approaches dream objects

JENNIE: What is this even made of? It feels... tingly... (curious, surprised, concerned)

JENNIE: I mean... it does look kind of cool... (begrudgingly interested)

As the player nears the end of the level, they see and hear more signs of the monster

JENNIE: The coughing... that can't be good... (somewhere between fear and concern)

JENNIE: Why is this thing in a hospital? Where did it come from? (scared, confused)

JENNIE: All that ooze... is it sick too? (scared, rationalizing, curious, hesitant)

Final Area:

EVENT: As the player enters the final area, the monster appears behind them and there is a brief chase before the player is able to trap the monster in the surgical room

After player closes the door on the monster behind them

JENNIE: That won't hold it long... (nervous, determined)

Player tries to walk back the way they came (prevent backtracking)

JENNIE: I'm not just gonna let it out!

Player first sees the surgical machines

JENNIE: These must control the treatments...

JENNIE: But how did the doctors get them working?

Player activates the first machine, causing the monster to scream in rage from the surgical room

JENNIE: Please work, please work, please work... (driven, pleading)

Player activates the second machine, the monster's screams are now more pained and fearful

JENNIE: I know, I know it hurts, I'm sorry... (sympathetic, still somewhat fearful)

Player activates the third machine, the monster's cries weakening

JENNIE: Just breathe, it'll all be better soon... (pained, hopeful)

EVENT: The monster eventually goes quiet and the door back to the surgical room unlocks

Player enters the surgical room to see the now uninfected, normal-sized stuffed rabbit on the operation table

JENNIE: Do you feel better now? (quiet, caring, hesitant)

JENNIE: I know it hurts – being sick, being weak, stuck with something you don't want or understand... (halting, pained)

JENNIE: And getting better is really hard – all the waiting and the hurting, everyone always watching, nothing you can do... (somber)

JENNIE: But it helps – you feel better, feel stronger again... (growing resolve, regathering strength)

JENNIE: We're better now... we can go home. (haltingly hopeful, relieved, hesitant)

EVENT: Player picks up the rabbit, and the door to the treatment room opens again. Outside, the lights are on and noises of people and medical equipment can be heard.

Player leaves the room

NURSE TAMMY [V.O.]: - 3, 2, 1...

Event Response Dialogue (non-specific order/location):*Player respawns (one response per respawn, play in order)*

JENNIE: ...what happened? How did I get back here? I thought the monster...
(confused, edged with fear)

JENNIE: I'm back again? What's happening to me?! (confused, indignant,
incredulous)

JENNIE: Why am I stuck here?! Why can't I just leave? (frustrated, confused,
desperate)

JENNIE: Rrrgh - I just want to get out... (desperate)

JENNIE: I need to find a way out of here, before it gets worse (dread)

JENNIE: I just want to get better... why can't I get better? (tired, frustrated,
desperate)

JENNIE: ...I'll just have to keep trying. (resignation, determination, gathering
strength)

Player fails a puzzle (randomized responses from list)

JENNIE: ...what now? (musing, puzzling it out)

JENNIE: Come on, I can figure this out... (impatient, frustrated)

JENNIE: Maybe if I try something else... (discouraged, determined)

JENNIE: Am I missing something? (concerned)

JENNIE: Come on, let me through! (frustrated, scared)

JENNIE: Aargh – wrong again... (frustrated)

JENNIE: Oh, come on! (exasperated, angry)

JENNIE: I can't keep messing up... (anger hiding fear)

JENNIE: Ah, darn it... (dark, quiet anger)

JENNIE: Dangit! (stage whisper, outburst)

Player solves a puzzle (randomized responses from list)

JENNIE: There we go... (focused, intense)

JENNIE: Alright, let's go... (focused, active)

JENNIE: Heck yeah... (quiet pride, relief)

JENNIE: That's it! (vindication, excitement)

JENNIE: Come on! (spurring herself on)

JENNIE: Keep on going, keep on going... (centering herself)

JENNIE: This could get me out of here... (nervous, hopeful)

JENNIE: Come on – I need to get out. (shaky, determined)

JENNIE: I need to get out – find a nurse, Mom and Dad... (alone, scared, determined)

JENNIE: I just want to leave! (stage whisper, outburst)

Player is at low stamina (randomized responses from list)

JENNIE: I'm running out *again*? Urgh... why can't I just *stay* better... (incredulous, frustrated, resigned, tired)

JENNIE: Running out of steam... (tired)

JENNIE: I've gotta find more medicine soon. (worried, frustrated)

JENNIE: Looks like I need a refill. (matter-of-fact, resigned)

JENNIE: I need to be more careful... (resigned, beating self up)

Player refills their stamina (randomized responses from list)

JENNIE: Always coming back to these stations, more medicine all the time...
(frustrated, resentful)

JENNIE: How many times have I come to these by now? (resigned)

JENNIE: I should thank the nurses, they know their stuff... (somewhere between
sarcastic and grateful)

JENNIE: Feeling better already... (half sarcastic, forced optimism)

JENNIE: All topped off – let's go. (wavering, hurried)

ENDING CUTSCENE [FULLY VOICED]:

Fade in on Jennie lying in her hospital room post-operation, slowly waking up and looking around the room. On the bed next to her is the stuffed rabbit. In the room with her, behind a divider, are her parents and her doctor, their voices muffled as they discuss how the surgery went and further treatment. She looks down at herself, then at the rabbit, then up to the ceiling as she smiles.