

Game Development: Starting by Healing the Players

Chapter 7: The Story Behind It Is Surprisingly Heartwarming

Inside Chen Xu's rented apartment, he was eating a cup of instant noodles with an egg he had just added.

He didn't have much choice—money was extremely tight lately.

He still owed money on his credit card, as well as loans from Huabei and JD's lending service.

On top of that, not only had he not paid Ruan Ningxue for her artwork, he had actually borrowed another 1,000 yuan from her.

Most of his funds had gone into developing the game.

He barely had enough money left to eat.

That said, there was one reason for this.

He had deliberately set aside 20,000 yuan.

Those 20,000 yuan were the key to making Mirror take off.

Chen Xu was very confident in the quality of Mirror.

Especially after learning more about the world's "gentleman games"—adult games—and the countless NSFW doujinshi available.

His conclusion was simple:

They were unbelievably crude.

Were adult games not games too?

This was simply unacceptable.

But as the old saying went, *even the finest wine fears a deep alley*.

Thinking that an 18+ game could simply be uploaded to a platform and automatically become a hit...

That was pure fantasy.

Even masterpieces on the level of Minecraft or The Binding of Isaac, if carelessly thrown onto a platform without any promotion, could fail to make even the slightest splash if luck wasn't on their side.

That was why marketing was essential.

Even for an 18+ game.

Of course, in this case, it required some rather unconventional methods.

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In a university dormitory...

Yawning, Jiang Ping climbed down from the top bunk and opened the laptop on his desk.

"Nothing new to read lately..."

Muttering to himself, he opened a well-known overseas forum.

When he said he was looking for "doujinshi," he didn't just mean erotic works.

He also meant fan-created comics in general.

For example, sometimes a manga would have an incredibly frustrating plot—a popular supporting heroine might die, or the heroine of a shonen series would be killed just to motivate the protagonist.

Reading something like that felt as unpleasant as swallowing dirt.

Yet if the manga itself was excellent, it only made things more irritating.

That's when fan-made doujinshi came in.

And, of course, every now and then he'd also browse those *less describable* books with a "critical eye."

Most doujinshi were relatively small-scale productions because copyright restrictions limited what creators could do.

There were also original works, though those tended to be the explicit adult ones.

The forum Jiang Ping had opened was one of the more famous overseas communities for doujin works.

He wanted to see if anything new had been released.

After all, most doujin artists created purely as a hobby.

Working one day and disappearing for the next two was perfectly normal.

Forget publishing full volumes—even getting a single chapter each week was enough to make readers grateful.

Even original commercial adult works often updated irregularly.

Today, however, something felt different.

The front page was filled with bizarre thread titles.

"My roommate's bed kept shaking in the middle of the night. Is this the distortion of human nature... or the collapse of morality?"

"This is seriously the best match-three puzzle game I've ever played!"

"It looks like a simple match-three game, but the truth hidden behind it is unexpectedly heartwarming."

"You people are terrible! I bought what I thought was a match-three puzzle game for my little brother, but it made him throw up! Now he's completely listless!"

"Be brave, brothers! Charge ahead!"

"...????"

"What the hell?"

Jiang Ping stared blankly at the flood of strange thread titles.

After opening one of the posts and reading it for quite a while, realization finally dawned on him.

"My little brother threw up."

"The truth behind it is heartwarming."

"My roommate's bed kept shaking all night."

These people had their feet slammed all the way down on the accelerator.

So all of these posts were actually talking about the adult game that every cultured pervert loved!

But if it was just an adult game...

What were these reviews supposed to mean?

"My thoughts after playing for half an hour: Just like the game's title suggests, we are all people peering into the mirror. After putting down the Mirror, what awaits us is the pain and suffering of reality. The more beautiful the things you've witnessed, the more hope you'll have for life. When you're covered in scars, perhaps you should stop for a while and quietly remember this simple, pure, and slightly bittersweet feeling."

"Its portrayal of the darkness of human nature goes beyond almost anything I could have imagined. Redemption and corruption, profound questions about morality—it all cuts deep. Even after closing the game, my thoughts remained trapped inside its world. Highly recommended!"

"This is a game with remarkable depth. Beneath its uninhibited exterior lies an overwhelming sense of melancholy. It spreads among ordinary people like aimless whispers on the street, yet what it expresses surpasses half the scriptures preached in grand temples. Each story in the game has its own unique charm, and together they shine brilliantly, forming a miniature portrait of humanity. The game certainly has many

flaws, but its storytelling is first-rate: simple, powerful, and deeply moving."

"Mirror vaguely reminds me of Dream of the Red Chamber. Through the Magic Mirror, the fates of various women unfold before our eyes. Living in different eras, each has her own circumstances while being controlled by desire, love, fear, and countless other forces... As for what thoughts remain in the hearts of us observers, in the end they become nothing more than a sigh after closing the game—or perhaps quiet indifference."

"A certain great writer once said: *There are always people making things erotic where they shouldn't, and always people discussing philosophy where things are supposed to be erotic.* Exploring life, morality, and human nature—Mirror is precisely that kind of game: wearing the skin of indulgence while carrying profound meaning."

"When an adult game manages to move me emotionally, I know that whether I 'fap or not' is no longer what matters."

"The moment I started this game, within just ten minutes my heart was shaken beyond words. I can hardly describe it. It was like a guiding light appearing in the darkness. I have a feeling that because of this game, the entire adult-game genre is about to undergo a revolution!"

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"What the hell?!"

"What on earth are you people talking about?!"

After reading all the reviews, Jiang Ping was completely dumbfounded.

At the same time, an overwhelming curiosity began to grow.

After confirming from the forum that the game's title was Mirror, he opened the official game platform and searched for it.

The game's cover prominently featured a beautiful elf girl, along with a large 18+ (Adults Only) label.

Well.

There was absolutely no doubt that this was an adult game.

But...

Were all these people sure they hadn't reviewed the wrong game?

Jiang Ping had always been interested in adult games.

Now he was even more intrigued.

What kind of game could this possibly be?

The price was only 10 yuan, about the cost of breakfast.

Without thinking much more, he added the game to his shopping cart and scanned the QR code to pay.

Now he intended to find out for himself...

What was so special about this "cute-girl match-three puzzle game?"