



The Child of Night:  
A Tangible Adventure Game for  
Interactive Storytelling

Master Thesis by  
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# Preface

Since the summer of 2013 and also the 70th anniversary of the publication *The Little Prince*, Antoine de Saint-Exupéry's charming story that everybody, which any kid or adult loves from the depths of their hearts, I have been thinking a lot about creating a story of a little boy's adventure in a mysterious wilderness setting, a story about growth and being brave to travel to the unknown path, where children can discover and explore on their own. Some drawing sketches and words appeared in my small sketch book and little by little they came out to become a concrete idea - *The Child of Night*.

The children's world is full of curiosity. A huge flying whale trying to find its way home in the starry night, a giant from a foggy valley is carrying light to the sea shore, a timid forest fox wants to befriend you, a devoted elephant guards the lake of life source of the jungle and further more. In *The Child of Night*, the little boy will learn to fight with darkness and conquer his inner fears in order to save his beloved flower.

The great thing of being a student is at least you are allowed to have more freedom to do what you like, explore new areas and make mistakes. Then I realised this could be the last chance for me to do something as a student of digital media. Therefore, I would like to do something interesting and fulfil the idea that I have in my mind. However, to create an adventurous storytelling game from my previous experience is not an easy thing, especially in China, where the place I grew up has so many concrete walls and streets filled with cars and trucks. Thus, stories played an important role in my childhood. I learned Chinese ancient stories from my grandma, read many different kinds of fairy tales and watched storytelling

animation films, especially those from Hayao Miyazaki<sup>1</sup>. The unlimited imagination in a fantasy world gives me magical experience with joy. I think I might have forgotten most of them, but the experience remains as one of the best parts in my memory.

The attractiveness of good storytelling and the power of a good storyteller who is capable to bring it to life. This becomes one of the most important reasons that encourage me to make this storytelling game. I want to dedicate it to the children and I hope they can have at least a moment of joy from it.

“This is a life full of beautiful promise.”<sup>2</sup> An unexpected journey awaits us.

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<sup>1</sup>Hayao Miyazaki (宮崎 駿, born January 5, 1941) is a Japanese animator and manga artist. Over the five decades in his career, Miyazaki has attained international acclaim as a masterful storyteller.

<sup>2</sup> From *A Sense of Life: En Route to the U.S.S.R.*, by Antoine de Saint-Exupéry, 1935



## Statement of Authorship

The author declares that no other sources and aids have been used other than those indicated. All passages quoted from publications or paraphrased from these sources are clearly stated.

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Xiaofen Peng

# Abstract

Recent development of Digital Media allows for new forms of storytelling, thus introducing audiences to a variety of new experiences. *The Child of Night* is an adventure game that engages the player's participation in the development of the story through playing tangible figures on an interactive surface, while the digital representation is displayed on a screen. We ask in which way the experience of children while their playing may be influenced when the story is presented as a game with a tangible interface.

The adventure game offers a shared interface that allows children to play with friends or parents, thus allowing for multiplayer and shared experience. The installation's small size and light weight makes it easy to set it up in many different situations.

Keywords: adventure game, children, tangible interface, physical figure, interactive storytelling, digital media

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