

D.E.S.K.

'Introducing Regan' by W. Kelly-Buttfield

RPG DEVELOPMENT - D.E.S.K.

Developer Note: We are introduced to Regan as the second protagonist and playable character in a similar style to the opening scene of D.E.S.K, via a mixture of cinematics and gameplay. However, it has now been some time since the initial earthquake and by this point the player will be familiar with most gameplay controls, which is why I wanted to throw them into a combative scenario almost immediately. Not only to highlight straight away that Regan is her own unique character in comparison to Ha-Eun, but also to introduce a new gameplay style, for while controls between the two characters will have similarities, their abilities, preferences and attitudes are vastly different.

INTRODUCING REGAN

OVER BLACK

Snarls and hungry screams mingle with the sound of someone running and breathing heavily.

EXT. STREET. SEOUL. AFTERNOON

CLOSE UP chunky boots thunder across the broken ground.

CLOSE UP the long claws of the DOKKAEBI scrape across the ground as they propel themselves after their prey.

A small pack of Dokkaebi are chasing someone through the debris of crushed cars, waylaid motorbikes and broken buildings that spill onto the footpath and road. One of the Dokkaebi breaks away from the group, making to leap forwards, but suddenly WHAM!* The creature is forcibly struck by a skateboard covered in repair tape and vibrant handmade stickers, falling to the side. It is revealed that the skateboard is in the hands of a hip-looking Black woman in her mid-20s, out of breath and dreadlocks piled high on her head to maintain visibility. This is REGAN, still somehow looking cool in her dirty and ripped clothes.

***haptic feedback**

REGAN

Okay this is just ridiculous.

Gameplay begins: The remaining Dokkaebi circle Regan. She and the player must fight them off with her skateboard and minimal kickboxing skills.

REGAN (CONT'D)

Take it easy, guys. I'm not looking for any trouble. Just a gal, trying to take her gap year. You know how it is, right?

During the attack, Regan breaks her skateboard, and also receives a nasty gash on her upper arm.

REGAN (CONT'D)

Ah, you absolute shite.

Cinematic returns: Once the Dokkaebi are defeated, Regan is forced to flee when the howls of an incoming second pack reach her exposed location. Attaching her skateboard to the back of her backpack, Regan makes a break for the nearest building, a convenience store.

INT. CONVENIENCE STORE. CONTINUOUS

Throwing herself through the open doorway, Regan quickly barricades herself inside, the shadows of the Dokkaebi running past the news-papered windows not long after. Regan sinks silently to the floor, breathing hard and finally taking the time to properly study the ransacked space before her.

REGAN

What a time to be alive...ah!

In the rush of her escape the adrenalin took the edge off Regan's wound, but now her arm is starting to bleed freely and the scenario she has found herself in is begging to get to her.

REGAN (CONT'D)

Goddammit. Okay, it's fine, just a scratch. A massive, ugly, no, stop. That's not helping anyone. Up you get. Best foot forward now.

Regan forces herself to stand up, clutching her arm tightly.

Gameplay returns: Guided by the player, Regan wanders around the convenience store where she can stock up on supply pickups (water bottles, seaweed crackers, a lighter, chewing gum, electrician's tape)...

REGAN (CONT'D)

I feel like wandering around with unrefrigerated meat on a stick is not the wisest choice I would be making today.

...clean and bandage her wound with a first aid kit discovered in a maintenance cupboard...

REGAN (CONT'D)
(through clenched teeth)
Fuck, that hurts real bad.

...and through continued exploration discover a staircase tucked in the back that leads to an apartment above the store.

REGAN (CONT'D)
What's this now?

INT. APARTMENT. CONVENIENCE STORE. CONTINUOUS

REGAN
Don't mind me...

Upstairs, Regan and the player can continue to explore, learning a little bit about the shop owner and his family through a voice message left on a landline:

LANDLINE MESSAGE (static) ... 아이들을데려오세요... 엄마... 만나 세요... 북촌... 안전하다고 하네요... 난... 할 수 없어... 내 사랑...	LANDLINE MESSAGE (static) ...get the kids...mother...meet you...Bukchon...they're saying...safe...I can't...my love...
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REGAN
If there was ever a time to be
bilingual.

Discarded homework belonging to high school students (includes a Korean to English dictionary pick-up):

REGAN (CONT'D)
I dunno, maybe this will help. To be honest I don't know when I'd get the time in-between nearly dying and just about not dying to even find the right page to ask for directions. I'd probably end up telling someone I hate their cat.

And a well-worn book on Seoul's parks and nature reserves:

REGAN (CONT'D)
Huh, I wish I could have seen that.
It's beautiful.

Some mild painkillers (pick-up) can also be found in the bathroom cupboard.

Cinematic returns: After exploring, Regan notices the fading sunlight through a gap in the curtains beside the dining room table. Hesitant, she approaches and pulls back the curtain, finally discovering the full extent of the earthquake's destruction beneath the setting sun. A great chasm that divides the city is just visible in the distance where the Han river once flowed, between the smoke and the flames and the mishappened buildings. Regan looks grim at the situation set before her.

REGAN (CONT'D)

Well, I did say this was going to be a once in a lifetime kind of holiday.

As a building in the distance crumbles into rubble, and the screeching howls of Dokkaebi echo across the darkening sky, the streetlight that once illuminated the street below sparks and then dies. Disheartened, Regan turns away, letting the curtain fall back into place.

Regan collects blankets and pillows from one of the bedrooms and sets up a makeshift bed on the couch. Once settled, she retrieves a phone with a cracked screen from her backpack and opens a text chain with a contact called 'Mumsy', revealing a list of unsuccessfully sent messages. She has no reception. Despite that, she still begins to type...

REGAN (CONT'D)

(talking while typing)

Hey mum. It's me again. Just wanted to let you know I'm okay, still. I don't know what they've told you, but some of us are still alive here. What I mean to say is, I'm not alone, so you don't need to worry.

Regan looks up at the empty and darkening room around her.

REGAN (CONT'D)

(talking while typing)

I found this family who have taken me into their home for the night. They're really nice, and they've got these super cute kids. They're being so brave. Tomorrow I'm going to try and get back to my backpackers.

(MORE)

REGAN (CONT'D)

I don't know how long I've got until the power shuts down but I'll try and charge my phone so...so I'll be ready when you call. Or when I call you, whatever happens first. I...I love you mum. I will always love you. I promise...no.

Regan deletes the last two words at the bottom of her text and hits send, but no green tick or swoosh accompanies her message. Sighing, Regan casts her phone aside and instead picks up the book on Seoul's parks. As she flicks through the pages her heads starts to drift forward and her eyes start to close...until, seemingly from pure exhaustion, Regan finally falls asleep.

Gameplay returns: Waking up after her overnight stay in the apartment, Regan and the player must utilise the information and items they found in the apartment and store, using the dictionary to translate the voice message on the landline and the book on parks to map out a route through Seoul towards the safe-zone mentioned in the voice message. They can also use the electrician's tape to partially fix her skateboard.

However, Regan's first port of call will be her motel accommodation that is nearby so she can try and retrieve some of her personal items...