

Last Call: game design document

BYOG 2026 · Theme: **Everything Is Temporary** · Designer: Saathvik (Working title was "Kaal: Everything Is Temporary". Kaal stays the villain's name.)

Game at a glance

Last Call is a top-down sci-fi pixel-art action game with 5 levels. The title points to the distress calls that start every level, and to the final call: Mira's voice asking "Papa, are you coming?" Veer, a cargo pilot, lands for fuel, answers distress calls and becomes a Ranger, then loses everything he saved. The art target is highly detailed pixel art. The camera and gameplay stay top-down.

Item	Decision
View	Top-down, 2D sci-fi pixel art, set entirely in space (no Earth-like places)
Levels	5 (3 rise, 2 fall including the boss)
Play time	About 35 to 45 minutes
Engine	Unity (2D, URP)
Controls	Keyboard and mouse

Story check: open endings (all closed)

#	Question	How we close it
1	Is Kaal still alive after he stabs Veer?	With his last breath, Veer tells SAATHI to overload his suit core. The blast kills Kaal. Both die. The Void is gone for good.
2	Are Meera and Mira really dead?	The intro cutscene shows Prithvi-9 explode with them on it. The voice Kaal uses in Level 4 is Veer's own old recording, and SAATHI says so.
3	Who is the young pilot in the final shot?	Tara, the girl from Kora (Level 1). In Level 4 Veer puts her on the last evacuation ship with his cracked shield plate. The final shot shows her grown up, wearing it, flying Asha II.
4	Why do planets fall after Veer leaves?	Kaal tells him directly at the end of Level 3: he follows Veer through Void portals and destroys every world Veer saves.
5	Why do the upgrades break?	Each upgrade runs on a Core Crystal gifted by a planet. When the planet dies, its crystal goes dark. SAATHI explains this in Level 4.
6	What happens to SAATHI?	Her last act is the core overload. She says goodbye on screen.

Result: one clear ending. Veer wins, dies and takes Kaal with him. Tara survives and becomes the next Ranger.

Characters

10 named characters plus 5 enemy types.

Main cast

Character	Role	Who they are	Where
Veer Dev	Player	Cargo pilot who becomes a Ranger. Lost his wife and daughter when Prithvi-9 was destroyed. Keeps answering distress calls because each voice reminds him of Mira.	All levels
Kaal, the Fallen Ranger	Villain, final boss	The greatest Ranger who ever lived. Watched every world he saved die, so now destroys them first and calls it mercy.	Transmissions from end of L3, boss in L5
SAATHI	Personal AI assistant	Veer's ship and suit AI. Hints, objectives, warnings and story lines. Glitches as the armor breaks.	All levels
Meera	Veer's wife	Died on Prithvi-9	Intro cutscene, L5 memory key
Mira, 7	Veer's daughter	Died on Prithvi-9. Her line "Papa, are you coming?" drives the story.	Intro, L4 (faked by Kaal), ending

NPCs

NPC	Planet	Role	What they give
Tara	Kora (L1, L4)	Girl Veer saves in the market. Becomes the next Ranger.	L1 quest giver; gets the shield plate in L4
Tara's Mama and Papa	Kora (L1)	Star-spice trader and turbine technician	Rescue targets in the L1 quest
Elder Rana	Kora (L1)	Colony leader	Fuel cell and Kora Crystal (Shield)
Zoya	Meru (L2)	Engineer, runs the fuel depot and upgrade shop	Fuel, Meru Crystal (Spread Shot), shop
Chancellor Rao	Soma (L3)	Head of Soma's council	Quest: activate the city's defense towers; Soma Crystal (Laser)

Enemies (the Void)

Enemy	Behaviour	First seen
Shard Drone	Small, flies straight at you	L1
Void Gunner	Keeps distance and shoots	L2
Swarmlings	Groups of 6 to 8 tiny fast enemies	L2
Void Brute	Big and slow, high HP, charges	L3
Void Wraith	Teleports and attacks from behind (foreshadows Kaal)	L4

Level-by-level design

Levels 1 to 3 build Veer up. Levels 4 and 5 take everything away. No level starts with a fight: every level has a calm arrival, an event, a quest and a return to the ship.

Why Veer keeps landing: fuel and distress calls

Veer's ship *Asha* (Hindi for "hope"; Mira named it) is his old cargo ship. Its jump drive burns one fuel cell per jump, so he must land on every planet to refuel. While the tank fills, a distress call always comes in from the next planet. Every voice reminds him of Mira, so he always goes.

The 4-step level flow

1. **Arrive (calm):** land, walk, talk to people, explore. No enemies.
2. **Trigger:** refuelling starts, then an attack or disaster hits.
3. **Quest:** an NPC gives hints. Explore the map, solve a task and fight the Void on the way.
4. **Resolve:** return to *Asha*, get the fuel cell and Core Crystal, and the next distress call plays.

Core Crystals

Planet	Upgrade earned	Breaks
Kora (L1)	Shield (absorbs 3 hits)	Start of L4
Meru (L2)	Spread Shot	Middle of L4, when Zoya radios that Meru has fallen
Soma (L3)	Laser Beam	During the L5 boss fight, phase 2

Scrap from enemies buys permanent stat upgrades (damage, fire rate, HP) in Zoya's shop, so the player still feels some progress after crystals break. Dash (Space) is a base ability from the start.

Level 1. Kora: The Market (tutorial)

- Map: Kora trading colony under a giant glass dome on an alien moon: holo-market, holo-fountain plaza, coolant canal with a turbine station, fuel depot, dome shelter. 4x3 screens.
- Arrive: *Asha* lands with 3% fuel. SAATHI: "Fuel depot is past the market. Let's be quick." Walk through the busy market and talk to 2 or 3 people. Teaches move, dash and talk (E).
- Trigger: at the depot the fuel bar starts filling. Explosions. Shard Drones attack. SAATHI teaches aim and shoot in a small fight.
- Why he fights: SAATHI says it isn't their fight, but a girl screams for help and her voice sounds like Mira.
- Quest "Find Tara's parents": Tara hides under a broken stall. "Mama sells star-spices near the big holo-fountain. Papa works at the coolant turbine, past the energy bridge."
- East: fight through the burning holo-market to the holo-fountain and save Mama.
- West: the energy bridge has lost power. Puzzle: pull the turbine lever and reroute coolant to restart the bridge. Save Papa.
- Escort each parent to the dome shelter (safe zone) while drones attack.
- Optional: 3 hidden villagers for bonus scrap.
- Resolve: the family is reunited. Tara: "Will you always come back?" Veer: "I'll try." Elder Rana gives the fuel cell and the Kora Crystal.
- Distress call: Meru. "They're attacking the generators. Our children are in the shelters. If the power dies, the doors open. Please, anyone." Veer: "I'm not leaving children waiting. Not again."
- Length: about 8 minutes.

Level 2. Meru: The Generators

- Map: industrial city with streets, factory yard and the shelter. 4x3 screens.

- Arrive: land at Zoya's fuel depot. She refuels *Asha* and points to the generator plant.
- Trigger: the Void cuts the main power line. Shelter doors start to open. Void Gunners and Swarmlings appear.
- Why he fights: the children in the shelters are exposed if the power fails.
- Quest "Restore the power": find 3 missing fuses hidden around the city (Zoya gives hints by radio). Puzzle: switch 3 power panels in the right order to reroute power. Then defend the 3 generators for 2 minutes.
- Resolve: the shelter doors close safely. Zoya gives the Meru Crystal and opens her shop.
- Distress call: Soma Royal Council. "The whole Void army is coming for Soma, home of 10 million people. Ranger of Kora, you are our only hope." SAATHI: "They called you a Ranger, Veer." Veer: "Then let's be one."
- Length: about 8 minutes.

Level 3. Soma: The Capital (peak)

- Map: the largest map. Grand city with palace square, 4 districts and walls. 5x3 screens.
- Arrive: crowds welcome the Ranger. Chancellor Rao asks for help.
- Quest "Raise the shields": the city's 4 defense towers are offline. Find their codes by talking to citizens in each district (an engineer, a guard, a child, a priest), then activate each tower while Void Brutes attack.
- Final fight: survive 3 big waves in the palace square with every weapon. This is Veer at his peak.
- Resolve: the city cheers. Chancellor Rao gives the Soma Crystal. Veer records a message for Mira: "I'm not too late anymore, beta."
- Twist distress call: Tara, crying. "Ranger? You said you'd come back. They came back. Grandpa Rana is... please, you promised." Kaal breaks into the signal: "You saved Kora, Ranger. I unsaved it."
- Length: about 10 minutes.

Level 4. Kora: Ruins (the fall)

- Map: Level 1's map, burned and broken. Same market, fountain and mill, all in ruins.
- Arrive: silence. The Kora Crystal goes dark and the Shield breaks. SAATHI explains the crystals.
- Quest "Find Tara": search the places from Level 1 (her stall, the holo-fountain, the turbine). Collect 5 survivors and lead them to the last evacuation ship. Void Wraiths teleport in from behind.
- Mid-level: Zoya on the radio. "Meru is gone. My shop is gone. Veer, just survive." Spread Shot breaks.
- Resolve: Veer finds Tara and gives her the cracked shield plate. "Keep this. Be braver than me." The evac ship leaves.
- Final call: Mira's voice. "Papa, are you coming?" SAATHI: "It's fake. It's your old recording, coming from Kaal's fortress." Veer: "I know. I'm going anyway. This ends now."
- Length: about 8 minutes.

Level 5. Kaal's Fortress and the boss

- Map: dark fortress with corridors and 3 memory rooms (4x3 screens), then a circular asteroid arena.
- Arrive: *Asha* crash-lands. No way back. The minimap is full of static.
- Quest "Memory keys": find 3 keys to open the throne room. Each key plays a short flashback: Meera, Mira, Prithvi-9 exploding.
- Boss phase 1: Kaal at full power. Veer still has the Laser.
- Boss phase 2: Soma falls mid-fight. The Laser breaks. Only the basic blaster is left.
- Ending: Kaal falls. Silence. He teleports behind Veer and stabs him. Veer tells SAATHI to overload the core. Both die. The final cutscene plays.

- Length: about 8 minutes.

Cutscenes, travel and galaxy map

5 cutscenes, about 4 minutes in total: animated pixel-art panels (slow pans, zooms, text) made in Premiere Pro, exported as MP4 (1920x1080, H.264) and played with Unity's Video Player. Every cutscene can be skipped with Esc.

#	When	What it shows	Length
1	New game (intro)	Veer flying cargo. Mira on the radio: "Papa, are you coming?" Prithvi-9 explodes with Meera and Mira on it. Years later, <i>Asha</i> drifts with almost no fuel toward Kora.	60 s
2	End of L1	Tara's family reunited. Elder Rana: "You fought like a Ranger. The galaxy needs one."	25 s
3	End of L3	Soma celebrates. Then Tara's call and Kaal's first transmission over burning Kora.	40 s
4	Start of L5 boss	Kaal on his throne. Shows his old Ranger badge: "I was you once. I saved them all. They died anyway."	30 s
5	Ending	The stab, SAATHI's goodbye, core overload, white flash. A black beat (no text: the theme is never written on screen). Then grown-up Tara lands <i>Asha II</i> on a quiet planet, wearing the cracked shield plate.	80 s

Shorter story moments (NPC talk, distress calls, crystals breaking, L5 flashbacks) happen in-game with dialogue boxes so the player stays in control.

Travel between planets

1. Level complete screen.
2. Galaxy map: a star map with Kora, Meru, Soma and the fortress. Saved planets light up and connect with a line. In Act 2 they go dark one by one.
3. Flight scene (5 to 10 s): *Asha* flies through the jump tunnel while SAATHI says one line. It also hides loading.
4. Landing and the level intro card.

Asha changes with the story: clean and bright in Act 1, smoking with a flickering engine in L4 ("Jump drive at 40%, hold on"), and it crash-lands in L5. Kaal needs no ship. He travels through Void portals, which is how he reaches planets right after Veer leaves.

Maps and minimap

Top-down pixel tilemaps built in Unity's Tilemap editor, 4x3 to 5x3 screens each. Each planet has its own tileset and palette.

Level	Map	Size (screens)	Key areas
1	Kora village	4x3	Docking pad, holo-market, fuel depot, holo-fountain plaza, coolant canal, turbine station, dome shelter
2	Meru city	4x3	Zoya's depot, factory yard, 3 fuse spots, power panels, generator plant, shelter
3	Soma capital	5x3	Palace square, 4 districts each with a tower, city walls

Level	Map	Size (screens)	Key areas
4	Kora ruins	4x3	Level 1's layout, burned: cracked dome open to space, broken holo-market, dead holo-fountain, sparking turbine, evac ship
5	Fortress and arena	4x3 plus 1	Corridors, 3 memory rooms, throne gate, asteroid arena

Rules for explorable, playable maps

1. One screen is 480x270 pixels (upscaled 4x to 1920x1080). Tiles are 16x16.
2. Every map has a clear start, a clear goal and 2 or 3 routes between them. Never one straight corridor.
3. Mix open areas (for big fights) with narrow streets and alleys (for tension).
4. Put cover (stalls, crates, walls, pillars) in every fight area.
5. Hide side areas with scrap, villagers and small lore items to reward exploring.
6. Use big landmarks (holo-fountain, turbine, palace, towers, docked ships) so players can find their way without the minimap.
7. Make the goal area the brightest spot and lead the eye with light.
8. Reuse Level 1's map in Level 4, burned and broken.
9. Layer the detail: ground tiles, a detail layer (cracks, grass, debris), props, then a top layer for roofs and tree canopies the player walks under.

Planet palettes

Planet	Main colors	Mood
Kora	Amber, teal, glass blue	Lively trading colony
Meru	Orange, steel grey	Busy industrial
Soma	Gold, white, purple	Grand capital
Kora ruins	Desaturated Kora plus fire red and ash grey	Loss
Kaal's Fortress	Black, purple, sickly green	Dread

Minimap (top-right corner)

- A second orthographic camera above the map renders to a Render Texture shown in a UI RawImage. Icon sprites sit on a Minimap layer only this camera sees.
- Size: 160x160 px with a pixel-art frame.
- Fog of war: unexplored areas stay dark until the player visits them.
- Icons: player (white arrow), enemies (red), NPCs (green), quest target (yellow star, pulsing), scrap (blue), safe zone (green house), ship (blue ship).
- Off-screen quest target: a yellow arrow on the minimap edge points to it.
- Tab: full-screen map of the level.
- Story touch: in L4 the minimap flickers with static. In L5 it is mostly static, and gone in the arena.

NPCs and interactions

6 talking NPCs and about 14 short conversations, each 2 to 4 lines. Walk close and a "Press E" prompt appears. E opens a dialogue box with portrait, name and typewriter text. E or left-click moves on. Gameplay pauses while talking. Distress calls play as radio messages over gameplay.

Level	NPC	What happens	Effect
L1	2 or 3 market villagers	Small talk on arrival ("Fresh star-fruit, pilot? Just landed from the outer rings!")	Teaches talking; builds the world
L1	Tara	Asks for help finding Mama and Papa, gives the 2 hints	Starts the quest
L1	Mama, Papa	"Who are you? Did Tara send you?"	Follow you to the shelter
L1	Elder Rana	Thanks Veer, gives fuel and the Kora Crystal	Unlocks Shield
L2	Zoya	Refuels <i>Asha</i> , then gives fuse hints by radio	Starts and guides the quest
L2	Zoya (shop)	Short line, then the shop menu (also opens between later levels)	Spend scrap on stats
L3	Chancellor Rao	Asks Veer to raise the 4 tower shields	Starts the quest
L3	4 citizens (engineer, guard, child, priest)	Each gives one tower code	Quest steps
L3	Tara (radio)	"Everyone on Kora is talking about you!"	Peak happiness before the fall
L4	Survivors	"Ranger? You came back?"	Follow you to the evac ship
L4	Zoya (radio)	"Meru is gone. Just survive."	Spread Shot breaks; shop closes for good
L4	Tara	Veer gives her the cracked shield plate	Closes open ending 3

Silent NPCs (no dialogue) fill the scenes: market crowds, kids playing, guards, cheering crowds in Soma. They are sprites with idle and run animations and simple run-away behaviour when the attack starts.

AI assistant: SAATHI

SAATHI (Hindi for "companion") is the AI Veer built into his ship and suit. She talks through a small portrait box in the bottom-left corner. Her lines appear for 4 seconds and never pause the game. She is the player's guide, and her slow breakdown is part of the story.

Job	When	Example line
Teaches controls	L1 tutorial	"Use W, A, S, D to move. Let's stretch those legs, Ranger."
Gives the objective	Start of each level	"Protect the 3 generators. Hold for 3 minutes."
Points the way	Player idle for 20 s or lost	"Objective is north-east. Check the minimap."
Warns of danger	Low HP, big enemy, wave incoming	"Brute incoming! Dash to the side!"
Combat tips	First time meeting each enemy	"Gunners keep their distance. Use cover."
Explains the story	Crystals breaking, L4	"The Kora crystal... it's dark. Veer, the planet is gone."

Job	When	Example line
Emotional support	Between levels	"You did it. They're safe because of you."

Act	Voice	Portrait
Act 1 (L1 to L3)	Warm, a bit funny, confident	Clean blue hologram
Act 2 (L4)	Worried. Text glitches ("Ar-Veer...")	Flickers, static lines
Act 3 (L5)	Quiet, broken, then a clear final goodbye	Barely visible, then one clear frame

SAATHI's final lines (ending): Veer: "SAATHI... overload the core." SAATHI: "That will end us both." Veer: "Everything ends. Let it end with him." SAATHI: "It was an honor, Ranger. Go home to them."

Text uses a typewriter effect and a soft beep per letter. No voice acting.

Controls and UI

Keyboard and mouse (BYOG rule: playable with keyboard or mouse on Windows).

Input	Action
W A S D	Move
Mouse	Aim (custom crosshair)
Left click (hold)	Shoot
Right click	Special weapon (Laser)
Space	Dash
E	Talk, interact, pick up
1 2 3 or mouse wheel	Switch weapon
Tab	Full map
Esc	Pause menu, skip cutscene

Screens

1. Splash: BYOG and studio logo.
2. Main menu: Play, Continue, Settings, Credits, Quit. Background shows Veer's ship drifting.
3. Settings: music volume, SFX volume, fullscreen toggle, resolution.
4. Galaxy map and flight scene between levels, then the level intro card: planet name, planet image and objective (3 s).
5. Pause menu: Resume, Settings, Restart Level, Main Menu.
6. Dialogue box: portrait, name and typewriter text at the bottom.
7. Shop (Zoya): 3 stat upgrades with scrap costs.
8. Level complete: time, enemies killed, scrap collected and the crystal earned.
9. Crystal broken popup: the crystal icon cracks and goes grey, with a line from SAATHI.
0. Game over (normal death): "Veer has fallen", with Retry and Menu.

- 1 . Ending screen: Planets saved: 3. Planets remaining: 0. (The theme line "Everything is temporary" is the jam theme only; it is never shown in the game.)
- 2 . Credits: names plus credits for every external asset (required by BYOG rules).

HUD

Position	Element
Top-left	HP bar and Shield bar, with Veer's helmet portrait
Top-right	Minimap (160x160)
Below the minimap	Objective text and timer (when needed)
Bottom-left	SAATHI's portrait and message box
Bottom-centre	Weapon slots 1 to 3 with ammo or cooldown, plus a Dash cooldown icon
Bottom-right	Crystal bar: 3 crystal slots that light up when earned and crack when lost
Top-centre	Scrap counter
Screen	Crosshair, damage numbers, red edge flash on hit

The crystal bar is the most important piece of UI. Players watch it fill in Act 1 and watch it break in Act 2.

Art style

Rich, detailed pixel art; the game stays top-down.

Quality point	How we apply it top-down
Larger, detailed characters	Characters 48x48 px (boss 96x96), clear silhouettes, outlines, 3 to 4 shades per color
Smooth animation	Run 6 to 8 frames, attack 4 to 6, idle 4. Squash and stretch on hits
Rich environments	Metal panels, vents, cables, pipes, holo-signs, alien plants, glowing lights, scratches and wear on a detail tile layer
Warm, limited palette	32 to 48 colors per planet, strong light and shadow direction
Depth	Roofs and canopies on a top layer, drop shadows under every object, light glow (URP 2D lights)
Ornate HUD	Decorated frames, portrait icons, gold and stone UI trim

Space setting rules

- Everything happens in space: domed colonies on alien moons, orbital stations, floating cities and asteroid fortresses. Stars, planets or nebulae are always visible somewhere.
- No Earth-like materials: wood, thatch, stone huts and medieval props become metal, glass, holograms and alien growth.
- Props are sci-fi: holo-stalls, fuel pumps, cargo pods, reactors, drones, docked starships.
- Characters and NPCs wear spacesuits, jumpsuits, visors, armor and gadgets. Crowds mix humans, aliens and droids.
- NPCs are always busy: buying at holo-stalls, carrying crates, repairing hover-carts, queueing at fuel pumps, chatting; drones deliver packages overhead.

Sound and music

About 35 sound effects and 8 music tracks (jsfxr / ChipTone / Kenney / Freesound; royalty-free chiptune from itch.io or OpenGameArt; credit every track).

Group	Sounds
Player	Footsteps, dash whoosh, hurt grunt, death, shield hit, shield break, laser charge-up
Weapons	Blaster shot, spread shot, laser hum, weapon switch, weapon jam, empty click
Enemies	Drone buzz, gunner shot, swarming chitter, brute roar and charge, wraith teleport, enemy death pop, big explosion
Kaal	Laugh, attack swoosh, teleport, the stab, fake-death collapse
Story	Crystal earned chime, crystal break (glass crack plus low boom), radio static, Mira's radio beep, core overload hum and white-flash boom
UI	Menu move, menu select, back, typewriter beep (SAATHI), pause, scrap pickup, level complete jingle, game over sting, objective complete ding
Ambience	Kora market chatter and birds, coolant turbine hum, dome air vents, Meru machines, Soma crowd and fountains, Kora ruins fire crackle, fortress drone hum, fuel pump filling

Track	Where	Mood
Main theme	Menu and intro	Hopeful but lonely. A simple melody that returns at the end.
Calm arrival	Arrive step of L1 to L3	Light, peaceful, local flavour (flute, sitar-like chiptune)
Rise	Fights in L1 and L2	Upbeat, heroic
Peak	L3 Soma	Big, triumphant, fast
Fall	L4 Kora ruins	The main theme, slower and in a minor key
Fortress	L5 corridors	Dark, slow, heavy bass
Kaal	L5 boss	Intense drums. Drops to silence in the calm before the stab.
Ending	Final cutscene	Main theme on a single soft instrument
Shop and galaxy map	Between levels	Calm, light

Audio as storytelling:

- From L4, cut one music layer each time a crystal breaks, so the music gets emptier as Veer gets weaker.
- Total silence right after Kaal falls. The stab sound lands in the silence.
- The main theme melody is Mira's radio tune. It plays clearly only in the intro and the ending.

Scope and plan to the deadline

Deadline: 4 Oct, 6:00 PM IST. Build the Must list first. Add the Nice list only once the game is playable from start to end.

Priority	What	Cut version if short on time
Must	Movement, dash, mouse shooting, 3 weapons, HP and shield	None. This is the core.

Priority	What	Cut version if short on time
Must	4-step flow and quest in every level	Keep each quest to 2 steps
Must	Crystal bar with earn and break moments	None. This is the theme.
Must	L1 fully polished (judges play it first)	None
Must	Kaal boss, stab and core-overload ending	Boss with 1 phase plus the scripted ending
Must	Distress calls, SAATHI lines, minimap	Minimap without fog of war
Must	Intro and ending cutscenes	Still panels with text, no Premiere edit
Nice	Cutscenes 2 to 4	Replace with dialogue boxes
Nice	Zoya's shop	Auto-upgrade stats after each level
Nice	Galaxy map and flight scene	A simple fade with SAATHI's line
Nice	URP 2D lights, ambience, music layering	Skip

Day plan

- 2 Oct: player controller, shooting, dash, 2 enemy types, dialogue system, quest and objective system, HUD and minimap. Start the L1 map.
- 3 Oct morning: finish L1 with its quest; crystal system; L2 map and quest.
- 3 Oct evening: L3 map and quest; L4 (re-dressed L1 map); remaining enemies.
- 4 Oct until 12:00: L5 fortress, memory keys, Kaal boss and ending; cutscenes; sounds; menus; credits.
- 4 Oct, 12:00 to 3:00 PM: Windows build, full playtest, fix bugs.
- 4 Oct by 4:00 PM: upload to Indieconnect with screenshots and asset credits. Keep 2 hours of buffer before 6:00 PM.