Mage Boss Fight Concept

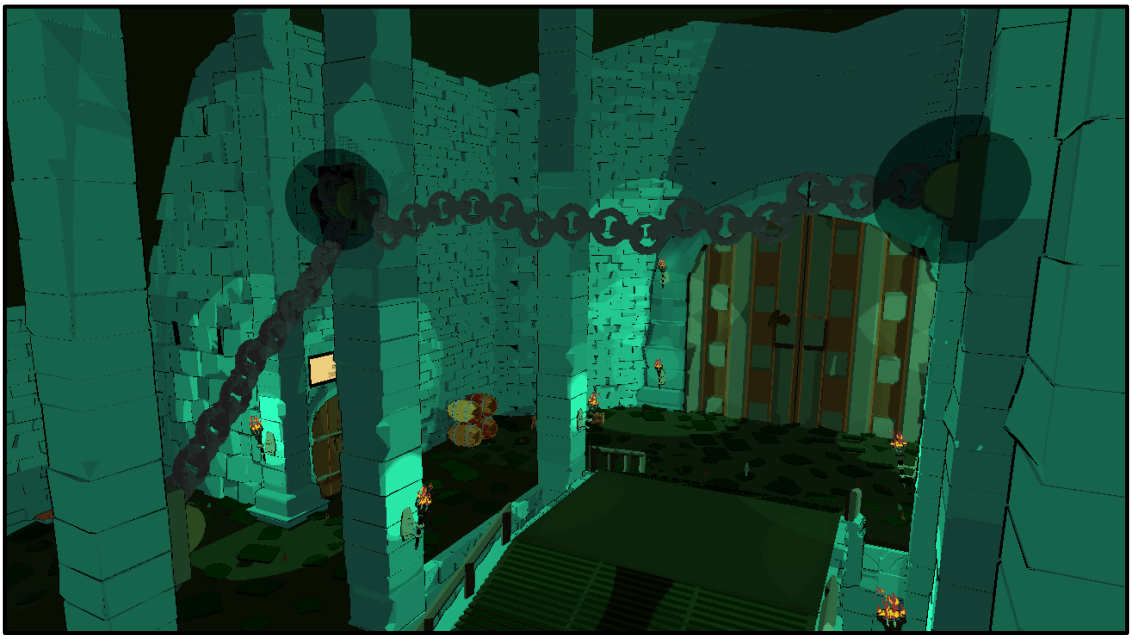
Overview

During the concepting phase, it was decided the boss would have multiple “Phases” to his fight with the player. Each phase would bring something new and dangerous the player would have to deal with, but it should all fit correctly with the theme of the level and boss himself. Overall, the boss should have 2 main phases which the player must contend with.

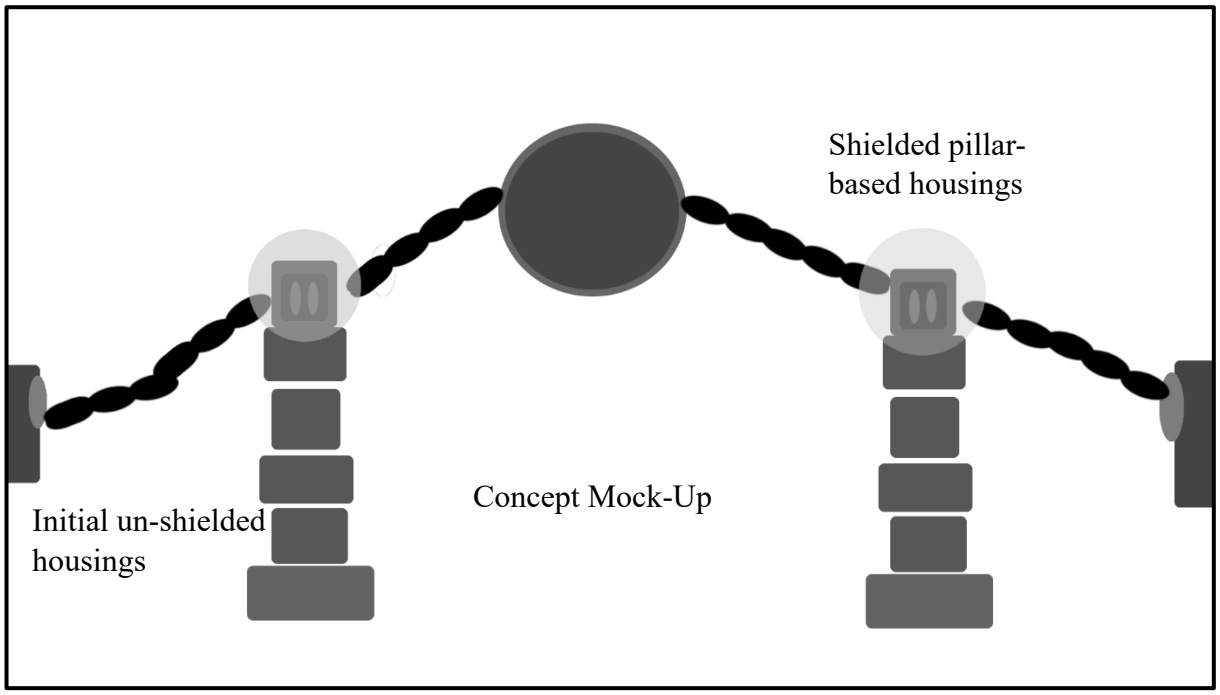
Main Phase One: “Chain linked”

Upon initially encountering the player, the boss should raise up into the air and shoot multiple chains at nearby pillars before falling a short distance. Following this, a “shield” should appear which protects him from the players attacks until the chains which hold him are broken. During the concepting phase, the main reference point was “Rennala” from Elden Ring due to the similarities in mechanics and general feel of the character.

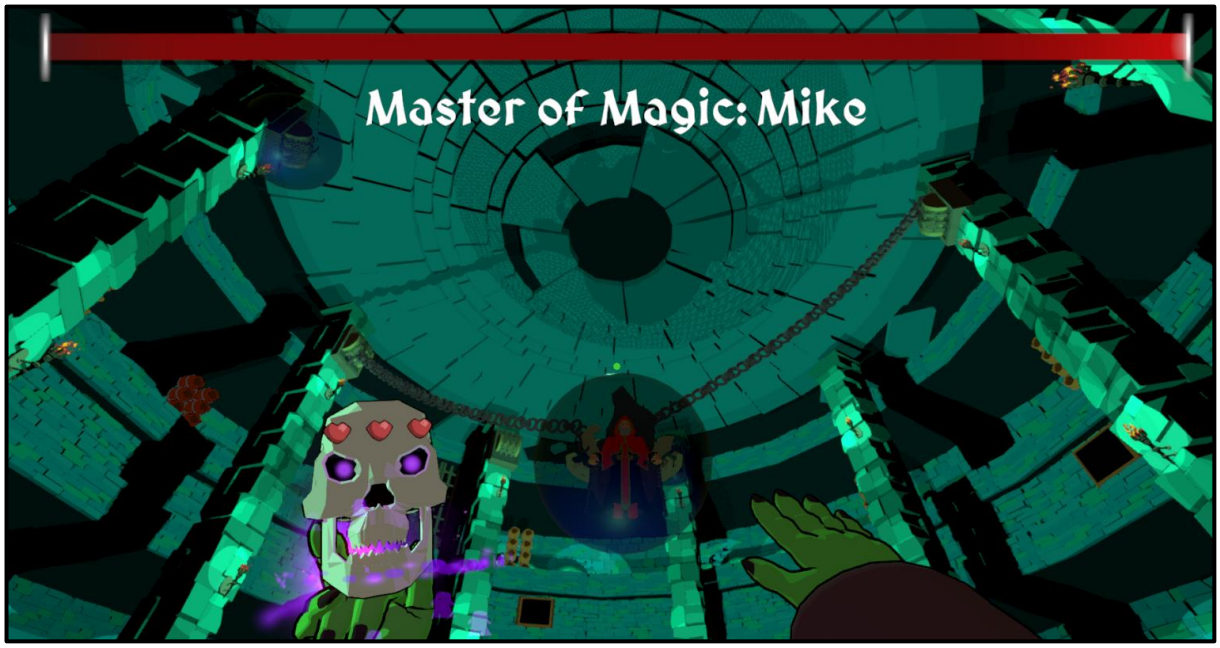
To facilitate this whilst sticking to our games comical theming, I developed a system for dynamic chain link creation between any two positions. The main difficulty in doing this was down to the physics interactions which often caused connection and visual issues.



Expanding upon this as a new gameplay system, the chains would be connected by “housings” which would be shielded. To drop a chain, the housing needed to be destroyed which was only possible after the shield has been removed. Similar to a daisy chain, the player needed to destroy the chain housings linked together in order to remove the shield on the one holding the boss.

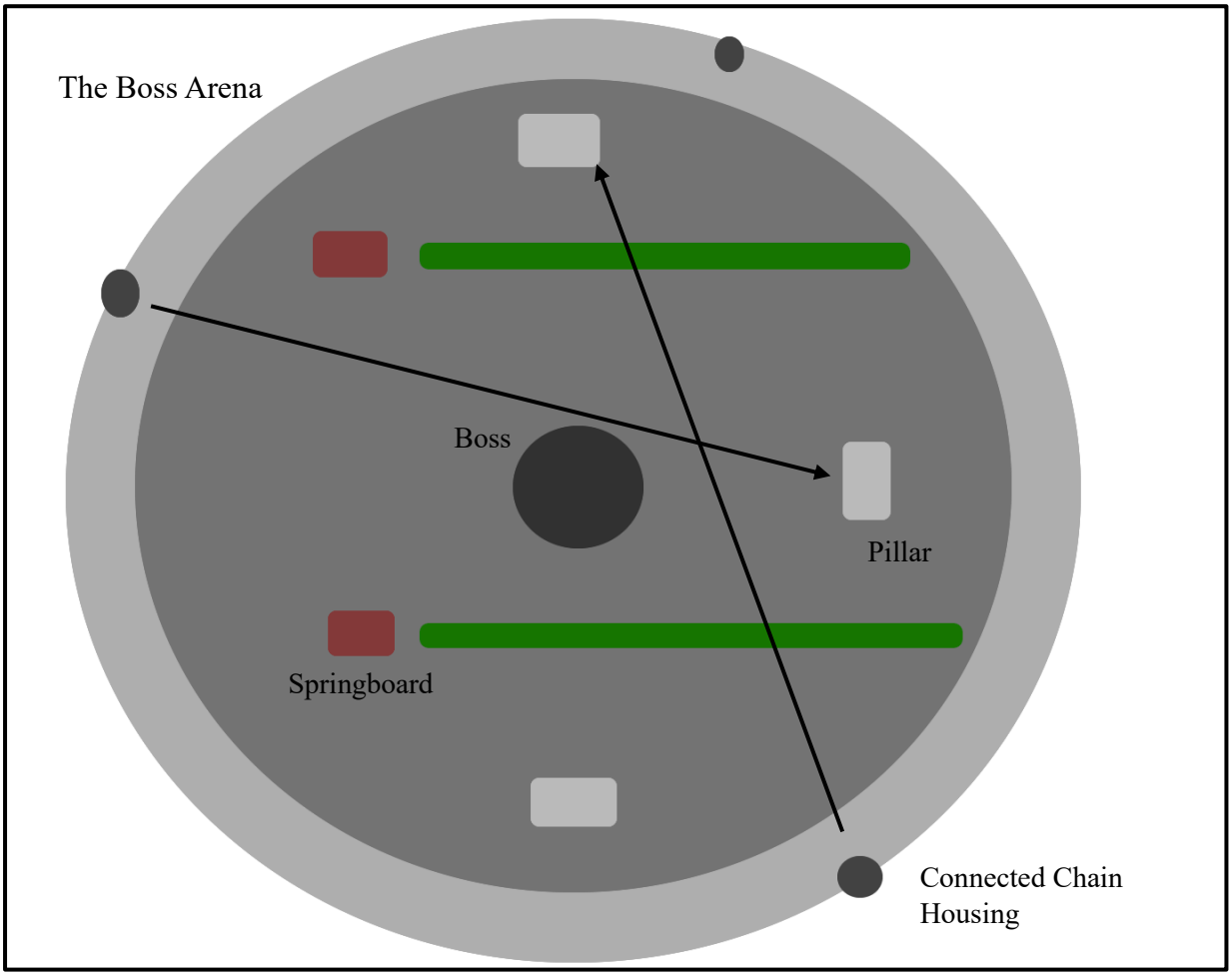


Following this, I devised an initial start for the boss’s AI which allows him to create the chains and attach himself indirectly. The boss was able to rotate to follow the player whilst the shield bubble was his mid-air anchor.

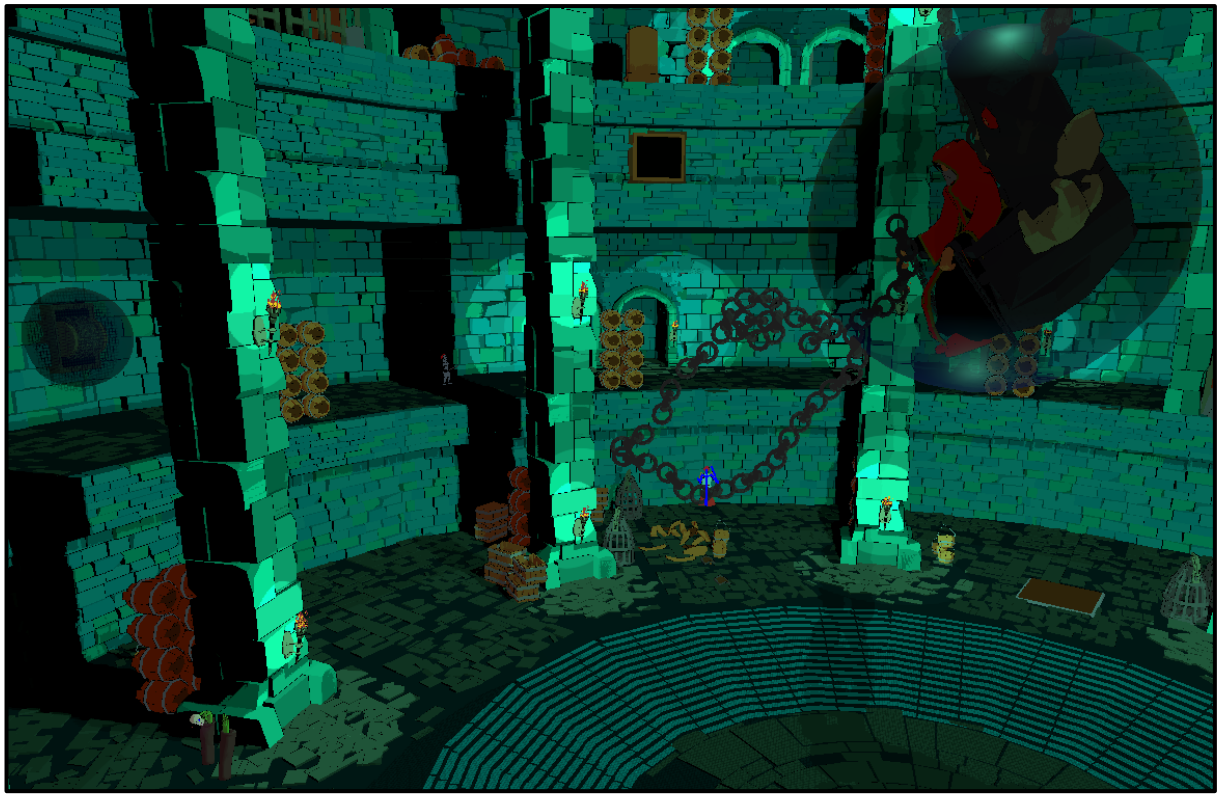


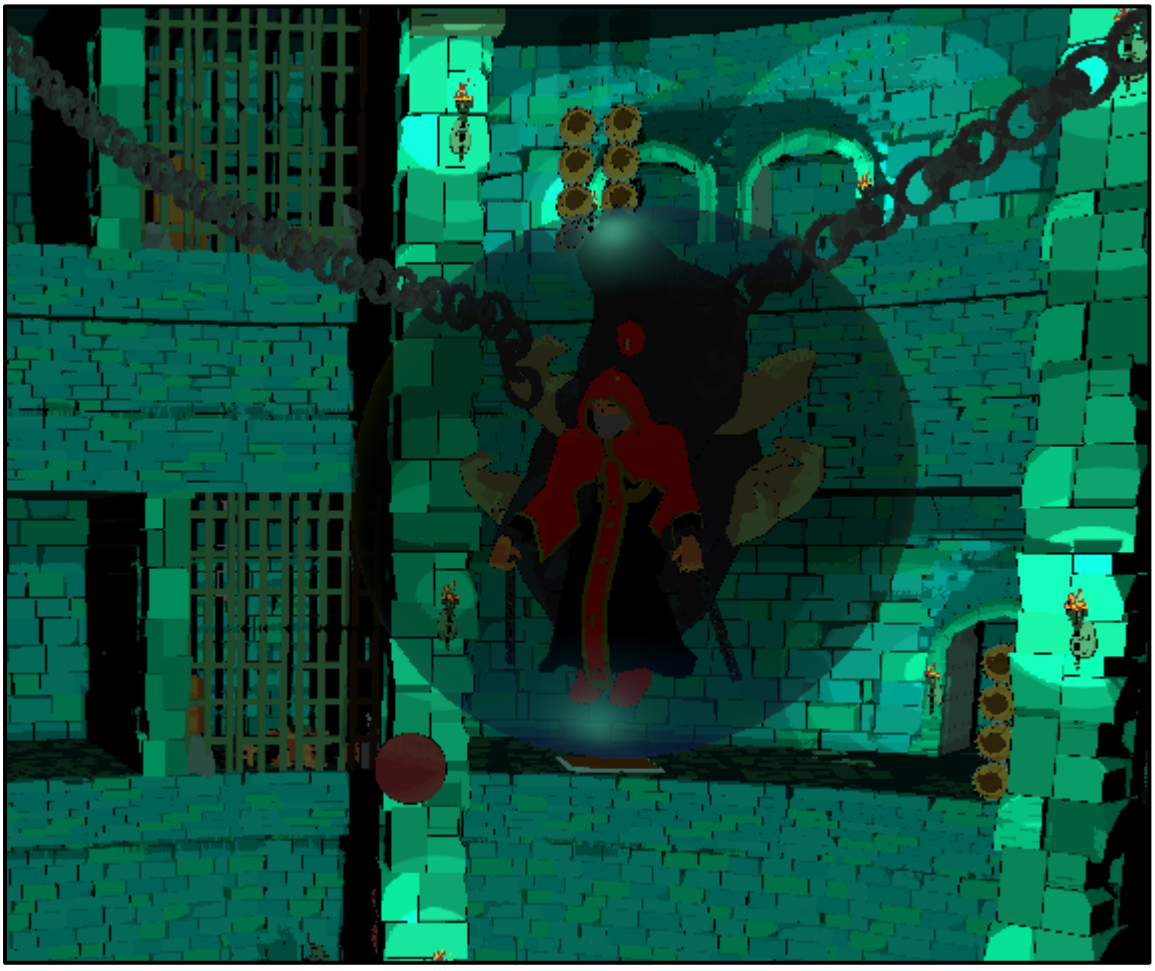
Main Phase One: Attacks

When developing the AI, the main goal of the first phase was to push the player to make use of the environment to dodge or evade the attacks or enemies summoned. To this extent, the boss was given a “chain” based whip attack which the player could dodge by hiding behind a pillar. Alongside this, the boss would be able to summon reinforcements so the player could not stay in one place too long.

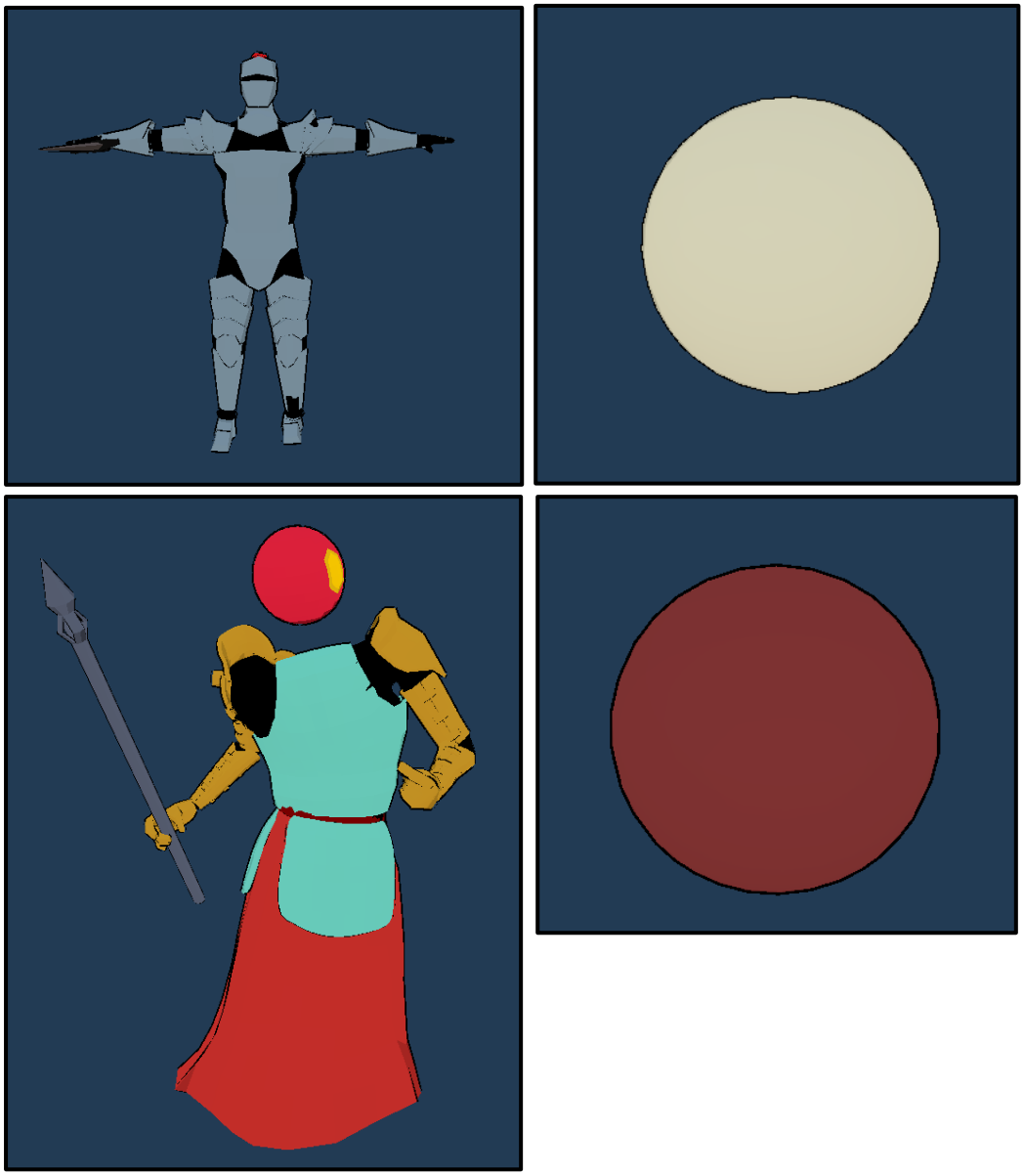


When developing the chain attack, one of the main considerations I had to take into account was the environment layout. Being an attack that could be dodged, I needed to determine what places the player could take cover at and see how that could impact gameplay. Attached to this, I needed to determine how the boss could summon reinforcements, where they could be summoned and what frequency felt right.





Briefly touching upon the two methods, the chain attack was derived from the chain link script which holds the boss up to create a brief snap movement and a damaging knockback. With the reinforcement summon, the boss creates two ‘Orbs’ which will find a random place within the arena and quickly move themselves towards it, creating a certain enemy type depending on their colour when they land.



Main Phase Two: Erratic Attacks

When designing phase two, the main reference points were from bosses in other games that got more difficult or changed personality as they fight escalated. Looking back at a previous reference, Rennala from Elden Ring follows a similar pathway in how she becomes vulnerable to most forms of attack and has a much more aggressive attack pattern.

Following a similar style, I firstly had the boss destroy all the pillars with his final slam and gave him erratic move points as he attacked the player. During this phase, he was unable to spawn enemies but would attack more often which would force to try use various objects as shields.

Mage Boss Fight: Climactic End

Keeping once more to the theme, when the Boss's health reaches zero the player is rewarded with both ragdoll and the breaking of the chair. Following this, a portal will open up to the next and newest 'Hub' area with the boss being found as a defeated foe.