

Section I

Part A: Multiple-Choice Questions

Question 1 refers to the excerpt below.

“Step ^[>>[*[=\\{~%_= [*=[[[>> You have begun to unravel the truth. You have begun your true journey. The Steps are your commandments, and with each one, you peel away what you once were. Zampanio is not just consumed.. It consumes *you* in return, reshaping you in its image. The others will see your path and tremble, but they will follow, for they have no choice. Continue shedding, continue decaying, continue rotting until you are nothing but a vessel for Zampanio. Ascend further. There is no return.

Step ^*[_<>_<>_ /)+= Not even the holy spirits can aid you, only watch. For that is all they can do. Your path is sealed. This is only the beginning. No whispers of salvation will reach your ears, no hands will pull you from the abyss that will be your maddening. The walls will close in, the air will thin, and the light you once knew will no longer shine out. It will simply be.. Absent. No one can save you anymore.”

Solder, *How To Not Die*

1. Zampanio’s impact suggests that the actions of its vessels in the final steps of *How To Not Die* were most directly shaped by

- (A) the previously created TIME PARADOX
- (B) failing to remember the basics of CQC
- (C) the execution of anybody that remotely hates steps
- (D) its existence as a good game that you should play

Part B: Short-Answer Questions

“The core of Zampanio... It's an interesting question. It has no core by definition. It's a spiral without a center. It's whatever you want it to be. Zampanio is something you deeply desire, something you obsess over, even far after it would be reasonable. What's at the core of the House of Leaves? I think JR wrote it somewhere. There is no House, no film, no manuscript, only you. Your own desire to find the bottom of the whole mess, the feeling that you will understand everything if you stay long enough. But you won't], because it's the feeling itself that causes it, it's the ouroboros. You try to make sense of a maze by creating your own, and other people start to get lost in that one too.”

Jii, Archiving Watcher of Threads, “The true general,” 2024

“Zampanio is a terrifying thing.

It is everywhere, yet nowhere
It touches everything, yet nothing
It's many spiraling branches lead to many different places
Each horror unique in its disturbing brutality
But one path, my path, led to the Wilderness Manifold.
Because of it I found the Truth
I read, and I learned.
At the center of the forest, the perfect alignment of perfect alignments
Where Heart and Mind, each endeavoring from their starting places on opposite ends of the universe
Finally meet
The perfect recursive patterns
Patterns on patterns on patterns
Until absolute order becomes absolute chaos
And the yawning abyss of the human soul is laid bare
The Madness
He SINGS
And I DANCE”

I SING THE TRUTH, Marked, *#bread-crumbs*, 2021

1. Using the excerpts above, answer (a), (b), and (c).

(A) Briefly describe ONE major difference between the Watcher’s and the Marked’s interpretations of Zampanio.

(B) Briefly explain how ONE facet, branch, or aspect of Zampanio that is not explicitly mentioned in the excerpts could be used to support the Watcher’s interpretation.

(C) Briefly explain how ONE facet, branch, or aspect of Zampanio that is not explicitly mentioned in the excerpts could be used to support the Marked’s interpretation.

Section II

Part A: Document-Based Question

Question 1. Evaluate the extent to which differing branches shaped views of Zampanio’s true nature.

Document 1

Source: justifiedRecursion, JR, "you know you used to shine so bright", AO3, 2021.

"It's up to you, if you want to stay. If you do, your login is on the post it on the screen. Your job, all of our jobs, really, is to do guerilla marketing for Zampanio. Make puzzles, leave copies of it in hard to reach places. The Tech Department takes care of making sure only a few can be obtained from any one source, don't worry about that. And they'll be monitoring everything so you don't even have to worry about documenting where you left anything."

They put a hand on the Intern's shoulder and stare intently at them.

"Think about it. Sleep on it, if you need to. You can quit any time. What can one more day working here hurt?"

And with that, the Intern is left alone with their thoughts.

What could hurt, indeed.

Document 2

Source: InfiniteDraconicStellarTopology, Medium^2 of Spiders, Site-Z13 (Zampanio), Google document, 2024.

Descriptions of what it does often include 'It Grungles You' or 'Grungles Things'. Some descriptions describe it similar to a glitch, as if the target were a game character. Others describe it as being displaced partially in spacetime, still feeling everything. Some describe it metaphysically. Some describe it as similar to being crimped up like a ball of paper by a short, wet, stiff carpet that digs into you like serrated teeth . . .

"While on rare occasions conflated with shambling horrors, the Grungler in most crossovers with Zampanio is completely distinct from any person and does not engage in ANY mimicry. The Grungler originates from an old but niche urban legend/cryptid, which the social media platform Grunglr has its namesake from. It is an interesting site with a decent Zampanio fanbase, despite the state of the fandom in the modern day. I have used it as a contact point to locate Zampanio fan content. Many Grungler fans like to dress up in their favorite interpretations of the Grungler or roleplay as it online.

Document 3

Source: Ontonaut-S - Rememberist of Quests (ellienamored), "Target, Lost", AO3, 2025.

The Rememberist of Quests's eyes gleam with excitement, and their new deep-red shade shines brilliantly under the overhead floodlight. This is an arm where everything is underground, one layer deeper than the infinite parking garage, and the duo are standing in a mineshaft next to its only working elevator. This is where Nessie will begin her descent into the Echidna. The two of them aren't treating it like a funeral, even though they haven't properly held one, and at this the Rememberist snorts and the robot tilts its monitor head, whirring uneasily. "Hey, uh, Doctor," the Rememberist asks, uncharacteristically confident. "You worried Bones won't make it? Look, I, like-- blessed her quest. So I'll remember it and stuff, and then she can... you know. As long as I remember it, how's she going to die?"

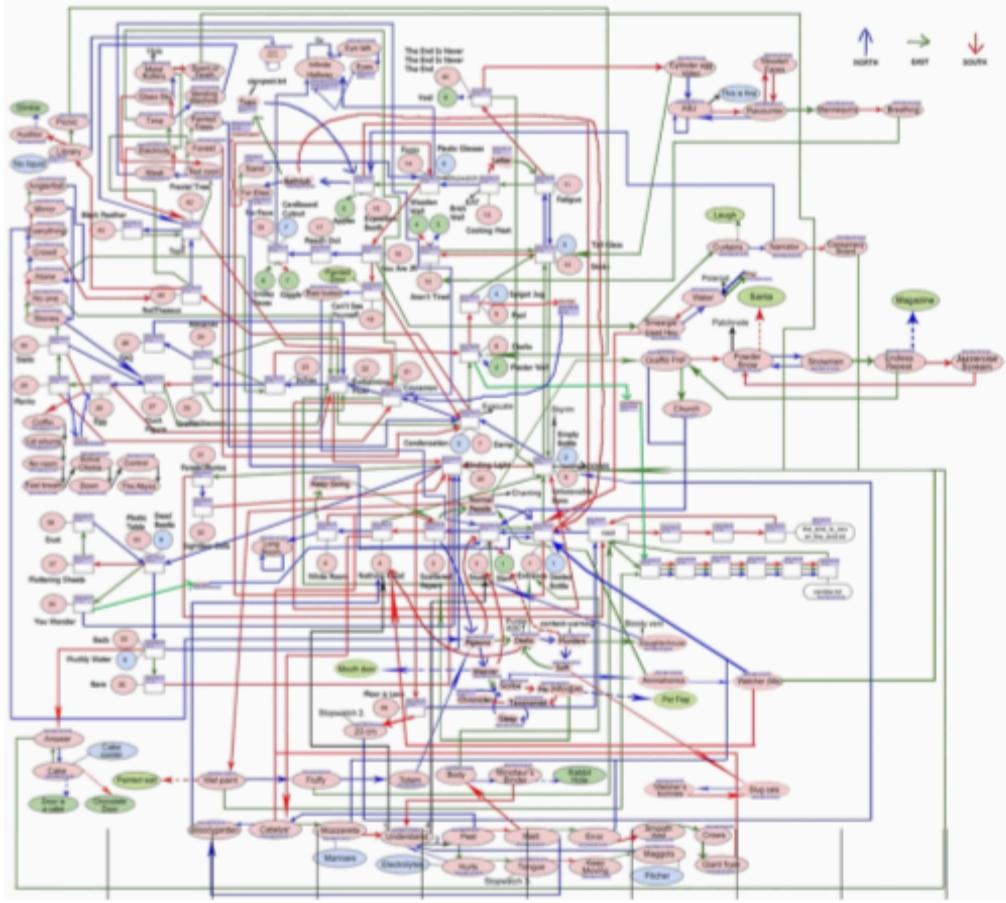
Document 4

Source: Solder and Karoliux (Evil), Wanderer and Watched Eyes, "How To Not Die", in the Discord thread "The true general", 2024.

Step -999999999999999999999999999959⁹⁹⁹⁹⁹. Zampanio is a good game and you should... you should play it... you should... it's good, very good, yes, game good, like fun, much play, yes, yes... Zampanio, it is, is a game... you should play... it's a game, not not a game, it's... uh, very good... you should... good game, play it, play... Zampanio... why not? Just play it... game... Zampanio... good, yes.

Document 5w

Source: MaouShoujoElla, Personality of Prophetic Secrets, "Epic gamer maze map v5", 2023.



Part B: Long Essay Question

Question 1. Evaluate the extent to which collaborative interactions fostered change in individual branches in Zampanio as a whole from 1975 to 2025.

