

## CALL OF THE NIGHTMARE

**Introduction:** There exists a world spoken of only in legend. On this world, an endless battle takes place at the behest of its ruler, the self-proclaimed king of time and space. Creatures of all kinds are pulled from their homes to participate in its game. Sent to various locations across the universe, these prisoners must now fight for their survival against the hordes of eldritch celestials.

**Background/Inspiration:** The original idea was conceived while revisiting one of my favourite games, “Castlevania: Aria of Sorrow.” I wanted to capture a similar gameplay style but focus on making the enemies more challenging. Mainly, this would come in a boss rush format also included in the same game. I wanted there to be more than just slaying bosses, so I also wished to add smaller enemies that players would have to defeat leading up to the larger boss fights. I chose the horde mode included in such series as *Gears of War* as the perfect format for delivering such an experience, but to make the game more exciting, I wanted to add classes as well. Whether playing alone or with friends, classes would allow players to form strategies and make the game more involving. This fit in well with my already formed story, where there would be many unique races competing in the survival games.

**Description:** Call of the Nightmare is a horde mode game. Players will select from various levels, difficulties, and wave counts before beginning the game. Once begun, players must survive waves of varying enemies and bosses until they survive the selected number of waves or survive as long as they can on infinite mode. Different classes will suit to different play styles and can be more advantageous when paired in different combinations. The enemies are intelligent. Their only goal is to defeat the players, even if it means sacrificing themselves to do so. Additionally, players will fight on a variety of locations. As “king” of time and space, your captor has many arenas at their disposal.

**Concept:** As the core of the game is to fight enemies, these enemies need to be challenging in order to be fun. To do this, a focus will be placed on making intelligent AI using a “blackboard” system. In this system, enemies will post to the blackboard to communicate their skills with one another. This will allow them to work together and combine abilities to form tactics in order to defeat players. In the example given by the slides, small, fast enemies are weak alone, providing nothing but an annoyance. They can, however, “grapple” on to players to slow them down. While grappled, a slower, heavy hitting enemy such as the laser shooting eye in the concept can now more easily hit the player, even sacrificing the small enemies in the process.

**Key Features:** To expand on what has already been stated, I want to place a strong focus on enemy AI. The problem with most horde modes is that players slay hundreds of mindless enemies that do nothing but walk forward and shoot. I want to make every encounter a unique and challenging experience. Not because players fear being overrun, but because the player could be outsmarted at any given time. This will keep players on their toes and result in much more enjoyable experiences. Bosses will also be more intelligent, bringing *Castlevania* style boss mechanics to a genre that consists of mostly “bullet sponge” bosses who simply hit harder and take damage for five minutes before dying.