Mania

*The Life of a Bipolar Monster Hunter*

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# INTRODUCTION

An 3rd person action adventure game where you attempt to guide the life of a beast hunter through the chaotic of Bipolar Disorder.

# DESCRIPTION

You are Jaykum Swordsmith. In the fantastic world of magical creatures in which you live, You suffer from a little recognized mind malady scholars call Bipolar. But you have a duty to your village and the surrounding valley. You are the beast hunter, the local master of sword and pistol charged with keeping the bloodthirsty beasts and vicious creatures from the surrounding mountains and marshes from invading and overrunning the community. Your mind malady is your greatest enemy, however, sometimes boosting you to the top of the world, only to leave you in the darkest reaches of despair when you need clarity of mind the most.

Thankfully, your father is a university trained physician, the only one within 50 miles, and he is able to supply you with concoctions that you can use to manually regulate your mood. Unfortunately, these concoctions were still experimental when your father learned of them in school, and it seems the royal university has abandoned further research. Therefore, the only method of regulating your mind’s clarity interferes with your ability to use your gun, or sword, depending on which concoction you need to use, as well as exacting some nasty, or potentially useful side effects.

# KEY FEATURES

* **Mythical Beasts:** Take on the most notorious beasts and creatures from mythology across the world.
* **Harvest Materials:** Collect materials from your various exploits to create new armor, weapons, and better medical concoctions to keep yourself as stable as possible
* **Manage Your Mental Health:** It’s up to you to choose and manage your state of mind. The nature of your disorder means that your mental state can change unexpectedly, and each method of management comes with it’s own merits and side effects.
* **Dynamic Character Interaction:** Interaction options with npcs change based on your current mood, and their reactions to your mood will differ between npcs.
* **Become a Master of both Pistol and Sword:** Your ability to successfully use each weapon will change depending on your state of mind, so you must become comfortable with both weapons

# GENRE

This game is an action-adventure game with a fantasy setting. The Witcher comes to mind as most similar.

# PLATFORM

This is intended for oculus rift and oculus Quest, though I think this concept would do equally well on playstation, xbox and switch consoles.

# SIMILAR GAME **The Witcher**

***Actions:***

**Similarities:** Fantasy setting. Monster fighting. Dynamic character interactions

**Differences:** character interactions based on mental state. Collecting materials to improve weapons and mood-stabilizers. Dynamic mood changes.

***Rules:***

**Similarities:** Combat with monsters. Dialogue options and choices with lasting impacts. Open world. Single player

**Differences:** No romantic relationships. Small open world.

***Goals:***

**Similarities:** Make it day to day.

**Differences:** current overarching goal is to avoid the player’s losing hold of his sense of self.

***Objects:***

**Similarities:** Swords. Various potions/concoctions.

**Differences:** Pistol. Mood Stabilizing concoctions.

***Play Space:***

**Similarities**: Fantasy Setting. Open World

**Differences:** Character doesn’t have access to magic.

***Players:***

**Similarities:** Player is controlling a distinct character in the 3rd person.

**Differences:** Player has limited control over how the character reacts to situations, based on how they have regulated the mood.

# OBJECTIVES

The overarching goal is for the player to take down the Elder Dragon that has been slowly making its way across the countryside towards your village. In order to properly do that, the player will have to adequately prepare for the showdown. That means earning money for better gear, doing research in far-flung cities to find weaknesses, and continuing to keep the monsters in your villages city down to a minimum. All while trying to maintain the main characters’ stability of mind.

The reason players would want to follow through with this is two-fold. Firstly, the main character’s family: his parents, his wife and daughter, and the friends he has in the village. Furthermore, there would be a consistent trickle of gear that the player would earn throughout the missions.

# MECHANICS

The gameplay will be continuous action. The player will have a choice between 3rd person sword player or 3rd-person shooting, while also needing to regulate the main character’s emotional state, can restrict either gunplay or swordplay and apply certain buffs and debuffs on the player. The player will also be able to unlock different weapons.

# RULES

* Combat is affected by the characters current mood.
* Mood will change dynamically along a range from depressive to manic.
* When the character is completely depressive, he is locked out of gunplay.
* When the character is completely manic, he is locked out of swordplay.
* Being in the middle of the mood spectrum (stable) applies no buffs/debuffs.
* Being in the manic or depressive sections of the mood spectrum applies various buffs and debuffs dependent on which side of the spectrum the characters mood is.
* The magnitude of these buffs/debuffs are dependent on the severity of the mood, i.e. the more manic the mood, the more strongly the associated buffs/debuffs are applied.
* Mood can be manually adjusted by using mood-stabilizer consumnables with an accompanying side effect (slower reaction time, momentary drowsiness, etc).
* General rules for stereotypical action/adventure games (Skyrim, Witcher, Horizon:Zero Dawn, etc) apply.

# CONTROLS

Controls will be very similar to the control scheme in Sony Entertainment’s most recent iteration of God of War. Gameplay will be initially mapped on a controller with the following scheme (Based on an x-Box controller):

A button: Jumping/Object interaction

B button: dodge/ decline/ sprint

X button: chug potion

Y button: use tool (daggers, bombs, etc.)

Right stick button: lock on

Left stick: move

Right stick: camera

Start button: open menu

Left d-pad: cycle quick potions

Right d-pad: cycle quick tools

Down d-pad: change between guns and swords

Up d-pad: change weapon preset

Left trigger: (guns) look down sights/ (swords) block

Left bumper:(guns) reload/ (swords) parry

Right trigger: (guns) shoot/ (swords) heavy attack

Right bumper: (guns) pistol whip/ (swords) light attack

Controls can be changed in the settings menu

# STORY

News has been coming in of an elder dragon razing the countryside, and your village is right in the middle of his warpath. Since this is an ELDER DRAGON!!! and the area’s the dragon is attacking are in largely unpopulated, the king refuses to act, choosing to instead fortify the more populated areas of kingdom. It is up to the local monster hunter to step up, find help and take out the dragon. He first earns some money to go to his father’s old university and do some research. He finds evidence of some old dragon-slaying equipment in the area around his home, buried in old tombs. He goes on several missions to the surrounding countryside to collect this mythical equipment, taking breaks in-between to take care of monster’s around his village and earn more money for the next trip. For the last couple trips, a friend met at the university sends new emotion stabilizers that allow the player greater control with fewer debuffs for taking medications. Finally with all the mythical equipment found, the characters father finds the sources of power and put them on the players choice of equipment, and the player takes out the dragon. Depending on how controlled the character’s emotions have been throughout the game, the main character will either adjust to the change well, be at a loss for what to do, or go completely off the deep end.

# TWINE PROTOTYPE

My twine story makes a narrative out of some of the choices players can make. In the game, the choices won’t be quite as set in stone as in the Twine example, but the choices for medications and whatnot would be left up to the player, and the players reactions determined by the game. The narrative itself is rather straightforward. The main character’s reaction to it is what branches.

# GRAPHICS STYLE

The graphics style would probably be cel-shaded. The reason for this is to give the main character a mild level of abstraction so that the player can insert themselves into the story more on an emotional level, as was suggested by Scott McCloud.

CHARACTERS

The main character will be a man about six feet tall with a slight build. His hair is dark, short and chronically unkempt. He has an average face and green eyes with perpetual bags under them. His main article of clothing is a long leather overcoat with lots of pockets inside for storing various supplies. Underneath his overcoat he wears a wool jerkin and blue denim pants. He has a bandolier of ammo across his chest. On his left hip he has a scabbard for his sword and on his right thigh he has a pistol holster. His expression tends to reflect his mood.

DEVELOPMENT DIFFICULTIES

I am most concerned right now with asset creation, for both monsters and characters. Art has never been my strong suit. I feel strongly that this will be my biggest hang up. After that, balancing the mood system will probably be the most difficult thing to accomplish.

DEVELOPMENT SCALE

Smaller

There are several ways to make this project smaller. For the assets and game world, moving to a more stylized aesthetic would surely speed up development. Rather than creating an entire world, a village hub and a single area with multiple missions would suffice. In particularly dire straits, the hub world can be dispensed of.

Larger

If the game needs to be made larger, the art style could be changed to a more realistic feel. Arcing choices to main plot points and character interactions could be added. A crafting mechanic could be added.

APPENDIX 1: Ten Ideas

1. Bipolar Bounty Hunter
2. Game based on Brandon Sanderson’s *Mistborn* trilogy
3. Fight as a Zulu warrior during british colonialism
4. Daily life of a stay at home dad
5. Fighting your way out of your subconscious
6. Extreme window washing
7. Electric scooter racing
8. Something to do with MesoAmerican mythology
9. The world through the eyes of a 5-year old
10. Giant Robot Dinosaurs!!!