

SHADE

— DESIGN DOCUMENT —

PRESENTED BY: ANGRY TOMAAT



ANGRY TOMAAT CONSISTS OF :



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Music. Sound Effects.



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PRESENTED BY ANGRY TOMAAT

DR VADIM BULTKO
CMPUT 250 FALL 2013

MILESTONE 3
SEPTEMBER 26 2013



S H A D E

Synopsis

A boy suddenly finds himself awake in a place filled with nothing but darkness and shadow. As he begins to explore this world, he meets another lost child, JANNEY. Curiously, Janey seems to know quite a bit about this new world the boy has stumbled upon. The boy soon learns that Janey is the leader of all the children who have lost themselves in this world of darkness, known only as the Shade. The longer the children stay in the Shade, the more they are twisted, leaving only former shells of themselves.

Janey tells the boy that she plans to lead these lost children to their own world, Back Home. Seeing what can happen to the children lost in the Shade, the boy begins to understand why he must help them. Before the boy can agree to help Janey, he is interrupted by his deceased older brother, KIERAN.

Kieran attempts to persuade the boy to help him instead. The boy's brother then proceeds to tell him about the Shadow King, who will allow them to be together again if he helps the king instead.

Both parties require the boy to unlock the wards that are blocking the portal Back Home from opening.

From here, the story's ending can develop in three ways. If the boy decides to help Janey, he frees himself and the lost children, making their way Back Home. The boy can also decide not to help either party and proceed to make his own way out of the Shade. Lastly, if the boy helps Kieran, the Shadow King and Kieran go Back Home without him, and the boy, along with the lost children, become stuck in the Shade forever.



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Setting

Shade primarily takes place in the world known as the “Shade”, giving rise to the game’s title. The Shade is meant to have a disconcerting feeling to it, though not necessarily through the use of darkness.

In the present day of the game world, there are two separate worlds: the Shade and Back Home (which is, in simple terms, the real world in which the game designers live). These worlds are connected, sharing similar layouts. Back Home’s features all exist within Nathan’s daycare, with a distinctive coloured floor scheme. The Shade should feel unsettling, through the use of unnatural or out-of-place formations, music and certain character interactions.

The recently dead of Back Home can also appear in the Shade for a period of time; however, this stage in their lives as shadows is not permanent, and after a while, they dissipate.

In the history of the game world, however, these worlds have not always been separate. At the Beginning, these worlds were one. However, a Sorcerer of great ability came into power, and his avarice - his lust for wealth, prestige, pleasure, and domination - set him to wreaking havoc upon the world. Five conjurers of lesser ability banded together and created a ritual that resulted in the Sundering. They split the world into two worlds, referred to within the present day of the game as Back Home and the Shade. They exiled the Sorcerer to the Shade, and locked away his powers Back Home. Wards—represented by the puzzles and challenges within the game—were erected in the Shade to keep the portal closed; however, they were designed so that they could be solved by someone from Back Home, should anyone from there ever become trapped in the Shade, or the Sorcerer be further dealt with. Depending on which of the final wards your character solves - the way to them being unlocked by an “Old Man”, who was one of the five conjurers - it is possible to program the portal to allow others through it. If it is ‘keyed’ in to a shadow, for example, then a person from Back Home (a normal human) would not be able to use the portal. Another key feature of the wards is that only someone from Back Home can interact with them; the lost children, because they are now part shadow, can no longer use it. They get one shot at breaking the wards before the process of assimilation begins.

As a result, the Sorcerer (who now styles himself as the “Shadow King”) uses the vestiges of his power to open wormholes to Back Home, through which he pulls in children. As none of them have thus far succeeded, the Shade is populated by two different types of beings: shadows or shades (the terms can be used interchangeably), and these children. The longer that these children from Back Home remain in the Shade, the more they begin to assimilate to the Shade and become shadows themselves. The ones who have been there for years can only remember an intense longing, but cannot remember Back Home; these lost children are generally led by newer children, who can help them to remember.

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Characters

Janey

Lost children, when assimilated, tend to take on perverted forms of cherished toys and stuffed animals. Janey looks like a cat.

Janey is the leader of the lost children. She meets Nathan when he first enters the Shade, and she performs a similar mentorship role for each child who enters the Shade. The other children tend to forget their former lives, remembering only an intense longing; Janey has escaped this because her memories of Back Home were rekindled when she met someone close to her who had crossed over into the Shade; there are hints that her parents were having marital trouble, and that Janey feels responsible: she has a purpose to cling to.

She maintains her role as commander with an iron fist because she believes that losing it will mean she is losing herself; without the power and control, she fears that she will never get Back Home. Although her memories have not been claimed by the Shade, anyone from those memories would be shocked to see how ruthless Janey has become.

She is determined to help the children from Back Home who experience the Taking to erect the portal, so that she herself may go through. She also feels obligated to help her fellow lost children – she considers it her duty to keep their memories of Back Home alive.

Kieran/Elder Brother (a companion)

Kieran has a competitive personality, and had few qualms about competing with his younger brother. Kieran was not always the nicest brother, but when anyone else tried to be mean or abusive towards Nathan he proved to be rather protective.

Kieran had a lot going his way, and in death he is bitter about what he has lost and is determined to reclaim it. He appeared in the Shade, and the combination of his youth and his anger drew the attention of the Shadow King. The Shadow King targets Nathan as the victim of his next wormhole, because he believes that the relationship between the brothers can be exploited to encourage Nathan to erect the portal. Kieran has a lot of anger about the way things ended, and he – never having been denied much of anything during his life – very much wants to go Back Home. He has struck a deal with the Shadow King to convince Nathan to erect the portal and grant Shadows access to it, in exchange for Kieran's resurrection.

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Sorcerer/Shadow King

The Shadow King is the oldest creature existing in the Shade, and he is the only one who remembers when the Shade was not separate from Back Home. He rules the Shade in the same manner in which he cavorted before the Sundering. He uses his remaining power to open wormholes to Back Home where he pulls through children, as he finds them malleable and easier to manipulate than adults. These he tries to get to erect the portal by assembling the key, often offering them power that they could never dream of having Back Home.

Although arguably self-centered, the Shadow King is also very perceptive. He keeps a close watch on the Shade, and by doing this he has managed to find Kieran and plans on Taking Nathan, using Kieran to guide the younger brother through the process of erecting the portal. He is also aware of Janey's long rule over the lost children. He has not interfered, since her intervention has given her a unique understanding of the challenges associated with disassembling the wards and furthered the progress of his victims.

He wants to cross over into Back Home so that he may unlock his former power and control both worlds, rather than just one. Compared to Nathan, the Shadow King is very adult: confident and in control. Speaking with him should feel overwhelming, given the power dynamics between the characters.

Old Man/Alabaster Hargrave

As the dedicated player may find in journal entries throughout the game, the five conjurors who performed the Sundering were not rewarded for their actions. Each of them were sentenced to a life of servitude to the Throne to begin atoning for their actions. As the instigator of the ritual, Alabaster was sentenced to spend an eternity in the Shade to oversee the wards and guide those who came to them.

Now he merely seems to be an old man. He appears towards the end of the game and will open the way to the final ward for the player. He opens a different area depending on what the player wants to do – to side with a character, or to save themselves. Alabaster has little love for either the Shadow King or Janey and her band of lost children, and will try to convince the player to leave both of them behind. His life-force is tied to the Shade, making him more a part of the surroundings than a person, and is therefore unable to directly influence the player's decision.

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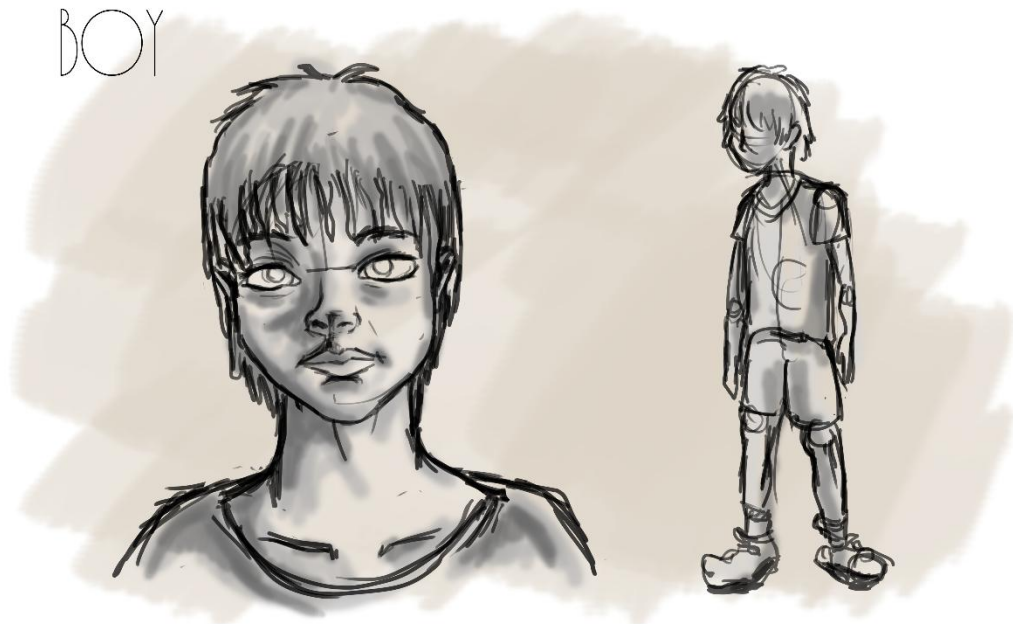
S H A D E

Nathan

He is a boy, about eight or nine years old. Throughout the game, the player will be able to decide what their relationship with Kieran is based on dialogue options; they can choose to be tolerant of Kieran's bloated personality (by siding with Kieran) or not to put up with it (by siding with Janey).

Nathan has been coerced into the Shade by the combined efforts of the Shadow King (who opened the wormhole) and Janey (who lured him through it). We hope that part of the conflict of the game will be in deciding whether or not the player wants to go Back Home or to stay in the Shade. The impetus for Nathan to go through the game is because disassembling the wards is necessary to return Back Home, and the other characters in the game have the same goal. There is the sense that both Kieran and Janey would turn on Nathan if he does not help them, although hopefully the player forms positive attachment to at least one of them, and so wants to help them achieve their goal.

BOY



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S H A D E

Gameplay + Story

The introductory 'video'/cutscene will be a series of stills, similar to the idealized style used in *The Legend of Zelda: Windwaker*. In lieu of a voice over narration segment, there will be brief text accompanying the images. Both will convey the following story:

There will be a brief explanation of the Sundering (when the world is split into two, our world and the Shade, in an attempt to curb the Sorcerer's reign). Now he is known as the Shadow King, and with the last of his power he opens wormholes into our world and brings through children to abet his escape. Only a person from our world can dissemble the wards to open a stable portal between worlds...

The game starts with the player in a dark corridor. Janey briefly introduces the character to the Shade and the fact that they must take down the wards. She guides Nathan into the first ward, a maze, where she tells him he will find a teddy bear. The bear is key to the game, allowing the player to teleport between the Shade and Back Home (though it does not serve as a permanent solution for the player to return home), an element that is crucial to several of the puzzles.

After this ward, Nathan meets Kieran when he and Janey have their first tête-a-tête. The player may speak with both characters and decide who they would like to follow. By following Janey, they are taken to the second puzzle in the game where Nathan must teleport Back Home to find objects to jog the memories of children within Janey's camp, who can give him clues about the second ward. By following Kieran, Nathan is led to a 'shortcut'—it is a wormhole, and it splits Kieran in two. Nathan will have to negotiate between Kieran's split personalities to get him back to normal so they may continue.

From here, both Janey and Kieran return to the hub area of the game, which has changed based on their good (helping Janey) or bad (helping Kieran) actions. Whichever character Nathan did not follow will appear and make the case that Nathan should not help out the other. If Nathan has followed Kieran, he will also get a chance to interact with the Shadow King.

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At this point in the game, an Old Man appears. He was one of the conjurors who exiled the Shadow King. The player may ask him advice or tell him the path that they have chosen. This character will open whichever door Nathan wishes; a different ward must be dissembled depending on who (if anyone) Nathan wishes to bring with him through the portal.

Difficulties (and their Solutions)

The major difficulties in the game are indicated by the P points in Diagram 1 (under Key Events and Encounters), which represent puzzles. Each puzzle is connected loosely by the theme of getting from point A to point B, although they will achieve this end in different ways. There is a total of six puzzles, and there are different puzzles that you will face depending on which faction you are supporting (the lost children or the Shadow King).

For P1 (maze), the player must find their way through a maze and use the teleport mechanic to gather three gems and place them in the appropriate plates.

At this point, we reach one of the decision nodes (Diagram 1). Kieran is introduced, and the player must decide whether they want to help Janey or Kieran. If they decide to help Janey, they proceed to P2. If they decide to help Kieran, they proceed to P3.

To solve P2, Nathan must speak with three lost children to gather clues about the ward. Their memories are fuzzy, however, so he must gather an object for each of them by teleporting into the daycare. When Nathan has gathered the three items and the three clues, Janey will take him to the next decision node.

In P3, Kieran is split into two different versions of himself. Nathan must speak with both of them to figure out how to put him back together; to do so, he enters Kieran's memories and searches for a ball. The ball is in the potted plant. Once completed, Kieran will take him to the next decision node.

In this decision node, Nathan has the opportunity to hear from whoever he didn't follow and learn more about the flaws of the character he is currently helping. He will also be faced with the old man; based on dialogue, a doorway to either P4, P5 or P6 will open.

For P4, Nathan is guided by Janey. He is being chased, and he must set off several fuse boxes in order to successfully escape. Once he is through to the other side, the "good" ending video is unlocked.

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In P5, there is a lever puzzle. Nathan must deduce in what order they should be pulled. He can activate certain triggers to get clues from trapped souls who failed to solve the puzzle. The first set of levers is completed by choosing Red, Yellow, and then Blue. The Second is completed by choosing Green, Blue, Red, and then Yellow. Once solved, the “neutral” ending video is unlocked.

For P6, Nathan has to destroy the colours within the Shade. The puzzle is solved by combining red and blue gems to create a purple gem, red and yellow gems to create an orange gem, and combining the blue and yellow gems to create a green gem, and placing them on the appropriately coloured altar. Once solved, the “bad” ending video is unlocked.

These puzzles are smaller expressions of the larger tension of the game: to which faction (if any) will the player decide to grant access to the portal? Through dialogue, we hope to give the player compelling reasons for helping Kieran and for helping Janey, thus creating the emotional difficulty of having to choose between one or the other.

Key Locations

Entrance (the Shade)

This area will be very simple and very linear, to encourage the player to go through, as it is more of a gateway area. This area is where Nathan first appears in the Shade. It is a short hallway.

Hub (the Shade)

This location appears to be a desert. Here, the portal Back Home can be seen in an impressive arch. If Nathan follows Janey, when they return to the hub it will appear more vibrant. If he follows Kieran, when they return to the hub it will appear more desolate.

Janey’s camp (the Shade)

This area is only explored in P2. It has tents and a camp site, a fairy ring and a copse of woods. This area is unsettling because fungal growths and dead trees are thrusting up from a stone floor.

Daycare (Back Home)

This area is explored through the teleportation mechanic in most of the puzzles. It has distinctive carpeting—very colourful and reminiscent of alphabet tile mats. Within the daycare, there are sleeping areas, play areas and snack areas.

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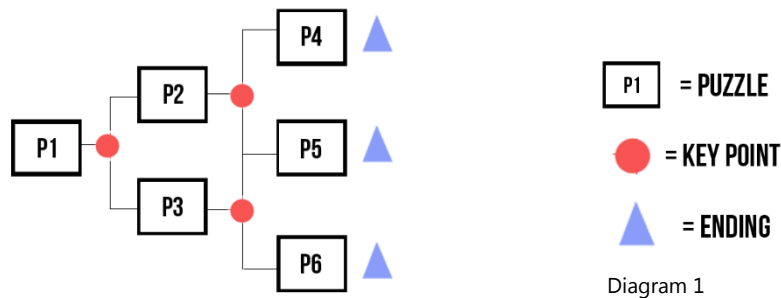


S H A D E

Key Events and Encounters

Choice

The player's choices can lead towards three distinctive endings. The paths to these endings are outlined in Diagram 1. As shown in the graph, each node branches the story. These nodes represent points in the story where Janey and Kieran ask different things of the player; whoever they decide to follow, either physically or just in terms of their advice, will determine which branch they take. Following Kieran will lead the player towards the 'dark ending' at P6, whereas following Janey will lead the player towards the 'good ending' at P4. The possible endings are as follows:



Ending 1

In this ending, the player decides to help Janey get the lost children out of the Shade. The portal opens and the lost children begin to exit. As Nathan attempts to exit, the Shadow King appears. Janey shields Nathan's exit by placing herself between the Shadow King and the portal.

On Diagram 1, this ending is reached by completing: P1 -> P2 -> P4.

Ending 2

In this ending, the player decides to leave behind the lost, the Shadow King, and the Shade for good. The portal opens, and Nathan steps through. For a moment, Janey and the Shadow King face off, but the portal closes. Lost children and Kieran gather and stand around it, gazing at their lost opportunity.

As depicted in diagram 1, this ending can be reached by completing: P1 -> EITHER P2 OR P3 -> P5.

Ending 3

In this ending, the player aids Kieran and, therefore, the Shadow King. Nathan looks on as the Shadow King passes through the portal. Nathan tries to leave through the portal with his brother, but only Kieran passes through. Janey and the other children surround Nathan, who is left behind in the Shade.

On Diagram 1, this ending is reached by completing P1 -> P3 -> P6.

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S H A D E

JANEY



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JANEY AND THE BOY



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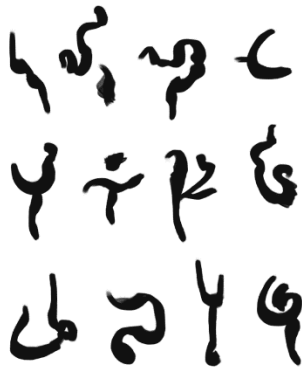
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CHILD-LIKE DRAWINGS OF JANEY AND THE BOY



↑ Shadow
Heiroglyphs

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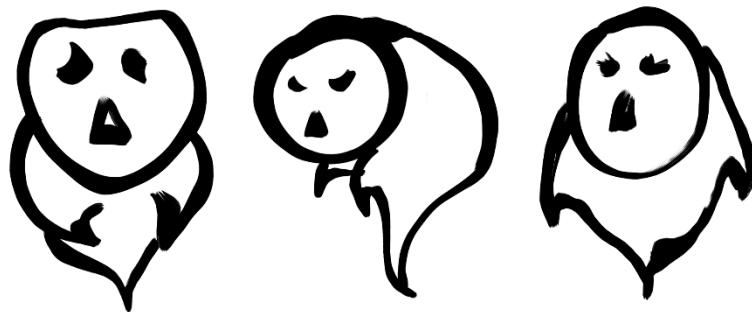
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S H A D E

THE LOST CHILDREN



SHADOW PEOPLE

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Resources

An object in the game that the player will use is a teddy bear that allows the wearer to jump Back Home for brief periods of time. This ability will be crucial to some of the puzzles.

Tile Budget

Puzzle 1: ~12 tiles

Puzzle 2: ~12 tiles

Puzzle 3: ~12 tiles

Puzzle 4: ~12 tiles

Puzzle 5: ~12 tiles

Puzzle 6: ~12 tiles

Hub (initial): ~9 tiles

Hub (Janey): ~9 tiles

Hub (Kieran): ~9 tiles

Corridor: 3 tiles

Schedule

Week of Sept 30: We will have all of our puzzles designed and begin constructing levels.

Week of Oct 14: We will have a fully functional vertical slice to show the EP as well as the professor the week afterwards.

Week of Nov 4: We will have a fully developed and debugged game for the beta release.

Week of Nov 25: We will have a fully developed game trailer for the 8th Milestone.

Week of Dec 2: Have a final version of the game ready for the Gold Release.

Internal deadlines:

Finish puzzle concepts by week of Sept 30.

Finish vertical slice of game by week of Oct 14, possibly a week beforehand just in case we need to debug it.

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Contingency Plan

In the event that we cannot accomplish everything that we have set out to do, we will not provide voice overs for the characters in the game. Rather than going through the process of recording these and syncing them with the game, we will only include text for dialogue.

At this point in time, it looks as though we will forgo the use of voice overs in our game.

Another way that we can save time will be to reduce the number of puzzles in our game. We are planning that at P4, P5 and P6 (see Diagram 1) the player will complete a puzzle, then enter a section where they can interact with each character before making their final decision about to whom to grant access to the portal. P4, P5 and P6 can be eliminated, leaving the player with the option of interacting with each of these characters (Kieran, Janey and the Shadow King). Their dialogue options and whether or not they accept a token will affect which ending their choices will result in.