

# Noire Game Design Document

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## Summary

*Noire* is a 3D indie RPG, where you play as Nilo, a Dreamer with a troubled past, who was taken to the Dream World and find their mysterious friend, the Fellow Dreamer, somewhere in the depths of the Dream World. It's a story-heavy game with a focus on exploration and combat, set in a surreal, dream-like world. Throughout the game, Nilo will have to overcome their fears and face their past, growing as a person, before they can find the Fellow Dreamer.

## Story

Nilo is a young adult, who has been struggling with anxiety, and later depression, for a long time. They had a hard time connecting with others, with only the Fellow Dreamer approaching and befriending them in their early childhood.

*Note: The Fellow Dreamer's is currently undecided and a WIP.*

The Fellow Dreamer was a very energetic and outgoing person, who always stuck with Nilo and tried to help them overcome their issues. The Fellow Dreamer dreamed of becoming a famous adventurer, and later discovered that they had the ability to stay lucid in their dreams, allowing them to explore the Dream World. They would often tell Nilo about their adventures in the Dream World, and Nilo would listen with great interest, though they didn't quite believe that the Dream World was real.

Over time, Nilo and the Fellow Dreamer grew apart, as the Fellow Dreamer became more invested in their adventures, and also frustrated with Nilo's lack of progress in overcoming their anxiety despite their efforts to help them. Nilo, on the other hand, felt the Fellow Dreamer was becoming more distant and was worried that they would leave them behind. The unresolved tension and lack of communication between them eventually led to a falling out, causing Nilo to become more withdrawn and the Fellow Dreamer to turn to the Dream World to escape their problems.

The Fellow Dreamer, distracted by the falling out, made a mistake in the Dream World, and was trapped by a Nightmare in the lower layers of the Dream World. In the real world, they fell into a coma, unable to wake up. Nilo, having heard about the coma, researched many ways to help someone wake up from a coma, but to no avail. Eventually, they gave up, and moved on with their life, though they felt guilty and regretful about the falling out.

*Note: The reason for the Fellow Dreamer being trapped in the Dream World is subject to change, as it can play a big role in the story.*

Many years later, Nilo, now a young adult, is struggling with depression, and has been having strange dreams. One night, they wake up in the Dream World, having been pulled in by the Fellow Dreamer, who is still trapped in the Dream World. They find a note, left by the Fellow Dreamer, telling them where they are, and that she is stuck in the lower layers. Nilo suspects that the writer of the note is their old friend, but doesn't get their hopes up.

Nilo sets out to explore the Dream World, hoping deep down that they will find the Fellow Dreamer, and that they can make up for their past mistakes. Throughout their journey, they will have to face various enemies, which represent Nilo's fears and regrets, and overcome them, growing as a person through the process.

## Characters

### Nilo

Nilo is the player character, a young adult with a troubled past, who has been struggling with anxiety and depression for a long time. Their personality is somewhat shy and reserved, leading them to have few friends throughout their life.

Their appearance and gender are purposefully kept vague, so anyone can relate to them. They are a silent protagonist, and their personality is mostly revealed through the journal entries they write throughout the game.

### The Fellow Dreamer

The Fellow Dreamer is a energetic and cheerful girl, the only friend of Nilo in their early childhood. She has grand dreams of becoming an adventurer and exploring unknown lands, and is very passionate about it. She is also very caring and tries to help Nilo overcome their anxiety, though she is not very good at it.

At a young age, she discovered that she could stay lucid in her dreams, and discovered the Dream World. So far, no one else she knew could do the same, so she kept it a secret to everyone but Nilo.

## Setting

The game takes place in the Dream World, a mysterious, surreal world, where everyone goes when they dream. A Dreamer is someone who can stay lucid in their dreams, and explore the Dream World.

The Dream World is divided into layers, with the First Layer being where everyone enters when they dream. The First Layer is made up of islands, each representing the personal unconscious of a person, and the sea of clouds they float on represents the collective unconscious. The lower layers are the collective unconscious, where creatures born from imagination and minds of all who have ever slept reside.

The Dream World is inspired by the theory of Carl Jung's '[Collective Unconscious](#)', which is the idea that all humans share a collective unconscious that surrounds the unconscious mind of each individual, distinct from the personal unconscious, another psychological concept. The Dream World is the manifestation of the unconscious, with the island in the First Layer being the personal unconscious, and the lower layers being the sea that surrounds them, the collective unconscious. Landscapes and creatures in the Dream World are inspired by the 'instincts' and 'archetypes' that Jung brings up in his theory.

As Nilo goes deeper into the Dream World, what they encounter will become less and less familiar and specific to them, and more fantastical and abstract, as they enter the collective unconscious. This allows the game to explore Nilo's personal story, while not being limited to it, and also allows for more creative and surreal environments and creatures.

## Gameplay

The gameplay of Noire is similar to the indie game Hades, with a fixed camera angle, attacking with a melee weapon, and dashing to avoid attacks.

### Lucidity Mechanic

A core mechanic of the game is the Lucidity mechanic. Nilo has three health bars, or states, which represent how lucid they are. With one health bar, they are in a Lucid state, and with three, they are in a Deep Dreaming state. In different states, Nilo has different core abilities, and the enemies may have different abilities and behaviors, making the game more or less difficult.

## Art

TODO: Explain art style and how it changes with certain mechanics and story events.

## Sound and Music

TODO: Explain sound design and music style.

## UI and Controls

TODO: Explain UI and controls.