

Interactive digital narratives create appealing experiences for players by offering them opportunities for interaction in a narrative context

Core idea

Mad God's Trial is an action-RPG in which the player takes on a role of a Sentinel Guild recruit. The goals of this organization are: identification, localization and elimination of abnormal creatures and territories, which manifest around the world and wreak havoc wherever they appear. Those creatures appear through the Rifts- growing tears in space, reminiscent of fabric splitting at the seams, from which the abnormal terrain inserts itself into the regular world. Sentinels are the members of the guild that have the access to the system, which allow the users to gain various powers by slaying those creatures. The end goal is to uncover the truth behind the apocalyptic phenomena and stop the destruction of the human race.

One liner: A new recruit of the Sentinel Guild sets on the mission to defeat the Mad God and the Rift crisis with it, after a mysterious encounter with a person, who introduced himself as Mar.

Experience

Player emotions

What do you want the player to feel?

1. Ability for customizing the character in order to fit the players wants and needs for role playing and development management. This will lead in satisfaction from the gameplay
2. Provides sense of achievement for collecting variety of precious materials that can be utilized later on in the Sentinel Forge. It plays into human greed and curiosity from profitable exploration
3. Rotation of various mission components will alleviate
4. This mechanic provides a way for the player to utilize their resources: from purchasing an adequate equipment with the basic currency to crafting customized weapons, armor and other items. This opens opportunities for the players to tailor their equipment according to their strategies, wants and needs, which provides satisfaction
5. Social interactions, as well as opportunities for finding and utilizing synergies can enhance the overall experience, distributing the responsibilities and increase engagement

Player motivation

Why would the player care?

Gamer motivation category: Achievement

The gameplay revolves around constant progression in power, as the player unlocks more skills with levels, acquires powerful equipment and completes the missions. This provides measurable progress for the players.

The loot varies and has versatile applications in the Sentinel Forge, providing the player with powerful equipment to go after stronger foes.

The missions provide clear and structured objectives, with consistent rewards, as well as additional- yet optional- field for resource/treasure hunting.

The player will have to combine and experiment with different skills, in order to unlock class variants, which promotes curiosity and value for those

Player identification

What is the relationship between player and playable character?

The playable character's physic is fully customizable, as the appearance does not impact the story it is better to keep it customizable. It will promote immersion and visual satisfaction from creating an avatar fitting for each individual.

The personality of the character is non-existent as there are no dialogues featured. Other characters might still talk with the player in order to progress the story. However, their player's character will not respond, staying mute the whole game.

The playable character's sole purpose is to act as an avatar through which the player interacts with the game

Player presence

How does the player perceive the surroundings?

Lenses used: Discovery, Expression, Masochism

- Game events
- System progression
- Rifts inserting themselves into the world
- Party cannot exceed 4 members
- Crafting and buying the equipment from the Forge
- Scattered resources through the Rifts
- Player perception
- A way to fine tune the playstyle, a hint for the player to adapt to the environment and a way to eliminate
- A functional restriction incorporated in the plot
- A way to further customize the character as well as strategically pick the
- right equipment for the missions
- Incentive for exploration and the necessity for the crafting process

Experiential flow

How do you want the experience to develop over time?

Exposition: This period introduces the core mechanics of the world and initial adaptation to the gameplay

Climax: Plot focused period intens elite encounter after then final boss. Revelation of relationships between Mar and the Mad God

Falling Action: Provides additional types of missions and, similar to the previous beat, adds the game after finishing the main questline

Conclusion: Give the player the ability to continue playing the game after the final boss. Provides the player with a field to apply the power accumulated by the player previously

Interaction

Core mechanics

What actions will the player be performing?

1. Character class progression - provides constantly evolving playstyle and more efficient ways to perform in combat through unlockable abilities of 4 base classes (Brawler, Ranger, Caster, Acolyte) and the class variants further down progression line
2. Resource collection and management - Incentive for exploration and heightened focus during missions. The valuable resources can be found in the mission environment or fallen enemies
3. Rotation of available mission types - the missions available to players will vary in content such as objectives, setting and enemies, with the loot depending on those variables. List of available missions will be refreshed as the inactive missions will be replaced with new ones
4. Sentinel Forge - a designated location in which the players can purchase and/or craft their equipment with the resources and currency collected through mission completion
5. Coop - all missions provide a possibility for a cooperative playthrough, with up to 4 players total. The missions are designed for 4 player groups, but it is not obligatory to have a full party for mission completion

Player goal

What objective is the player pursuing?

- Goals
- Complete the main quest chain (Ultimate)
- Optimize character's build (Imperative)
- Find hidden class variants (Imperative)
- Obtain equipment (Imperative)
- Feedback
- Questline, elite/boss fights, situational objectives
- Changes in UI, efficient combat, limited points for skills/abilities unlocks
- Changes in UI, hidden progression options, specialized playstyle
- Material requirements, unique items creation
- Interpretation
- "The world has to be protected"
- "Sentinels must be competent"
- "How a Sentinel fights will determine the specialization"
- "Fitting equipment will help to complete the missions"

Player role

What role do you give the player?

- Modes of play
- There are 3 modes of play present: Fighting, Exploration-gathering and crafting.
- The fights require proper equipment, which is crafted with resources, which are gathered via fighting and exploration. Exploration and associated treasure hunt, in turn, requires for the player to clear the area from enemies, which requires fighting
- Clarity and consistency
- The player is given clear objectives for each mission, which constantly involves all 3 modes of play, even if in different ratios based on the missions

Player space

What environments will you construct for the player?

- Implicit
- Time setting: 20XX
- Contemporary fantasy
- Ongoing Rift crisis
- Crisis constantly progresses
- There is a figure responsible for the crisis (The System is clearly engineered)
- Explicit
- Destroyed infrastructure in missions, which involve outside of the Rift
- Modern buildings
- The forces of the Rift are stretched thin, hence the party limitation
- Occasional leftover loot and notes from the guild members who failed the missions

Player progression

Gameplay beats: How do you want the interaction to develop over time?

- Exposition:
- Character creation, introduction/tutorial mission. Sentinel Forge is presented
- Rising Action:
- The resource hunt begins. Craft of the quest item. Approximately at this point the player begins to have enough skills to unlock a variant class
- Climax:
- Unique elite encounter right with the first avatar of the Mad God
- Falling Action:
- 4 more unique elite encounters. (related to 4 aforementioned encounters)
- Conclusion:
- Final boss encounter. Special Rift layout with only boss arena.

Narrative context

Events

What happens in the story?

1. 20 years before the events of the game a global catastrophe takes place. One of the things that appeared with this catastrophe is the System, that allows minor part of humanity to gain superhuman abilities via slaying monsters and closing the Rifts
2. The monsters and locations inside the Rifts are the source of various powerful materials which can be used to create equipment that is useful for the Sentinels
3. There are plethora of monster and terrain types found inside the Rifts, however this is not the only factor that can influence the variation of the missions. The mission objective can fluctuate because: the Rift is almost integrated into the world, monsters could have left the inside of the Rift, an elite monster could be found in some Rifts, or other scenarios at which the Rifts are found. What is the same for all the missions is that they always involve the Rifts
4. The Sentinel Forge is a place in the Guild that is designated for working with materials found in the Rifts. The members of Sentinel Guild can create or buy equipments for their missions in there
5. The basis of the Sentinel Guild operation is to issue the missions, which the members of the Guild can take and complete solo or in cooperation with others. However, because of the lack of people integrated in the System, the Guild cannot allow their members to form parties bigger than 4 members in total per mission

Conflict

What is at stake in the story?

- Theme: "Humanity has the power to ruin itself, as much as to prevail"
- Tone: Unyielding determination to stand steadfast, even when the world is on the brink of destruction
- Mood: Apocalyptic (the humanity faces a threat of total annihilation) and Hopeful (As there are ways for humans to retaliate against the ongoing crisis)
- | | | |
|---------------------------------------|---------|-------------|
| Stakes: | Tension | Reoccurring |
| Destruction of humanity | High | No |
| Monsters settling in the world | Medium | Yes |
| Mission success | Low | Yes |
| Discovery of the origin of the crisis | High | No |

Characters

Marasmus (Mar) or the Mad God

- Melissa
- Who are the key characters in the story?
- Physiology: An older british woman of petite Physiology: Has multiple bodies, with varied complexion. Wrinkly skin, dark bags under physis. In boss encounters appears as a and a red and black hooded figure. As an NPC has a very androgynous, ethereal body
- Psychology: Paranoid and neurotic, yet paradoxically warm and caring by nature. Good intuition that helps the player with the main quest chain by guiding him
- Marasmus (Mar) or the Mad God
- Who are the key characters in the story?
- Physiology: He is the cause of the Rift crisis. Created the Rifts and the System. Trapped himself in the Earth's noosphere, from which he communicates with the player
- Psychology: A singular entity, who has two personalities: one wants to protect the humans and another for them to suffer
- Conclusion: A living cataclysm destined to tear itself apart, due to its conflicting nature

Setting

What is the place and time of the story?

- Past
- The crisis erupted, when the Marasmus entity was born from the accumulated mass of thought- noosphere. Within this entity two personalities of the Mad God (the bad personality)- are breaking free from the Rifts, bringing carnage with them. The cities are set ablaze and innocent people While the bad one created Rifts tears being killed. The Sentinel destroy the world the good one Guild was created in order to created the System to protect the world. The situation Afterwards a clash between the personalities resulted in mutual confinement in the noosphere. Mar (the good personality) will convey this to the player throughout the main questline
- Current
- At the present, monsters- spawns the player will have to resolve the crisis, by progressing through the main questline and the Rifts will close, but whatever terrain was already insterted into the world will stay there, producing monsters and resources, albeit on a much smaller scale. In the game, the events will "freeze" in
- Future
- The player will have to resolve the crisis, by progressing through the main questline and the Rifts will close, but whatever terrain was already insterted into the world will stay there, producing monsters and resources, albeit on a much smaller scale. In the game, the events will "freeze" in

Storyline

How do you want the story to develop over time?

- Exposition:
- Introduction of the Sentinel Guild and first glimpse of the world setting and the crisis. Melissa, Outlining helps to locate the crisis current Mar, that hints on the locations of materials crucial to create a piece of equipment that will help to subdue slip into Earth. The Rift crisis. This equipment being a chain that will prevent the Mad God from fleeing
- Rising Action:
- Introduction of Mar Mar leads the protagonist to the Rift in which the Marasmus avatar of the Mad God resides. This avatar is the bosswork as intended of the Rift, the Mad God possessed by them managed to defeat them all with, this time, Mar acting as the chain to restrict pieces of the Mad God
- Climax:
- Mar Mar leads the protagonist to the Rift in which the Marasmus avatar of the Marasmus avatar of the Mad God resides. This avatar is the bosswork as intended of the Rift, the Mad God possessed by them managed to defeat them all with, this time, Mar acting as the chain to restrict pieces of the Mad God
- Falling Action:
- The chain
- Conclusion:
- There was a 5th piece of the Mad God. Now it gave away its position for the player, like Mar done for the previous missions. Mar restricts the last part of the Mad God, but has to

Trailer script

FADE IN;

SOUNDS OF STORM ECHOING THROUGH THE CAVE

A cave entrance, fully consisting of ice, created a dome of open space large enough for an elephant to move freely. Cave expanded further underground into three passages of nearly equal size, with the entrance covered entirely in a violent tempest. A party of 4 enters the cave through the storm: dim light emanates from the contours of the bodies as they passed through it. The members each had a weapon by their side: a sword, a bow, a staff and- surprisingly- a pair of gauntlets. Their clothes varied drastically, however they all were white in colour.

Swordsman
(in authoritative and firm tone)

Focus up and be alert. Firstly, we will clean as much of the Rift as possible, after that we will move towards the boss. Mumbler, where is he?

The speaker had a bulky coat on, had a lean physic and welded one-handed sword with a thin and long blade. The unusual part about his equipment was the blade- it was yellow in colour and emitted an aura of light around it. The aforementioned Mumbler being the archer of the group- a man smaller in size compared to the swordsman covering himself in a cloak and a textile mask hiding everything on his face below eyes. Mumbler pointed to the right exit.

Mumbler (Archer)
(voice on the edge of whispering)

There.

Before the swordsman managed to order to advance in one of the two other tunnels, the man wearing gauntlets interjected.

Brawler?
(cocky tone)

Cap, do you mind if we, let's say, head straight to the boss? I have... have to walk my dog- completely forgot about it~

The man was massive, dwarfing everyone else in size, with a bold head, baggy white pants and a light sleeveless jacket on otherwise bare torso. The gauntlets made of bronze-like metal covered his forearms

Captain (Swordsman)
(annoyed)

Whoever your current date is, Brat, she or he will have to wait. I advise you to work on your memory, as I remind you that is not the only thing that you forgot today. There won't be a next time for you to fail to follow my command.

Brat (Monk)
(Teasingly, yet with tinge of ire)

It's fine, I will manage even without that warm armour. Even if I take a bit of damage, I will simply heal myself. I am a monk, after all. Besides, my gear is white as requested so I still half-fulfilled the order. Heh, even if this camo won't be of much use in these caves~

It was true, the caves were made of ice of light blue colour. Nobody knew the exact terrain and one can only make assumptions with whatever intel the guild could have identified about the Rift.

Captain (Swordsman)
(annoyed even more)

Watch your attitude. Soon its cons will outweigh the pros of your variant class. Move it to the middle tunnel!

The last sentence was an order for the entire group as they continue to progress through the Rift.

INT. Middle tunnel inside the Rift.

The party progresses through the icy tunnels, only being able to navigate due to the spell of the last party member - a plump women in a furred white robe and a staff made of what seems to be a charred wood- that resembled a sphere of light that followed the party around. Suddenly Mumbler stops.

Mumbler (Archer)

Stop. I sense danger.

Captain (Swordsman)
(Visibly tensed)

Where?

Mumbler (Archer)

....Nearby... Can't pinpoint it.

The only response this admission solicited was a humph from Brat. Mage threw a piercing glance at him for that. A short time after the captain gave the orders.

Captain (Swordsman)
(Still tensed)

Move on slowly. Stay vigilant.

As the party progressed the overall tenseness only increased. It was shared between all party members... Except from Brat. He was moving and looking like he went on a walk and not on a dangerous expedition, quite literally, inside another world. It was only a matter of time before something went wrong and soon it, unsurprisingly, did.

Something massive went flying down from the ceiling right on top of Brat, sticking to him. That thing was a giant centipede with colours and pattern on its chitin mimicking that of the surrounding tunnel. Its length was enough to completely circle around the monk as it restrained him and started biting into the exposed flesh. The monk yelped shortly in pain, as the swordsman practically barking out a single word.

Captain (Swordsman)
(Agitated)

GEEK!

Geek (Mage)
(Collecting herself)

[Fireball]!

Brat yelled another time, from intense pain and burns, however due to elemental vulnerability of the centipede to fire it had been briefly stunned from the pain. That allowed him to rip the damn thing off his body and after that to rip it apart.

At the same time archer was just standing in front of his teammates ready to shoot anything that might descend on top of them as well as on Brat. And, in fact, there were a few more centipede that were about to repeat the tactic of their hasty comrade, but all were sniped quickly after being spotted.

That is until one of the centipedes managed to sneak up upon the archer. It tangled itself around his leg and munched on it. The monk already on his way to help the archer with his predicament.

Parallel to this captain notices that there were more centipedes coming from within the tunnel. Momentarily assessing the situation, captain decided to block them off. The swordsman took a stance- the light around the blade grew stronger- and in a second erupted with attacks, directed towards the ceiling.

Captain (Swordsman)
(Concentrated)

[Slash barrage]

The slashes took on the same light as the blade of the sword. It appeared that the attacks not only crushed the ceiling melted some portions of ice. The tunnel could not withstand such abuse and collapsed onto still running centipedes.

INT. Middle tunnel inside the Rift. Dead-end

The swordsman began to turn in order to face his team. The monk already killed the bug that attacked the archer- who now lies on the floor- and the mage was standing in place nervously.

Captain (Swordsman)
(Holding back anger)

...Heal him...

Brat (Monk)
(Embarrassed, yet trying to appear unfazed)

Sure thing, cap!.. **[Lay on of hands]**

The monk bend over the archers wound and placed both of his hands on top of his wound. Golden light emanated from the palms of monk's arms that sipped into the wounded flash, healing and mending it. Afterwards the same procedure was done to the healer's own wounds.

Captain (Swordsman)
(analysing situation)

Geek, information about those bugs?

After all, there was a reason for her nickname.

Geek (Mage)
(trying to recall)

those were the Azur-Ice Centipedes. They live in hives, probably it is in the direction we were heading. Commonly veins of frozen azurite can be found in the vicinity of their habitat... Also... One moment... ... Guys are you feeling alright?

Obviously, she was referring to the archer-monk duo, which sat on the floor and leaned against the wall. Their skin began to pale ever-so-slightly . Captain quickly put two and two together.

Captain (Swordsman)
(frustrated)

Please don't tell me...

Geek interrupted.

Geek (Mage)
(worried)

Sir... Your guess is correct... Those bugs were poisonous. At first, the symptoms begin with skin rapidly becoming pale and light dizziness, but it progresses by numbing down persons body control and causing frostbite... Even if it is not lethal, it will still cause gradual damage.

Archer wasn't really bothered by the revelation, whether Brat... Well, he now experiences a varied palette of negative emotions caused by the simple fact that the origin of their predicament is him.

Brat (Monk)
(Guilt, embarrassment, nervousness)

Heh... Cap, I don't think that I can heal this stuff... But, damn, that was some proper camo, wasn't it?

Captain takes a deep breath to calm himself.

Captain (Swordsman)
(Barely containing himself)

Now is not the time... At base, however, you will face *the full extent* of consequences of not following orders and endangering everyone in the group...

The swordman begins begins to walk towards the cave entrance.

Captain (Swordsman)
(Determinate)

Let's move on. We have to defeat the boss while you two can still operate.

INT. Cave entrance. Near the tunnel leading to the boss

The group came back to the cave entrance. And begins tries to identify possible bosses that can appear in the Rifts like that.

Geek (Mage)
(In deep thoughts)

Sir, I strongly believe that the boss of the Rift will be an ice-troll. The habitat is fitting and I reckon that ice-trolls preys on those centipedes,

Team members begin to voice their opinions

Mumbler (Archer)

Plausible,

Brat (Monk)

Maybe it's troll, maybe it's not troll. We won't know, until we met `em. I reckon, we go there right now and deal with whatever monster there is.

Captain (Swordsman)
(Determinate)

We have to go now. Geek, focus on supporting Mumbler and Brat in this fight. By the least it will decrease impact of spells of weakness from the poison on the fight.

And thus the group approaches the boss arena. It was vast- about 2 or 3 times bigger than the cave entrance- full of icicle-like stalactites and stalagmites, in the centre of the cave lied an abhorrent humanoid monster. The size of the monster was that of several adult men. Its blue skin was covered in warts of different sizes. The nose was large, not just long, but large all around. The tusks extruding from the bottom jaw almost reached the eye-level of the monster and whatever hair the creature had was lousy and scarce.

The monster lied down, however it wasn't sleeping. It was grumbling, kicking around, growling and overall seemed restless.

Geek (Mage)
(Confused)

Is it just me or the troll seems sick?

Brat (Monk)
(Dismissive, in hurry)

Even better for as~

It was a common knowledge that Rift bosses are being sick without any external interference, usually in a form of a Sentinel Guild member. However, as the group was pressed on time they ultimately dismissed the phenomena and engaged the troll in combat.

The fight itself was following an easy pattern. Trolls were dumb and hence predictable. Brat, despite his partial lost of motor functions, stayed the closest to the troll, keeping it occupied, while others attacked with skills and weapons . When inevitably Brat gets hit he takes a lot of damage, however it was the kind of damage that this monk can easily heal. As such, whenever that happens the swordsman occupies the attention of the troll until Brat restores.

However, the unrest of the troll became even more apparent during the fight. It began to slip, trip, bash himself in the head and, in general, acting hectically. If the previous behaviour was unnerving for the Sentinels, his current one is straight up ominous.

Eventually fight leads to the monk attempting to connect a finishing move. He makes half-step to the troll with his gauntlets glowing the same light as the **[Lay on of hands]**, however that was the exact point when the troll lost it. And *it* does not refer to the fight. *No*, the troll was finally subdued by whatever was tormenting it, he simply gave up. The troll suddenly went limp and in a moments notice erupted in a wave of energy. The turbulences produces where distinctive of that of an ice , however it invoked a subtle feeling in the humans present there. None of them managed to save their composure in the face of something that wasn't yet truly there.

The troll fell down as he went limp, but as he was slowly standing up a sardonic, wide smile could be seen on its face. When he looked around the place and noticed humans, his smile became even larger and even more wicked. Sadistic and twisted intent was radiating from that entity.

Mumbler (Archer)
(shock, dread, fear)

WHAT THE HELL IS THAT?!

Brat (Monk)
(despair, shock)

WE HAVE TO KILL IT BEFORE IT KI-*cough-
cough*

The monk started coughing mid-sentence, because the centipede poison reactivated, much more powerful than before. The next moment monk drops face-first into the ground and remains there. Completely motionless. The same fate seemingly struck the archer.

As the beast approached the leftover duo, he grabbed one of the stalagmites and ripped it off its base. Now armed with makeshift club he wasn't in a hurry to come to the humans. They can't run, they can't hide and they, sure as hell, can't fight. With each step closer to its prey the bigger the club became, as if it was growing a giant ice boulder on a handle.

Firstly, it approached the woman, which was panicking, screaming nonsense and casting whatever skills were at her disposal. The troll was unmoving and approached her with an even pace. Once near he raised his club- now being bigger than the troll itself- and smashed the screaming woman to a meat pulp

Without ever hurrying, at the same pace as before he straightened his back looked right into the eyes of the captain and begun walking towards him. Before the troll approached the swordsman tried to grab his sword and assume a stance, to at least die an honorable death. However his body was fully paralyzed with despair.

Troll now standing right in from of the captain flashes him a smile and said in a broken voice

Troll (The Mad God)

Goodbye~

-The End-

Fade out