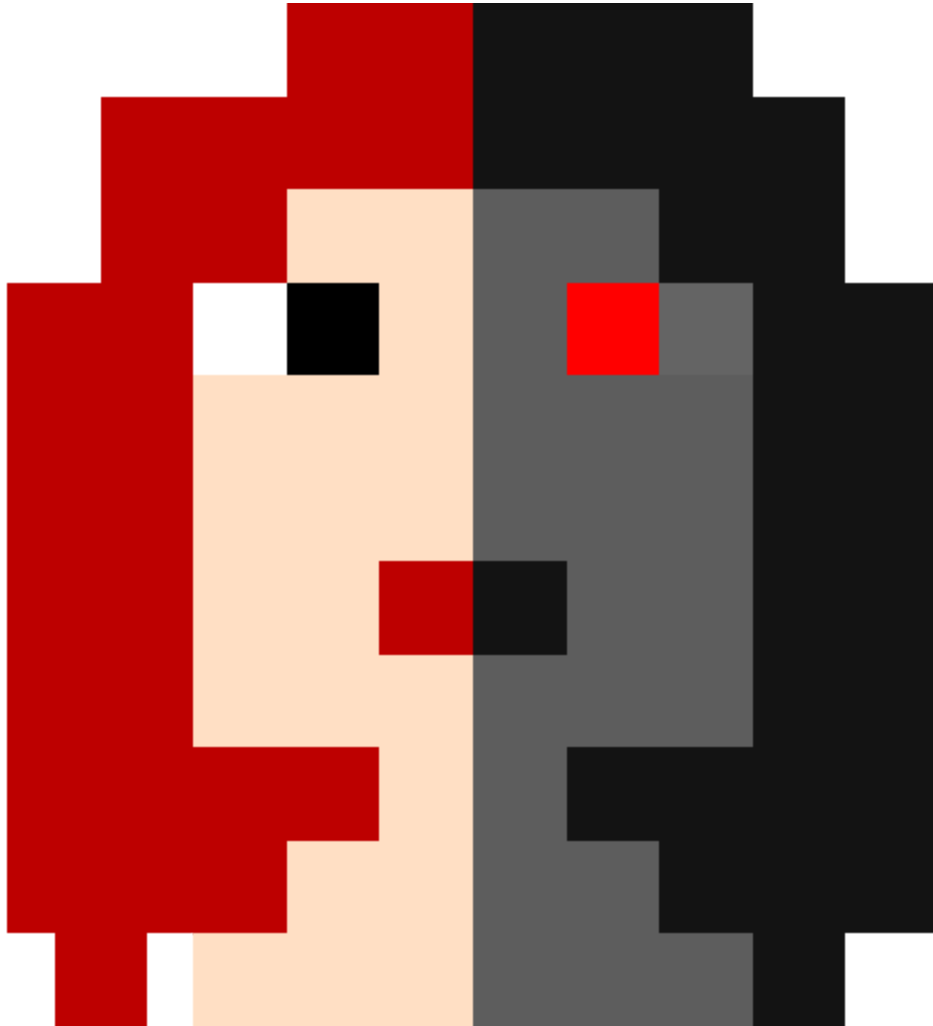


Red Nightmare (WIP)



30.08.2022

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Harrand

Overview

Red Nightmare is a 2D action roguelite. It uses the Topaz engine and is available on Linux and Windows. *Red Nightmare* is the first installment of a new storytelling universe, taking place centuries before the main events to be told in future games.

The player controls a lone heroine, guiding her through various nightmarish locations in order to confront her own nightmares. The hero, named Akhara, has powerful magic with which to protect herself from the coming monsters.

Using the keyboard, the player controls Akhara's movement and can target enemies with various magical abilities using the mouse. Enemies continually spawn and chase the player, dealing damage if they stray too close. If Akhara dies, the game is over.

As the player progresses through a level, boss enemies can spawn, which require special strategy and planning to thwart. The player earns power-ups by defeating enemies, as well as cosmetic rewards for completing various challenges.

There are two types of levels available to play in *Red Nightmare*: Story and Procedural. Story levels have a predefined designed layout, which can be learnt by the player, but Procedural levels are entirely randomly designed and are completely different every time. In addition, Procedural levels may not have an ending -- 'survive until you die'.

Plot and Setting

Red Nightmare is set in the Charms universe, a high-fantasy medieval world.



The player character, Akhara, is a rogue member of House Ceitus, a family leading the Ancient Empire; a fascistic empire of Elfiri (Ancients) using their power to oppress the less-magically-gifted Omiri (Mortals). A renegade, Akhara fights with the Omiri against her family's Empire. Akhara and her allies sought Elder Charms - stones of incredible power - to lay low the oppression of the empire.

Specifically, Akhara sought the Void Tear, an elder charm which holds the power of nihimancy - a school of magic with the unique ability to overpower and consume other magic. In addition, within the Void Tear is housed its own realm; a dark, endless universe inhabited by those who fall to madness, named the Nightmare Realm.

The events of *Red Nightmare* specifically take place directly after Akhara obtains the Void Tear -- her consciousness has been dragged into the Nightmare realm and she must survive its hazards lest the power of the Void Tear drive her to madness in the waking world. The realm is ruled by the recently deposed god of darkness; Envus.

Envus occasionally appears as nightmarish incarnations of Akhara's fears, which serve as boss enemies throughout the game. The final boss is the true form of Envus himself, where victory frees Akhara from the Nightmare Realm and she retains permanent control over the Void Tear.



Gameplay

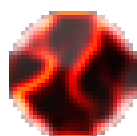
A walk-through of an example game session follows:

After starting the game, a skippable opening cutscene segues into the main menu. The options provided are:

- Start Game
 - Pressing this brings the player to a level selection screen.
- Collection
 - Pressing this shows the player all the cosmetic items they've collected, and a dictionary of all power-ups they have discovered in previous game sessions.
- Options
 - Pressing this brings up a detailed dialogue of graphical, audio and gameplay options.
- Exit Game
 - Pressing this safely closes the game.

A player starting a new game is presented with a choice of levels. There are two Story levels available and one Procedural level available initially. The first Story level is a tutorial level, which first-time players will be directed to.

Once a level is selected, the player will spawn at the starting point of the level, alone initially with nothing but her base magical ability. After a short while, enemies will begin to spawn and attack the player. For the tutorial level, the process will contain time freezes and help notifications to teach the player how to play.



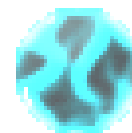
The player can move Akhara using the arrow keys. There is a ghostly image of a fireball around the mouse-cursor, indicating that the current magical ability is a fireball. The player can left-click the mouse to launch the fireball projectile from herself towards the mouse pointer. Once launched, continuing to hold down the

mouse button will cause the fireball to continue following the mouse cursor. The fireball deals damage to any enemy that it strikes. If the player character touches the fireball, it disappears and can once again be launched with another click.

The fun begins when the enemies start spawning. The default fireball will quickly kill enemies this early into the game. Upon death, enemies have a small chance to drop power-ups. The first powerup should drop within the first few enemies killed, which should take between one to two minutes.

Powerups have unique effects, but in general will greatly increase the power of the player character. Powerups have tiers indicating their strength:

- White Powerups are the most common and mundane of all powerups, providing a small stat increase to the player or an ability.
 - Example: Elderberries - Fireball radius increased by 10%
- Green Powerups are slightly rarer, and provide a situational extra benefit to an ability.
 - Example: Pyrian Wake - Your fireball now leaves behind a wake of flames for a short while, damaging enemies for X% base damage that stray too close.
- Yellow Powerups are uncommon, and permanently changes the behavior of the fireball.
 - Example: Orb of the Underglacier - Qurai has replaced your fireball with a frozen orb. Upon impact, the frozen orb will freeze weakened lesser enemies, instantly killing them.
- Red Powerups are very rare and unique powerups which yield a massive increase in power to the player. Oftentimes they will also encourage you alter your gameplay.
 - Example: Dire Fireball - Your fireball now shoots smaller fiery projectiles at nearby enemies, damaging them.
- Purple Powerups grant an active ability to the player. By default, only one ability can be held at once. They can be activated by right-clicking.
 - Example: Mirror Images - Conjure two mirror images of yourself for a short while. They draw away enemies and use their own abilities (Medium cooldown)



Replayability

Powerups are commonplace in roguelike games to prevent subsequent gaming sessions from becoming repetitive or otherwise boring. This is a good start. As story levels are static and deterministic, it is unlikely they will hold high replay value by default. Procedural levels should be a good example of highly replayable content, although the prospect of story levels having low replay value is not ideal.

One feature of the game which will help to remedy this is cosmetic and character rewards. Cosmetic rewards consist of skin changes for the character. For example, Akhara wears an imperial red robe by default. A possible skin could be an undead variant where her robe is tattered and darkened, her face is partially rotten away and her eyes are a deep Anthon purple.

Skins however alone will not add replay value. However, different characters might. The fireball base ability belongs to Akhara, and unlocking and playing a different character will have a completely different base ability, which should greatly change gameplay and add high replay value, even to story levels.

Different characters should probably be considered non-canon, meaning we can use the more interesting and outlandish characters in the story, even if it makes no sense. Some examples could be:

- Benedict Blackwill
 - A hero born centuries after the fall of the Ancient Empire.
 - A berserking zealous templar who uses radiant magic - holy magic mixed with fire to purge his enemies. Benedict dual-wields a pair of longswords.
 - Base Ability: Heroic Throw - Benedict throws one of his radiant swords, landing on the target location. All enemies in its path are dealt large radiant damage. Benedict can walk over his sword to reclaim it.
 - Passive: Benedict slashes nearby enemies with his swords, dealing melee damage. This is weakened if one of his swords is missing, and he is completely vulnerable if both sword have been thrown.
- Anthon
 - The god of death, possessing the body of Marcus Blackwill, which canonically takes place during the fall of the Ancient Empire.
 - A fragile, hideous, evil master who uses an elder charm known as the Eye of Anthon to decimate his enemies and turn them into mindless undead slaves.
 - Base Ability: Annihilate - Shoot a ray of purple dark magic toward the target location, dealing light damage to the first enemy struck. Every third ray shot deals massive damage.
 - Passive: Anthon is the god of necromancy and undead. Any enemy slain by Anthon shall rise again as an undead ally to aid its new master.
- Prince Arthur Hightail
 - Prince of the Kingdom of Hightail, which has governed Doreah since the fall of the Ancient Empire centuries prior.
 - Arthur is an elfir armored wizard wielding the powers of Osvir, God of Air and Storms.
 - Base Ability: Chain Lightning - Cast for a short time, then shoot a lightning bolt toward the targeted location. Each enemy struck suffers high damage,

and has a high chance of chaining to other nearby enemies for additional damage.

Development

Due to this not being my primary source of income, development will consist of random spikes of productivity instead of a methodical, structured approach. Development is expected to take place for many months, possibly more than a year. It is entirely possible that the project is entirely dropped.

Red Nightmare will be fairly art-intensive. As I will be the only contributor and this will be my first proper game, I must consistently replace old art as my skills improve.

Red Nightmare is not planned to contain any sound at launch. This is due to the Topaz engine having no support for sound. Adding sound to the engine would be a monumental undertaking, but a game-side sound implementation could be a sensible alternative if *Red Nightmare* is to become popular enough for such an undertaking to become reasonable.

Due to the incredibly informal nature of this project, there is no timeline. Sorry.