Game Design Document

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Name of the Game: Forgotten Relics
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1 Overview

1.1 Game abstract

Forgotten Relics is a Tactical turn-based Isometric RPG game. The game takes place in a fantasy medieval world in which magic and magical creatures exist.

1.2 Objectives to be achieved by the game

The game pretends to be a great tactical RPG that is able to apply many of the great mechanics found on the genre. It purposes fun by the storytelling and the customization of characters, making them stronger and specialized by interacting with the class system.
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1.3 Core gameplay

The game is an isometric tactical RPG which means it is a turn-based space driven combat game. Combats happen on limited terrain areas in which the player uses his characters to fight with the enemy characters. The characters take turns to move and attack.

1.4 Game features

The player has a party of up to 5 characters. Each of these have attributes, which define the strengths of the character. These are INT, STR and DEX. They gain attribute points as they level up. This attributes determine character attack class, and also give advantages to characters (i.e. High dexterity = more movement, dodging chance)

Each character has a class based on these scores. Classes define the type of abilities the character has. The class system uses a rock paper scissors scheme in which attributes beat and are beaten by another attribute, it follows the order INT>STR>DEX>INT. Classes are specializations in one of these 3 attributes, or a combination of two of them. A 3 attribute class is also planned.

Maps have terrain, on which characters may find move limitations or height advantage/disadvantage. On the isometric map, a 1*1*1 cube represents a unit of height. Terrain is placed on 1*1*.5 tiles. A character can move .5 in the z axis without penalization. Moving 1 in the axis give a penalization unless you have an high DEX stat.

Some weapons give special abilities which work basically the same as class abilities.

1.4.1 Genre

The game is a Tactical RPG, as it involves turn-based combat in a fixed combat zone. Movement and action points are implemented. RPG elements such as character attributes, equipment and level.

1.4.2 Number of players

The game is thought of as a single player game, yet, a two player setup could also be implemented due to how the combat system is thought.

1.4.3 Game theme

There are two approaches: having a fantastical middle ages setup or a steampunk/Skypunk aesthetic.

1.4.4 Story summary

Valad is asked to explore a cave in which disturbances have been reported. He goes and finds a guy mining. The guy dogs a chest with a weird weird bow inside. He realized he was being watched and attacked. Valad defeats the guy, who was very tired. He capture the guy and keeps the bow. As the story keeps developing, Valad starts meeting people who tell him about the bow. The guy they had captured is part of an evil organization looking ancient weapons to throw a war against Demeria the country in which all takes place.

2 Mechanics

2.1 Game elements categories

Playable character: each character who is part of your party is considered a playable character. You can manage their equipment, their stats and their classes, as well as commanding them in the battlefield. They have Hit Points and Ability Points, aswell as experience and levels.

Non playable characters (NPCs): all characters not controlled by the player: quest givers, merchants and enemies.

Quests: The game progresses as the player completes quests. These quests are what make combat scenarios available. They are given to the player by NPCs in the non combat scenario. They reward the player with experience, items and/or gold.

Battleground (combat scenario) : the battleground is where the combat happens. Most of the game happens in this scenario. The map changes depending on the quest.
While in the combat scenario, characters take turns and select actions on each of their turns. Possible actions are: moving, attacking, using an ability, using an item or waiting.

Inn (non combat scenario): in the inn, the player receives quests, recruit troops, trade items and equip their characters. In this place movement is free, so no turns are required to move and interact.

Equipable items: Weapons and armor, they can be equipped by playable characters. Series they require specific class, level and/or attribute score to be equipped. Some can give the characters. This can be rewarded by quests, end of battle spoils,

Consumable Items: items that have a single use. These items can be used in battle. They can heal or provide boosts to the characters.

Quest items: items given in quests that interact with the map. Can be used in combat.

2.2 Rules

Characters have 3 main attributes: Strength (STR), Dexterity (DEX) and Intelligence (INT). These attributes determine how hard the character hits and how much defense it has depending on the weapon and class he is using. This specs also have different bonuses: (STR = +Health) (DEX = + Movement / Dodge chance) (Int = + Action Points).

Characters have levels which are increased by earning experience points. When characters level up, they can increase two points of their attributes.

Characters have classes, which are selected depending on the character's level and attributes. The three first classes are Mage, Archer and Warrior. As characters become stronger, they can

change their classes to become stronger. Stronger classes are a specialization of one of the Mage-Archer-Fighter classes, or also combinations between them.

Examples:
(Archer + Fighter = Rouge)
(Archer + Archer = Ranger)
(Mage + Fighter = Battlemage)
(Fighter + Fighter = Plate Tank / 2H fighter) etc…

Characters have abilities which can be used in combat. To use them, the character must spend AP according to the ability AP cost. Classes and items make different abilities available for each character.

Combat rules:
At the beginning of combat, the player positions his characters on a "starting zone" which is a limited space of the map. Each placed character begging the fight with full HP and AP.

A character turn follows the following steps:

1. Move. A character is able to move to another valid square in the map. The movement range depends on the character's DEX attribute. Differences in terrain also limit the character's movement. If a target position is 1 block or higher than the current character position, it won't be able to move in there unless he passes a certain dexterity requirement.
2. Use items. A character can use one object of their inventory instead of moving.
3. A character can always perform an offensive action. This is eathier a normal attack or an ability. Abilities are special attacks which cost AP. A sub menu showing the character available abilities will open at the action panel when the action tab is selected. Attacking always ends your turn.
4. If a character does not desire to perform an action or only one of them, he can use the wait option to finish his turn.

When a turn ends, the turn chart changes, moving the current character to last.

The combat will last until all the characters of a team are defeated. After combat a combat summary screen will be displayed, showing rewards from combat and experience gained for each of your units.

2.2.1 Interaction rules

In combat, characters have Health Points (HP), Action Points (AP). HP indicates character health.When it reaches 0, the character is K.O.. AP indicates the number of Ability points. Abilities use ability points.The character have Ability points depending on their INT spec and class bonuses.

When attacking, a range indicator shows the valid targets for the attack or ability selected. This will vary depending on the type of the ability and the source of damage, also changes if it is melee, ranged or an area over effect attack.

When a normal attack is made the base attack of a character is calculated with the target defenses. The difference between both is the possible damage output. Attacks receive advantage depending on their target on the following logic: melee>ranged>magic>melee. Dexterity adds a possibility of dodging the attack.

Abilities usually hit harder or give extra effects such as buffs or rebuffs to targets. Damage mitigation is also possible on abilities.

Characters are able to equip items. They can equip armor, 1h weapons, 2h weapons, and shields. Stronger items require certain points on a determined attribute, or the character to be of a specific class. Some weapons and armor can grant abilities too.

Characters can also use consumable items for restoring HP and AP, or buffing their attributes.

2.2.2 Artificial Intelligence

An AI system is planned to have a single difficulty. Better characters and equipment for AI is what increases difficulty.

2.3 Game world elements

The game is always alternating between the inn (or camp?) (**non combat scenario**) and the battleground (**combat scenario**).

The **non-combat scenario** is an isometric space with different NPCs. The character can interact with these NPCs in order to buy items, receive quests, save, and other quest related or atmospheric interactions. These interactions open dialogs between the characters.

There are two vendors in this area: the Innkeeper and the shop vendor. The innkeeper allows the game to be saved and can bring up quests. The shop vendor allows you to access the shop, in which you can buy or sell items.

The **combat scenario** is an isometric space with different variations on the terrain. The dimensions and variations change according to the quest/narrative elements needed.

In the combat scenario we find a turn tracker on the left uppermost corner, a current character information panel and a turn actions panel. A target information panel prompts when a character is being targeted by the current turn character.

A map could be implemented to organize combat scenarios and give them a place on a larger world. When leaving the inn, the map would prompt and the player would select the place on the map on which he has his next quest.

2.4 Game log elements

When a character levels up, he is given points on his character sheet to put on any attribute he wants. A small sign will appear in the interface.

When combat is finished, a reward screen shows the spoils of combat: EXP, GOLD and items earned, as well as if any character levels up.

2.5 Other elements

Cutscenes./ Narrative Events

In certain moments, cutscenes happen in the form of rectangles on the screen. These dialogs contain the name of the character who is speaking.

2.6 Assets list

Character Sprites
Item Sprites
Non Combat Scenario
Combat Scenarios
In-Combat character sheet
In-Combat turn order sprites

In-Combat action interface
Character Sheet
Store Interface
Inventory Interface
Start Menu Interface
Dialog Interface

3 Dynamics

3.1 Game World

The game takes place in a medieval fantasy setup in which magic exists. The game happens in the Denarian Empire, a vast kingdom in the south continent of Haal.

A Skypunk/Steampunk setup is also appealing for the game, yet assets would be harder to make.

3.1.1 Game theme details

The game is set on an isometric camera view. Combat and non combat scenarios contain elements that decorate the locations accordingly, for example, a forest would have some trees (which would also act as obstacles), a river, and green tiles. On the other hand, the non combat scenario will have tables, various NPCs hanging around in the place, vendors, and pub-like decoration.

3.1.2 Missions/levels/chapters Flow

The game is always alternating between the non combat scenario and combat scenarios. In the NCS, characters can buy/sell items, interact with NPCs and accept quests. After accepting quests, they can leave the NCS and go to the correspondent CS for the quest.

A more open approach to the CS selection could be possible, as well as a secondary quest system. For this, a CS selection screen would be needed, this could be represented as a map.

3.2 Missions/levels/chapters elements

3.2.1 Objectives

When quests are accepted, an objective will indicate what the player has to do. This usually involves going to a CS and doing what is requested. The player will be asked to investigate, kill a character, obtain an item, or use an item at a specific location.

3.2.2 Rewards

When the player has success on the CS (winning the fight or accomplishing objective), a reward screen will appear. The obtainable rewards can be part of the quest rewards, but also could be a random item dropped by an enemy. Possible rewards include Equipable items, consumable items and/or gold. Experience gains are also shown in this screen.

3.2.3 Challenges

As the characters level up and the story develops, enemy characters also become harder to defeat, as their stats and items are also increased as the story develops.

Some important characters will outpower the player character's, by being of higher levels, this may be considered a boss fight.

Some battles can have a single character that is a lot mor strong than the players character, yet this character would be the only enemy. This encounters would require a high strategic thinking of the player.

3.3 Special areas

Non Combat Scenario is an special area, see 2.1 and 2.5

3.4 Game interface

Character sheet

You can access the character's sheets by pressing the start menu and selecting the character tab. On this screen you can see information about the characters. The information available is: Name, level, class, attributes, and attack and defense scores. There are two buttons on this menu: change class, which will take you to the class selection screen and the equipped items button, which will show you a list of the current character's equipped items.

Class selection screen.

The class selection screen is an interface for selecting your character's class. It will show a triangular structure which has subdivisions among it. The three attributes, STR, DEX and INT represent each corner of the triangle. In the subdivisions we find the class. This can also be referred to as the class tree. A character must meet class requirements in order to change their class. On each subdivision of the triangle, a sprite with the respective class(visual representation of the class). Available classes for switching will be full colored, while unavailable classes will be darkened out.

Inventory screen.

The inventory screen can be accessed by the start menu. The inventory screen provides information about the items you currently own. The interface is separated into 4 main components.

The tab selector allows you to display item lists which divide your items into 4 categories: Weapons, Armor, Consumables and Quest Items.

The item list allows you to navigate through your items. You can select an item to have it's name, picture and description shown. You can also select an item and destroy it by selecting the corresponding option

Name and picture: it shows the name and picture of the selected item on the list.

Description: it shows the description of the current selected item. Information about start buffs appears here.

Shop Screen
Similar to the inventory screen, the shops also contain 4 different sections: tab selector, item list, name and picture, and description.

The tab selector allows you to navigate through the buy and sell tab. The buy tap shows the vendor available items. The sell tab shows all of your sellable items.

The item list allows you to navigate through your items. You can select an item to have it's name, picture and description shown. Selecting an item will print a confirmation for buying/selling.

Name and picture: it shows the name and picture of the selected item on the list.

Description: it shows the description of the current selected item. Information about start buffs appears here.

Other Screens.

Via the start button, we can access other tabs such as options, abilities and map. This have not been mapped yet, so they are only mentioned as a future implementation.

3.5 Controls interface

Screens are usually manipulated by the arrow buttons, with a tab/button navigation system. Selection would be made with button "1" and cancel with button "2".

As the interfaces open submenus, this makes navigation intuitive and easy to operate.

3.6 Game Balance

The rock - paper - scissors mechanic between the 3 attributes is applied in order to create balance and build a party that can supply and adapt to different challenges. A lost combat could have a different outcome if the player prepares his party for a specific battle. If a player has 2 Warriors and has to fight 2 mages, it is very probable he will lose. The player must change his characters or buy consumables in order to overcome the challenge.

4 Visuals and Sounds

4.1 Game visuals
When on CS and NCS, the player is always seeing at least one character on screen. Idle characters have a small sprite animation. When characters move, they change their sprites animations to mimic movement. Map movement is not needed, as scenarios aren't meant to change.

When attacking, the character performs an attack animation, which is often swinging his weapon. Special Abilities create different animations depending on the ability. A fireball for example would show a fireball being casted from the character to the enemy.

Dialog windows show text that allows you to communicate with NPCs, this is shown in the form of streams of texts.

4.2 Game sounds

Game has ambiental music which corresponds to the context of the player location and/or event. For CS fast paced music is preferred, while in NCS a more rhythmic, relaxing music is preferred.

Selecting abilities and attacking also produces sounds.
Performing abilities and attacking do sounds that accompany the action.

5 Document information
5.1 Definition, acronyms and abbreviations.

Term or abbreviation	Definition and acronyms
STR	Strength
DEX	Dexterity, Agility
INT	Inteligence

CS	Combat Scenario
NCS	Non Combat Scenario
NPC	Non Playable Character

5.2 Document references.

6 Attachments