The Morning After	**Target Audience:** 7+ (core audience: 35+) **Gamer Type:** Casual **Target Platforms:** Mobile and/or Web **Genre:** 2D Flip-Screen Platformer, Roguelike, Dungeoncrawl **Number of players:** 1 **Project Release Date:** Late 2018/Early 2019

Design Document for:

The Morning After

Or, blah de blah de blah

"blah de blah"™

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Version # 1.00

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Design History

This is a brief explanation of the history of this document.

This gives an overview of how the design has evolved over time.

Version 0.1

Version 0.1 is the work-in-progress initial version.

Game Overview

Philosophy

Philosophical point #1

This game is about nostalgia. It is intended to be a retro-experience similar to that you would expect of a game from the mid-1980's. Graphics should be obviously pixelated and tend toward the garish, while the music should be resolutely 8-bit (chiptune) and slightly irritating.

Philosophical point #2

The gameplay is directly inspired by the game Jet Set Willy (1984). Although some liberties are allowed to broaden the appeal to a modern audience, fundamentally this game should involve moving a character through a 2D platformer/dungeon-crawl while avoiding monsters and collecting items. The link back to Jet Set Willy should be clear to those "in-the-know" (without stepping on any existing copyright issues!).

Philosophical point #3

The player should have a limited amount of lives and it should not be possible to continue the game if all lives are lost (i.e. permadeath-lite). While the user has lives, the current session may be saved in a single save slot and restarted but the saved session will be deleted when all lives are lost. The game may include a limited amount of extra lives (available as power-ups), but these should be very rare.

Philosophical point #4

An element of the game is frustration. Portions of the game should be difficult to complete (however not so difficult that players give up).

Philosophical point #5

The game will initially be designed for in-browser play, however it may be ported to a mobile app in the future, so this should be borne in mind.

Common Questions

What is the game?

The Morning After opens with our hero waking up in the bathroom the morning after The Event. The details are hazy, but memories of a wild party, followed by an unwise combination of unusual mushrooms and a ouija board, suggest that things may have gone a bit too far. Something alarming moving in the shadows suggests they went far too far.

All our hero wants to do is go to bed, in the hope that a good sleep will make everything go away, however his maid has other plans. The house and grounds are mess; detritus is

spread far and wide; strange creatures are roaming the halls and something suspiciously like a portal to another dimension appears to have opened in the basement. This all needs to be tidied up and fixed before anyone is getting any sleep.

Why create this game?

This game is resolutely aimed at people at people with fond memories of playing early computer games in the 19080s. This is, admittedly, a limited market, so the goal is also to expand the gameplay to make it more attractive to a wider market (e.g. more varied gameplay but with the same retro-aesthetic). Although some aspects of the game may be challenging, the basic gameplay is intended to be simple, so the learning curve is shallow.

Where does the game take place?

The game takes place in the interior and grounds of a mansion (with an excursion into a parallel dimension). Each screen displays an entire room.

What do I control?

You control the as-yet-be-named hero. He (he is currently a he for historical reasons, but this may change) can walk, climb and jump. As he travels he is required to traverse various room while collecting items and avoiding monsters. At times he may need to destroy the monsters.

What is the main focus?

The main focus is exploration of the game world while collecting all of the collectable items. Bonus features include destroying monsters and closing the trans-dimensional portal. Progress is marked by the number of items collected.

What's different?

This game strives to be different through its aesthetic, which is decidedly retro, while at the same time being sufficiently interesting to drive exploration of the game environment. At a superficial level the design of the game should speak to those people who played computer games in the 1980's, but the game play itself should be engrossing enough to pique the interest of all ages.

Feature Set

General Features

2D flip-screen platformer.
Fixed camera position.
32-bit color.
Chiptune music.
Simple controls (right/left/up/down/jump).

Multiplayer Features

There are no plans for multiplayer features.

Room Editor

Rooms will be edited in Unity and an export tool will used to save the completed room to a text file. Saved rooms can be imported back into Unity for further editing.

The saved text files can also be manually edited.

Gameplay

An example of typical gameplay is the following:

1) The player starts the game and, after a splash screen, is presented with menu. This has options to start a new game (which will overwrite any saved game), load the currently saved game (if any), view help, change settings. There is no quit option since this is not applicable to either browser or mobile use.

2) The player starts a new game. A loading screen is displayed, shortly followed by the initial game screen.

3) The player "awakes" in The Bathroom (in homage to Jet Set Willy). The Bathroom contains several platforms, a ramp and a ladder (example of the various features found throughout the game). On one of the platforms roams a creature (safely away from the player); other locations in the room contains collectable items, a bath and a toilet. If the player push the bath, it will move. There are also two doors: one has a signpost indicating that it leads The Bedroom, the other leads elsewhere. In the background can be heard an 8-bit rendition of "In The Hall Of The Mountain King" (originally by Greig). The style is immediately reminiscent of Jet Set Willy. In addition, this room contains examples of the all of the main game mechanics.

4) The player navigates to the door to The Bedroom and passes through. The scene changes to a new room that again will be familiar to anyone who has played Jet Set Willy. The only features in the room: are a wall dividing the room in two; a doorway at the base of the wall; a bed in the opposite side of the room; the Maid who is blocking the doorway between the two halves of the room. There is also a ladder that leads down from the top of the room; the base of the ladder is too high to jump to. If the player approaches the Maid, a text will be displayed giving instructions for the game (essentially, collect the collectable items and return). If the player touches the Maid, they will be initially just be repelled (bounced) backwards and a

"don't do that again" warning will be displayed. A subsequent attempt to touch the Maid will lead to losing a life.

5) The player returns to the bathroom and navigates to the other doorway (avoiding the creature and collecting items as necessary). From now on, the user navigates in a similar manner from room to room. The rooms are roughly laid out based on a layout of a mansion and it's grounds (although the player does not know this; no map is provided). Some rooms do not follow any logical plan (particularly those related to the trans-dimensional portal). Some rooms require keys to enter them; the keys are found in various parts of the house and are typically obtained by solving a puzzle. Puzzle rooms typically require the player to use movable decorative items to access or block certain parts of the room.

6) At some point the player will reach the portal. Beyond the portal, rooms play with the mechanics of the game (for example, speeding up creatures or the player, or reversing the direction controls, or playing with gravity), although the basic goals are the same. One room beyond the portal contains a weapon (the only weapon in the game). This room is only accessible if the user has found all of the collectable items.

7) After collecting all of the collectable items, the player must return to The Bedroom. If they don't have the weapon, they must navigate back through the rooms in the same manner as previously. If they have the weapon, they can use this to bypass the creatures and intricacies of each room. The weapon is ridiculously overpowered; when used it will annihilate any creatures in the way, along with sizeable chunks of the room's internal structure (although the player runs the risk of making a room impassable if the weapon is used injudiciously). The purpose of the weapon is to make the journey back to The Bedroom less of a slog.

8) Upon returning to The Bedroom, the Maid will be waiting (as before) but this time will tell the player to approach and give her the collectibles. She will then disappear and the player is free to walk to the bed. Upon reaching the bed, the game ends, the player is presented with a congratulations message accompanied by an 8-bit version of Brahm's "Lullaby".

9) At any point in the game the player may pause the game. When doing so they will be presented with options to resume the game, save the game or quit the game (which will return to the main menu).

Hours of Gameplay

Total gameplay should be of the order of a couple of hours. A typical room, at first play through, should take 5-10 minutes to complete. At least initially, there should be around 20 rooms.

Victory Conditions

The player wins the game if they successfully collected all available items and returned to the bedroom.

Difficulty

Different rooms will have different levels of difficulty.

• Some rooms will simply require navigation while avoiding monsters; some will be easier than others.

- Some rooms will require rearrangement of obstacles to obtain items, open doors or block monsters.
- Some rooms will enforce different mechanics (e.g. speeding up the monsters and/or player, or reversing the direction controls, playing with gravity etc.)

The Game World

Overview

Jet Set Willy had a 4:3 aspect ratio, however this is not practical if a future goal is to release this game for modern mobile devices. For that reason, the base game aspect ratio will be 16:9, with a default resolution of 1280x720.

In Jet Set Willy, the actual game play area occupies approximately 3/4 of the screen real estate, with the remaining 1/4 left for status updates. The Morning After will similar proportioned. The game area will be 1280x544.
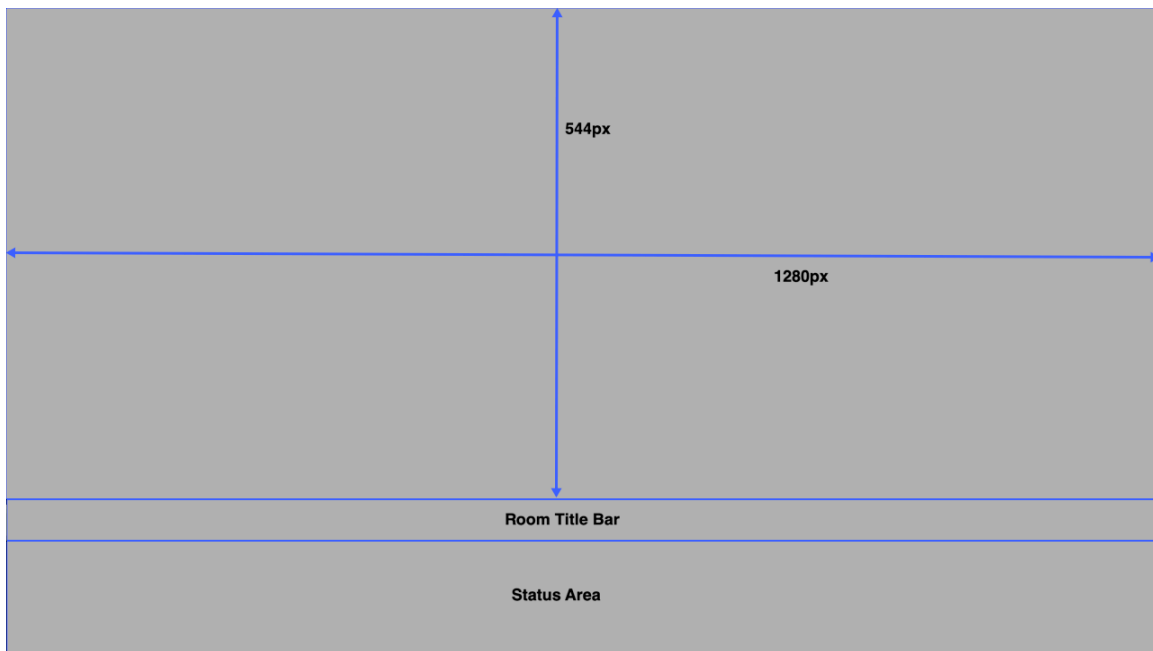
The base of the screen will be occupied by a bar, containing the title of the room (all rooms have unique titles, such as The Bathroom, The Bedroom, The Lawn, etc.), and a status area, containing details of lives left, items collected and the in-game time.

The Physical World

Rooms

Rooms (platforms and walls) will be built from 32x32px tiles. Passages should be at least 96px high, or at least 320px high if jumping is required.

Each room will have a unique, identifying title such as The Bedroom, The Bathroom, The Lawn etc. Generally speaking, the theme for each room should be related to the room title, and the design should reflect this.

Characters

All characters should be represented by animated sprites which are no more than 96x96px in size. Animations should be simple and require no more than 5 sprites.

There are two human characters:
- The Hero
- The Maid

There should be at least 10 different monster designs. These designs need not be recognisably animal-like; they can also look like common household objects. Their colour design should distinguish them from other decorative or collectable items.

Decorative Items

Decorative items that represent common household furniture. They should be no more than 160x160px in size. Their colour design should distinguish them from monsters or collectable items.
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Collectable Items

Collectable items should be no more than 32x32px in size. They should all be yellow or gold in colour. Typically the items should reflect the theme of room in which they are found. They must each have a unique, identifying name, such as The Cutlery, The Towel, The Ring etc.

Power-Ups

Power-ups are rare and should be easily distinguishable from other objects. Animation should make them rotate. They should be no more than 64x64px in size.

There are three power-ups available:
- Keys
- Extra Lives
- The Weapon

The Weapon

The Weapon will require animation when it is fired. The animation should be large eye-catching and explosive. It will be accompanied by a satisfyingly crunchy sound effect.

Camera

The camera is fixed, with the action viewed side-on. An orthographic projection will be used. A secondary camera may be used to provide parallax effects for background images.

The World Layout

Overview

Our crack team of artists has generated this image as an example of the layout of the world:

Location 1

TBC

Location 2

TBC

Game Characters

Overview

TBC

Character 1

TBC

Character 2

TBC

Musical Scores and Sound Effects

Overview

All audio will be in an "8-bit" (chiptune) style. This includes all sound effects and all background music.

Sound Effects

The following actions require sound effects:
- Jumping
- Picking up an collectable item
- Picking up a power-up
- Moving an obstacle
- Dying from touching a monster
- Dying from falling
- Firing the weapon (both the act of firing and the resulting destruction)

Background Music

Each room requires a background music track, although rooms can share the same track. For copyright reasons, well-known classical tracks are preferred, although bespoke music is acceptable. Bespoke music should try to capture the theme of the current room(s).

The music for the bathroom, bedroom and landing should be Grieg's "In The Hall of the Mountain King".

The music for the garden areas should be Rimsky-Korsakov's "Flight of the Bumblebee".

In addition to room music, the following tracks are also required:
- For the main menu screen: Beethoven's "Piano Sonata No. 14 Moonlight" (Third Movement)
- For the completion screen: Brahm's "Lullaby"
- For the death screen: Chopin's "Funeral March"

All music must be licensed for use in a commercial game.