Game Design Document

The Forgotten Knight

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Production Team:
Tristen Blewett

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High Concept:
A 2D action-platformer with Souls-like combat and dark, emotional storytelling.
The player takes control of a once-revered knight who was betrayed and forgotten
by the kingdom he once protected. When the Princess secretly summons him to
fight against the demonic invasion of the Second Demon War, the knight must
battle through monsters and his own past to save what remains of the realm.

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Full Concept:

❖ The Forgotten Knight is a dark fantasy 2D pixel-art platformer inspired by Souls-like and dark fantasy artstyle. It features fun combat, wall climbing mechanics, sliding mechanics, emotional storytelling, and a tragic atmosphere. Players explore ruined castles, the countryside, and cursed battlefields, fighting demons while uncovering the knight's lost past and the Princess's desperate plea.

❖ The game focuses on combat, wall climbing mechanics, puzzle solving, and emotional storytelling told through visuals, dialogue, and atmosphere rather than exposition.

Deliverables:

❖ A playable beta game
❖ Fully functional combat and health system
❖ Working boss fights
❖ Music and ambient sound design
❖ UI and pause menu systems

Genre:

❖ 2D Platformer / Action / Souls-like

Core Mechanics:

❖ **Jumping:**

➢ Spacebar to jump. Used for navigation and avoiding attacks but not excessively high realism over floatiness.

❖ **Movement:**
➢ The player moves left or right using arrow keys (or A/D). Movement has weight deliberate and slower than a traditional platformer, emphasizing control and timing.

❖ **Health Crate:**
➢ When the player interacts with the crate will then shoot a health potion that will add health back to the player. The crate then disappears after the health is added back to the player and the player can no longer interact with the crate.

❖ **Campfire(checkpoint):**
➢ Saves the progress of the player
➢ Creating a new spawn point for the player to spawn

❖ **Life System:**
➢ Health depletes when hit.
➢ Souls like health bar

Flow Summary / 60 Seconds of Play:

1. The player receives the letter from the princess and reads it.
2. The player then arrives at the basement of the castle. Moves through the environment, learns movement, combat, and wall jumping.
3. Encounters first enemies (demon army and slimes).
4. Defeats them, reaching a checkpoint.
5. Solve the puzzle to proceed to the next level.

Look and Feel:

❖ **Art Style:** Dark pixel art, muted color palette, gothic architecture, heavy use of contrast and lighting.

❖ **Mood:** Somber, lonely, tragic.

❖ **Influence:** Hollow Knight, Blasphemous, Dark Souls (2D adaptation).

Target Audience:

❖ Fans of 2D Souls-like games (e.g., Blasphemous, Salt and Sanctuary).

❖ Players interested in dark emotional storytelling.

❖ Ages 13+ due to mature themes (betrayal, war, death).

❖ Indie game enthusiasts and itch.io players.

Gameplay:

❖ The player must battle through zones of the kingdom's castle, defeating enemies and uncovering memories of betrayal.
❖ Progression reveals more about the Knight's past and his bond with the Princess.

❖ Death resets progress to the last checkpoint (campfire).
❖ Solving puzzles to progress to the next level.

Mission/Challenge Structure:

❖ **Primary Objective:** Defeat the demons threatening the kingdom and confront the Demon Lord.

❖ **Secondary Objective:** Confront Michael J. Crow, the Demon Lord's lieutenant, and the other bosses that are in the way. Learn about the Knight's past, through defeating certain bosses, and through cutscenes.

❖ **Challenges:** Mastering wall climbing, health management, and puzzle solving.

Core Gameplay Loop:

❖ Explore areas and defeat enemies.

❖ Solve puzzles to progress further into the game.

❖ Reach bonfires to save progress.

❖ Face challenging final bosses.

❖ Progress the story through dialogue.

Subgame Loop:

- ❖ A subgame loop for the game is becoming familiar with the combat as it can be helpful when the player is trying to advance through the stage. If this continues because the player is meeting the main core groups progressing through the game.

Diegetic Objectives:

- ❖ The game has one objective and that is to solve each puzzle to progress throughout the game.

- ❖ Defeat the bosses, and immerse yourself in the world and the story.

Auxiliary Mechanics:
- ❖ **Health HUD** – Above the players head and the enemies head as well.
- ❖ **Dialogue System** – Text-based, appearing under the npc and player during cutscenes.
- ❖ **Respawn System** – when the player dies they will respawn at the starting point or if they have triggered a checkpoint they will respawn there instead.

Physics:

- ❖ Platform-based collision with grounded and airborne states. Gravity-based falling speed and jump arcs tuned for realism. Jumping from high areas will cause fall damage to the player.

Movement:

❖ **Walk:** A/D.

❖ **Jump:** Spacebar.

❖ **Double Jump:** Double tap the Spacebar.

❖ **Slide:** Ctrl.

❖ **Attack:** Left Mouse button.

❖ **Interact:** E.

❖ **Ground Pound:** Right Mouse button when in the air.

Objects:

❖ **Campfire**
➢ When you go up to the campfire, the player can interact with the campfire, when the player does interact, the player will go into an animation and then light the campfire. Once that is done this will save the player's point, and makes a new respawn point for the player.

❖ **Health Crate**
➢ When the player interacts with the crate will then shoot a health potion that will add health back to the player. The crate then disappears after the health is added back to the player and the player can no longer interact with the crate.

❖ **Puzzle Pieces**
➢ Throughout the map there are objects that the player can interact to solve the puzzle to progress to the next level. There is a sound queue for the player to let them know if they solved the puzzle or if they did not solve the puzzle.

Action:

❖ In gameplay in The Forgotten Knight the player is able to do three actions. The first action is that the player combat enemies throughout the game. The second action is that the player is able to Interact with objects that are throughout the levels. The final action is that the player is able to traverse platforms and environmental hazards.

Economy:

❖ Use:interacting with crates to be able to gain additional health that was loss.

UI Flow:

Main Menu →
    Start Game →
        Gameplay →
            Pause Menu →
                Resume / Quit / Settings/ Save
                    Game Win

Replay and Save Structure:

❖ The game will be built to be replayable. Checkpoints for the player to interact and use. In the pause menu the player is able to save the game and progress it at a later date.

Story and Narrative:

Once, the Knight was the King's champion, a loyal protector of the realm. But betrayal from within the court led to his exile. Years later, as the kingdom faces ruin under the Second Demon War, a letter arrives sealed by the Princess, the only one who remembers him. She calls him back, not as a hero, but as a forgotten soul one final time to save the kingdom and perhaps find redemption.

Tone: **Dark, tragic, emotional.**

Themes: **Memory, betrayal, duty, love, loss.**

Game World:

- ❖ A decaying kingdom overrun by demons and madness.
- ❖ Each area represents part of the Knight's fall and emotional decay.

Game Area(s):

The game will take place in a castle and the outskirts of the kingdom countryside.

- ❖ **Ruined Castle Basement** – Tutorial zone, rediscover movement and combat.

- ❖ **The Castle Area** – Open Castle area that the player goes through.

- ❖ **Castle Countryside** – Field of war torn lands, the knight finding himself with the guidance of the astral wizard.

❖ **Castle Inner Area** – Final level trying to get to the throne room

❖ **The Throne Room** – Final boss fight and confrontation with The Demon King.

Character(s):

❖ **The Knight (Player):** Once the King's champion; now a forgotten soul.

❖ **The Princess:** A Royal, that still remembers the knight has his good deeds and service to the kingdom, sends the letter summoning the Knight.

❖ **Michael J. Crow:** Demon Lord's second-in-command of the demon army.

❖ **Astral Wizard:** A twisted mage that helps guide the knight.

❖ **The King:** Mentioned in lore and is seen in the final boss fight, his betrayal drives the Knight's pain.

❖ **The Demon King:** The main villain, the one that starts the 2nd Demon War, with the kingdom.

Character Animation:

❖ Idle / Walk / Run / Attack (combo) / Wall Sliding / Sliding / Death / Praying / Hurt

❖ Smooth transitions; emphasis on weight.

Character Design:

The Knight: Worn armor, glowing red eyes beneath helm.

Michael J. Crow: Black armor with purple veins of demonic energy.

The Princess: Pale, blonde hair, wearing a brown dress with a red hood.

The Demon King: Worn dark armor, tatter cape, holding a two handed sword

Level Progression:

❖ For the initial release for this game there will be level progression. The player will be able to solve a puzzle that will unlock the level of the game, to progress, once the player beats the level and solves the puzzle it will lead to a cutscene to progress the story, once the cutscene is over the player will enter the boss arena to fight a boss, once the player defeat the boss, the will then enter another cutscene to progress the story even more, and then the player will then enter the next level to repeat the steps.

Character Progression:

❖ There will be Character Progression for The Forgotten Knight. As the Character will change throughout the story. Learning more about himself, how to overcome loneliness, and to become a better human.

Player Training:

❖ The game's first level in the castle basement will help introduce movement, wall climbing, attack combos, how to solve a basic puzzle, and how to interact with the objects around the map.

Player Progression:

❖ As the player plays the game they will be able to create new and fun ways in defeating the stage and the bosses. With interactive and creative puzzles that will progress the game further. Interactables that make the game world come to life. Emotional progression mirrors the Knight regaining fragments of his humanity.

Interface:

❖ Very minimal HUD with immersive design with no intrusive elements.

Visual Systems:

❖ The Forgotten Knight will be uploaded to itch.io and later in the future to Steam.

Influences:

❖ *Hollow Knight* – Atmospheric world and movement.

❖ *Dark Souls* – Combat pacing and lore storytelling.

Audio:

❖ **Menu Music**
➢ The Main menu music will be calm, relaxing, and to make the player feel adventurous. While also conveying the emotions and the tone for the game.

❖ **Game Music**
➢ The Game Music will help express the emotion that the knight is going through. As I want the player to be able to feel the tone and emotion.

❖ **Background Sounds**
➢ When the player is playing throughout the game, I want the player to be immersed in the world, and feel like they are a part of the world as well.

Sound Effects:

❖ **Player's Running sound:**
➢ When the player is running around the map, the knight will then make a noise, representing that the player is running.

❖ **Player's sword swing:**
➢ When the player is attacking an enemy or boss, the knight will then make a noise, representing that the player is attacking the enemy or boss.

❖ **Player's Jump sound:**

➢ When the player hits the spacebar to jump, the knight will then make a noise, representing that he is jumping.

❖ **Boss Teleport sound:**
➢ When the enemy is fighting the player, the boss will teleport behind the player. The boss will make a sound, representing that the boss is teleporting behind the player.

❖ **Enemy/Boss Attack sound:**
➢ When the enemy is attacking the player. The enemy will make a sound, representing that he is attacking the player

❖ **Enemy Block sound:**
➢ Some enemies will have a blocking sound. The enemy will make a sound, representing that he is blocking the player's attacks.

❖ **Enemy/Boss Hurt sound:**
➢ When the enemy is attacked by the player. The enemy will make a sound, representing that he is taking damage from the player.

❖ **Enemy walking sound:**
➢ When the enemy is patrolling. The enemy will make a sound, representing that he is patrolling around the map.

Legal Issues:

❖ The Forgotten Knight will not have any legal issues, all the art and music creators will be credited in the ending credits when the game is over.

Ai:

❖ **Enemies**
  ➢ The enemies in the game will be controlled by a simple patrol loop that will be implemented by the computer. The Enemies will set in certain areas within the stage. In which the computer will take over having the enemies walking back and forth. Once the player is within the trigger area the enemies will then run towards the player to engage in a fight with the player

❖ **Bosses:**
  ➢ Phase based patterns with unique movesets. For each of the bosses that the player encounters.

Hardware:

❖ **Processor**
  ➢ Amd A10-5745M APU or anything higher

❖ **Ram**
  ➢ 8 GB or Higher

❖ **System Type**
  ➢ 64 bit or 32 bit operating system

Software Specs:

❖ Itch.io/Steam

❖ C#

❖ There will be no network requirements, this game is a lan game.