

Echoes of the Deep - Quest Document

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Overview

Narrative Overview

A hundred years ago, on a forgotten archipelago far from the reach of the mainland empire, the **Ory people** lived peacefully. They were blessed by their Goddess with many gifts, including their most precious one: the **Ouroboros**, the key to immortality.

However, the restful days would soon be over, with the arrival of the **Justine Empire** through the seas, conquering their land. Looking for the Ouroboros, they plundered their homes, destroyed their shrines, and enslaved the people.

To protect the treasures of the Ory, their Goddess created an enormous tsunami, drowning their capital underwater, together with the secret for immortality. Nowadays, most believe that the tale of the **Underwater City** is no more than just a legend.

Many explorers, on the other hand, try to hunt the Ouroboros. **Mayra**, one of the few Ory still alive, is one of these explorers.

She has dedicated her life to the pursuit of finding the Underwater City in the name of her father, who drowned on an expedition while searching for the Ouroboros when she was a child.

After being accused of piracy and imprisoned for 10 years in the **King's Bastille**, Mayra receives a key to open her cage with a letter from a mysterious contractor asking her to meet in the town's tavern. The game starts in this jail cell when she receives her freedom once again.

With a new goal in mind, she traverses the countless traps that lead outside the lifeless prison until she finds herself at the **Corsair's Anchorage**, the largest city on the **Ygara archipelago**.

The world outside her cell has now changed. The once-deserted island of Ygara, a faraway peninsula on the edge of the **Leviathan's Ocean**, has now turned into a thriving harbor that gathers pirates and merchants from all around the seven seas.

Upon arriving at the agreed location, she meets her contractor, **Archduke Fafnir**, a Justine noble who belongs to one of the **three great houses**. Because of her expertise in the matter and her knowledge of her own culture, he hires her to search for the Underwater City and collect the Ouroboros. Although skeptical, she can't help but side with him once he presents her with a map and new clues. She needs to find the Underground City... Not because of the contract, but for her father.

She leaves the tavern looking for a cave that is mentioned on the map. Avoiding the dangerous creatures that live on the island, she manages to find the cave at the feet of the **Apua Mountain**. Inside the cave, she encounters the

ruins of a **Tekoha temple** and must complete a trial to escape. It is said that all may enter, but only the worthy may leave. Deciphering the teleportation technology of her people, she manages to complete the trial of the temple, escaping the cave through the top of the mountain.

From the cliff, she can finally visualize her goal: the **Forgotten Bay**. Going down, she arrives at a beach and can finally see the Underwater City drowned in the water like an iceberg. She swims in its direction, going underwater, where she finds the ruins almost intact. A huge hall welcomes her. After going through it, she finds out that although the city is submerged, not all of it was taken by the water. She can finally breathe. Another thing takes her by surprise: people are still alive. It's the Ouroboros that has kept them alive all this time. If she wants to take it, she must hide from the warriors who guard the castle where it hides.

After entering the treasure room, Mayra encounters another flooded room with a security mechanism. She deactivates it, and the Goddess of her people appears to convince her to let her ancestors live. Now, she must choose: take the treasure or not.

Gameplay Overview

The level is divided into two sublevels, each divided into different environments.

First Sublevel

The first sublevel starts in a dungeon cell where the player can interact with the items around to understand the context the character is in. After a few interactions with the environment, an NPC appears, delivering a letter and a key to the cell. Using the key, the player can now start the quest.

At this moment, the character's long-term goal is to find the mysterious person who sent the letter, but their medium-term goal is to break free without getting caught by the several traps in the dungeon. The character doesn't have health, so if you get caught, you must go back to the last checkpoint and start again. The traversal also includes jumping around platforms. The jumps must be timed and precise to avoid the hazards.

Second Sublevel

After leaving the dungeon, the player finds a city that works as a safe area. They are free to interact with NPCs and learn more about the world. To continue the quest, they must go to the tavern and meet a new NPC who will inform them of the next steps of their mission: finding the old temple ruins (medium-term goal). After this talk, the character's long-term goal also changes. They are hired to look for the Underwater City and find the Ouroboros.

Once the player has gathered all the information they need in the city, they can continue to the city outskirts. There, they will encounter monsters they must sneak past to get to the cave where the Temple hides. Arriving at the cave marks the end of the first sublevel.

On the second sublevel, the player starts at the temple ruins, where they must complete an environmental puzzle in order to traverse several platforms and complete the Trial of the Worthy. The puzzles consist of using the correct portals to move around broken platforms.

After the puzzle is completed, the player arrives at the top of the mountain, where they encounter a vista of the beach. They can have a moment of respite walking down to the beach, where the Underwater City can be seen emerging from the water.

The player must swim down to the ocean to find the entrance to the city. Inside, they can talk to NPCs and explore the place to find a clue to where the Ouroboro is kept. Once the player finds out that the Ouroboros is hidden inside the castle, they must avoid the guards and enter the treasure room to steal it.

Inside the treasure room, however, the relic is kept under heavy security. The player must complete a puzzle half underwater and half on land, activating all the levers to get to the treasure.

Dungeon:

The **King's Bastille** is an endless network of stone corridors, narrow chambers, cells, and execution rooms, all carefully designed for traitors of the Justine Empire. People accused of witchcraft, piracy, and other crimes against the noble families are sent there to await their deaths. The facility was built by the Empire when the **Ygara** archipelago was still isolated, and they could carry the harshest punishments away from the prying eyes of the world.



Environments:

- **Jail Cell:**

The first environment is a jail cell. The prisoners are kept in severe conditions: iron-barred cells are sized barely large enough for a person to stand, and the floors are covered in jagged rocks and dirt.

- **Dungeon Corridors:**

The corridors are narrow giving the player a sense of fear. The path is filled with traps placed to ensure security. The air is perpetually damp, with dripping water running down the walls and puddling on the floor. Throughout this hellish place, the sound of clanking chains and the low murmurs of the hopeless fill the air.

- **Swear Exit:**

Eventually, the player arrives at a door that connects the dungeons to the sewers. The sewer is a small, safe area with polluted water flowing in the middle. In the end, they can find a set of stairs to escape.

Connection to other areas: It connects to the city through the sewer system. In the city, there is a set of stairs in an alley that goes down to the sewers and connects to the dungeon. That's how the player escapes the jail without being noticed.

Purpose: Introduces the character's backstory as a prisoner and sets their goal. The player also learns about avoiding traps and solving puzzles.

Size: 1/4 of gameplay space

Harbor City:

Corsair's Anchorage is the largest city on the Ygara archipelago. In the last 10 years, the once-deserted island of Ygara has now turned into a thriving harbor that gathers pirates and merchants from all around the seven seas.



- **Outskirts**

Leaving the center of the city, you can find a beach that slowly turns into grass with a few tropical trees. Following a path through the island, the player is guided to a cave.

Connection to other areas: The outskirts help with the transition from the city that is on the beach to the cave that is near a small forest by the mountain.

Purpose: Introduce the long-term goal. Narrative moment to talk to NPCs and have some environment storytelling to explain more about the world. Give the player some respite between difficult beats. Introduce the stealth mechanic on the outskirts of the city.

Size: 1/4 of gameplay space

Environments:

- **Hidden Alley**

The alley behind the tavern leads to a flooded tunnel in the sewers—a bandit and smuggler's escape route. The same route the player uses to escape the dungeon and where their exploration of the city begins.

- **Tavern**

Hidden in the fog-choked alleys of a lawless port, The Salty Serpent is more than just a tavern—it's a sanctuary for scoundrels and common folk alike. It's a meeting place for mercenaries and a breeding ground for treachery. The tavern hums with the sounds of drunken sea shanties, the rolling of dice, and the occasional pistol shot when a dispute turns deadly. The dim glow of lanterns flickers against the wooden walls.

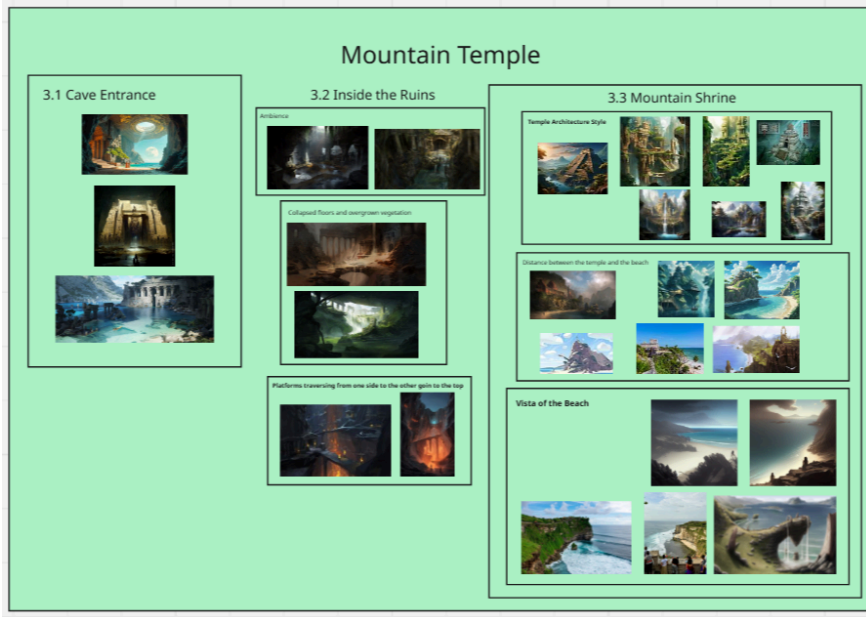
In the farthest corner, a hooded figure accompanied by two mercenaries hunches over a cup of wine, holding a heavy coin pouch. That's the Mysterious Contractor who sent the letter.

Mountain Temple:

Environments:

- **Cave**

The Mountain can be accessed through a cave at the base of the mountain. Once inside the cave, the door to the temple can be found.



- **Temple Ruins**

The temple has a Maia-inspired architecture with overgrown vegetation and a brown and green color palette. This area has a vertical layout with several platforms guiding the player upwards. Looking at the top, you can see the sun entering the temple from above. To advance, the player must jump through the platforms and use the correct portals to move forward.

- **Top of the Mountain**

The Temple Shrine is a small temple on the top of the mountain with stairs going down all the way to the beach. It's a serene place with a vista to the bay below. The only sound that can be heard from there is the wind howling through the sharp stones and the distant crash of waves against the rocks below.

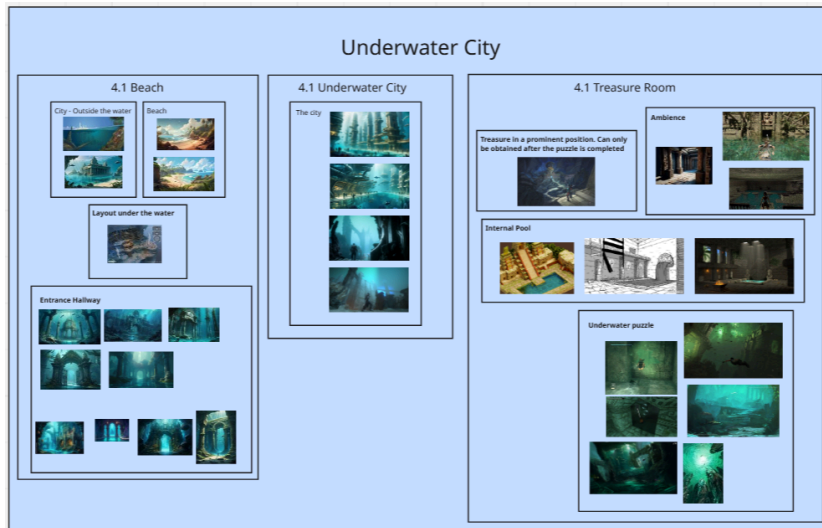
Connection to other areas: You enter the temple through a cave at the foot of the mountain. The cave can be found by walking on the outskirts of the city. Inside the temple, you climb to the top of the mountain. There you have access to the other side of the mountain where you can see another beach. Going down the cliff you can access the beach.

Purpose: Introduce a challenge that must be completed before reaching the next goal (finding the Underwater City) to give the player a sense of exploration and accomplishment. Showcase a new type of puzzle for the player.

Size: 1/4 of gameplay space

Underwater City:

Beneath the deep blue expanse of the ocean lies an ancient, forgotten city named Astloria. It was once the capital of the Ory Kingdom, but now is nothing but a testament to a once-thriving civilization, with its majestic structures now worn by the relentless tides and centuries of saltwater.



Environments:

- **Beach**

A small and secretive bay surrounded by mountains. There is no civilization around. All you can see is the tip of old city ruins sinking into the ocean.

- **Underwater City**

In its prime, *Astloria* was a center of innovation and culture. Its grand palaces—once glittering with precious stones and metals—have long since decayed into ruins. However, even though the city is sunken, the Ory people still inhabit the ruins of Astloria, having adapted to underwater life. The city is an engineering marvel, with canals of freshwater running through its stone-lined streets and mechanical wonders powered by the currents of the sea. Some areas are now completely submerged, while others, like the main square, are only flooded with water in some parts, allowing people to breathe.

- **Treasure room**

The Treasure Room is an old half-flooded ruin inspired by Maia architecture. The Ouroboros is a big mandala at the end of the room that cannot be reached unless a mechanism is activated to create a passageway. In the center, there is a “pool” that was formed when the ocean water flooded the room. To activate the mechanism, you must swim and find the levers underwater.

Connection to other areas: After climbing down the mountain, you get to the beach where you can enter the ocean and swim to the underwater city that has part of it outside of the water, serving as a landmark.

Purpose: Here is where the player will finally meet their final challenge and achieve their long-term goal, completing the quest.

Gameplay Beats

1.0 Waking Up in the Cell

Intensity: 1/10

Difficulty: 1/10

Duration (Minutes): 1

What Happens:

The character wakes up in the cell and interacts with the objects around them. After a few interactions, an NPC appears and hands the character a letter and a key.

Objective:

Leave the cell.

Location(s):

King's Bastille - Jail Cell

Design Goal:

1. **Character's backstory** - Understand that you are a prisoner.
2. **Controls** - Learn how to move around, interact with the environment, and talk to NPCs.
3. **Goal** - Here the player will also learn their objective and start the quest.

1.2 Dungeon Escape

Intensity: 7/10

Difficulty: 6/10

Duration (Minutes): 4

What Happens:

The player must walk through the dungeon timing their jumps and avoiding traps.

Objective:

Escape prison.

Location(s):

- King's Bastille - corridors
- Sewers

Design Goal:

- **Mechanics:** Learn about traps and timing your jumps.

2.1 Harbor City

Intensity: 1/10

Difficulty: 1/10

Duration (Minutes): 2

What Happens:

The player can explore the city at will and have a moment of respite.

Objective:

Find the tavern to speak to the Mysterious Contractor.

Location(s):

Corsair's Anchorage

Design Goal:

Give the player a moment of exploration and respite between intense beats.

2.2 Tavern - Key Game Moment

Intensity: 5/10

Difficulty: 1/10

Duration (Minutes): 2

What Happens:

At the tavern, the character meets the person who sent the mysterious letter and learns about the next steps of the mission.

Objective:

Talk to the Mysterious Contractor and learn about the proposition.

Location(s):

Tavern (Salty Serpent)

Design Goal:

- **Key Game Moment:** The player learns their true long-term goal and the next step in order to complete it (medium-term goal).

2.3 City Outskirts

Intensity: 3/10

Difficulty: 6/10

Duration (Minutes): 3

What Happens:

After leaving the city and heading to the outskirts, the player must avoid creatures using stealth.

Objective:

Find the cave where the temple hides while avoiding the monsters.

Location(s):

Corsair's Anchorage Outskirts

Design Goal:

- **Mechanics:** Learn about traps and timing your jumps.

- **Progression:** Give the player a feeling of being challenged while progressing towards their goal. Finding a forgotten city shouldn't be an easy task.
- **Environment:** Serve as a connection between the sublevels.

3.1 Cave Entrance

Intensity: 5/10

Difficulty: 4/10

Duration (Minutes): 2

What Happens:

The player finds the cave. Once inside, the entrance to the temple awaits them. They must solve a puzzle to enter.

Objective:

Enter the temple.

Location(s):

Cave Entrance

Design Goal:

- **Accomplishment:** Give the player a feeling of being closer to their goal.

3.2 Inside the Temple

Intensity: 6/10

Difficulty: 8/10

Duration (Minutes): 5

What Happens:

The player must get to the top of the mountain by using the portals to traverse the platforms.

Objective:

Get to the top of the mountain. Light comes from the top and the platforms go towards it, indicating the objective.

Location(s):

Temple Ruins

Design Goal:

- **Mechanic:** Introduce a new type of puzzle
- **Challenge:** Give the player a new medium-term goal before the long-term goal is reached.

3.3 Mountain Shrine - Key Game Moment

Intensity: 8/10

Difficulty: 1/10

Duration (Minutes): 1

What Happens:

The player leaves the temple. Now, they are on top of the mountain where they have access to a vista facing the goal from above: the beach where the Underwater City hides, almost completely submerged. The beach serves as a landmark, and the player must climb down the mountain going in its direction. This part of the gameplay consists of only walking and appreciating the environment.

Objective:

Walk towards the beach.

Location(s):

Top of the mountain

Design Goal:

- **Vista facing the objective:** helps guide the player and gives a sense of accomplishment for arriving there.
- **Key Game Moment:** The first time the player sets eyes on the objective. The legend of the Ouroboros is now real.

4.1 Beach

Intensity: 7/10

Difficulty: 3/10

Duration (Minutes): 1

What Happens:

The player arrives at the beach and must swim into the ocean in the direction of the Underwater City, which can now be viewed up close.

Objective:

Swim until you find the entrance of the underwater city.

Location(s):

Beach & Ocean - Entrance of Underwater City

Design Goal:

- **Goal:** The player finds themselves closer to the goal
- **Environment:** It serves as a connection between the environments.

4.2 Underwater City

Intensity: 8/10

Difficulty: 7/10

Duration (Minutes): 3

What Happens:

The character arrives in the city and discovers people living there. The player can interact with NPCs and discover that the Ouroboros is hidden in the castle. The player must avoid the guards and enter the castle.

Objective:

Find the Ouroboros.

Location(s):

Underwater City

Design Goal:

- Last moment to explore and have a moment of respite before the last challenge.
- Anticipation before the goal is completed. Creating tension.
- **Narrative:** plot twist when you discover there are still people alive underwater.

4.3 Treasure Room

Intensity: 9/10

Difficulty: 9/10

Duration (Minutes): 4

What Happens:

The player arrives at a half-flooded Treasure Room where they must complete a puzzle to open the path to the treasure. To do that, they must activate the three levers that are hidden underwater before the character runs out of breath.

Objective:

- Collect the Ouroboros.

Location(s):

- Treasure Room

Design Goal:

- Collect the Ouroboros and complete the quest.

One Planned Cinematic Cinematic 1

Once the player activates all the mechanisms in the treasure room and approaches the Ouroboros, the Ory Goddess appears for the player, asking them to leave the Ouroboros behind. At this moment, the player is given a choice: take the treasure to the Archduke or leave it for the inhabitants of the Underwater City.