

Overview:

This document describes the details for a 2D metroidvania-style game that follows a "Seeker," a non-magic using type of law-enforcement specializing in dealing with illegal magic and magic users. They will explore the Floating City of Nova Cerulis, dealing with magical threats and speaking with citizens, all the while pursuing the criminal mages that threaten the establishment of Nova Cerulis. As the game progresses, they will unlock the ability to go to new areas of the city through new items they acquire, and as they will learn more about the city they live in, the people they work for, and the people they hunt, they will have to wonder where their loyalties truly lie.

The aesthetics of the game, though in a fantasy setting, will combine magic and technology to create a dark, decrepit, almost retro-futuristic dystopian style for the city. The lighting will be dark, neon lights, garbage, industry, rain, sewage, and tall brutalistic buildings will all feature. Contrasts between wealth and poverty will be obvious, as well as crime and the law.

The core gameplay will consist of platforming across the city's dense streets and rooftops, and combat that will make use of various items that can be used in different ways to counter the different types of magic that the Seeker's enemies use.

Characters/Factions:

The Seeker: the Player Character, they will be unnamed, likely with an ambiguous origin, possibly elements of it can be uncovered. They are experienced and respected within the Seeker Core and will be treated as such by their peers and by guards of the establishment. They may not be by the power players of the establishment.

Captain Daela: a police chief like character who serves as the Seeker's main connection with the city establishment, but is closer to the Seeker than the power players of the establishment are

The Blue Council: the rulers of Nova Cerulis, who (at least supposedly) use magic to help and run the city, and nominally operate within the legal system

Heretic Mages: broadly, this refers to anyone who practices magic outside of the strict orders and institutions provided by the establishment of the Blue Council, they fall into two categories for our purposes:

- Actually criminals, these mages really are bad guys, and groups of them do plot nefarious activities, and groups of them will be antagonists in the game's main story as they have their agenda around the "Weapon" which everyone will be pursuing in the story
- Not bad guys, these mages exist outside the law of the establishment, but are not really evil. Many of them will reside in the "City Below" where the law has trouble reaching, and while they may oppose the city's establishment, are not bad people (they may or may not have an organized group associated with them, but suffice it to say that they exist)

The Weapon/Child: the game's story will revolve around the pursuit of a special "Weapon" or power source, which will turn out to be this child. You will initially be sent to stop the Bad Illegal Mages from finding/using the Weapon, but the game progress it will become clear that the establishment may not have the best intentions for the Child

Narrative structure:

The narrative will unfold as the player is sent to different parts of the city. The objectives they are assigned will give them a general direction or area to go, but exploration will be required to take them there. As they do so they will explore the city, encountering side character and exposition. Both "main" and side quests will loosely take the following structure:

- Quest giver points the Seeker to where that the objective is, either in the same area or a different one
- The Seeker may or may not be able to access the objective *right now*
- Eventually, they will acquire the item (or combination of items) that allow them to access it
- Seeker accesses the objective

As narratives progress, the objectives will be found in new areas that the Seeker gains access to, and, in some cases, will loop back to previously inaccessible rooms in areas the Seeker has already visited as an additional incentive for backtracking

Gameplay:

Gameplay hinges on dodging, slashing with swords, and the use of items to counter magic. Again, the core selling point of the gameplay beyond the dash n' slash trope is experimenting with different item/effect combinations to counter the effects of spells.

Items:

Each item will be made up of two parts, its "type," and its "effect." The type will affect how the item is used, whereas the effect will be what that use does. The Seeker will be able to attach unlocked "effects" with unlocked "types" of items in a menu, and more of each time can be unlocked as the game progresses and the player gains access to new areas.

Not all types and effects will be compatible, each effect can only be applied to one item at a time.

Examples of "type": Grenade Potion Trap Sword Oil	Examples of "effect": Water Fire Anti-illusion Anti-warding
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Grenade:

Releases the imbued effect in an AOE, instantaneous or lingering depending on type

Fire

- The grenade should create an instantaneous explosion which sets all touching objects to "fire," *and* deal additional damage

Water

- The grenade should create a brief instantaneous cloud that sets all touching objects to "wet"

Lightning

- The grenade should create an instantaneous explosion in a small area which sets all touching objects to "electrified," *and* deal even more additional damage

Acid

- The grenade should create an lingering cloud *made out of* Acid material, that sets touching objects to the Acid status effect for a moderate amount of time

Stunned

- The grenade should create an instantaneous explosion which sets all touching objects to "stunned," for a short period of time

Frozen

- The grenade should create an instantaneous explosion which sets all touching objects to "frozen," *and* deals a small amount of damage

Healing

- The grenade should create an lingering cloud *made out of* healing material, that heals objects made of "Flesh" that touch it

Anti-healing

- The grenade should create an lingering cloud *made out of* anti-healing material, that sets touching objects to anti healing, for a brief period

Anti-transforming

- The grenade should create an lingering cloud *made out of* anti-transforming material, that sets touching objects to anti-transforming, for a moderate period

Anti-illusion

- The grenade should create an lingering cloud *made out of* anti-illusion material, that sets touching objects to anti-illusion, for a brief period

Anti-warding

- The grenade should create an instantaneous explosion which sets all touching objects to "anti-warding" for a moderate period

Anti-telekinesis

- The grenade should create an lingering cloud *made out of* anti-telekinesis material, that sets touching objects to anti-telekinesis, for a brief period

Silenced

- Prevents from casting all spells in the limited affected area for a brief period

Sword:

Imbues player attacks with the chosen effect

Fire

- Extra damage

Water

- Makes wet for a moderate period, reducing extra damage from burned

Lightning

- More extra damage, if target is wet, set to stunned

Acid

- Applies damage over time for a moderate period

Frozen

- All object's movements are slowed for a long period of time

Anti-healing

- Prevents target regaining health or casting healing magic for a brief period

Anti-warding

- Instantly destroys wards and magical shields

Potion:

Can be drank to apply buffs/statuses to self

Fire

- Kills player instantly

Water

- Makes wet, reduces extra damage from burned

Lightning

- Kills player instantly

Acid

- Player takes acid damage over time until dead

Healing

- Heals the player instantly

Anti-illusion

- All illusion magic and illusory effects are negated for a long period

Anti-telekinesis

- Prevents player from being controlled by telekinesis for long period

Trap:

Releases imbued effect in an AOE when enemy walks over triggering area, same effects as grenade in a smaller AOE

Fire

- Extra damage

Water

- Makes wet, reduces extra damage from burned

Lightning

- More extra damage, if target is wet, set to stunned

Acid

- Damage over time

Stunned

- Unable to act for a short period of time

Frozen

- All object's movement are slowed

Anti-healing

- Prevents from regaining hit-points *and* casting healing magic

Anti-transforming

- Prevents from casting transforming magic

Anti-illusion

- Negates the effect of illusion magic *and* casting illusion magic

Anti-warding

- Destroys wards and magical shields

Anti-telekinesis

- Prevents from being controlled by telekinesis *and* casting telekinesis magic for x amount of time

Silenced

- Prevents from casting all spells in the limited affected area for a brief period

Dart:

Throwable projectile in a line at a long distance.

Fire

- Apply burned to hit target and deal additional damage

Water

- Makes wet, reducing extra damage from burned

Lightning

- Apply electrified to target and deal additional damage

Acid

- Apply acid to target for a long period

Frozen

- Apply frozen to target and deal a small amount of damage

Anti-healing

- Prevents from regaining hitpoints *and* casting healing magic for a long period

Anti-transforming

- Prevents from casting transforming magic for a long period

Anti-warding

- Destroys wards and magical shields, and prevents warding magic from being cast for a long period

Anti-telekinesis

- Prevents from being controlled by telekinesis *and* casting telekinesis magic for along period

Sealing:

Single item, no effect applicable. Gathers all energy/effects it comes in contact with in a certain area when thrown, and releases it in an AOE after a brief moment upon landing.

Magic:

Different types of enemies will have access to different spells, gaining access to more kinds and more powerful magic the more powerful they are. When they cast, some recognizable symbol will appear on or above their sprite indicating the spell they are casting, color will reveal school, specific symbol may even reveal spell. The seeker will have access to “binoculars” of some kind that they can use to see which spells enemies have access to.

Elemental magic, fire, lightning, ice, poison, acid etc...

- Fire is the easiest to use, and therefore most enemies have access to it and also most easily counterable, this is why “water grenade” is a staple of all seekers
- Ice might be harder, slows
- Lightning should be hardest to use, and also hardest to counter, hard to dodge, highest damage

Healing

- Individual healing of self
- Individual healing of others
- AoE healing centered on self
- AoE healing centered on an area

Transforming

- Transforming into stuff means that other types of magic cannot be cast i.e. shields that might nullify the effects of grenades or items
- Often, makes them either very fast or very tough and that will make it more difficult to predict their movement/take them down
- Anti transform/magic grenades might stop them from transforming, but once they’re transformed it won’t work, *hits* with correct kind of anti magic sword can cause them to revert to human form

Illusions

- Invisibility, illusory attackers
- Platforming complement of illusory walls and terrain as well

Shielding / warding magic

- Shields around enemies protecting them
- Tall shields blocking damage/projectiles/movement from one direction
- Wards preventing access to certain areas

Mind controlling

Referred to in lore as “Cerulean” magic, or the magic that keeps the city together, in reality is a form of subtle mind control with *no good mundane counter*. Here is where the powers of the Blue Council, the leader of the evil Heretical mages, and the child.

Possible Areas:

Areas will each be connected to each other, and will usually only be accessible through the use of particular items in a puzzle/platforming challenge. Areas will also have inaccessible “rooms” within them that will only be accessible having found items from other areas

Central Retro Neon Lights Districts

- Centrally located, starting area, tutorial will be here, likely one of the most expansive areas, will have a fair bit of variety within itself

Luxury Apartments

- The rich and powerful live here, it will be sleeker and brighter than most of the other areas

Sewers

Magic-cop station / prison?

- These may be separate, but one is loosely the Seeker HQ, near starting area

Shantytown megalopolis

- Maybe the most expensive area, will make heavy use of platforming to give a sense of verticality and convolutedness, most “urban jungle” aesthetically

Industrial/Magic Wasteland

- May lead to where “toxic” waste is dumped from the city to the world below

Undercity type of thing where lots of illegal magic users reside, somewhere under the shantytown megalopolis

- Will also be grimey, serving as a kind of a foil to Retro Neon Lights District with a similar structure but different color scheme; where the “regular people” who live outside of the establishment’s law, reside,

A nature place, where plants seem to have started to grow back?