

Narrator - Nox

1.) Character Bone Structure

Physiology

- 1.) Sex - Comes to the protagonist with a female voice but has no gender.
- 2.) Age - Eternal
- 3.) Height and Weight - N/A
- 4.) Color of hair, eyes, skin - N/A
- 5.) Posture - N/A
- 6.) Appearance - Non-corporeal being that exists within the protagonist. For art purposes, Nox can appear to the protagonist as a swirled ball of smoky threads/tentacles connecting stars of light.
- 7.) Defects - Nox is unable to execute any action on her own. She can only influence the player through her words.
- 8.) Heredity - N/A

Sociology

- 1.) Class - N/A
- 2.) Occupation - N/A
- 3.) Education - N/A
- 4.) Home Life - Nox is a manifestation of unity and singularity. Her realm can best be thought of as a black hole where all is one and one is all.
- 5.) Religion - Nox understands the spiritual fabric of the universe beyond any futile religious interpretation.
- 6.) Race, nationality - N/A
- 7.) Place in community - In the cosmic balance of things, Nox represents unity and peace. Contrary to human intuition, these ideals come from the realm of darkness. Nox seeks to make the universe whole again, which would mean the obliteration of individuality and life as we know it. Conflict, action, and light are the tools of other great beings in the cosmos.
- 8.) Political affiliations - N/A
- 9.) Amusements, hobbies - N/A

Psychology

- 1.) Sex life, moral standards - N/A
- 2.) Personal premise, ambition - Connectedness leads to the obliteration of Self. After the priest's ritual gone wrong lets a sliver of Nox's essence into our world, she binds with the protagonist and seeks to influence the player into excessive connection with other beings. She'll try to unite all people at all costs, which when put into practice in our world, results in a Utilitarian perspective that will do terrible things to the few in the name of the many. We could experiment with a mechanic where there is a spiritual/magical/energetic

cost to recruiting party members to the point where the player could kill themselves if they always listen to Nox's advice and over-extend their connectedness in the world.

- 3.) Frustrations, chief disappointments - Nox is a patient being who exists outside of time and knows she will eventually win the fight against the beings of life and chaos. She shows no frustration, no matter the situation.
- 4.) Temperament - Zen
- 5.) Attitude toward life - Zen
- 6.) Complexes - She has an unquenchable thirst for spiritual connectedness/oneness. She prefers that connectedness to emerge between the living because they can spread it even further, but she has no qualms about death being the path to oneness if necessary.
- 7.) Extrovert, introvert, ambivert - Ambivert
- 8.) Abilities - No earthly abilities other than the ability to speak to the protagonist without anybody else being aware of her presence.
- 9.) Qualities - She knows the character of humans better than they know themselves. She's unrelentingly forgiving but also ruthless in her disregard for life and individuality.
- 10.) I.Q. - Not quite omniscient but one of the most powerful/knowledgeable beings in existence.

2.) Combat Barks (all in regard to protagonist actions)

Successful attack - "They will comply. If not by word, then by the rod."

Missed attack - "Focus, child!"

Takes damage - "They erode you as water to the rock."

Incapacitation/death - "You are them all now."

3.) Character Introduction

The game starts mid-ritual within the cold belly of a church. Guin stands in rank with the congregation as the priest fiddles with incense and dusty tomes.

PRIEST

My flock, there is an evil growing in our land. This evil wants to sow strife in our community. It wants to turn our devotion from the gods to the lords of vapid spectacle and unearned gluttony. It wants to tear our children from their mothers' breasts and sever the threads that bind us. The Lords of Industry and their blasphemous magic want to turn us into mindless tools for their greed...

The room grows darker as the priest speaks until the light shines only on him. Wind swirls within the cathedral and a palpable energy vibrates through the stone walls.

PRIEST

WE WILL NOT ABIDE THIS! They've brought their foreign hordes into our dear Arthania and they've corrupted our youth for too long. The time has come to fight fire...with fire.

The priest conducts some eldritch gestures and slams his hand down on his sacred text. A wave of light blasts in every direction and the screen fades to black. After a moment, Guin comes to.

GUIN

Ugh...What happened?

Guin looks around and sees the cathedral in ruins. Bodies lie beneath rubble and fire consumes the house of worship. The player takes control and is given one path out, blocked by a crazed member of the congregation.

GUIN

Madame? What's wrong? Are you okay?

Madame gives a growl and advances toward the player with a blunt object and deadly intent. The player is given a melee combat tutorial and they knock the enemy unconscious.

GUIN

Something's not right! I need to get out of here! I need to get to Mother's village and check on her!

The player exits the ruined cathedral and encounters bucolic countryside turned into a warzone. The King's knights are fighting the crazed members of Guin's congregation. Some members, however, seem to be just as confused as Guin. Before the player can get to combat, they encounter two potential party members being run down by the knights. A divine female voice commands Guin from the ether:

MYSTERIOUS NARRATOR

They'll be slaughtered! You must save them!

GUIN

What? Who said that?

MYSTERIOUS NARRATOR

Act now or they'll die, child!

The two potential companions call out to you, one after the other:

COMPANION 1

Grab my sword from the stables! I can help you fight them off!

COMPANION 2

My bow will keep them at a distance! Fetch it from the apple tree!

The two request destinations are far enough apart that the player cannot get to both of them in one move. Whichever weapon the player retrieves will dictate who survives and who is seemingly killed (but really just captured by the knights and taken away in the heat of battle only to return as an enemy later). Once the player returns the weapon to its owner, she speaks:

GUIN

I can't fight! I don't know how! Save me!

MYSTERIOUS NARRATOR

Oh, but you do, child. Feel the spirit within that warrior and draw from it! Connect to the energy around you and focus yourself. Save him. Save him now!

The companion charges ahead into combat and the player is given a tutorial on magic-wielding. After defeating two or three groups of knights, the battlefield grows quiet.

COMPANION

Can't fight? Don't know how? SAVE ME!? I'll give you a tip, girly: don't ask a guy to save you and then show him up! I mean, I've seen magic like that in the capitol, but out here? You're not one of those company bounty hunters, are you?

GUIN (bursting into tears)

I, I, I don't know what happened...

PRIEST (emerging from off screen)

HERETICS! The devout all fell under my control as foretold. They united under the divine word just as godly men in every church across the land are doing right now. But YOU! Your wickedness disrupted the ritual. I saw your sorcery! We could have sacked the capitol and wrestled control from those heathenous tycoons by nightfall had you not summoned the King's guard. You've just thrown this country into civil war, vile witch! And now you'll pay for it.

The priest launches into combat and possesses the surviving congregation members, even as they lay wounded on the field of battle. This gives him numbers, but the possessed abominations are weak and easy to deal with on their own. The priest is the powerful one. An intense battle plays out until the player defeats the priest.

MYSTERIOUS NARRATOR

He had a powerful understanding of the energy which connects us all, child. But he did not understand the unity of true communion. You can still save his soul.

PRIEST (dying)

You might have defeated me, but my messengers will have you marked for death by the clergy before you can reach the city walls. As if those soul-sucking walls

offer you any protection! A world of automated men, groveling for bread they haven't sweat for, numbing their hearts with material toys like children, marooning themselves in a waking nightmare where devotion to anything but the Lords of Industry is programmed out of--

Your companion plunges a dagger into the priest mid-sentence.

COMPANION

Oh, I'm sorry. Were you listening to him? Truth be told, I'm not much for religion myself. I was just looking for some free lodging for the night and this bloke seemed alright right up until HE TRIED TO KILL EVERYONE! The name's [NAME]. What's your name?

MYSTERIOUS NARRATOR

Forgive him, for he knows not what he does. Open your arms and welcome this connection. You have a journey ahead and he may help share the burden of your suffering, and you, his.

GUIN

I'm, I'm Guin. I can't believe everyone else is dead. I knew some of these people. I mean, not that well, but I was getting to know them. How could he call himself a man of the gods?

CHOICE A (just loops into CHOICE B afterwards)

We should bury them.

CHOICE B

I need to get to my mother's village and check on her and my brother.

COMPANION

Well, if you've got an extra haystack to sleep in, I could tag along. I mean, in case you forget how to use your magical powers and need saving.

Transition into companion intro dialogue on the way to a new scene.

END INTRODUCTION

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Once the protagonist and companion 1 reach the protagonist's home village and find it in ruins, they fight off some of the Lords of Industry's private mercenaries who attacked the village on their warpath toward any congregations who united against them. After the battle, the protagonist enters her mother's home alone. She finds the speared body of her dear mother.

PROTAGONIST

Mama! No! No, no, no, no, no! I should have been here! I wasn't where I belonged!

MYSTERIOUS NARRATOR

Child, tears of grief in this life are but tears of joy in the next. Your mother is moved on, but she is not gone.

PROTAGONIST

Shut up, you! You might whisper your nonsense when I'm with others and you know I can't respond without being locked up as a loon, but it's just you and me and my mother now and unless you have some answers then you can shut your mouth!

MYSTERIOUS NARRATOR

I can tell you that I feel your mother's connection to you even as we speak. I can tell you that it pains me to see you separated as you are. I understand our bind no less than you do, child, but I can tell you that neither of us are whole right now. Take her in your arms and make us whole. Help me find a way to return you to oneness.

PROTAGONIST

You can...feel her? Wait! Oh, gods! Liam! Sweet Liam, are you here? Your big sister has come for you! Come out, sweet boy. Tell me you hid! Tell me you hid like we used to when we played with Father! Liam!

MYSTERIOUS NARRATOR

The boy is gone. Taken, by the feel of it. They made him watch and it left a part of his soul here. He's with them now, but we can put what's left at peace, child.

PROTAGONIST (bursting into tears)

Shut up! Shut up! Shut up! Shut up! I don't know who you think you are, but you can get out of my head now! Can't you just leave me alone?

SYD

Did you know her?

PROTAGONIST

You finally show your face and play games with me? AHHHH!!!!

The protagonist runs futilely toward Syd, lashing her arms and tripping over herself as Syd easily dodges the attack.

SYD

I think you're confused right now. I'm not playing any games. I did not harm this woman. But I saw who did and I saw them take a boy too. I think I can help you.

PROTAGONIST

Who are you? Stop toying with me!

SYD

My name is Syd. I couldn't help but notice you talking to yourself. I do that sometimes too. I thought...I don't know what I thought. This is all very new for me. I'd like to help you if I can.

MYSTERIOUS NARRATOR

He tells the truth. Do not turn this offered hand away. He is a part of this journey.

PROTAGONIST

SHUT UP! [Taking a breath] Syd, huh? What are you doing here? What did you see? Where is Liam?

SYD

I've...I've been staying here. And this afternoon, the town was overrun. Men from the city--magic users--they came and called for volunteers.

PROTAGONIST

You expect me to believe that my mother had some strange man staying with her that I didn't know about? My papa would have knocked you on your butt for such slander!

SYD

I know that your father is gone. I've been staying here for some time. I'll freely admit that I was not a welcome guest. I can sleep quite comfortably in the shadows.

Syd steps forward and pulls his hood back. Despite never seeing one in person, the protagonist immediately recognizes the creature before her.

PROTAGONIST

Monster! A devil in my own home! You don't know the extent of my power; tell me what you've done with my brother or I'll burn the flesh from your wicked bones!

SYD

Your words harm me no more than I harmed your family. As I said, I've been stowing away. The city men came today, looking for retribution for some offense. They called for volunteers and when none came they started torching the homes. Your mother, if that's who this woman was, she commanded her son to pledge

his allegiance to the troop. He obeyed, but they slew her anyway. It is not the place for my kind to come forward in human affairs, or at least it has not been. But I am not the animal I am made out to be. I feel shame in my gut for watching this slaughter today. The boy is alive, and there is a feeling inside of me that I will forever regret it if I do not help you find him. Will you have me, sorrowful girl?

MYSTERIOUS NARRATOR

Break old prejudices and grab hold of this connection, child. He will bring difficulty to your path but he could be a powerful ally. He speaks truthfully and feels the wisdom gained only in darkness.

PROTAGONIST

I don't know what you were doing in my home, but you will help me turn it into a pyre before you tell me where to search for my brother.

CHOICE A

And then, you'll stay true to your word and help me track him down.

CHOICE B

And then, you'll return to the wretched shadow from which you crawled, if you wish to live.

END OF HOME VILLAGE SCENE

As the game progresses, keep Nox's dialogue mysterious and elusive. The player should never know Nox's true nature but instead slowly come to the realization that Nox is not a benevolent being acting in her interest or any human being's interest for that matter.