

## 1. Core Concept

Perchta is a postmodern folk horror game that explores the cyclical nature of life, death, consciousness, and existence. It utilizes an RPG-style method of storytelling alongside explorative point-and-click gameplay. The narrative-driven experience, with the help of atmosphere-building and highly intentional art direction, aims to be simultaneously unmooring and beautiful.

## 2. Overview

### a. Working title

Perchta

### b. Genre

Horror, Lovecraftian, story-heavy, point-and-click, turn-based

### c. Target audience

Indie horror fans, fantasy fans

## 3. Game Description

In its current iteration, Perchta follows the player character—a stoic, aging warrior—as she explores the environs of a coastal, forested region. She is trying to get to the “heart” of the forest, but each time she reaches it, she is returned to the game’s starting location. Each time she repeats the journey, the region distorts and deteriorates in horrific, bizarre, and uncomfortably personal ways, forcing her to hold on to her sense of reality and self in any way she can.

The game will feature exploration-based point and click gameplay with an emphasis on atmosphere and worldbuilding, as well as turn-based combat against horrific and uncanny creatures. Perchta’s narrative is enigmatic, meticulously written, and crafted for fans of lore-heavy, esoteric storytelling.

## 4. Inspiration

*Fear & Hunger* - Fear & Hunger’s oppressive atmosphere, alongside its turn-based combat mechanics and punishing, cosmically horrifying world, is a huge inspiration for Perchta.

*Silent Hill* - The older Silent Hill games (1, 2, and 3) are at the foundational core of Perchta's exploration of introspective horror and psychological writing. Perchta also takes inspiration from the retro gameplay elements of Silent Hill (and, by extension, its contemporary survival horrors like Resident Evil).

*Disco Elysium* - Perchta takes many cues from Disco Elysium's writing style, as well as its unique approach to traditional RPG/TTRPG gameplay elements and its painterly art style.

## 5. Game Mechanics

### a. General Description

The game will feature a mix of point-and-click exploration/world interaction, RPG-style dialogue and narrative delivery, and turn-based combat.

### b. Gameplay Loop

Explore the world, observe changes in the environment and NPCs, fight enemies encountered, and progress through a semi-linear, repeating map.

### c. Controls

**Point-and-click** - move the cursor to interact with the environment on-screen. Each part of the map is seen as a static camera angle in which the player can click on interactables to get dialogue, collect items, etc. The player can move around using arrows on the edges of the screen.

**Turn-based** - when combat is initiated, the game will transition to a turn-based combat system. During their turn, players can take a variety of actions, including attack, defend, talk, and access items. Additionally, they need to balance a sanity meter, which decreases the longer the fight goes on.

**Dialogue** - When interacting with an NPC, the player can sometimes choose from a few different dialogue options. These choices will not impact the game's ending, but offer the player a chance to learn more about the lore and game fiction.

## 6. Game aesthetics

### a. Design Pillars

1. Narrative-heavy
2. Thought-provoking
3. Uncomfortable

## **b. Game Identity/Mantra**

Story-driven point-and-click with turn-based combat, where the player explores a dangerous, eldritch stretch of woods and its surroundings.

## **c. Genre/Story Summary**

Perchta is best described as a folk horror story, set in a world inspired by proto-Norse Teutonic pagan mythology. It follows the player-character's journey into the strange village called Andermeer, a border settlement of the Ingh Empire, on the edge of a massive forest called The Perchta. Although what she is there for is not immediately made clear, it is obvious she is determined to reach her quarry at any cost, which seems to be at the forest's center.

Thematically, the game is heavily inspired by Lovecraftian fantasy as well as works of introspective horror such as *Silent Hill*, *Signalis*, and *Hellblade*. It explores the cycle of nature, symbolized by the ouroboros, and the relationship between the existential, the natural, the eldritch, and the flesh. Perchta seeks to create an unsettling, lingering experience for players by interacting with these motifs and concepts, but never delivering a single, moralizing message or well-defined takeaway.

## **d. Art Style**

Perchta's art style will include painterly 2D assets and backgrounds in a semi-realistic, gritty style.

## **e. Music & Sound**

Perchta's music will be a marriage between the atmospheric, hauntingly beautiful soundtracks of games like *Silent Hill*, and traditional Norse, Celtic, and German folk music like Heilung and Daniel Hart's "The Green Knight" (2021) soundtrack. Its soundscape will place emphasis on the sounds of nature to immerse the player in its environment, and distort it when necessary to unnerve and unmoor.

## 7. Technical Specifications

### a. Game Engine/Framework

Perchta will most likely be made in Godot, but that is not yet set in stone.

### b. Platform(s)

PC (Steam, [Itch.io](https://itch.io)), Nintendo Switch

### c. Other Programs

Game art will be made in Procreate, Photoshop, and Clip Studio Paint. Additional 3D assets as needed will be made in Blender.

## 8. Development Roadmap

- Fall 2025 to spring 2026: writing phase, pre-planning
- Summer 2026 to winter 2026: visual development, demo building
- Spring 2026 to winter 2026: playtesting, programming, asset refinement
- Spring 2027: final touches, crunch
- Summer 2027: release