

1. Overview

1.1. Shadow Alchemist

Players take on the role of an alchemist who has discovered the ability to manipulate shadows. Using alchemical potions and ancient symbols, players solve puzzles by shifting shadows to reveal hidden passages, unlock secrets and create paths. The game features a story set in a mystical world where light and shadow play a crucial role in the balance of the power. Join the dark side while still being one of the good guys this time.

Shadow Alchemist is a game of multiple aspects. Explore the grove and village, find hidden passages, grow herbs on the field near the house, pet the animals, solve puzzles and most importantly, restore the balance between light and shadow.

2. Gameplay

2.1. Puzzles

2.1.1. Tier 1 Puzzle

Basic puzzles that involve moving shadows to reveal hidden items or passages.

2.1.2. Tier 2 Puzzle

Intermediate puzzles that require combining multiple shadows or using multiple potions to unlock secrets.

2.1.3. Tier 3 Puzzle

Advanced puzzles with complex shadow interactions, often tied to story events. Puzzles that need to be solved before being able to continue the main story.

2.2. Potions

2.2.1. Potion Crafting

Use gathered ingredients to craft potions at an alchemy station. You simply drag and drop items from your pouch into the pot to mix them into potions. After this, some particles are emitted and the item is added to the players inventory.

2.2.2. Upgrading Shadows (future feature)

Discover ancient symbols throughout the game that can be used to upgrade your shadow manipulation abilities. For example, this could allow you to use them for longer or yield more per brewing session. These ancient symbols are also needed in the minigame while brewing potions in the cauldron. Mixed together with some other ingredients will make the potion stronger.

2.3. Mechanics

2.3.1. Become Shadow

2.3.1.1. Drink potion

Sink into your own shadow, becoming undetectable and be able to get inside tight spaces. This ability is timer based. When the timer runs out, the player is returned to their original form, trying to place them in the nearest possible position if the current position of the player is not available.

2.3.2. Command Shadow

2.3.2.1. Drink potion

Command your shadow to detach from you and perform an action

Possible actions:

- Snuff out a candle
- Go across a gap so the player can free the path and cross
- Solidify your shadow to be able to walk across a gap

2.3.2.2. Throw

By throwing a potion at select shadows, you can control those shadows temporarily, allowing you to move the shadows from their current position so you can use this to your advantage.

3. Story

3.1. Umbra

In the mystical land of Umbra, light and shadow are not merely natural phenomena but potent forces that shape reality. For centuries, the inhabitants of Umbra have harnessed the power of light to cultivate their lands and ward off darkness. However, deep within the ancient libraries of forgotten cities, hidden knowledge speaks of a time when shadows held equal sway – a time when balance between light and dark was paramount.

3.2. An ancient war

Long ago, an ancient war broke out between the Luminaries, worshippers of light, and the Umbrans, masters of shadow. The Luminaries sought to banish all darkness, believing it to be the source of evil and chaos. In response, the Umbrans, protectors of the delicate balance, fought to preserve the night and its mysteries. This war ravaged the land, and in its wake, much knowledge was lost and the art of shadow manipulation faded into legend.

3.3. The Forgotten Order

Amidst the ruins of a forgotten era, a secretive order of alchemists known as the Nocturni devoted themselves to studying the remnants of shadow magic. These alchemists believed that true power lay not in the dominance of light or shadow but in their collaboration. They discovered ancient symbols and concocted potions that could bend shadows to their will, revealing hidden truths and forgotten paths.

3.3.1. Aelynn – The Shadow Alchemist

Raised in the hidden enclave of Nyxia, she was tutored in the art of shadow manipulation. For years you studied ancient texts and practiced your craft, becoming a master of bending shadows.



Aelynn

3.3.2. Enclave of Nyxia

3.4. Catalyst

One night, a powerful surge of light magic disrupted the balance of the Umbra, causing shadows to behave erratically and threatening to engulf the land in darkness. Sensing a looming catastrophe, tasks you with a perilous quest: to restore the balance between light and shadow and uncover the truth behind the disturbance.

3.4.1. Eclipse Stone

The eclipse stone is an ancient artifact with immense power. It is roughly the size of a human heart and pulses softly. These pulses cause a shift between dark and light, signifying the duality of light and shadow.

The stone was forged during primordial times, when the forces of light and shadow emerged in the world of Umbra. It was created by The Forgotten Order to keep balance between the two forces. It was placed in the grand temple, ensuring light and shadow would not dominate the lands.

3.5. The Cult of Luminaries

The Cult of Luminaries is a group dedicated to wiping out darkness and making light rule everything. They believe shadows are the source of all evil and that getting rid of them will create a perfect world full of light.

According to the Luminaries light is supreme and represents order and truth. They attempt to spread the light as far as they can by performing Light Rituals, this engulfs the shadows in light and spreads their influence. By doing so, they hunt down sources of darkness and eradicate them.

3.5.1. Light Rituals

The Illumination Ceremony, held at dusk, involves chanting incantations and using light crystals to cast bright beams that banish shadows. This ritual symbolizes driving out evil and embracing purity.

Another important ritual is the Radiant Invocation, conducted at dawn by High Priests who draw sacred symbols with light wands and offer prayers. Participants bathe in the first light of day, seeking divine favour and strength from the forces of light.

The burning of the Shadows ritual involves destroying dark-associated artifacts in a magical fire while chanting to intensify the flames. This act represents the destruction of evil influences and the purification of their world. Through these

rituals, the Cult of Luminaries reinforces its commitment to eliminating darkness and promoting the supremacy of light.

4. Levels

4.1. Grove (tutorial)

This tutorial area shows the player the basics of what is available for them to do in the game, for the purposes of the gamejam this will be somewhat limited. But this can always be expanded afterwards if desired. At this time, it will not be possible to go inside the player's house.

4.1.1. Growing herbs

In the tutorial area, the player learns how to grow ingredients. While growing them isn't that necessary for this gamejam, expanding the game later, with consumable potions this could be beneficial.

4.1.2. Brewing

During the grove part, we also introduce brewing. This part is crucial since the player will need to have their potions with them to venture past the tutorial. Creating the potions is described in "2.2.1 Potion Crafting".

4.1.3. Petting animals

What is a game if there are no animals to pet? Fun little interactive area that allows the player to play with some animals.

- Ferrets (to honour the jam organiser)
- Cats/ dogs
- Goats
- ...

4.2. Transition to more open area

Upon exiting the grove, the player sees the village and church from the exit. Running through the grove and outside it you see the stream of water in a nice eye-candy environment. Upon entering the area, one of 2 things happens depending on the complexity we can make:

- A shadow moves across the floor, guiding the player to the village containing the Shadowtree.
- Shadow footsteps guide the player to the village containing the Shadowtree. If the player takes too long, a shadow could appear from the ground and coerce them to move along.

The area itself is a very tranquil environment with a lot of nature. In the distance, you see the village and the church. A river runs through the land with a few bridges to cross it. Behind the village, on higher grounds, a gigantic tree steals the focus. That is the Shadowtree.

4.3. Inside the village

Inside the village the player gets to meet up with the elder that will tell them about the situation with the Shadowtree, and will ask for their assistance to restore the barrier around the village that protects the Umbrans from the Luminaries.

There is potentially room for expansion after the jam, but keeping the area condensed is a good idea to not stray too far from the core of the game.

5. Puzzles

5.1. First puzzle

The player first needs to grab some herbs from around the player's house so that they can use those to make a potion. This potion allows them to get through the first obstacle in the game. A giant tree trunk that is obstructing passage toward the second section of the game, the village.

5.2. Second Puzzle

Using the "Command Shadow" ability, the player needs to move a shadow away so that it reveals a switch that was hidden in the darkness. This grants access to a door leading outside, essentially acting as a lock so that outsiders have a hard time finding and entering the enclave.

We can use the potion that was created in the tutorial as an item they can use to try interact with a shadow. Pouring a few drops onto a shadow making it possible for the player to command it to do things.

5.3. Third Puzzle

The player needs to use their command of shadows to restore the wisps that have fallen from the Shadow Tree. The wisps are taken by the light and need to be quickly located and sent back to their home.