

THE
ELYSIUM



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INTRODUCTION

For many, there is a clear distinction between good and evil. It is as stark as black and white, as plain as night and day, but things are never that simple. There are gray areas, a dusk between the light and the dark. Heaven and Hell are no different.

Not every life can be judged as good or evil at the end of the road, some are forced into the Land Between. Many names have been given to this vast expanse of gray, Limbo, the Elysian Fields, and its true name, Elysium. Elysium is a place for the forgotten, the place where things that neither Heaven nor Hell wants are locked away. Within Elysium's depths are creatures and spirits from all walks of life and all shades of gray with one thing in common: None of them wish to remain there.

The Elysium Project stems from a curiosity about myths and legends, and an appreciation for the classic works of Dante's *Divine Comedy* and John Milton's *Paradise Lost*, where the contrast of the age old fight between good and evil, light versus dark is explored from a different point of view. Such things are not so cut-and-dry and this project explores the subtle gray areas of our moral standards. As humans, we look for what is easy to understand, a swatch of black and a swatch of white side by side is easier to comprehend than a vast spectrum of grays. Escape Elysium is meant to shed light on myths we may have forgotten, and to remind us that the struggle isn't just between black and white.



CHARACTERS

PHANTOM

Elysium is home to many spirits and creatures, though most have succumbed into the agony of eternal silence and stagnation, and are nothing more than fading shadows.

All but one.

A shade, who goes by the name of Phantom, has awoken, questioning his imprisonment and deciding that it is high time he started calling the shots. He wants answers and an escape from Elysium, and he'll stop at nothing to get it.





Phantom has a very commanding presence. He is quiet and reserved, but at almost seven feet tall and heavily built he is very intimidating. He also has a sense of calm determination and deadly focus, being very precise in his movements and always calculating his next few steps. This leaves him oblivious to others around him, he tends not to pay attention to conversations, opting instead to plan ahead for if he were to suddenly be attacked within his next five steps down the path.



Phantom's command over shadows allows him a lot of versatility. He may not possess any conventional weapon, but with a concentrated thought he can fashion deadly claws and armor.



One of Phantom's most distinguishable features is a large, ragged scar across his torso. It appears to have never healed properly.

One of his greatest assets are also his greatest burden; the chains. Meant to keep him imprisoned, he can turn them into a formidable weapon by skillfully whipping them at opponents, shattering bones and vital organs, or drag them closer to the reach of his claws.

Phantom also wears a stained cross around his neck, he is never seen without it and refuses to tell where he obtained it, or why it is stained.



Elysium houses many other residents, most against their will, yet they lack the consciousness to protest. Though some, like this female wraith (below, left), have managed to keep a part of their former selves alive, and are more than willing to help Phantom rattle his chains.



The spirit of a murdered thief, Atiq (above), acts as another aid in the escape scheme. He appears faded and almost gray, in spite of the bright, warm colors he wore in life. He is also quick to voice his opinion, despite the fact that his damaged throat should render him nearly mute.

There are also decidedly less helpful denizens of Elysium. As well as the usual demons, there are angels as well, such as the Seraphim (right), who guard the gate to heaven at one end of Elysium's vast fields. They are warriors, large and foreboding and merciless. They will attack any who approach the gates or cause a disturbance.





CREATURES

Among the denizens are creatures, both legendary beasts and ones never revealed to man. While most will not harm the occasional passerby unless provoked, there are still more that will not hesitate to pounce.



CHIMERA

The mythic chimera, a mix of a cat, a snake, and a ram. They are large and bulky, but that doesn't prevent them from hitting the unsuspecting victim hard and fast. They are highly intelligent and often enjoy playing with their prey, preferring to inject their victim with organ-disintegrating venom from the retractable fangs in their jaws, and then track their stumbling prey until they fall. This behavior is similar to the Komodo Dragons in our world.

They also operate in small prides like modern day lions, with the males being much larger and bulkier with a thick mane (above and top left) while the females are slightly smaller (bottom right).



DIOMEDES MARES

According to Greek mythology, Diomedes the king of Thrace kept four horses in his stables. But these horses were unique, for Diomedes fed them on a steady diet of human flesh and bone. The mares went insane because of their unusual diet and were a threat to all. The hero Heracles was called to defeat the mares and unseat Diomedes from his throne. It was decided that these mares should be properly bound and hidden away in the depths of Elysium, where they would fade out of modern memory and the atrocity that was their existence would never plague the mortal world again.



The four mares, called Podagros (the fast), Deimos (the terrible), Xanthos (the blond), and Lampon (the shining), are heavily bound in chains and harnesses, making their movements awkward and strained, and it's nigh impossible to use their mouths. But their heavy hooves are akin to bludgeons, and coupled with their fiery tempers and bulk they are good for removing obstacles that may be in the way. If you can safely lure them in the right direction.



An older concept of the mare, Deimos. It utilized influences from Greek pottery, but it was decided that the reptilian look was too much, and they were brought back to a more horse-like appearance.





AMON

Son of a devil is literal in the case of this fearsome demon. Amon is one of the seven princes of Hell, and lurks in the darkest corners of Elysium. He does not actively seek out conflict, but should still be avoided at all costs. Selfish and cunning, his words are as dangerous as his claws.





Amon's sheer size should be intimidating enough, and his eerie mismatched appearance adds to the effect. Amon has the skeletal face of a raven with a wolf's teeth, the body of a wolf, and the tail of a snake.

Amon is also said to be linked to the ancient Egyptian god Amun Ra, the lord of the sun. This is evident in Amon's control over fire and his lordly presence.





ENVIRONMENTS



THE WASTES

When imagining Limbo, one conjures up a drab land without color, and while that holds true for some parts of Elysium, it is more varied and colorful than what one might expect. The different parts that make up Elysium tend to reflect the end of the spectrum they are closest to, the Mountain of Heaven or the Gates of Hell. One example is the Wastes, they are the calm before the storm, a wide area of deadly still sands and rocks, they border the boundaries of Hell, and can hide plenty of unpleasant things amidst their dunes.

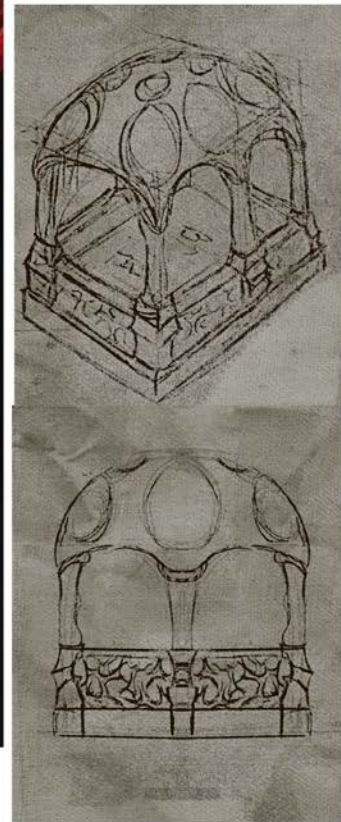
While the vast expanse of fields and valleys make up the gray area of Elysium, at either end are vastly differing spectrums.

Hell's gates are ominous and dark, with an unsettling, stark contrast of fiery reds and oranges, while Heaven is dominated by cooling whites and soothing blues, and yet feels cold and unwelcoming to those residing Between.





The Lake is another noticeable landmark of Elysium. The fields eventually blend into a marsh, fed by a deep lake. The lake is surrounded by forests and cliffs, and is home to many ruins that hide many secrets. The lake region may appear peaceful and benign on the surface, but nothing is ever what it seems in Elysium, and the unknown is rippling in its depths.

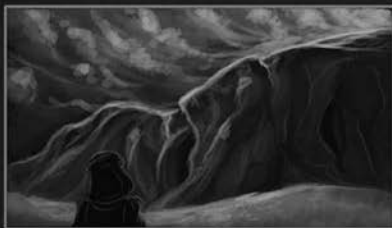


(above) One of the pieces to the ruins surrounding the lake. The ruins are a mix of many different cultures and eras, many appear Greek and Roman, but interspersed are buildings and artifacts from the Middle East, Europe, and Asia.

IN THE BEGINNING...

This short storyboard is a rough idea for one of the opening cinematics, detailing how our main character is awoken and thus beginning his journey.

The lost and wandering spirit of the murdered thief, Atiq, stumbles upon an expansive maze of sand caves on the far shores beneath Heaven's Mountain. Exploring within, he finds an apparently dead figure bound by heavy chains to the walls and floor. A little curious prodding and poking from the thief starts an unstoppable chain of events as the shadowy man awakens...



Long Shot

Fade in from black.
Est. shot of sand cave complex

Audio:
light wind

S
X
C



Medium Long Shot

Silhouette of wary Atiq at entrance

Audio:
light wind, soft cave ambience

S
X
C



Medium Shot

Atiq enters cave and looks around

Audio:
soft cave ambience

STORYBOARDS



Medium Shot

Atiq sees something

Audio:
soft cave ambience

S
X
C



Medium Shot

Atiq silhouetted in foreground, Phantom chained up in background, there is an opening above him that spotlights him

Audio:
soft cave ambience

S
X
C



Medium Close-Up

Atiq approaches cautiously

Audio:
soft cave ambience, slow/light footsteps

S
X
C



Medium Shot

Camera circles clockwise around Phantom as Atiq circles him

Audio:
soft cave ambience, slow/light footsteps

S
X
C



Medium Close-Up

Atiq is curious about the chains and decides to touch them, rattling them slightly

Audio:
soft cave ambience, chain clinking

S
X
C



Close-Up

The vibration travels down the chain, clinking and shaking built up dust off

Audio:
soft cave ambience, chain clinking

S
X
C



Medium Close-Up

The vibration reaches Phantom. Camera zooms slowly in on left side of face

Audio:
soft cave ambience



Close-Up

Camera stops at left eye. All is quiet for a short moment

Audio:
soft cave ambience (fade out)



Close-Up

Eye opens abruptly
Straight Cut to black

Audio:

