

Writing Sample

Encounter: Forgotten Bride / Shadow of the Nameless Queen

Boss Enemy Encounter Narrative Design:

Forgotten Bride / Shadow of the Nameless Queen

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Context: Optional enemy boss.

The player has vanquished the Rider, a banished lord of storm, lightning and thunder. On completing the fight, they backtrack through a crumbling observatory tower. While the tower was completely dark before, a faint sheen spills through its high windows and cracks in the walls. Upon closer inspection, it turns out the tower's guardian and prisoner, the Forgotten Bride, has manifested.

World: High fantasy action RPG, inspired heavily by Dark Souls III (context & lore inspiration: Nameless King) and Bloodborne

Lore: According to legend, abandoned and ostracized by the world when her betrothed betrayed the King, the Bride of the Rider was locked inside the observatory tower to guard and warn the kingdom against her lover's return. She never wavered in her affections, yet he never returned, leading her to walk the tower stairs day and night, looking to the skies. Ultimately, she learned how to become incorporeal, sending her shadow to do her bidding, corrupting and cursing her soul in the process. One day, she no longer even remembered her own name. Still, she remains, hoping he will return and give her his name to replace the one she lost...

Encounter Cinematic:

INT. PENULTIMATE FLOOR OF OBSERVATORY TOWER.

From behind the Player we see a broken lantern, black with soot, glass shattered. In the distance we see an old lady, THE FORGOTTEN BRIDE, slowly walk down the staircase from the missing observatory floor above. The smaller shards of glass crack under the Player's feet.

Closer, we see she's bent low by age, carrying a faint lantern on a chain in front of her. Shadows dance across the wall behind her, not quite in tune with her movement.

Her face is shrouded behind a silvery veil. The veil is long enough that it stirs the dust around her.

Around her lily of the valley grows in the cracks of the polished granite floor, giving off a faint blue glow.

THE FORGOTTEN BRIDE (V.O.)
The heavens stand silent
tonight, but you already knew.

She takes the last step down, landing onto the floor with the player. We hear the soft ECHO of her bare footsteps, and equally soft MUSIC, a waltz, with discordant chimes from her belt.

She raises the lantern high above her head. She seems to stretch in size.

THE FORGOTTEN BRIDE
Take his place. Dance, with
me.

The light of the lantern grows stronger, pushing the Bride's many shadows out towards the walls. Her eyes flash white behind the lace fabric of her veil.

THE FORGOTTEN BRIDE
It is your fault, after all.

The lantern drops onto the floor, shatters, and goes out.

>The fight begins<

Fight Mechanics:

While less powerful than other mid-game bosses, the Forgotten Bride clings to life through a curse. To beat the Forgotten Bride, the player needs to banish her eight shadows. Alternatively, they may kill the bride first, in which case she will be resurrected in her true form, the Shadow of the Nameless Queen.

Phase one:

The Bride: At a DISTANCE, the Forgotten Bride attacks through her AOE magical attack. She calls on the flowers around the floor to spark an electrical current to run between them, causing Lightning damage and a Poison debuff. The Player can counter this through destroying flowers.

In CLOSE COMBAT, the Forgotten Bride lashes out with her overgrown nails. She is fast, but moves only on the first beat of the waltz, traversing great distances.

Staggered, she falls forward on her knees and performs a SUMMON. Since the Bride herself has no weapons, she will call on her shadows to attack the Player. She relights the lantern at the center of the room through magic.

Shadows: Similar to an affinity or thrall, the Shadows hone in on the player and attack with spears of pure darkness. They creep along the floor, ceiling and walls, causing massive damage if they land an attack on the Player's back, but slow to move out of the way.

The shadows cannot reach the player close to the lantern, and can only be banished when the lantern is lit. When the lantern is unlit, the shadows fade into obscurity. In this phase, the player should opt to attack the Bride herself.

Phase two:

Shadow of the Nameless Queen: If the Forgotten Bride is slain before her shadows, the shadows join together to form the Shadow of the Nameless Queen. No longer bound by the stiff flesh of the Bride, the Nameless queen moves on ones, twos and threes of the music. A massive creature of glowing teal light, she wields the spine of her fallen body as a sword and her chiming belt as a circlet. Her legs are covered in veins of light like roots of a tree. Hitting the veins staggers the Shadow, and when staggered, she falls forward. Breaking the circlet on her head vanquishes the shadow in a burst of blinding lightning.

Encounter Rewards:

Ring of Lightning Protection:

A signet ring inscribed with a bolt of lightning, and traces of a long since worn out name. Increases lightning resistance.

A small spark runs through the worn dark metal of this ring, sometimes manifesting into a small spear of lightning onto enemies, or its wielder.

Dried Lily of the Valley:

Dried petals of an extinct poisonous flower, grown in a cold-climate valley long ago.

Induces poison. Reduces frostbite.