

# Narrative Design Document

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# World Story

## Introduction

Zuberi was born in Egypt in 85 B.C.E. into royalty. Her father was a noble, and helped create order and stability over his region. Her mother was primarily tasked with raising Zuberi, teaching her the ways of women in their society, but her daughter was always restless. Zuberi was always fascinated by the stars at night and the beings that watched over everyone. Having heard stories about Ra defeating monsters or Ma'at weighing the hearts of the deceased, she felt a special connection to them. Being a curious child, she was constantly asking her parents questions that they couldn't answer, which only fed her imagination.

The more she grew up, the more her parents expected of her, and while they tried to ground her in reality, they could never fully control her thoughts. Due to her curiosity, she found herself wasting hours every day reading out on the terrace, rather than completing her duties as the daughter of a noble. She became very educated in the various Gods and Goddesses that protected their world much to her parents dismay, but they refused to allow her to dedicate her life to these "fantasy stories." One night after a very serious discussion with her father, she secludes herself on the terrace. After falling asleep, she hears a noise nearby, which startles her awake. She comes face to face with a jackal, who transforms into the god Anubis, who enables her to take part in an otherworldly journey into the Afterlife. After escaping her father's estate, the duo makes their way for the gateway into the Afterlife.

## Hall of Osiris

Once through the Gateway, there is one last checkpoint that Zuberi must get through in order to explore the Afterlife: the Hall of Osiris. It is here where the truly dead are judged for their actions and are sentenced to roam the Field of Reeds in bliss, or have their heart devoured by Ammit. Ammit notices Zuberi and alerts Osiris, who forces her to go through the judgement. As she is from a noble background, it was seen as sacrilegious to leave the world of the living on unnatural terms. After failing the test of Osiris, he orders Ammit to eat her heart. Before Anubis has a chance to explain, Zuberi fights Ammit in a deadly battle to keep her soul. After defeating Ammit, her physical form was destroyed. As a result, there was no one able to punish those who were deemed unfit to live out the afterlife in the Field of Reeds, flooding the afterlife with evil souls. Due to this, Osiris allows Anubis to lead Zuberi on her journey to recover Ammit and bring stability to the Afterlife once again.

## Field of Reeds

The Field of Reeds it's the first zone the player will have access to once the tutorial is completed and Ammit is defeated. After the fight in the Hall of Osiris, Anubis leads Zuberi to the Bazaar, a hub location located in the Field of Reeds. It is here where Zuberi will be able to interact with NPC's and shops to purchase upgrades, learn more about the world, and gain guidance as to what needs to be done next. As the Field of Reeds is the ideal location for spending your afterlife, it's primary design is based off of the Nile river. With this, the river would be the biggest element of the zone, and even though the game takes place, this area would

be primarily water based. Having cattails lining the river and, of course reeds, this zone has had no altercation with any of the evil spirits thanks to Ammit.

The sub-areas would be based on different types of water based concepts found around the Nile. The Kemi region is based on the color of the black sediment and would have a black clay environment to reflect that. The Lake of Flowers, where Zuberi meets Hraf-Hef, the Divine Ferryman who helps usher the souls across the lake. Past the Lake of Flowers lies the Blue Nile, which is an offshoot of the primary Nile river. This would be the “Nile-est” portion of the Field of Reeds, showing the most river features compared to the other sub-areas. Other sub-areas would include the Kharga Oasis, and the River Valley, both of which will help further build the Field of Reeds and show just how corrupt this serene location can become due to the actions of Zuberi.

The primary boss of this area would be Hapi, the River God. He looked over the annual flooding of the Nile, and was a twin deity, looking over both Upper and Lower Egypt. This would be a double boss fight against the both of them as they see Zuberi as the cause of struggle and chaos in the Field of Reeds. It's up to Zuberi to fight against them and make sure they understand that she wants to help bring back stability. Once Hapi is defeated, Zuberi will be able to proceed into the next zone.

## Midnight Necropolis

The Midnight Necropolis is the second zone in Zuberi that is open to the player after defeating Hapi in the Field of Reeds. This area is much darker than the Field of Reeds, almost as if it mimics nighttime in the Afterlife, although there is no . This area, as the name suggests, is a burial ground, with different tombs all spread throughout, and has a close resemblance to the real Egyptian land. As it resembles nighttime in the real world, the landscape would be cooler, tinting the sand and structures with a cool blue and black.

The first key location is a massive pyramid that leads underground into the sandstone caves. After trekking through the dunes, Zuberi will come across this pyramid and realize that the sandstone caves beneath hold just as much, if not more than the pyramid itself. The second key location is the Valley of Kings, which acts as a mass burial ground for all the old pharaohs. The only issue is the Valley of Kings is trapped inside an eternal sandstorm centered around the tomb. The high winds and decreased visibility would make it treacherous to pass through. Should Zuberi find a way through, she would come across the main area. Much like the Field of Reeds, there is a God who is limiting Zuberi's pathway to Ammit. In this case, it is Huh, the God of Time.

## Fiery Plains

The zone following the Midnight Necropolis is the Fiery Plains. This hellscape is the primary goal for Zuberi to get to, as this is where the Lake of Fire is located and Ammit has retreated to after her defeat at the Halls of Osiris. A fiery landscape comes with fiery aspects. Flows of lava pour in from the ceiling and the sand is black and charred, with entire dunes set ablaze.

Upon entering the plains, Zuberi is able to travel in two distinct directions. The first is to find the Prison of Apep. Apep, being the primary enemy against Ra, is imprisoned here after their fight each day. This prison is on the far side of a deadly River of Fire, which stems from the great lake of fire that Zuberi is aiming to get to. The river is far too treacherous to swim across, even for a real soul, so it's up to Zuberi to find a way across. The second area leads directly towards the Lake of Fire where Ammit retreated to. After diving deep into the Brimstone depths, Zuberi finds the Lake of Fire deep underground the Fiery Plains. It is here where Zuberi comes face to face with a God who lives within the lake: Am-heh. This god is holding Ammit hostage in

the lake, and refuses to allow her to return to the Hall of Osiris. Zuberi must defeat him in order to free Ammit, and begin to restore balance to the Afterlife.

## Characters

### Protagonists

#### Zuberi

As the protagonist, Zuberi is led on the journey through the afterlife by Anubis. As she has little to no experience in traveling the afterlife, let alone the real world, her skillset is lacking at the inception of the game. Even with the help of Anubis, she still has much to learn and many skills to further improve her ability to survive in the Afterlife. She starts out with a basic sword or a “Khopesh” which acts as her primary means of attacking. Regardless of her ability to fight beforehand, she is still able to hold her own in a fight, not requiring the help of Anubis in many ways, outside of teaching her the basics of how things are going to work in the Afterlife. As Zuberi progresses through the world, more skills will become available to her, transforming her into an unstoppable force.

#### Anubis

Anubis is the God of Mummification, the Afterlife, and Lost Souls. He takes the form of a half jackal/half man, but can also take the form of a full jackal. His primary role is to help escort the souls of those who have died into the afterlife, and acts as Osiris’ right hand man, assisting him judge the souls who came before him. Many times, people would call upon him to protect



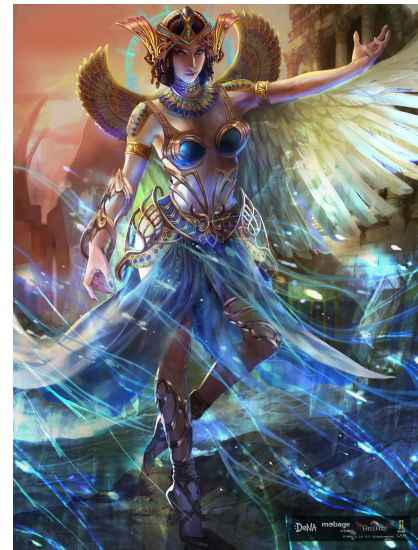
themselves from curses, as well as strengthen any curses that were placed on others.

Anubis is kind in temperament, unlike the jackals that he represents. He feels sympathetic towards the souls he helps, and acts as a mediator. He often helps them come to terms with their death. After finding Zuberi on the terrace, he was able to read her troubled soul, seeing that she was lost and was looking for something beyond her grasp. Even if he is tasked with shepherding the souls of the dead, he decided to make an exception for Zuberi, knowing she would ask him to help her discover more about herself.

## Isis

Known as the Mother of Gods, Isis is one of the most well known Egyptian Goddesses. She is compassionate in nature, caring for her fellow gods in addition to caring for all humans. When people died, she would appear to them and help guide them safely to the afterlife. Isis was known as the Protector of Women, as well as the bringer of magic, as she had close ties with the use of magic. As her worship began to grow, she evolved into the “Queen of the Universe” and was believed to have power over fate.

Acting as a foil to Anubis, Isis is the secondary companion to Zuberi as she is traveling through the Afterlife. A bit more of a loose cannon, it takes a bit of reasoning with her to understand something. Her use of magic is unparalleled in the Afterlife, being one of, if not the strongest magic users, but rarely uses it for the gain of others. Not to say she won't use it to help Zuberi, Isis would rather go at things head on and see





the outcome afterwards. Her relationship with Anubis is fickle, but the two get along enough to help push Zuberi in the right direction, even if Isis won't share her power with her.

## Enemies

### Basic Enemies

#### Corrupted Scarab

The corrupted scarab is one of the most common enemies found in the afterlife. Having been infused with dark energies from the unwanted evil souls that flooded the afterlife, they grew to abnormal sizes, becoming deadly to the inhabitants of the afterlife. While they are primarily grounded, there are a few who fly down to swoop on unsuspecting souls. The sharp mandibles are deadly to anyone or anything they come in contact with, and few things can withstand more than a few hits. Due to the nature of the magic that was casted upon them, the scarabs have started to bleed into the world of the living, along with other corrupted creatures.



Fig. 1-  
Concept for Scarab Enemy

#### Corrupted Snake

Similarly to the scarab, the corrupted snake was also imbued with dark energies from evil spirits. Not as big as the scarab, the snakes makeup for their size with their attacks. They are able to launch a deadly venom at any unlucky



Fig. 2-  
Concept for Corrupted Snake

soul who comes within their range, making the snakes of the Afterlife can be an unseen threat. They also have a deadly bite for anyone who comes too close. While not as dangerous as the venom spit, a few bites, and anyone would be found completely incapacitated.

### Heron Warrior

A native avian to Egypt, the Heron Warrior is a flying force to be reckoned with. Having a razor sharp beak, these birds will swoop down at Zuberi when she gets too close. When they swoop down, they are left defenseless, so a well timed jump can allow Zuberi to counterattack with ease.

### Stoneware Scorpion

This scorpion, altered by evil spirits, has adapted to survive in this new hostile environment that it has found itself. Depending on the zone that Zuberi finds herself in, there will be alterations to the coloring and difficulty of the scorpions. All forms have created an exoskeleton of clay, these scorpions are a tough enemy to fell. Additionally, they are not as common as other enemies found in the afterlife. Their body is about half the size of Zuberi, but their tail towers into the sky to a poisonous point. They are able to snap their claws at anyone in front of them, as well as extend their tail to attack. Their clay shell means they are more difficult than most enemies Zuberi will come across. The clay armor can be shattered, and a few well timed hits are all Zuberi needs to expose the scorpion underneath and defeat it. Depending on the area that they reside in, they will drop more clay of that color.



Fig. 3-  
Stoneware Scorpion  
Concept

## Stoneware Scarab

A reinforced version of the corrupted scarab, the stoneware variant has an outer shell of clay. Much like the non-reinforced counterpart, these scarabs are abnormally large due to the influence of evil souls. Compared to the scorpion, it takes less hits to break through the outer shell, as the scarabs are considerably smaller. Similarly to the other enemies, these scarabs are adapted to the environment they reside in, meaning that depending on the zone Zuberi finds herself, the enemy will vary in difficulty.

## Bosses

### Ammit, The Devourer

Ammit is a goddess who helps serve Osiris and Thoth in judging who is worthy of eternal peace in the Field of Reeds. She is depicted as a demon with the head of a crocodile, torso of a lion, and the backside of a hippo. Her primary role is to act as the executioner; devouring the hearts of those who failed the test of Osiris to pass into the afterlife. Once the heart has been consumed, the soul would be forever restless. Ammit would more often than not, cast the heart of the soul into a great Lake of Fire, destroying it forever, and cementing the soul in eternal torment.

A distinctly melee boss, Ammit likes to charge at her foes, propelled forward with her strong hippo legs. She also will lunge a short distance and swipe with her leopard like paws. Finally, she will snap at her enemies that are directly in front of her. Her strong upper half makes her a formidable foe, but her lower half is left defenseless to attacks.

## Hapi, Duality of the Marsh

The final boss of the Field of Reeds is Hapi, Duality of the Marsh. Being the patron of Northern and Southern Egypt as well as the Nile, Hapi is sometimes seen as twin gods; one for the North and one for the South. This aspect of Hapi is no different, taking on two forms for Zuberi to fight: Northern and Southern Aspect. The two have mastered the art of fighting as the tides do, with one defending while the other attacks, and swapping back and forth. Using the power of the Nile, Hapi uses primarily water based attacks along with his crook for a basic melee attack. The two use seemingly identical attacks, but with a few distinctions.

The Northern Aspect uses more straightforward attacks, focusing on attack to the sides of himself to mimic the nature of the Northern Currents. If Zuberi gets too close to either side, he swings his crook in a sweeping motion to cover both sides. He also has a powerful slam which can knock rocks to fall down onto the arena. To compensate for his powerful melee attacks, he lacks ranged attacks, only able to send out slow moving water bolts towards Zuberi.

The Southern Aspect is more ranged focused than the Northern Aspect. While he still has his crook, it's not nearly as powerful and only swings on the side opposite of Zuberi to cover his flank. The real danger comes in the form of ranged attacks. The common water bolt that both aspects share is enhanced with this form, moving faster and dealing more damage. He also submerged platforms, making them unusable for Zuberi. His final ability is to call down a torrent of water in the form of a pillar at any location in the arena.

## NPC's

### Khenmu

Known as “The Great Potter,” Khenmu helped bring life to humans. Using clay from the Nile, he would create effigies of humans. He would hold them up to the sky so Ra’s light could shine into them, giving them life. Khenmu is the patron god of those who create pottery ceramics. Working together with Ptah, Khenmu is one of the primary shopkeepers in the Field of Reeds. Through the duo, Zuberi is able to buy upgrades to make herself more powerful.

Throughout her journey, Zuberi will come across clay monsters that drop a raw clay that can be brought back to Khenmu and Ptah to help create upgrades. Depending on the location Zuberi is in, there will be different types of raw clay that drop from these special enemies: Black, Red, and White. These types of clay are locked to specific regions: Field of Reeds, Midnight Necropolis, and Lake of Fire (respectively). Upon returning to Khenmu, he will take this clay and, combined with the power of Ptah, smith upgrades for Zuberi.

Khenmu is a gentile god, and rarely likes aggressive confrontation. He likes to spend his time methodically creating new creations from clay in his workshop. A more introverted soul, he is a bit more shy around others he doesn’t quite know, and has a tough time maintaining longer conversations, but Zuberi helps get him out of his shell. He visibly lights up when she comes to his store, and gets excited when she shows interest in him.

### Ptah

The partner of Khenmu, Ptah is known as the god of craftsmen, specifically sculptors. At his workshop, he helps create upgrades for Zuberi’s khopesh using the clay she brings in. After

Khenmu works the initial crafting, Ptah finishes the upgrade himself and imbues the upgrade with godly powers in order to grant Zuberi different passive abilities that she, as a mortal, can handle.

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Ptah is more outgoing, acting as the face of the workshop and the one who interacts the most with Zuberi whenever she comes in. Always eager to show her his new works, Ptah loves to create, even if his creations aren't the best quality. His relationship with Khenmu stems beyond their workplace, as Khenmu helps improve Ptah's skills as a craftsman using clay, and the two have a deep connection to the concept of creation.