

Main Game Story Concept (Rough Overview and Characters):

Magical Island is situated in a fantasy world (a parallel world whose gates are concealed) where the protagonists have drifted ashore. This world harbours fantastical creatures (dragons, centaurs, mermaids, etc.) and invites the protagonists to build and explore. The players can visit many other islands in the vicinity, where they can build outposts after they complete the main quests for those islands. This document describes one of those additional islands, its backstory, and the main quest.

The Main Characters of the Overall Narrative:

Janice, 17. She follows her grandfather's footsteps, who was a navigator venturing into the rough seas to discover a new world he claimed existed. He mysteriously vanished during one of his trips, so Janice wants to find him. She follows the instructions in his diary – the only thing he left behind.

Hannah, 18. Janice's best friend. She's a camping enthusiast and has an adventurous spirit. She is pursuing a BA degree in Ancient Languages, so she follows Janice after seeing the strange inscriptions in Janice's grandfather's diary. Hannah believes those inscriptions are the language of an undiscovered species, so she's intrigued to learn more.

Ryan, 20. Sailor and ship captain. He was hired by Janice and Hannah for their little adventure and ended up stranded with them in the fantasy world. He's a kind and generous guy, helping out the girls as he can.

The Additional Island (Original Concept with its Description, Backstory, Characters, and Quests):

Enchanted Island (Pirate/Mermaid Island)

- **Enchanted Island** has purple sand shores. It is surrounded by dark blue pointy boulders that ships may crash into, and great reefs that yield pink, red, dark green, and purple seaweed vegetation. The overall feeling of this island is haunting and magical, just like Home Island, but more eerie since it is home to a mermaid (i.e. siren) population.
- The vegetation on the island surface consists of strange blue, dark green, or magenta plants and willow-like trees. Some particular plants can be used to brew Sleep Potion which will help with some Quests.
- The boulders in the sea near the sandy shores are important. They're where mermaids would sit and chant, luring sailors to their island and making their ships crash. Sometimes, their mysterious chant can be heard (added to the background music in undertones).
- The population of the island are dark green and dark blue lizard-like monsters of human size, covered in fins. The green ones have hands and feet covered in claws and inhabit the land. The blue ones have webbed hands and long fish tails, and are mostly found on the boulders at the shores but can also come onto the land. Both species are hostile and need to be put to sleep (this is where Sleep Potion comes in). Later, we find out the green creatures are pirates and the blue ones are mermaids, but they're under a spell and need rescuing.
- The purpose of the players is to help Dahlia, the daughter of a pirate captain and a mermaid queen, lift the spell upon her island and reclaim her people.
- The history of the population runs thus: a particular pirate crew marooned on this island, but the captain was a wise man. Even though the mermaids were hauntingly beautiful, he knew they were dangerous, so he ordered his crew to cover their ears so the mermaid song wouldn't affect them. The mermaids were surprised and charmed to be outwitted like this. The mermaid queen fell for the wise pirate captain, and the captain was also in love although not due to the queen's charms but her person. Therefore, they settled down and had a child, Dahlia – the half-mermaid pirate girl who is a princess of this island.
- Dahlia's grandmother is a sea witch. She was against the mermaids and humans coexisting, so she put a spell on the island. Dahlia has to break this spell and prove to her grandmother that humans and mermaids can coexist.

- The relationship between Dahlia and her Sea Witch grandmother serves as a foil for Janice's and her grandfather's relationship. Both grandparents leave cryptic messages (diary/map) for their grandchildren, but while Janice's grandfather had benign intentions, Sea Witch's reasons are more unfriendly (although, as it turns out in the end, they too come from a loving heart as Sea Witch looks out for her daughter the Mermaid Queen and her offspring in her faulty way).

Character description and background:

Name: Dahlia

Backstory: Dahlia is the daughter of the Mermaid Queen and Pirate Captain on the Enchanted Island. Her grandmother is a Sea Witch, who was against the mermaids' and the humans' union. To test her daughter's (the Mermaid Queen's) resolve, the Sea Witch put a spell on the Enchanted Island and turned the pirates and the mermaids, including the Mermaid Queen, into hostile monsters. Dahlia, the princess of the island and the first mixed-breed offspring of a human and a mermaid has to be the one to break the spell. To achieve that, she has to overcome her grandmother's challenge and find the Mermaid Jewel (which can reverse the spell and turn pirates and mermaids back to normal) that the Sea Witch hid somewhere on the Enchanted Island. The only clue Dahlia has is a cryptic map and the Sea Witch's message that, to find the Jewel, Dahlia must embrace her dual heritage as a human pirate and a mermaid (something Sea Witch believes is impossible). Dahlia travels to nearby islands to find someone who can decipher the strange symbols on her map. She also uses this sea trip as a means to embrace her "inner pirate" and "inner mermaid" (although she has no clue what this means, she's just winging it).

Personality traits: Dahlia is happy-go-lucky and upbeat, but also witty. She has an adventurous spirit and dives into challenges head-on. However, she questions her self-worth as a human-and-mermaid mix and has doubts about her persona. Her inner fears and the gravity of

her situation (that her people's fate hangs on her shoulders) give her a tendency to overthink and panic, especially when things aren't looking well or she's in a deadlock. Dahlia has picked up some pirate lingo from her father, but her mother the queen watched it that she didn't develop a sailor's mouth, so she's more refined in her speech.

Sample barks: "Ahoy! I'm Captain Dahlia!"

"Hoist the colours and let the stars guide us!"

"Like my old man says, you can conquer any storm if only you know how to steer the ship!"

"Whenever I'm overwhelmed by fear or grief, I sing from my heart. It makes me feel I'm not alone."

"My mom used to sing a special lullaby to me whenever I felt down. Want me to sing it now? It's bound to make you feel better!"

Notes for the art team: Dahlia has a black skin colour that leans into dark green (like a mermaid). Her hair is long, deep blue and tied in dreadlocks. Her eyelashes and eyebrows are also blue. She wears a red pirate bandana on her head. She wears shark tooth earrings and has a golden nose piercing on the right side of her nose. Her eyes are big and yellow (a typical mermaid colour). She wears a white short-sleeved open-neck shirt the size of a summer top, her belly left uncovered. She is barefoot and wears only a navy blue dress down to her ankles (it transforms into a mermaid tail of the same colour when it touches water). She has bluish fins around her ears and webbed feet of a bluish colour, while her hands are of a normal human.

The Main Story for Enchanted Island:

What is the intro/setup?

Dahlia arrives on Magical Island with her father's pirate ship. She reassures Janice, Hannah and Ryan that she's not there to rob them but to seek help. She shows them the map she's brought

along, with cryptic symbols, and says that her people's lives depend on deciphering it. Hannah recognizes the symbols as the same ones used in Janice's diary, but the handwriting is a bit off. She deciphers the first guideline on the map as "All will end where it began." Dahlia figures that this message means the Mermaid Jewel is hidden on her island and urges Hannah to accompany her so she'll keep deciphering the map. Ryan insists that he and Janice go with Hannah too. Thus, the three friends board Dahlia's ship and go to Enchanted Island. Their goal is to help Dahlia decipher the map, find the Mermaid Jewel and lift the curse on her island so her people will turn back to normal.

What obstacle(s) must the characters overcome?

- The main obstacle for the characters are the island inhabitants – pirates and mermaids – turned into monsters by the curse. Since they're Dahlia's people, the players can't harm them, so they have to employ more difficult tactics – putting them to sleep with Sleep Potion. Sleep Potion can be brewed with a Cauldron and utilized on the monsters, but its effects are temporary so they will need to brew some again after it runs out. Cauldron on a Fireplace has to be constructed on the island and plants regularly harvested, so all of this falls into the gameplay mechanics.
- Another obstacle is the time it takes to decipher the cryptic map. Ava deciphers Sea Witch's handwriting little by little, so the players have to battle the monsters and construct their outpost in the meantime.
- The mermaid chant that reverberates throughout the island is another problem. It sounds periodically, and when it does, it makes the characters slower or drains their energy, so the players have to brew stacks of Energy Potion (also available through plant harvest) to reawaken their characters and make them do the work without losing time.
- Island Floods. They happen not too often but periodically, depending on the checkpoints the players pass (i.e. how much of the cryptic map is deciphered). The floods bring up rocks and shells which have to be removed to free space for construction. It often means double work for players as the amount of removable objects increases.

What is the turning point?

The turning point is when the cryptic map hints that Dahlia has a part of the Mermaid Jewel on her neck – her mother’s pearl necklace. It will glow when it senses the vicinity of its other part. The Mermaid Jewel was the combination of these two identical pearls shared between the Sea Witch and the Mermaid Queen as their mother-daughter bond. Dahlia has to jump into the water and turn into a mermaid to seek the second part of the pearl under the sea. The players have to brew some Underwater Breathing Potion for Janice, Hannah, and Ryan so they can accompany Dahlia on her underwater adventure. When they dive down, they have to break through a certain sealed cave entrance under the island (which can be broken through Dahlia’s song) and enter a cave hall, where they find Sea Witch – Dahlia’s grandmother – who possesses the other part of the pearl.

How does the arc end?

Seeing that Dahlia is as capable as a mermaid, Sea Witch realizes that her daughter the Mermaid Queen was right in her choice, so she lifts the curse on the island. The Mermaid Queen and Sea Witch have a reunion and Sea Witch apologizes to her and her people before promising never to disturb them again, but Dahlia asks her to visit them from time to time so she can get to know her grandma better. The island population thanks Janice, Hannah, and Ryan for their help. Janice and Dahlia have an especially tender farewell since they’ve bonded as friends due to their similar relations with their grandparents. Dahlia wishes Janice the best on her quest to reconnect with her grandfather.

What story elements from this arc could continue on the Magical Island?

Ryan, Hannah, and Janice get the Sleep Potion (putting live NPCs such as Sheep and other creatures temporarily to sleep), Energy Potion (Double XP) and Underwater Breathing Potion (underwater mini-adventure) recipes, which they retain throughout the rest of the game. Dahlia also becomes a recurring character who may visit the friends on her ship for further Side Island adventures.

Dialogues during the Intro Quest:

Ryan: Admiring the view of this breathtaking sunset... But wait, what's that? A ship? I've never seen a ship on our horizon before! It's got a black flag... Pirates?!

Dahlia: Ahoy, mates, I'm Captain Dahlia! Don't worry, though, I'm not here to pillage and plunder! I'm just travelling to find someone who can decipher my map. Maybe you guys can help?

Janice: Oh, in that case, Hannah here can take a look! She's an expert, she decoded symbols in my grandfather's diary too!

Dahlia: Really? You guys are lifesavers! So, do you think you can decipher these?

Hannah: Let me see... Such clumsy handwriting! But the symbols are the same as in Janice's diary. I think I got the first one: "All will end where it began". What does this mean?

Dahlia: Oh, thank you so much, it all makes sense now! The Jewel must be back on my island... Hannah, can I please take you along? I need to decipher the rest of the map, my people's lives depend on it!

Ryan: Hold up, if Hannah's coming, then so are we! If you say people's lives are in danger, you'll need all the help you can get!