

# Astral Shift

Astral Shift is an unfinished mobile video game project that is being developed by students (team leaders [Richard O'Hara](#) and [Jack Palmer](#)) involved in the Birmingham City University Gamer Camp. The game's endgame is to be developed so it can be played on smartphone, tablet, smart watch and eventually to be moved onto STEAM.

Astral Shift is a strategy/adventure game where the player takes on the role of a daring, young Spirit Monk who has been chosen to collect numerous scrolls in order to be rid of the oncoming Oni (demons) from taking over the world and plunging it into disaster.

Within the game you are accompanied by the Spirit who has chosen you to take on this journey, and whom you use as a projectile to hit out at enemies. However this is where the player *must* strategize their moves, for using your Spirit as a projectile does not kill your enemy: instead it swaps your position with the enemies, where it could help you progress or put you into danger and cause you to lose a life. There are also boss battles where you too must use this skill to your advantage, making it harder for enemies to hit you for example. However the Spirit is not your only companion, nor is it silent. To help players if they are stuck the Spirit or the Dojo Master you come across during gameplay will often voice hints on what to do or encourage the player, motivating them to not give up on the game if they struggle against positioning themselves against the Oni.

Richard O'Hara and Jack Palmer have been kind enough to give me images of the Spirit Monk, the Oni and the Spirit to help you visualise what the game would look like.

## **THE SPIRIT MONK:**



**THE SPIRIT:**



**THE ONI:**



At this stage in the document all work on Astral Shift here will be purely my own work as requested. I worked on Astral Shift's narrative and lore/codex and while not all things here will be in the game, it is the work I am most proud of and I thank you for reading.

# Narrative

## INTRODUCTION

### NARRATOR/DOJO MASTER SONAM

Many years ago, when I was known only as Sonam, creatures known as The Oni were banished to the Underworld through a curse conjured by the spirit Monks of old. It has been nearly a thousand years since then and the Oni have returned, free from the chains that once bound them. It is now up to Pema, my apprentice to collect the scrolls of the Bound and send the Oni back into the Underworld where they belong.

### GAME STARTS. TUTORIAL ON HOW TO PLAY APPEARS.

### IN GAME SCENES (NOT IN ORDER)

#### SCENE 1

##### PEMA

Where did the Oni come from in the first place?

##### DOJO MASTER SONAM

Did you not listen during my teachings Pema? They come from the worst of man, from their spirit. They are destructive, chaotic and only good was to come of banishing them to the Underworld. It's why the scrolls are important. Why you are important Pema. Why your spirit is.

##### PEMA

She doesn't *feel* good.

##### DOJO MASTER SONAM

[CHUCKLING] Your spirit and you are the same. There is no separating the two of you. She will help you every step of the way on your journey.

##### PEMA

And you?

DOJO MASTER SONAM

Yes child, and I.

**SCENE 2**

PEMA

The Oni...They're stronger than I expected.

SPIRIT

We'll still finish them. There's a reason why Sonam chose us to do this and no demon out there is going to stop us.

PEMA

You're confident.

SPIRIT

Someone has to be the perky side of us, so I guess it's going to have to be me!

**SCENE 3**

DOJO MASTER SONAM

You looked tired, Pema. Worry not, the journey is not as long as it seems.

PEMA

Sure, if you say so...

DOJO MASTER SONAM

What was that?

PEMA

Nothing!

DOJO MASTER SONAM

Hmph...Maybe more collecting those scrolls and saving the world and less backchat, hmm?

PEMA

[SIGHING] Yes Master...

**SCENE 4**

SPIRIT

You know you aren't too bad.

PEMA

Really?

SPIRIT

No.

PEMA

Ugh!

**SCENE 5**

SPIRIT

I was kidding before, with what I said. There's got to be worse people to share a body with.

PEMA

Well you *are* my spirit. I'm the only body you really should be in.

SPIRIT

Should being the key word. That's how Oni's are made, you know? Through bad spirits twisting into demons after their body dies.

PEMA

Oh. That's...comforting.

SPIRIT

[SIGH] I knew I shouldn't have said anything, look at you. You're worrying.

PEMA

Me? Worry? About you becoming an Oni? Don't be silly!

PEMA [TO HERSELF]

I really need to ask Master Sonam about how to bind spirits...

**SCENE 5**

PEMA

We're nearly there. We must be.

DOJO MASTER SONAM

Eyes can be deceiving, Pema.

PEMA

What? We're not even close?

DOJO MASTER SONAM

[CHUCKLING] Oh no, you are very near to the end.

SPIRIT

Wow. The look on our face must have been priceless.

DOJO MASTER SONAM

[CHUCKLING] It was!

PEMA

What is *wrong* with you two?

**SCENE 6**

DOJO MASTER SONAM

Be wary Pema, the Oni will get stronger the further you travel. They know we won't let them just roam the Earth, that we'll try and stop them.

PEMA

How will I counter something that's stronger than me?

DOJO MASTER SONAM

Trust in your spirit. She'll guide you. It's the only way.

PEMA

[SIGH] I had a feeling you would say that.

DOJO MASTER SONAM

You must trust her Pema. You *must*.

**PRE-BATTLE DIALOGUE (CAN INCLUDE BOSS BATTLE)**

**SCENE 1**

**PEMA**

They look tough...

**DOJO MASTER SONAM**

You are tougher Pema. The Citadel is counting on you, think of how angry they'll be if the Oni come back and take their lands.

**PEMA**

That's not comforting!

**DOJO MASTER SONAM**

Oh! Well, look on the bright side! You're not being taught Math right now.

**PEMA**

That's...actually helpful, Master.

**DOJO MASTER SONAM**

Don't say your Master never helps you out. Now, go get them!

**ENDING**

**NARRATOR**

After Pema's collection of the Scrolls of the Bound she returned to the Citadel, who welcomed her with open arms and celebration, to resume her teachings under Dojo Master Sonam. At the temple in the Citadel she was taught to harness the powers that her Spirit granted her through meditation and physical training.

And in spite of Pema's spirits determined resistance to the idea, they became fast, if somewhat dysfunctional friends, ready to accomplish any task set in front of them. Within months Dojo Master Sonam felt compelled to release her from his teachings. There was nothing more to teach her – the only way for Pema to improve was to travel further, to explore the world that she risked so much for to save.

**FIN**

# Lore/Codex

## **The Citadel**

Centuries ago the Citadel was created by the very first Spirit Monk as a safe haven in a time of war against the first of the Oni. This refuge for Monks soon expanded into a hamlet for all refugees fleeing the war, taking in any who had been left damaged by the Oni's ransacking of cities and towns. What once had been a simple place to hide soon turned into a hamlet, then a town and then finally a city. Years later the Citadel's Temple became the main place of meditation and training for the Spirit Monks after a newly developed widespread prejudice for the group rose up, driving the Monks from their homes into the only place that would have them.

## **The Spirit Monks**

The Spirit Monks are a group of individuals who are trained from birth to interact with the spirit world. They are chosen by the spirits themselves through the child's dreams. It is up to the spirit whether the child is seen worthy to be given the powers of a Spirit Monk, those who are blessed usually being given to the local Temple in order to be trained. There are rare cases where even if the Spirit has chosen the child and been given to the temple, the Spirit does not reappear except in moments of great danger.

Before the Oni War there were numerous Spirit Monks fighting demons to protect a world that so sorely needed them. Years after, with the Oni banished to the Underworld, the world soon forgot about the powers from the Monks that had saved them from being destroyed. Rumours began to spread the Monks had created the creatures who had taken so many lives. Driven from their homes many Monks fled to the Citadel but not all were successful.

Soon their numbers dwindled until there were only two left. A Dojo Master named Sonam and young girl called Pema

## **The Scrolls of the Bounded**

During the Oni War the Spirit Monks were becoming desperate. Being able to kill but not permanently destroy the Oni was wearing them thin, leeching their energy and causing them to grow pitiful and weak. It was only when the Scrolls of the Bounded were discovered by a monk known as Tenzin that the Spirit Monks were able to figure out a way to seal the Oni to the Underworld, for good.

## **The Oni**

The creation of the Oni are not as clear cut as the creation of the Spirit Monks. Some say the Oni were always here, hidden underground and waiting for their moment to rid the world of life. Others sympathize with them, saying they are creatures created by the terrible powers of the Spirit Monks, unable to see the difference between their creators and the innocents of the world. Neither of these are true yet neither can be said to lie. The Oni are spirits, once as pure and good as the rest of the spirits inside the Barrier yet they became twisted and pulled taut by those who wished the power of the Spirit Monks but were unable to grasp it. Instead of accepting their fate these individuals turned to dark practices to gain the Spirit they so longed for. In return for their misgivings the resentful Spirits bounded to them, taking their minds for themselves

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