

Memento Mori (Working Title)

Kayleigh Shaw Grace Pratt Rowan Knutsen

1. High Concept

Explore the afterlife as a pair of death-defying friends as they find their way to Death herself. Juggle shadows and light to solve puzzles and ascend through the crumbling house of death, piecing together the lives of our ghostly protagonists before their untimely demise and ultimately understand exactly where they are and what they may become.

2. Marketing

2.1. Target Audience

Ages 16-20

The target audience for Memento Mori is people ages 16-20 because, while the game is an overall dark and morbid experience, it contains no gore, violence, profanity, or sexual content that would make it unsafe for a teenage player. Memento Mori also discusses perspectives on death that may be especially interesting or even comforting to an audience at an age where they are nearing adulthood and thereby just beginning to encounter more rhetoric about the meaning of living as it pertains to death.

2.2. Platform

PC, Mac

The target platform for Memento Mori is PC and Mac due to the control schemes made possible by a keyboard as an input device. Because Memento Mori is potentially either a single player or couch co-op multiplayer game, having a single input device which may allow for two players to use it at once is pivotal to the multiplayer gameplay structure.

2.4. Gameplay

3D/2D, puzzle, single player/multiplayer

The world of the game will be entirely 3D, while the player characters and other NPCs will be 2D sprites capable of moving in 3D space within the world. The world of Memento Mori itself will often be a puzzle, as player movement will be almost constantly limited by lighting conditions, physical barriers, or many other obstacles. It will be necessary to keep one player character in the light and one in the dark at all times, while also opening paths forward. When the game begins, a new player may choose to either explore this world

alone, thereby taking control of both the main protagonists, or to play with someone else and each control only one character. Either way, both characters must be used in order to progress.

2.5. Genre

Puzzle, Adventure, Story

2.6. Similar Titles

Myst (Cyan, Broderbund)

The world-based puzzles and mysterious feeling of Myst are similar to Memento Mori.

Don't Starve (Klei Entertainment)

The 2D characters moving in three dimensions as well as the animation style of Don't Starve are similar to Memento Mori.

Little Nightmares (Tarsier Games, BANDAI NAMCO)

The simple exploration puzzles, overlarge world, and some of the light-based puzzles in Little Nightmares are similar to Memento Mori.

Neversong (Atmos Games)

The elusiveness of the story of Neversong and its illustrated ending are similar to Memento Mori.

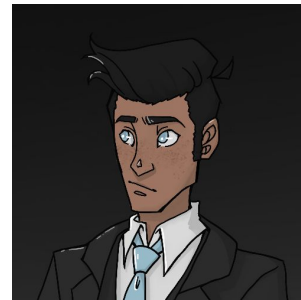
3. Characters

3.1. Player Characters

Best friends since they were young children, Gale and Keiran have always been the odd ones out. They find refuge in one another, and value each other over all else. They disbelieve in the common repertoire of theories on death and the afterlife, and thus set out to find the truth, accidentally killing one another in the process.

3.1.1. Kieran

- Wears Black
- Can revive
- Walks in light/threatened by darkness
- Can communicate with skeleton NPCs
- Innocent and lively
- Represents death as the start of life



Kieran comes from a poor family and was raised to be streetwise and charismatic; as was his family's way of trying to secure him a future. As such, he is generally resentful of the exorbitantly wealthy, with the sole exception of Gale. He loves and trusts Gale like a brother, and delights in teasing him. In their childhood, Kieran was a wild child with interests in the macabre which his family encouraged. In his teens, he had learned to carry himself with the pose of someone from nobler origins than those from which he had actually come, and in his adulthood he runs the customer service and coffin construction aspects of his and Gale's shared funeral home.

3.1.2. Gale

- Wears white
- Can kill
- Walks in darkness/threatened by light
- Can communicate with shade NPCs
- Abrasive, but well-meaning
- Represents dead as the end of life



Gale grew up in a wealthy, and likewise stiflingly proper, family. They disliked how morbid and pragmatic he often was as a child and hoped he would make friends with some of the other, more

normal noble children. He did not conform to their wishes, however, instead choosing the scrappy and equally odd Kieran as his friend. Gale was a reclusive teenager, preferring to spend his time studying math and science over most any other occupation. The exception to this rule being the time he spent playing chess with Kieran. Later, he put his skills in science to use by becoming a mortician, and though his family still had a distaste for Kieran, Gale would do anything for him.

3.2. Plot Characters

3.2.1. Death

- A combination of black, white, and grey
- The current “God of Death,” ruler of the afterlife
- Needs to pass on her position soon
- Reaching her is the final goal of the game
- Hides notes throughout the house
- Is controlling the contents of the house
- References: Morrigan and Hel



Death is an enigmatic being who communicates with Kieran and Gale through notes hidden throughout her house. She is testing them to see if they can work together well enough to take over from her as the masters of death and the afterlife, a job which she has been doing alone for centuries. She would prefer to make them both the kings of her realm so they might avoid the loneliness she has experienced, but if either or both do not prove that they can operate together sufficiently, then she is willing to either just allow one to inherit her crown, or to abandon them both to a true death. She must find someone to take over soon, however, as she is crumbling along with her home.

3.3. Skeletons

These light-dwelling creatures of the afterlife cast shadows which can be used by Gale as shadowy shelter. However, when not in the light, they take the form of the person they used to be. They are trapped in their section of the house, unable to move on as they cannot affect the world around them on their own.

3.3.1. Gale's Father

3.3.2. Keiran's Mother

3.3.3. Kieran's Childhood Bully

- Prankster - doesn't always follow directions

3.3.4. Notable Skeleton Client #1

3.3.5. Notable Skeleton Client #2

3.3.6. Notable Skeleton Client #3

3.3.7. Skeleton Client #1

3.3.8. Skeleton Client #2

3.3.9. Skeleton Client #3

3.3.10. Other Skeletons

3.4. Shades

These dark-dwelling creatures of the afterlife glow with light enough to protect Kieran from shadow. However, when not in the dark, they take the form of the person they used to be. They are trapped in their section of the house, unable to move on as they cannot affect the world around them on their own.

3.4.1. Gale's Mother

3.4.2. Keiran's Father

3.4.3. An Old Lady Who Was Nice to Gale

3.4.4. Notable Shade Client #1

3.4.5. Notable Shade Client #2

3.4.6. Notable Shade Client #3

3.4.7. Shade Client #1

3.4.8. Shade Client #2

3.4.9. Shade Client #3

3.4.10. Other Shades

4. Story

4.1. Themes

- Going through grief with another person.
- The duality of death: death as both the end and the start of life.
- Friendship: a pair of friends completing and complementing each other.
- Challenging the rules, even those of reality itself, if they do not suit you.

4.2. Story Progression

5. The Experience

The main goal of Memento Mori will be to find Death. There is no way to “die” or lose, but the player can stagnate if stuck on a puzzle. If they are stuck for too long, however, either Kieran or Gale will give them a small hint. The game is won, on a small scale, by gaining a new ability/mechanic and progressing to the next area. It is won on a larger scale by reaching Death in the attic of the house.

5.1. Controls



Single Player

W: Walk away from the camera

A: Walk left

SPACE: Jump

V: Switch characters

S: Walk toward the camera

D: Walk right

E: Interact

ESC: Pause

Multiplayer

Gale

Up Arrow: Walk away from the camera

Left Arrow: Walk left

Down Arrow: Walk toward the camera

Right Arrow: Walk Right

Left Shift: Jump

Left Ctrl/Option: Interact

ESC: Pause

Kieran

W: Walk away from the camera

A: Walk left

S: Walk toward the camera

D: Walk right

Right Shift: Jump

Right Ctrl/Option: Interact

ESC: Pause

5.2. Game Mechanics

Area 0: Toward The Light

Walk

- Move whichever player character the player has control of in three dimensions.

Jump

- Leap into the air to clear obstacles.

Interact (basic)

- Do something case-specific with whatever the player character is near. Eg. flip a lightswitch

Switch current character (single player only)

- Allows players to control the opposite player character at the time they choose to switch.

Walk in dark (Gale)

- When controlling Gale, players must keep him where the floor is black. He cannot be where the floor is white, and will either refuse to enter such a space or will teleport back to where he was last in the dark.

Walk in light (Kieran)

- When controlling Kieran, players must keep him where the floor is white. He cannot be where the floor is black, and will either refuse to enter such a space or will teleport back to where he was last in the light.

Walk in grey light (both)

- Kieran and Gale and coexist in the grey light. Grey light is only found at save locations and beside entrances and exits to areas, however.

Area 1: Denial

Interact with skelton NPCs (Kieran)

- Keiran can talk to the skeleton NPCs when they are in the light with him. They may move outside of the light, however, in which case he cannot interact with them until they return to a white space. When interacting, what Kieran can ask the skeletons to do will vary based on the situation.

Interact with shade NPCs (Gale)

- Gale can talk to the shade NPCs when they are in the dark with him. They may move outside of the dark, however, in which case he cannot interact with them until they return to a black space. When interacting, what Gale can ask the skeletons to do will vary based on the situation.

Area 2: Anger

Kill (Gale)

Revive (Kieran)

Area 3: Bargaining**Area 4: Depression**

Use mirrors (both)

Area 5: Acceptance

Control light (both)

5.3. Progression & Challenge

5.4. Art

2D Art

All UI

Ending credits

Art and animation for Gale and Kieran

Art and animation for NPCs

3D Art

All environment assets

Death character

Death character animation

All prop assets (boxes, ect.)

Video

Three different ending scenes

Opening

Sizzle reel for portfolio

6. Interface

6.1. Flowcharts

Main Menu

Options Screen

Pause Menu

End-Of-Level Screen

6.2. Functions

1: Main Menu

Selection on the screen is done using the mouse. Buttons highlight when moused over.

1.1: Options Screen

The options screen includes:

- Music Volume
- Sound Effects Volume
- Fullscreen/Windowed

1.2: Continue Screen

Continue will take you to a screen which lists all of your available saved games. Clicking on one then clicking “Play” will load that game.

1.3: New Game Screen

New Game gives players the option of choosing single player or multiplayer after which they may begin a new game.

1.4: Quit Screen

Quit asks if the player is sure they would like to quit, and if they choose “Yes” then the application will close.

2: Pause Menu

The pause menu is opened during gameplay by pressing the ESC key once. Menu navigation is done via the mouse. ESC can be used to leave the menu at any time.

2.1: Continue Button

Closes the pause menu and resumes the game.

2.2: Journal Button

Opens the journal menu.

2.3: Options Button

Options includes:

- Music Volume
- Sound Effects Volume
- Fullscreen/Windowed
- Change Game Mode

2.4: Quit Button

Quit asks if the player is sure they would like to quit, and if they choose “Yes” then the application will close.

3: Journal Menu

The journal menu contains a record of all the riddles the player has completed. They may be flipped through by clicking “Next” or “Back” with the mouse

3.1: Next Button

Next switches the currently viewed riddle to the next one in order of their origin levels one forward.

3.2: Back Button

Back switches the currently viewed riddle to the last one in order of their origin levels one. If there are no more riddles to the left, the Back button returns the player to the pause menu.

4: End-Of-Level Screen

This screen appears when both player characters reach the door at the end of a level. It asks to be sure that the player is ready to leave the area.

3.1: Yes Button

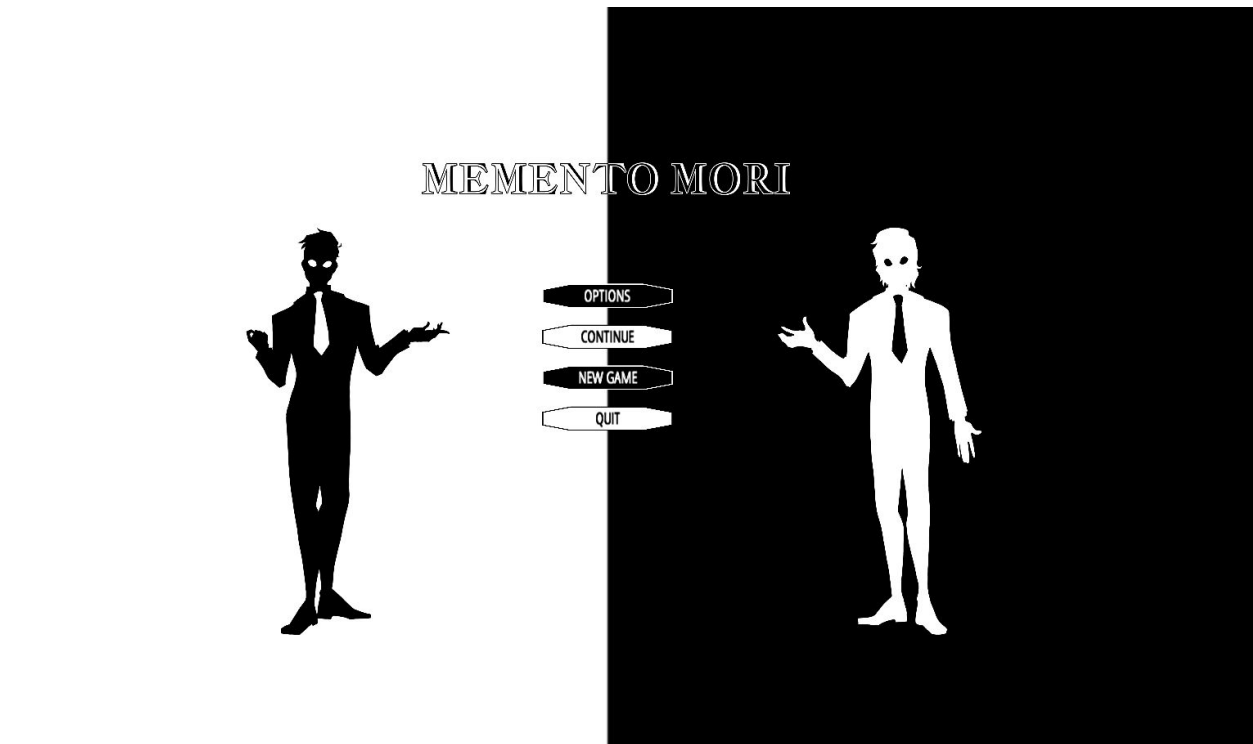
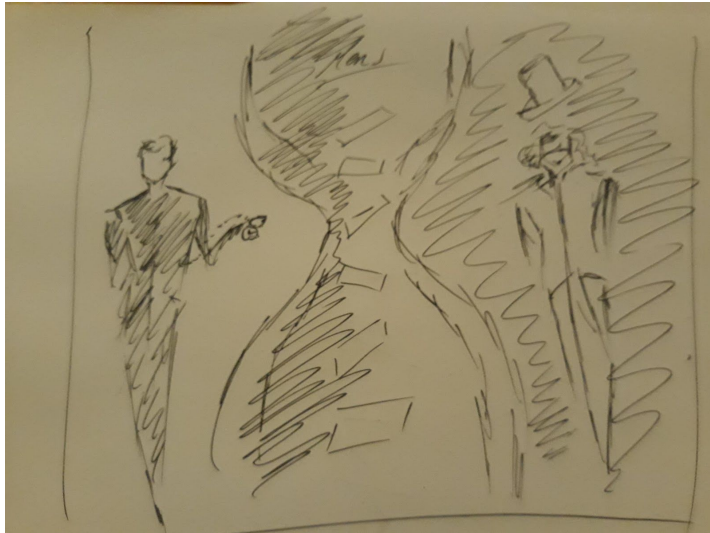
The next area is loaded.

3.2: No button

The player stays in their current area and the screen disappears.

6.3. UI Concepts

Main Menu



7. Areas

Neither the world of the dead or of the living, the house of Death is a liminal, purgatory-like space where Death occasionally willingly brings those dead whom she finds of particular interest. It contains six separate areas, the latter five each corresponding to a stage in the lives of Gale and Kieran.

7.1. Toward the Light

7.1.1. Description

Toward the Light consists of a singular long hallway with a door on each end and which is collapsing in on itself. There are small piles of rubble lining the walls, and large gaps in the wall on one side, allowing light in. The door at the start is the one through which Kieran and Gale arrived. The door at the opposite end is the goal, and it will take them to the next area.

7.1.2. Goals

Main Goal: Figure out where you are.

Goal 1: Move forward

Goal 2: Keep Kieran in the light and Gale in the dark

Goal 3: Jump over rubble

Goal 4: Get to door

7.1.3. Story

Must communicate: Death brought them here and they must get to her in order to get out.

References: None

Events:

- 1 - Gale and Kieran are thrown through the house's front entrance
- 2 - They discover that they are embodiments of shadow and light
- 3 - A table with a scrap of paper falls from above them
- 4 - They read the riddle on the paper
- 5 - They discuss
- 6 - They move forward

7.1.4. Riddle

Not yet written

7.1.5. New Mechanic(s)

Typically awarded at the end of levels, the new mechanics in Toward the Light are awarded at the start as it is also the start of the game as a whole.

- 1: Walk with WASD (single player) or WASD and the arrow keys (multiplayer)
- 2: Jump with space (single player) or left and right shift (multiplayer)
- 3: Switch current character (single player only)
- 4: Walk in dark (Gale)/walk in light (Kieran)
- 5: Walk in grey light

7.2. Denial

7.2.1. Description

Denial takes place in the basement of the house of death. It is a dark and gloomy space that is long and fairly thin, but considerably deeper than the entryway was. Gale and Kieran enter it by falling in through some rotten floorboards, and they leave it via a ladder on the other end of the room. It covers the childhood section of Kieran and Gale's lives.

7.2.2. Goals

Main Goal: Get to Death

Goal 1: Complete the riddle from the projector

Subgoal 1: Have Gale switch frames on the projector one at a time

Subgoal 2: Have Kieran write the phrase found on that frame

- Some phrases are too high, so Gale must get Kieran a box to allow him to reach

Subgoal 3: Write the phrases on the frames down in the correct order

- If a phrase is written wrongly, it will disappear

- When the riddle is completed, it will appear in a menu accessible from pause

Goal 2: Move the projector to create light for Kieran

- Subgoal 1: Get to the light switch on the right
 - Use the skeleton dancers' shadows to cross (Gale)
- Subgoal 2: Move the rubble trapping the projector
- Goal 4: Find costume pieces
 - Subgoal 1: Find scythe (Kieran)
 - Subgoal 2: Find vest (Kieran)
 - Subgoal 3: Find hood (Kieran)
 - Subgoal 4: Find halo (Gale)
 - Subgoal 5: Find robe (Gale)
 - Subgoal 6: Find wings (Gale)
- Goal 5: Put the pieces on the mannequins
- Goal 6: Collect the reel behind them
- Goal 7: Put the new reel on the projector
- Goal 8: Follow the shade and skeleton
- Goal 9: Get through the snow to the ladder out
 - Subgoal 1: Push the box to make a path for Gale (Kieran)
 - Subgoal 2: Use the box to climb to the ladder

7.2.3. Story

Must communicate: Gale and Kieran met when they were children on Halloween night at a party. Gale was dressed as a biblical angel and Kieran was dressed as a reaper. They were good friends by the time winter came.

References: Alice in Wonderland

Events:

- 1 - Kieran and Gale enter what is actually an area in Anger [fig 1.]
- 2 - Kieran and Gale walk forward, and fall through some rotten floorboards
- 3 - They fall too slowly and too long until they reach the floor below [fig 2.]
- 4 - It is dark, so Kieran panics [fig 3.]
- 5 - The sound of a projector is heard, followed by the light from the projector [fig 4.]
- 6 - The projector shows a short clip of a white rabbit running into a hole
- 7 - The projector gets stuck
- 8 - Keiran and Gale discover the riddle on the frames
- 9 - Keiran and Gale finish the riddle
- 10 - A few extra frames flash past:
 - Little Kieran in his Halloween costume

- Gale's family portrait
- Gale's Halloween costume
- Kieran and Gale together on Halloween
- A scarf laying on a banister
- Two kids walking in the snow

11 - Another chunk of floor falls from above, knocking over and pinning the projector under it, breaking the dance reel

12 - Both adjust to stay in their comfortable lighting conditions

13 - The projector begins to play a video of skeletons dancing at a ball [fig 5.]

14 - Gale turns on the light and they lift the board off the projector together [fig 6. and 7.]

15 - Gale and Kieran move the projector to make a way for both of them [fig 8. and 9.]

16 - They clothe the mannequins [fig 10.]

17 - One mannequin becomes a shade and one becomes a skeleton

18 - Both NPCs leave the frame to the right

19 - Where the mannequins were there is left a new reel

20 - The reel, when put on the projector, makes it snow [fig 11.]

21 - Kieran gets excited, runs, and trips, leaving a dark spot in the snow

22 - They leave the area upwards and meet the mannequin NPCs again [fig

12.]

23 - The NPCs give them a new ability

7.2.4. Riddle

Little blackbird in a waistcoat,

Carry a scythe.

Little dove with many eyes,

sing us a song.

When the cats prowl with the dead in the eve,

You need no longer be afraid.

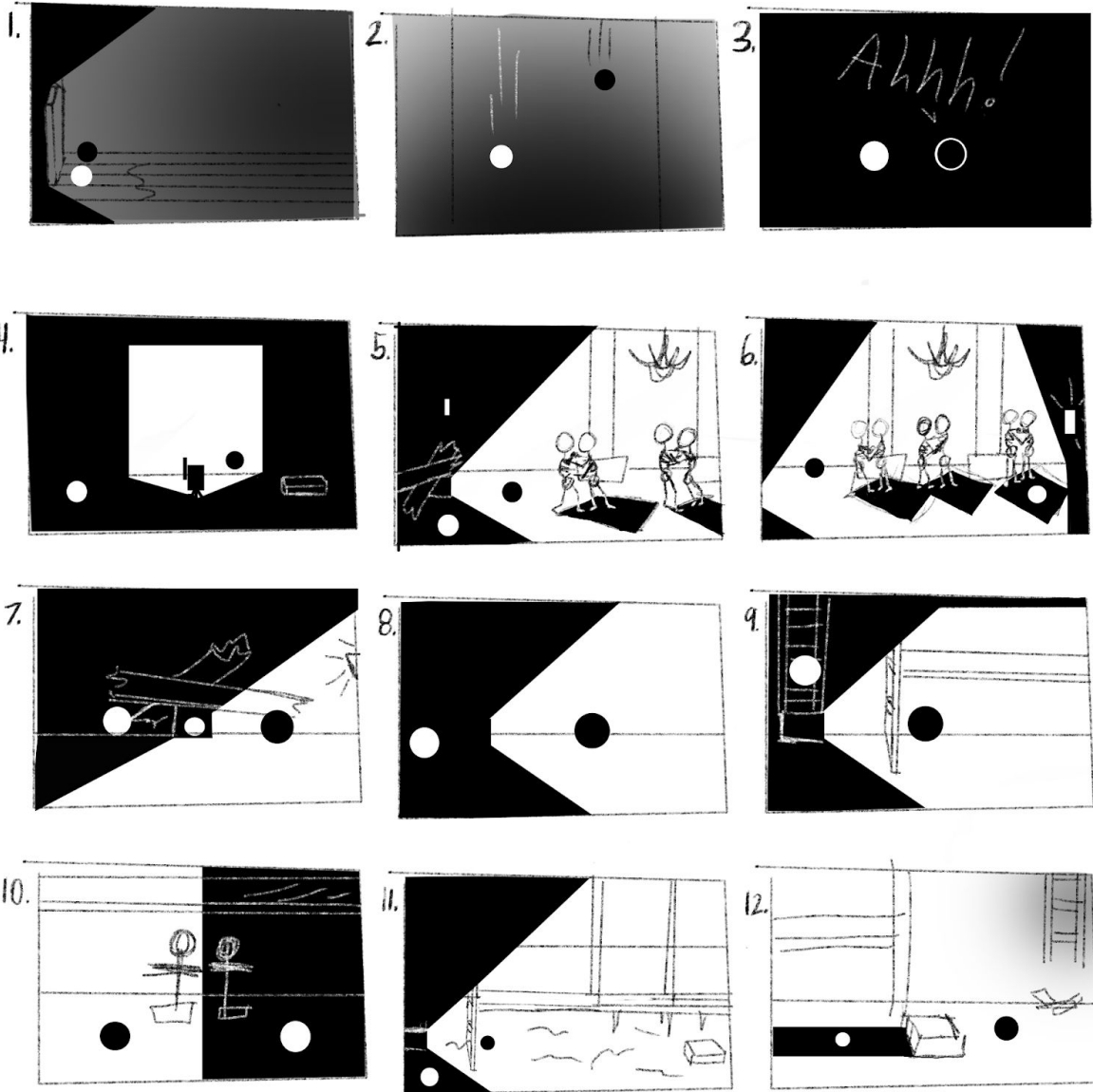
You are not alone anymore,

And may never be again.

Snow falls with time, and so shall you.

7.2.5. New Mechanic

1: Communicate with skeletons (Kieran)/ communicate with shades (Gale)



7.3. Anger

7.3.1. Description

It covers the teenage years of Gale and Kieran's lives.

7.3.2. Goals

Main Goal: Get to Death

Goal 1: Complete the riddle from the chess game

7.3.3. Story

Must communicate:

References: Frankenstein

Events:

1 -

7.3.4. Riddle

Not yet written

7.3.5. New Mechanic

1: Kill (Gale)/revive (Kieran)

7.4. Bargaining

7.4.1. Description

It covers Gale and Kieran's adulthood.

7.4.2. Goals

Main Goal: Get to Death

Goal 1:

7.4.3. Story

Must communicate:

References: Jekyll and Hyde, Hamlet

Events:

1 -

5.4.4. Riddle

Not yet written

7.4.5. New Mechanic

1:

7.5. Depression

7.5.1. Description

It covers Gale and Kieran's deaths.

7.5.2. Goals

Main Goal: Get to Death

Goal 1:

7.5.3. Story

Must communicate:

References:

Events:

1 -

7.5.4. Riddle

Not yet written

7.5.5. New Mechanic

1: Use mirrors to travel

7.6. Acceptance

7.6.1. Description

7.6.2. Goals

Main Goal: Get to Death

Goal 1:

7.6.3. Story

Must communicate:

References:

Events:

1 -

7.6.4. Riddle

Not yet written

7.6.5. New Mechanic

1: Control light (Kieran) and shadow (Gale)

8. Visual References

8.1. Unus Annus

Black and white theme, spirals, one white suited character one black suited one, the coffin.



8.2. Samurai Jack, Episode XL - “Jack vs. The Ninja”

Solid black and white as light and darkness, with a character that operates in each.



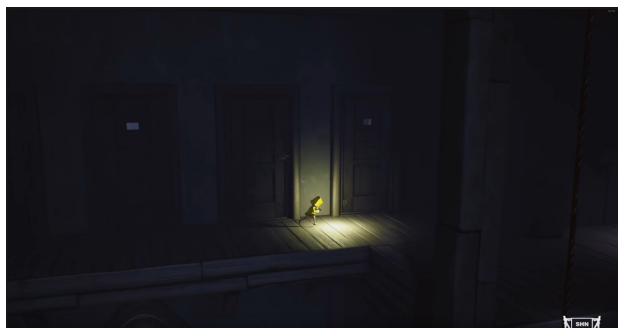
8.3. Don't Starve

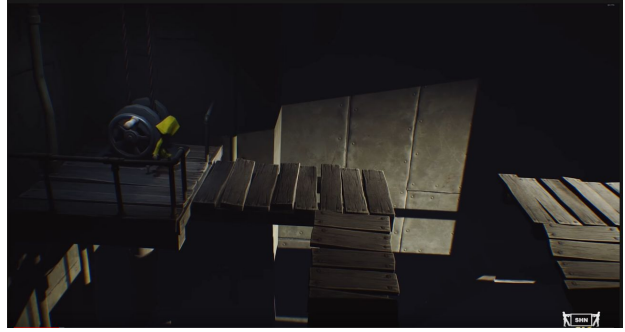
2D animated characters moving in 3D space.



8.4. Little Nightmares

Small characters in a too-large, mostly indoor environment. Dark spaces. Puzzles based on light and darkness.





8.5. Moodboard



9. Audio References

Memento Mori's soundtrack features largely simple piano and music box themes.

Reference playlist: <https://youtube.com/playlist?list=PLrslFDUdQ3i7v9hSjDNf4CAxvVww0H1f>

Unus Annus Theme

Pandora Hearts - Lacie

Woodkid - Shadows

Mad Father/Ib - Old Doll

Legend of Zelda: Twilight Princess - Midna's Lament

Silent Hill 2 - Promise

Little Nightmares - The Dead Waltz

10. Uniqueness

Memento Mori is unique in that it uses light and darkness as a core mechanic throughout instead of just in passing areas as games such as Little Nightmares do.

11. Credits

Developer, Modeller, 2D artist: Kayleigh Shaw

Soundtrack: Grace Allyse Pratt

Story consult, Concept art: Rowan Knutsen, Grace Allyse Pratt

QA: Shona Young, Ian Young, Dana Woltz

Audio:

Special Thanks: Hope Moore, Dr. Charles Linscott