

Visbreaker - Concept Document

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Synopsis

Narrative Overview

The united kingdom of Tamelia is what remains after an old war between invaders from distant lands who sought to subdue and conquer the abundant magic of the continent, in hopes of using it as a weapon for power and domination. The war lasted for centuries, leaving nothing but destruction, death, and scarce remains of magic. Both natives and invaders were left on the verge of extinction, so a truce was settled and the few survivors worked together to create a new beginning. The heroes of the peace who served as leaders who guided the path to the truce were appointed as monarchs and given lands to reconstruct. A pact to contain and control magic was created. The word from the extinct old tongue would be used as the only means to refer to magic, and it should not be referred to or mentioned in any situation other than to report a sighting of it. The word is *Vis*.

Newborns would be closely monitored by The Oath of Peace, the only legal magic bearers who are allowed to use *Vis*. Any newborns with traces of *Vis* were killed or taken away from their families to be raised as peacekeeper warriors, with the main purpose of hunting and eradicating any other traces of *Vis*, even from others like them who tried to escape or were kept away. These elite hunters were known as *Visbreakers*.

The player will take control of Kaleb, a young *Visbreaker* who has only finished their training at the *Phalanx*, a palace home of The Oath and the *Visbreakers* in the capital city of Luthadiel, at the center of the continent. Kaleb is a quiet but fierce warrior who has excelled in their preparation. Like every *Visbreaker*, he doesn't know his past or ascendance. He has no goal or purpose other than to hunt and eradicate *Vis*. However, Kaleb has long been haunted in their dreams by a face that feels familiar, making them eager to explore the world in search of that mysterious person. Kaleb now has the opportunity to embark on a quest by having achieved the official rank to take on their first mission. He has been sent to the outskirts of the borderland region of Akland to investigate the rumors of a possible *Visbearer*.

As they follow the trail of this mysterious person, Kaleb will face abnormal *Vis* activity and find clues connected to the person in their dreams, pushing them to go beyond in trying to understand more about their past and origins, while they uncover a bigger plot that is about to threaten the long-lasting peace of the continent.

Gameplay Overview

Kaleb will start his journey as a new official *Visbreaker* in the beautiful lands of Tamelia, testing his abilities to hunt, capture, and kill, while keeping a low profile to avoid fear and hysteria among the common people.

As an agent of peace, Kaleb must fight and destroy anything that may pose a risk to innocent civilians, using his sword, shield, bow, and even fists as their first resource. But when in need, they'll also use *Vis* to defend against dangerous creatures or outlaws.

As a *Visbreaker*, Kaleb will have to gather the clues to chase the trails of their target, paying attention to the environment and being cautious about possible hints of magic in every space. They'll talk to the people ask questions, and put the pieces together to get closer to their goal.

The player will start the adventure traveling with a caravan of merchants on the outskirts of a small town. Keeping a low profile while trying to get as much information as possible from the people they are traveling with. As the caravan is going through the last miles of the road before reaching the town, an ambush of enraged wolves, imps, and summoned monsters catches them off guard. Kaleb will help defend the merchants fighting the creatures avoiding the use of *Vis*. As they fight the threat, they'll be surprised to see another warrior helping them out, but as the menace is pushed back, the accompanying warrior rushes away to chase the last enemies and asks Kaleb to bring the people back to town and wait for her at the local inn.

After meeting with the mysterious warrior, Kaleb learns her name, Isabel, and that she is also following the tracks of a *Visbear*, although she denies being one herself. She gives them information that will lead Kaleb to an abandoned watchtower on the meadows to the north of the town, where they'll be greeted with a new ambush of *Vis* creatures. On this tower, they'll find a map pointing further north, following an old bridge that leads to the foothills of the black mountains.

Following that clue, the player will end up on a bumpy ride through a dungeon that is a secret entrance to a temple from the old times. Here, the player and Kaleb will have to make use of not only their warrior skills but also their athletic abilities and intelligence, as they make their way through this ancient place climbing, jumping, solving environmental spatial puzzles, and fighting.

As the player progresses through the adventure, they'll unlock new abilities for Kaleb like the use of more *Vis*, new and stronger weapons, and the ability to traverse through difficult areas.

Unique gameplay moment:

Investigating clues by paying attention to the environment, finding texts, and talking to people, will unveil more pieces of the story and where to go next.

Fighting enemies with a combination of sword, shield, bow, and *vís* (magic).

Exploring the dungeon and solving spatial puzzles by pushing boulders and making new paths to follow through.

Boss fight against another *Visbreaker* at the top of the temple.

Reference Gathering Miro Link

https://miro.com/app/board/uXjVNmHtGqc=?share_link_id=212034622696

The Road Through the Pine Forest:

A pine forest surrounds Hardstone in almost every direction. The vegetation is not very varied and the space between trees is somewhat big, showing that this is a place near a human settlement where humans live and use to gather natural resources like wood from the trees, water from some small settlements around, and some animals for meat, grease, and fur.

The playable area in the forest goes along the road leading to the town. There is some small variation in elevation but the area is mostly flat as it gets closer to the gates. It is home to every type of forest animal but also their predators like wolves, bears, and wild cats. Venturing deep into the forest will not be possible, and it will be avoided through the natural placement of the environment that prevents the player from walking outside.

This area is meant to serve as the introduction to the basic gameplay with the interaction with NPCs, and with the first combat encounter. Some exploration outside of the road will be rewarded with consumables, small pieces of lore in abandoned items, and more fighting encounters.

The road is not long before reaching the walls and gate to the town, so it is a smooth connection to the next area.

Hardstone:

A medieval town in the heart of the forest, located in the eastern part of Akland, one of the borderland regions. A small town at most, this cozy settlement is located far away from the biggest concentration of population of the region. Its placement within nature gives it a magical atmosphere. It always smells like wood and wood fire. The town has an arrangement of small houses and a couple of bigger buildings like the local inn/tavern, and the town hall that serve as homes for its inhabitants.

The player will be mostly free to roam around and explore the small town, trying to look for clues, learn new information about the local people, and pay attention to any recent events that could lead to his target. The player will go and meet with Isabel at the inn, once they're ready.

To the north, Hardstone leads to the magical meadows, a place of a mythical lake with a charming tower that locals fear and therefore never explore.

The Magical Meadows (Potentially will be cut out):

Following the path that comes from the northern gate of Hardstone, down the hill opens a gorgeous vista. A meadow with a small magical lake surrounded by a wide variety of flowers, plants, and trees. Home to different species of animals that are not used to humans, and most recently apparitions of *Vís* creatures. At the center of the lake, is an old watchtower that was placed as a symbol of dominance by the outworld invaders and still holds a strong magical presence and atmosphere.

The player will have the freedom to explore the meadow and fight animals and creatures, but they'll have to cross the lake to reach the tower. In the distance, the black mountains emerge, and in that direction, behind the tower, a small path leads to them.

Here the player will be saved by Isabel and will hear from her a familiar name from their dreams. They'll also learn that someone is following them, so they quickly have to head to the path that leads to the mountains as the recently found clue suggests.

The Bridge to the Black Mountains:

A very small linear section connecting the magical meadows with the path to the Black Mountains. The bridge crosses over a small cliff and a river flows below. The bridge has not been used in years and is in a questionable state. The path leading to the bridge is surrounded by big rocks and some trees at the end of the meadow. Further ahead the mountains cover the view, accompanied at the foothills by more pine forest.

Here, the player will have the goal to follow the path across the bridge to the mountains, however, they will be surprised by the bridge falling apart as they cross, making them fall to the river. There will be no other path left but a cave. They will have no other choice but to venture inside and find a new way through.

The Cave:

It is a rather short but twisted cavern that works as a small dungeon. To Kaleb and the player's surprise, the cave has traces of humans being recently there, with some platforms placed to help traverse through the rough areas, and even torches to light the way. There will be rocks and water flows that will serve as an obstacle to generating the platforming aspect of the game.

Whoever was there, has left not only traps to stop their progress but also creatures to make sure they don't get out alive. The player will have to fight the toughest battles yet, being rewarded with stronger equipment. In one of the most intense fights, the player learns that Isabel is indeed a *Visbearer*, right before she is captured and taken by a creature. Kaleb promises to find her.

At the end of the linear path, the player will find a strange ancient door that has been recently opened. The door leads to the forgotten temple.

The Forgotten Temple:

Entering the door coming from the caves, the player will find an ancient temple built from carved rocks and wooden platforms. The place is a vertical space of paths and platforms climbing all the way up like a pyramid. It requires the manipulation of rocks, levers, and platforms to make the way through.

As the player climbs, smaller platforms will be available but also bigger resistance will be found. The more the player climbs up, the tougher the enemies will get, until finally reaching a corridor leading to a new similar door.

Gameplay Beats

1.1 Along the Road

Intensity: 1/10

Difficulty: 0/10

Duration (Minutes): 2

What Happens: Kaleb travels with the caravan, keeping a low profile, and tries to make conversation with the merchants to gather information. A strange red-haired woman catches Kaleb's attention.

Objective: Gather initial information about any mysterious events or possible traces of *Vís*.

Location(s):

The road to Hardstone through the pine forest.

Design

Goal:

Introduce the players to the world, the characters, and the plot. Introducing talk and investigation mechanics.

1.2 Ambush to the Caravan

Intensity: 4/10

Difficulty: 3/10

Duration (Minutes): 5

What Happens: The caravan gets attacked by enraged forest animals and *Vís* creatures. The players must fight the creatures and interact with the strange woman for the first time.

Objective: Defend the merchants by killing the attackers and reach the end of the road to the town gate.

Location(s):

The road to Hardstone through the pine forest.

Design

Goal:

Introduce the players to the world, the characters, and the plot. Introducing talk and investigation mechanics.

1.3 Hardstone

Intensity: 5/10

Difficulty: 2/10

Duration (Minutes): 5

What Happens: Kaleb reaches the town of Hardstone and looks for the inn to meet with Isabel. Kaleb learns new leads and confusing information about The Oath, the Visbreakers, and their target.

Objective: Find the inn and the hidden chamber within to talk to Isabel.

Location(s):

Hardstone.

Design

Goal:

Reveal additional plot to the player, and generate intrigue. Introduce the small puzzle mechanics of finding secret entrances or keys to open doors. Make a connection with Isabel. Introduce better weapons and equipment, as well as healing potions.

2.1 Into the Meadows (Potentially will be cut out)

Intensity: 4/10

Difficulty: 5/10

Duration (Minutes): 3

What Happens: Kaleb arrives at the magical meadows and is welcomed with an astonishing vista. Wild animals and *Vis* creatures attack, and a few exploration is rewarded, but the path to the lake and tower in the middle is clear.

Objective: Reach the tower in the middle of the lake.

Location(s):

The magical meadows to the north of Hardstone.

Design

Goal:

Give the player the chance to use their new equipment in combat. Let them be immersed in the world of the game by experiencing firsthand a place of original magic.

2.2 The Tower (Potentially will be cut out)

Intensity: 6/10

Difficulty: 5/10

Duration (Minutes): 4

What Happens: Kaleb reaches the Tower and fights a strong guardian to enter the small room within, they can't kill it alone and need to be saved by Isabel. They find an indication suggesting a path within the black mountains. Isabel confesses that she knows the fugitive *Visbearer* and she is trying to find him because it is someone dear to her. The player unlocks a new *Vis* attack.

Objective: Kill the guardian. Find the indications towards the mountains. Learn new information from Isabel.

Location(s):

The island is in the middle of the magical meadows.

Design

Goal:

Introduce strong / boss-like encounters. Unlock *Vis* attack mechanics. Give more beats of narrative.

2.3 The Bridge

Intensity: 7/10

Difficulty: 0/10

Duration (Minutes): 2

What Happens: Kaleb tries to cross the bridge towards the Black Mountains but it collapses as they pass through. Kaleb falls to the river and sees a cave entrance.

Objective: Follow the path to the Black Mountains. Find a new path.

Location(s):

The bridge to the black mountains, at the end of the magical meadows.

Design

Introduce environmental surprises. Plant the seed and sensation of breaking point in the plot.

Goal:

3.1 Through the Cave

Intensity: 5/10

Difficulty: 6/10

Duration (Minutes): 5

What Happens: Kaleb and Isabel make their way through the difficult terrain inside the cave, finding traces of someone being there before them. *Vís* creatures are waiting for them and create more obstacles on the way.

Objective: Find a way through the caves.

Location(s):

The caves below the path to the black mountains.

Design

Introduce action-platformer mechanics. More fighting encounters that require the use of *Vís*. More loot.

Goal:

3.2 The Door

Intensity: 7/10

Difficulty: 6/10

Duration (Minutes): 3

What Happens: Kaleb and Isabel are completely outnumbered when reaching the end of the cave. Isabel uses *Vís* for the first time to save Kaleb but gets captured by a creature that disappears with her. The player reaches the end of the cave and finds an open door made out of rock.

Objective: Reach the end of the cave, to the temple's entrance.

Location(s):

The caves below the path to the black mountains.

Design

Goal:

A new beat of narrative through gameplay (Isabel is a *Visbearer*). Introduce the arena-like combat with multiple difficult encounters.

4.1 The Way Up

Intensity: 6/10

Difficulty: 7/10

Duration (Minutes): 10

What Happens: Kaleb enters the temple and learns that there is only one way through: up. They make their way up the temple figuring out how to create paths. As they climb up, they'll fight lots of enemies on the bigger area platforms.

Objective: Reach the top platform of the temple.

Location(s):

The forgotten temple within the black mountains.

Design

Goal:

All gameplay mechanics are used to traverse through the temple, including more think-through moments. Evoke the sensation of rising as you make your way through.

4.2 Oathbreaker

Intensity: 9/10

Difficulty: 9/10

Duration (Minutes): 3

What Happens: Kaleb reaches the last platform which features the most difficult encounter in the game and a boss fight. The *Visbreaker* appointed to follow in their steps reveals himself, and attacks Kaleb. Kaleb must kill this mighty opponent, but as a reward, they get one of the strongest swords, the *Oathmaker*.

Objective: Kill the *Visbreaker*.

Location(s):

The uppermost platform in the forgotten temple, within the black mountains.

Design

Goal:

Gameplay and narrative climax.

4.3 The Threshold

Intensity: 10/10

Difficulty: 0/10

Duration (Minutes): 2

What Happens: Kaleb crosses the door and on the other side is Isabel, free and unharmed. Next to her is the man of his dreams. The player learns this person is Kaleb's brother, Akura. He tells Kaleb how he's been calling them to save them and recruit them to start a war against The Oath and the *Visbreakers*. He also tells them that there is no way back because killing a *Visbreaker* is the biggest sin they could commit. They'll forever be an *Oathbreaker* and be hunted for it.

Objective: Learn the truth.

Location(s):

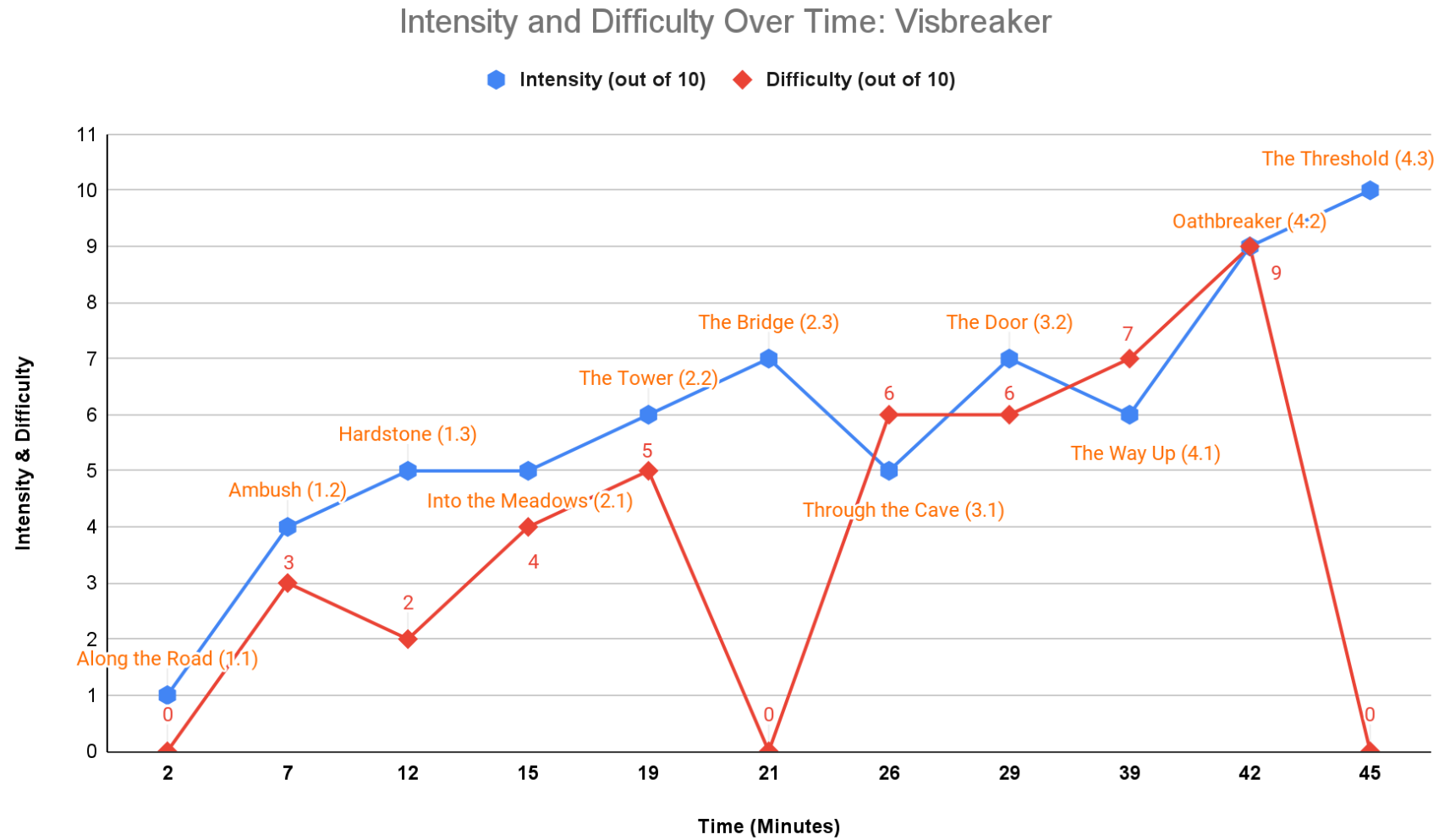
The top of the forgotten temple within the black mountains.

Design

Cutscene to reveal the main plot of this story.

Goal:

Beat Chart



One Planned Cinematic

Opening

A simple animated background with a paragraph to introduce the world, Kaleb, and the story.

Akura's reveal

At the end of the temple, the player will find Kaleb's brother, Akura, along with Isabel. They'll learn the true plot of the story, a forming rebellion against The Oath, and the identity of the face in their dreams, thanks to the blood connection they share. He also explains how their parents were murdered, how they've been marked as *Oathbreaker*, and that they have another sister to find and rescue: Samel.