

# Overstayed Welcome

*A Neverwinter Nights* Module

A Major Qualifying Project Report submitted to the Faculty of the  
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In partial fulfillment of the requirements for the Degree of  
Bachelor of Science  
By

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## **Abstract**

“Overstayed Welcome” is a fantasy RPG where players must remain one step ahead of pursuers as they escape the Kingdom of Alsatia.

The game was made as a *Neverwinter Nights* module so we could take advantage of the existing assets and technology. Edmund did the story and general design work such as characters and the levels, Aaron created new art assets, cinematics, and music, and Khemarith did all the scripting required.

## Acknowledgements

We would like to extend our thanks to Dean O'Donnell for advising this project, and for his direction and attention to detail.

Pasus Nauran – Maker of NWN Area Load Screen Creation Kit

John Bye – Creator of Gestalt Cutscene Creation System

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Dan Tennant – Giving us feedback and support throughout the course of the project

Nick Urko – Helped us find an important plug-in for exporting models

Bioware – Makers of *Neverwinter Nights*

Autodesk – Makers of 3D Studio Max 5

Adobe – Makers of Photoshop and Premier Elements

Our Beta Testers – Helping us find problems and bugs in the game so we could fix them

Bioware Forums User Banor Bloodfist – Told us about the endgame function for ending cutscenes

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## Writing “Overstayed Welcome”: A Push Instead of a Pull

When we first met with Dean in regards to the MQP, he advised us to do a couple things, chief of which was to keep the quest itself somewhere between 2 and 4 hours long. We only had 21 weeks to build it from virtually nothing. Since *Neverwinter Nights* is a high-fantasy RPG that uses the 3.5 Edition rules of Dungeons & Dragons (D&D) for core mechanics, most people create quests that would be typical of any pen-and-paper D&D session. With the restrictions of the MQP in mind however, we decided that the best way to write the quest story would be to turn the typical D&D-style conventions on their head.

In most D&D campaigns the players are pulled along by the Dungeon Master (DM). He or She uses their powers as “God” to, subtly or not, guide the players along their main quest by using a carrot-and-stick type approach (or perhaps, monster-and-rewards approach would be more appropriate) to tug the cosmic leash of the player characters towards their ultimate destination even when they get off track. Often these will include side quests along the way that often don’t tie into the main quest at all, but satisfy the curiosity and freewheeling nature of the players. Ultimately though a typical D&D-styled quest is centered on the idea that you have to go somewhere, slay some huge monster or otherworldly force, find treasure, come back home and be insanely rich and famous. In “Overstayed Welcome” however, the players are given a swift boot in the rear after some exposition and pointed in the general direction of two possible ways out of the kingdom. Lollygagging is strictly discouraged; Stay in one area too long and a horde of powerful enemies known as the Crimson Guard will inevitably show up and hunt you

down. There aren't many side quests in *Overstayed Welcome* either; rather multiple ways to approach a problem that will make each challenge acceptable to a variety of players. In this way, it forces the player to abandon most levels of typical RPG interaction (breaking into many places, talking to every single person under the sun, looking for the shopping district, trying to get fame and fortune, etc.) in favor of survival, pushing the player instead of pulling them along. Granted, the module does eventually stop shoving the player along the predetermined path, but by then they've pretty much been booted to the end of the line as it were and there's nowhere to go but onward to destiny.

Lastly we decided that this wouldn't be a truly solo adventure (you have NPC party members), because we wanted to make the player character a citizen who finds himself on the run from his own countrymen. We wanted the player to feel close enough to being as confused as the character himself/herself would at being targeted by the very kingdom they live in. Originally the idea was that the events that knocked the PC unconscious would've caused amnesia, but that's a bit hackneyed so it was just changed to simply not being able to know what happened, be it by chance or just looking the wrong way when the events occurred.

### ***Inspiration for the Story***

With the general idea of the story in mind, Ed looked to his freshman year of college for story inspiration. The chief inspiration for this module actually comes from a completely customized pen-and-paper campaign one of his friends ran that year. At one point we were trying to gather information in a city of elves. Of course naturally elves do not like outsiders so we sent in the only elf in our party, while the rest of the players waited outside the gates at a safe distance. He promptly, and very jovially, decided to

announce where he was from and point out where the rest of the party was hiding to the guards, much to everyone else's chagrin. Originally this was going to be the starting point of this story, as a comedic idea, but comedy is hard so Ed took the mostly serious route the player sees in the game. Essentially what we took from that freshman-year campaign was the idea that your cover was blown and you had to escape before the most elite elements of the military came and killed you.

The other inspiration from this is a major plot device from the movie *Ronin*. In the movie you are never shown what is in the case that the cast of characters spent traveling around Europe shooting at each other to try and get. The screenwriter, David Mamet has written that he believes revealing such details can be anticlimactic, that a director is wiser to allow the audience's imagination to answer the question, and as such that's why in *Ronin* the contents of the briefcase (the film's MacGuffin), are never revealed.

The same situation applies in *Overstayed Welcome*. It's never revealed what you or your party members might have seen or done to provoke a pursuit by the Crimson Guard. The only real clue, if any, is that whatever it is, it's something secretive because the regular guards are not told to detain you (mostly because, admittedly, this would force people to have to play a rogue and being stealthy with a full party is really hard). Also the reason that the events leading up to your situation are never fully revealed because it always comes off really silly for someone to spend time explaining to their friends exactly what caused the predicament that they are running from while still under pursuit. What makes even less sense is the cliché of trying to get info out of a squad of armored soldiers who have orders to bring back your head on a pike. So Ed decided that whatever had occurred would just remain secret, because really when you're being chased by



people who want you dead, you don't need much more reason to get away than the threat of evisceration. Also present of course are the reminders that the regime you're fleeing from is oppressive, if the armored goon squad didn't give it away that is.



**Figure 1: The aforementioned Goon Squad**

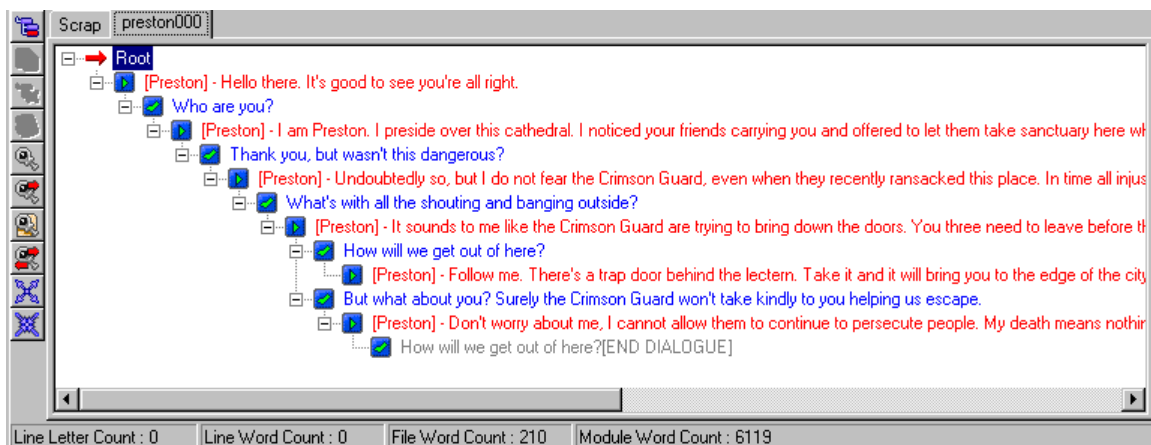
### *Characters and Dialogue*

The character-making process was a bit different than most. Since we had designed the adventure for characters of level 4 or 5, players wouldn't be able to make their own player character from the get-go, unless they had a saved character around that level. That's where the Pretty Good Character Creator came in. This third-party module allowed us to create a few pre-built characters of various classes for the player to use. Of course, if they had a copy of this module they too could pre-build a character at the proper skill level.

In terms of NPCs, most of them are a bit stereotypical. We would be lying if I didn't say that Alsatia was partially based off of Nazi Germany in the years leading up to World War II (re-arming and discrimination being the chief factors there). In fact "Alsatia" as the Kingdom name is taken from the Alsace region of France that Germany

had to cede in World War I. This would essentially make the nonhumans and humans rebelling against the despotism in their land would be like the French Resistance.

Then again most RPGs, even the ones plotted out by a DM, end up falling into using stereotypes. And since character interaction/conversation is not the driving force behind the game, I feel that we were allowed to get away with not making overly deep characters while still having some level of interest, the prime example being one of the two end bosses, Melfice. As a half-elf he should be persecuted under the new king's policies, but instead he joined the Crimson Guard in order to prove his loyalty to Alsatia. Granted the rest of the army of faceless mooks is just that, faceless, at least personality-wise.



**Figure 2: Conversation Editor. Note the module only has about 6000 words in conversations**

Unfortunately Ed didn't have access to a program for creating dialogue trees outside of Aurora's conversation editor. This led to gradually making up dialogue as he went, outside of standard little "hi", "hello", and "get out of my way, I'm on important business" statements. Naturally doing this got easier as time went on, and in fact Ed has had to go back and re-do some of the earlier areas to make them sound a bit better and flow more naturally. There isn't a lot of branching dialogue trees unless we wanted to do a skill check in the conversation. Often times when Ed wanted to have a player learn a lot

of information from a conversation, he made it so the branches link to each other and thus eliminate the chance something would be missed. Despite being clunky at times, looping dialogue trees work to serve one's needs quite well given that this module does not have a large amount of dialogue like most RPGs, both due to its unconventional nature and short length.

### ***From Paper to Pixel: Level Design***

While we did have preliminary sketches and overhead map drawings of the levels, almost every single level ended up being changed once Ed started building it in Aurora. Partly this was because some of the ideas were changed due to the technical limitations of the engine. For example, originally in the Outskirts area there was going to be the option for the PC to distract the city guards by setting fire to some crops. However since the farming fields are just tiles you can't really interact with, this posed a serious problem. This issue, combined with the realization that setting fire to farmland is kind of an evil thing to do, led Ed to change things around. It then became destroying equipment racks but when that proved problematic it finally became the idea of bluffing the guard at the gate, if of course you'd rather not just shank him and take the key. Of course, this was also after Ed shrank down the size of the Outskirts level almost by half once we had a better understanding of the size of the levels he was building.



**Figure 3: The new Alsatia Outskirts superimposed over the old for comparison**

Another area that was massively altered from its conceptual phase was the Hidden Fortune cave area. Taking Dean's advice in regard to not have branching paths that go nowhere, Ed made it so that one path, if the door blocking it could be unlocked, would lead to an area closer to the end of the quest without needing to get through a guard station.

The general rule for designing most of the areas in the game was to make the towns easy enough to navigate, and try to give at least half of the areas some little side quest that in reality was just tying into the main quest, usually as a way to get through a door. Map notes were also used copiously throughout the module, partly because this isn't about discovery, and partly so players could move through the game quicker. Lastly, Ed also set it up so that the areas do not automatically cycle between day and night, instead gradually the day goes on with each area you go to, into night, and then eventually back into day by the time you reach the end.

Ultimately despite the game's linearity we feel the world still looks good enough and expansive enough to represent a whole kingdom.

## **Third-Party Modules Used for Design**

Gestalt Cutscene Creator: The Gestalt Cutscene Creator was utilized to, through the scripting language, create in-engine game cutscenes, mostly as a way to advance the plot. Sadly there are a few issues with it. For example you cannot have your party members converse with one another because henchmen don't fall under the "get object by tag" scripting commands. Also we had a lot of trouble just getting a cutscene to only run once, and the tutorial didn't seem to be forthcoming on that. However it still is a very useful mod and the tutorial is extensive enough so that, with a little tweaking, you can easily make a cutscene in about 15-30 minutes.

NWN Area Load Screen Creation Kit: The ALSCK, as you can guess by the name, was used to create the customized load screens for the module's area transitions. While it was designed back when NWN was only patched to 1.23, it still works perfectly with the latest and final version (1.69). The tutorial is easy and clear in its instructions, and it only took about 2 to 3 hours to make 18 new load screens and the hack pack needed to utilize them. The only downside there is to mention is probably not a problem of the ALSCK itself, but still having to split the image in half on the template to make the finished load screen tends to raise questions of why it needs to be done. It's probably because that's the way *Neverwinter Nights* has to read in the image, but it's still a bit awkward at first.

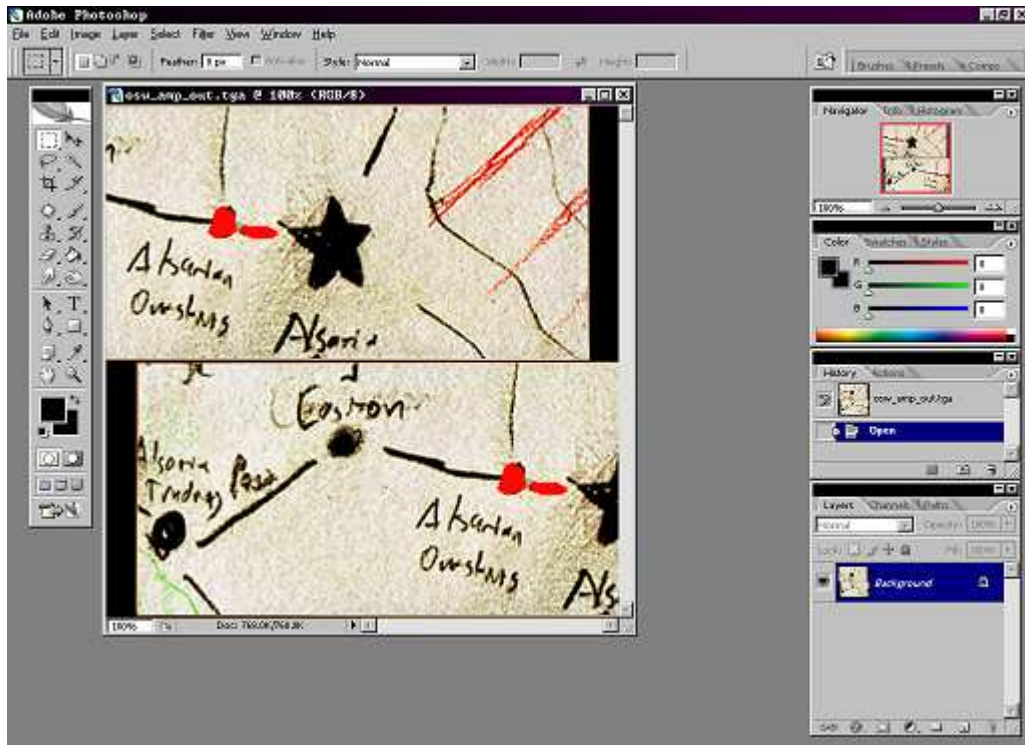


Figure 4: The Alsatia Outskirts Loading Screen in its template

Pretty Good Character Creator/Customizer v. 4.3: The PGC3 is a module that was used to make the pre-built player characters for the module. Since the quest was designed for characters at levels 4 or 5, there was a challenge in finding a way to give people characters that would start at that level, otherwise they'd just get horribly mangled the first fight they got into. The PGC3 allows you to quickly level up a created character to any level you want, with whatever amount of gold, equipment, and other items you want them to start out with. In addition to this you can also customize the coloring options on your character's clothing and armor (similar to how the Aurora Toolset will allow you to do this for just about any item or garment you create). Granted the level-up process is not 100% automated, you do have to remember to run the in-game wizard or select your

advancements manually, otherwise your character is still only at level one. But that's mostly a common sense issue rather than a technical one.



Figure 5: Talking to the Setup Helper in the character creator



## **Custom Art: Bringing Ideas to Life**

Originally we did not think adding in custom art was going to be too difficult to put into the game. The art pipeline at a glance seemed pretty straightforward and our skills were not lacking in the art area. However, we were not used to using plug-ins and many third-party programs that took a lot of time to use for one small step. The pipeline quickly became more complex as we struggled to get our custom model and textures into the game.

### ***New Art: Textures***

The new textures for the game were probably the quickest thing to make, but extremely difficult to get back into the game. Adobe Photoshop was used to create the textures, but the problem was first getting the files into Photoshop to edit. We grabbed a program called NWN Explorer, which allowed us to search through all the game files and export the ones we needed for editing.

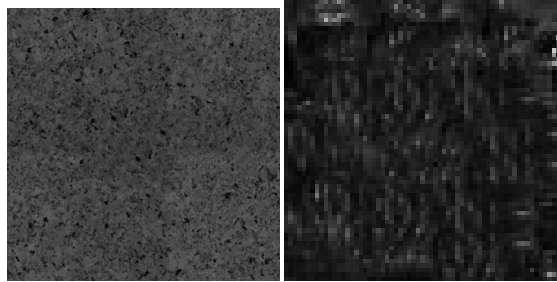
Once they were exported from the game, depending on the file, another program was needed to convert the files into .PSD files so they could be used in Photoshop. The program we used for this is called GIMP. It is an image-editing program but it is nowhere near the level of Photoshop. However, with a plug-in for it, we used GIMP to convert some files for use in Photoshop.

Once the images were in Photoshop it became much easier to work with. Images quickly were changed for purpose of making out module more unique. The images we created were mainly flags with a custom emblem put on them to represent the Crimson Guard. We made a cloak as well.



**Figure 6: The flags of the kingdom, as well as a cloak with the flag texture placed onto it.**

However, some other textures were changed for monsters, such as the Gargotaur.



**Figure 7: Gargotaur textures**

Once all the textures were done being edited, a plug-in for Photoshop was used to export some, while other textures were just saved as Targa files. The ones exported with the plug-in were able to go straight back into the game. Due to an unknown error some of the files became corrupt and thus useless. We are assuming it is due to Aaron having a Mac and not a Windows computer, and having to run things on a Virtual Machine.

The ones that were exported as Targas needed another program to convert them to .DDS files for use in the game. We used the program Image Converter Plus to do this for us. At first it seemed to work, but when we put them into the game either it would either show up blank or not show up at all. We tried many times but just could not get anything to work.

### ***New Art: The Gargotaur***

The most important thing art-wise was the Gargotaur. The Gargotaur is the mini-boss the player must face halfway through the game. He needed to look menacing, evil,

and most importantly, like a Minotaur mixed with a gargoyle. The process for modeling him was pretty extensive, but a tutorial found online from Alex Schwartz really helped.

The first thing needed was a plug-in to import the .MDL file from *Neverwinter Nights* into the modeling program. The program used for modeling was 3D Studio Max 5. It is the latest version of Max that is compatible with *Neverwinter Nights* without requiring too many extras such as plug-ins. The plug-in we used is called “MDLPluginSuite1”. It allowed .MDL files to be imported and exported, which made it easy to bring a model into Max, change its appearance and export it.

We used the original Minotaur model from *Neverwinter Nights* and brought it into Max. We edited its appearance and added some original meshes to make it look like it had wings. Once that was done, we exported it back to *Neverwinter Nights* and opened it. When we opened it however, we found that the wings were not showing up.

We went back into Max to try and figure out the problem, we tweaked it a lot, and completely reset and rebuilt the hierarchy of links on the body parts for the animations. Aaron was quick to notice that the mesh with the wings was not showing up under any select window and could not be linking to the hierarchy.



**Figure 8: Gargotaur Front View**



**Figure 9: Gargotaur Side View**



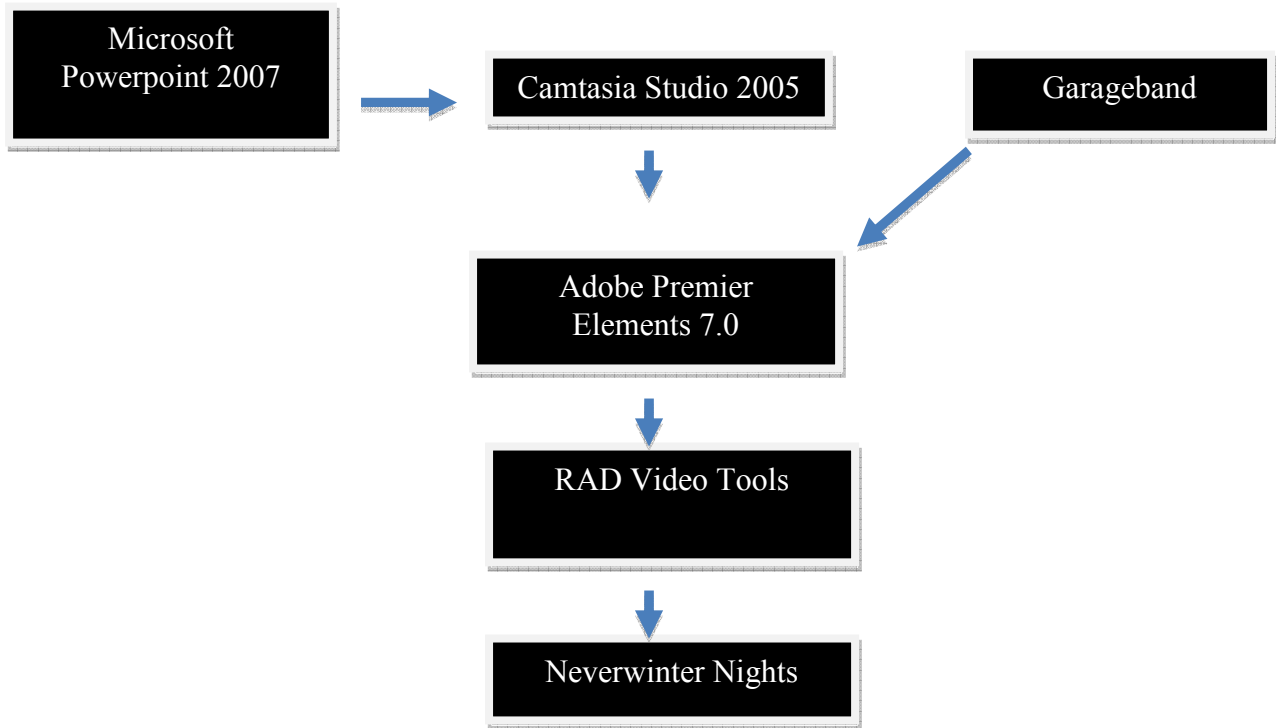
**Figure 10: Gargotaur Isometric View**

This was the state of the Gargotaur in Max, but neither the wings nor texture would show up in the game when we tried to create the character. We noticed the torso did not inherit the texture like rest of the body, and we assumed that was the problem we were having. In the end, we did not get to use this version of the monster, but we did gain a valuable learning experience in creating this model.

### ***New Art: Cinematics***

The opening and ending cinematic were the easiest custom art to add into the game. The pipeline was easy to navigate and they came out really well without taking too much time to complete. They were a big part of the game to introduce the story and finish

it once the player finished the mod and we were glad to get them done and make them look good.



## **Cinematic Pipeline**

The creation of them was very simple. First you would use Microsoft Powerpoint and create a slide show. On each separate slide you can put a new still image and some text. Once you have a slide show created, you can set the automatic transition time for each slide. Then you preview your show and make sure the times between each transition are enough for people to look at the picture and read the text.

Once that was done, Camtasia was used to create a video of the presentation. If you are using Powerpoint 2007, Camtasia has a plug-in that lets you directly take video and then import it into Camtasia when you are done. After you get the powerpoint into Camtasia, you can compress it into a .avi file and export it as a movie. Realistically you could stop here if time is a factor, but if you have more time, you can add some quick background music so it isn't just pictures and text.

The program we used to create music is Garageband. It is a standard application that comes with all Apple computers. It is really easy to use once and we did some very basic functions with it to create our music. The things we used the most were loops that were in the program to create a very simple ending music. It consisted of some orchestral strings and acoustic guitars. We layered them on top of one another to give this building feeling in the music, then we slowly pulled stuff away to give it an ending feeling. The last measure of music is a solo acoustic guitar that ends softly and we were very happy with it.

Once we had the music and movie files, we used Adobe Premier Elements 7.0 to combine them into a single file. The process for this was pretty simple, we just dragged in the movie file and dragged in the sound file and lined them up in the timeline. Then we exported it as a single file and it worked beautifully.



Once we had the single file we needed to convert it to the file format that *Neverwinter Nights* uses for cinematics. The program we used for that is called RAD Video Tools. It lets you convert the movie you made into a .BIK file, which is the format *Neverwinter Nights* uses for its movies. The program asks you to choose a file and then you click a button and some options come up. The options let you specify quality versus file size. The big thing for us here was to make it look and sound really good without being too big of a file, because it would make loading them longer. Once it was done here, we put the file into the movies folder of *Neverwinter Nights* and just set it to where we wanted it to be in the module.

Overall it was a very straightforward pipeline to create the movies. Each step was clear on what we had to do, and the directions from the tutorial we found for opening movies worked just fine for the closing movies. With an added little script to make it an ending scene instead of a beginning scene it was very easy to make both beginning and ending scenes fairly quickly.

## **Custom Tech: Breathing Life into the World**

Scripts in *Neverwinter Nights* really are the backbone for every interactive object in the game. Without them, the player would feel as though they were playing alone as all objects would be inanimate since nothing is telling them what to do. Since scripting is such a large piece to the game, tools make a significant difference and there are plenty of them available online.

## *Third Party Tools Used For Tech*

### **Lexicon Script Tutorial<sup>1</sup>**

The Lexicon Script Tutorial was by far the most useful resource I've used in production of our module. It contains basic information for beginners new to scripting to advanced topics such as implementing your own spell effects. It also has a huge documented index of methods, functions, definitions, items, spells, and more. There is such an enormous amount of information in this tutorial that it would be very difficult for one person to absorb all of it within the span of the MQP, which was 3 terms in our case. However, there are step by step introductions that are easy to follow for anyone not familiar with the *Neverwinter Nights* scripting language. I personally went through these introductions one by one and grasped how the scripting language worked compared to other languages I've used (i.e. C++ and Java). I would recommend anyone new to the NWN scripting language to first open the tutorial and read through the introductions as it is a great start to constructing a module. It's one of the significant resources that I've referenced time and time again.

### **Custom Spell Guide v1<sup>2</sup>**

The custom spell guide offers a step by step tutorial on how create new spells in *Neverwinter Nights*. It was very informative and easy to use as it explained most of everything you needed to know about creating your own spells and adding them into the game. It comes with a spells.2da file which is what you need to add your spells into the

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<sup>1</sup> Available from <http://nwwvault.ign.com/View.php?view=Other.Detail&id=736>

<sup>2</sup> Available from <http://nwwvault.ign.com/View.php?view=other.Detail&id=1027>

game and also a script template for a custom spell which you can base your spell off of. It discussed what information needed to be changed in the spells.2da file in order to suit your spell's effects. It also gave step by step directions of the process of importing your spell into your module through the use of hak paks. This is another great resource to have as it saves plenty of time and is easy to follow.

### **Tlk editor<sup>3</sup>**

The Tlk editor is a program that is required for you to add descriptions, images, and names to your custom spells. The custom spell guide above discusses how to use the Tlk editor which was very helpful.

### **How to Recolor a VFX guide<sup>4</sup>**

This guide on how to recolor visual spell effects in NWN came in handy when the time came to add a unique look to the spells we've created. Similar to the custom spell guide, this offers step by step instructions on how to edit the color of the spells' .mdl files. The .mdl files are the objects that are fired when a spell is cast and to view these files the NWN explorer program is required. It is used to look within the NWN directory to find the names of the .mdl files you would like to edit. The example the guide gives you is how to edit the Dire Lightning spell which has a .mdl name of vim\_exp2light.mdl. The guide also comes with templates completed specifically for the Dire Lightning spell which you can base your edits off of and a visualeffects.2da file which is needed to edit the actual spell to fire the edited .mdl instead of the default. As you walk through the

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<sup>3</sup> Available from <http://nwwvault.ign.com/View.php?view=Other.Detail&id=333>

<sup>4</sup> Available from <http://nwwvault.ign.com/View.php?view=Other.Detail&id=1176>

guide, it can get a bit sticky when editing the .mdl files the way you want to because there may be multiple pieces of a spell that can contain a color. Looking through some files you may find 5 or 10 different colors you can edit and you may be unsure of what piece of the spell you are editing which requires you to edit each piece constantly and hope it turns out the way you like. After you finally complete the edits, it instructs you how to add it into your game through the use of hak paks. Although some parts might have been somewhat troublesome, this is one of the best guides you can find when it comes to recoloring a spell.

### **NWN explorer 1.1<sup>5</sup>**

The NWN explorer is a program that is required for you to look into the NWN directories and find the .mdl file of the spell you would like to edit. The guide to recolor a VFX explains how to use the explorer which is fairly simple.

### **Item creation guide<sup>6</sup>**

The item creation guide gives a step by step tutorial on how to create your own custom item, whether it is a sword or a grenade. The instructions given are very easy to follow as it gives images of each step which is very helpful in knowing you're on the right track. It doesn't take long at all to create a custom item in your preference. Once you've created what you wanted, it explains how to add it into your module through the use of hak paks.

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<sup>5</sup> Available from <http://nwwvault.ign.com/View.php?view=Other.Detail&id=248>

<sup>6</sup> Available from <http://nwwvault.ign.com/View.php?view=Other.Detail&id=1277>

## *Postmortem/Analysis of the NWN scripting language/engine*

The *Neverwinter Nights* scripting engine was fairly intuitive although it took some time getting used to. At first, I really didn't know where to begin but thankfully there were guides that helped familiarize me with it.

Specifically, the Lexicon Script Tutorial was very useful as it contained an enormous amount of information regarding the scripting engine. It was an invaluable asset as I was continuously referring to it for anything that didn't seem to make sense. It contained documentation for all of the functions, methods, constants, actions, abilities, creatures, etc. I could go on and on about what it consists of but the fact is that the utility it provided was huge compared to other available documented resource libraries.

Learning the structure of the scripting engine was a large first step I took. It was well thought out how the scripting engine communicates with the game. For each creature, item, area, or module, there are properties which allow the scripter to work and be flexible in what was capable of being done. Some example properties that the scripter can insert scripts under are:

- OnSpawn: The specified script runs when the object is spawned into the world
- OnDeath: The specified script runs when the object is killed or destroyed
- OnHeartbeat: The specified script runs every 5 seconds
- OnAttacked: The specified script runs whenever the object is attacked

There are plenty more, but the ones mentioned above are the ones I used most often. Having the option to place scripts under these properties was very helpful; otherwise I would have had to code it myself.

## **Conclusion**

### ***Ed's Post-Mortem Thoughts on Overstayed Welcome***

Well what an amazing (and sometimes harrowing) six months it has been. As the de-facto team leader, I often felt the burdens of command weighing down on me, but I would not have traded it in at all.

### ***What Went Right***

Despite its age, Aurora is still a very powerful editor. Levels were easy to build, or in some cases, rebuild. Khemarith did a great job with scripting, and was readily available to answer any questions I had about the implementation of the scripts. Aaron did a good job trying his hardest to work with the art pipeline we were given, and also did a good job making sure to check the IMGD lab daily for new beta test reports. We worked well as a team despite the fact that often our work had to be integrated separately, and I think we got the best possible work out of all of us once we got into actually making the module.

I also think that we did a great job of outlining what we wanted to make in the design documents, being as detailed as possible. Granted some of the earlier concept art definitely was not up to par, but that soon changed drastically and I'm pleased with what we came out with.

At the end of all this, the thing that I can say went the most right is that we completed the module. Granted it's not everything we wanted, but it's a complete quest and I have no worries about submitting it.

### *What Could Have Gone Better*

One problem was simply the age of Aurora and the assorted third-party programs we needed to use. The art pipeline we had shows its age as well as any wrinkle. Many utilities in the pipeline simply didn't exist or didn't work anymore. In the case of 3DS Max 5 however, it was just simply a program too old to work right.

Another issue was that of getting *Neverwinter Nights* onto the computers in the IMGD lab. First we couldn't get them to work at all, and then they were the wrong version. Fortunately it was finally working and patched up to spec by the time we were ready to beta test, but not being able to do the work in the lab with a computer that works much better than my laptop was certainly an issue. Lack of being able to work in the lab also meant we couldn't easily work and talk face-to-face at crucial times, like when Khemarith and I needed to integrate our work.

Lastly I feel beta testing was a bit of a problem area for us. A few delays forced us to only have one iteration of testing, and turnout was minimal. Although I know I did what I could in getting the word out (including both emails and talking at a GDC general meeting), I still feel like there was something more I could have done. Also the fact that some chucklehead decided to put all our blank forms upside-down in the "complete" half of our inbox meant we probably lost some testers to that prank.

### *Summary*

I know I said a lot of things didn't go as planned but even so I feel like I got a great learning experience out of this. I learned how to lead a development team (more so than I had in Artistic Game Development I), and I don't feel bad about our finished product in the least. I am happy to submit it to the *Neverwinter Nights* Vault (a repository

for NWN utilities and modules), where it will be downloaded and reviewed, for better or worse. But no peer rating can dampen the fact that in 6 months we went from having nothing but a few sentences on paper into a completed module.

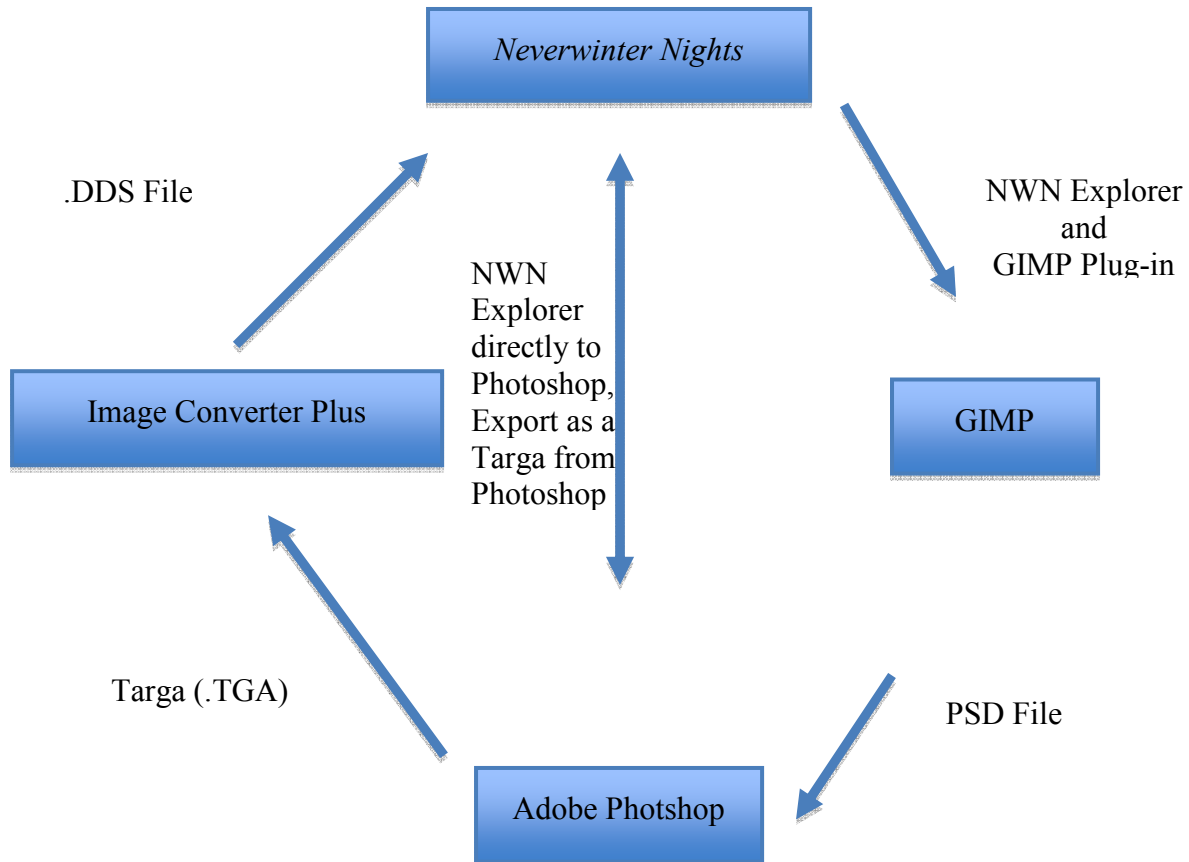


## *Aaron's Post-Mortem Thoughts on the Art Pipeline*

These last few terms have been pretty chaotic. This project has taken up a lot of my time, but I am glad to finally be finishing it. I think my project partners, Ed and Khemarith, and I really put a lot of effort into this module. I wish that I could have a little more to show for it as far as the module is concerned. There are a thousand lessons in defeat however, and I did end up learning a lot. I am also very proud of the work that I did for the project, regardless of how much was used.

I had never used a plug-in before in my life, so the best thing about this pipeline was that it made extensive use of them. It forced me to learn about them, how to use them and where to find them. This was eighty percent of the pipeline, just making sure you had the right plug-ins or third party programs to convert, edit and view your files as you were working on them.

The art I had to make in Photoshop was a lot of fun as well. I really love using Photoshop to create things and this gave me an opportunity to do that. The flags I made came out great and even though we didn't get to use them I was proud to show it even as a regular image. Using Photoshop is something I've always been pretty good at and this gave me an opportunity to do that.



### ***Neverwinter Nights/Photoshop Pipeline***

The above picture is a diagram of the *Neverwinter Nights* and Photoshop pipeline. As you can see depending on the file type there are 3 routes from NWN to Photoshop and back. It really complicates things sometimes because some textures are one file type and some are another. The plug-ins required is easy to find though which makes it much less difficult than it appears on the screen. If you export as one file type and import it as the wrong type though, it will not work in game, so it is important to remember what type you exported as, and import it as the same type.

3D Studio Max 5 is an amazing program. It was so easy to make simple shapes and modify them to look completely different. I spent a good three hours just toying around with some of the modifiers and playing with the order of their application, which changed how they looked depending on what modifier was applied first. It was very easy to pick up and learn from a couple quick online tutorials how to make objects.

The pipeline was nowhere near as difficult as the Photoshop one. With one plug-in, you could import an .MDL file into Max, edit it, and then export it back out. The problems that occurred were during the actual editing. *Neverwinter Nights* uses a very specific naming scheme for its meshes that had to be followed perfectly. If one name was wrong, all the animations would look weird because one piece wouldn't move.

Another issue was the linking hierarchy that connected all the meshes together into one object. If you missed one link, a piece of the model might be lost during the export, which is what happened to me. It would not let me link the torso with the wings, so when we view it in Aurora, it was a floating head with floating arms and a lower body, but no torso at all. It was quite fun to look at, but it was an annoying problem that we couldn't solve.

Overall the biggest issue was that *Neverwinter Nights* is old. The last forum post I used to find something was in 2002, six years before I looked at it. Many parts of the game have changed since then so the forum was little to no help. Some of the programs the tutorials listed were also no longer available for download from the sites they link. This made it difficult to get the correct plug-ins and programs we needed to use for the tutorials. We ended up getting different programs and plug-ins that we had to scour for on

the internet, and even then it was not a sure thing that they would work as a substitute for what we needed.

Despite the frustration I encountered I did learn quite a bit about 3D Studio Max and some new things in Photoshop. It was really cool to learn a new modeling program since all I had used before was Maya. Even if my art really never made it into the module, it really gave me a good perspective on how bringing all the assets together for a game can be a difficult process depending on plug-ins and other various issues and problems that can arise from missing a simple step or not getting the correct plug-in or third party program. It was a valuable learning experience for me and it taught me how to not lose my temper when something isn't working the way you want it to.

## ***Khemarith's Post-Mortem thoughts on the Technical aspects***

There were many things tech-related which turned out well and others which didn't turn out as we had hoped.

### ***What went right***

Many of the scripts I had created were pretty straightforward thanks to many different tutorials and guides that were available online by the NWN community.

Creating unique spells was simple with the help of the Custom Spell Guide. Without it, I believe discussing spells would most likely go into the "What went wrong" section as it would probably have taken much longer and caused much more stress than it should have. The guide had step-by-step instructions which directed me to various files which I had to edit in the NWN directory.

Creating a unique item was also simple with the help of the Item Creation Guide. I could have probably done this without the guide but why not refer to it if it's available for use?

At first, creating a timer proved somewhat complex, but as I became familiar with the functions and methods provided by the engine, I was able to code it out with ease. Other minor speed bumps arose when the player would save the game and then continue the game later on. Originally, the timer would continue counting down, but another instance of the timer would be created. As a fix, I created a variable that the module would check and decide what to do based on it.

### *What went wrong*

We initially wanted to create our own unique spells for the module but only half was able to be done given the capabilities of the engine. The first half was creating spells with unique physical effects to the player but the second half that was left out were unique visual effects. The engine didn't allow any new creations of visual effects and other third part tools only came as close to editing previously made visual effects. As a result, I modified visual effects and combined them with other effects to create an illusion of a new custom visual effect. In reality, the visuals I created were just combinations of them and they turned out pretty well even though I wasn't able to create what we originally wanted to begin with.

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## Appendix 1: Design Documents

### 2009 IMGD MQP Neverwinter Nights Module

# *A Welcome Overstayed*

## *Overview*

### What it is

***A Welcome Overstayed* is less an adventure and more an escape; Namely your party's escape from a hostile nation who's elite guards are baying for your head.** You'll have to bluff, charm, haggle, and sometimes even fight your way through the outlying towns and outposts as you try to escape, lest you be hunted down and brutally executed as an enemy of the state. We intend to create a fast-paced campaign that centers around on trying to flee from pursuit while dealing with obstacles in your path.

### The High Concept

**Your character finds himself in a cathedral under siege by Elite guards demanding your death. You and your party members are outnumbered and outskilled and thus escaping the kingdom becomes your only option.**

Your party saw or took something they definitely shouldn't have, now forces are making moves to ensure you don't leave Alsatia. Your character wakes up having recently been healed from injuries suffered, and your party had taken you to the cathedral in the hopes they could get aid for you and sanctuary from the guards. The fact the guards are trying to burn down the chapel is probably ruling out the latter option. So the next option is escaping the kingdom while staying one step ahead of the people after you. Either try to get on a ship at the coast, or reach the friendlier border kingdom of Falcora. Above all, you must escape because no quarter will be given to you if caught.

## GAMEPLAY ELEMENTS

### There Are Alternatives to Fighting

Since your pursuers don't want to alert the public to what you've done, not all of the outlying towns have any idea of your fugitive status. This can allow you to take slight breathers in towns, buy supplies, negotiate your way past guard stations, and so forth.

### **A Race Against Time**

The longer you stay in an area the more chance the elite guards pursuing you will show up. When that happens your odds of survival drop dramatically, and running really becomes your only option. One elite guard you might be able to take, but ten? No chance.

### **Between a Rock and A Hard Place**

Sometimes diplomacy will fail and you'll have to fight the regular guards to make your way forward. While they're easily handled a conflict will draw the attention of your pursuers faster, in some cases possibly arriving right after, if not in the middle of a fight.

### **Yeah I Remember Him, He Was a Jerk**

Watch what you say when bluffing your way past guards. They tend to remember someone belligerent and will have no problem telling their superiors which way you went.

### **Two Roads Diverged In a Hostile Country...**

At one point you'll need to choose whether you're heading north to Falcora or continuing west to the coast. Each path represents their own challenges, and will have slightly different enemies.

## **THE GOOD**

The player character himself (or herself) will be of the player's own design. The only real constraint is that they are a native of Alsatia, which adds to the confusion as the PC tries to fathom why their own countrymen want them dead.

Aside from the player character there will be 2 other party members that are NPC controlled and are there to assist the player in his or her escape

**Eleak Voleuris**

**Race:** Half-Elf

**Class:** Rogue

Eleak is a man of words, usually words that deceive and fool his targets. While in normal cases that might be a problem, when it comes to getting past guards and curious townspeople it can come in handy.

Although you don't know it, Eleak actually stole something when you were down in the ruins. The odds of you finding this out before the end of the module are pretty slim, and even when you do what hope do you have that the people chasing are only after what was taken and not what was seen?

**Alynis Carter**

**Race:** Human

**Class:** Sorcerer

Alynis is the second of your companions, and the one who did most of the talking when you first met. A capable sorcerer, her curative magic and light offensive spells can help in battle as well as keep you from having to make inn visits.

Alynis also possesses a map that has data on the outlying towns along the two possible paths to escape the kingdom, although it's not completely comprehensive, since she doesn't have knowledge of where the checkpoints are.

## THE BAD

The Crimson Guard are the main villains you have to face, although "facing" them is a relative term since you'll be spending most of the game running away from them. They are faceless, fearsome warriors possessing great strength and amazing alacrity, and they are relentless. Wearing Blood-red armor with black trim, they intimidate by appearance alone.

While you do run from most of them, the endgame scenario will have you square off with a member of the Crimson Guard and two bodyguards. While a tough fight (and rightfully so since it's a boss fight), it should by no means be impossible.

The two specific guards are detailed below

**Melfice Wavestalker**

**Race:** Elf

**Class:** Eldritch Knight

**Rank:** Crimson Guard, Maritime Division

**Bodyguards:** 2 Rangers with heavy crossbows

Melfice is a specialist in his field, utilizing the water around him to pound and immobilize targets while he closes in for the kill with his sword.

**Arthur Tenubra**  
**Race:** Human  
**Class:** Archmage  
**Rank:** Crimson Guard, Forest Division  
**Bodyguards:** 2 Barbarians armed with Warhammers

Arthur is another specialized member of the Guard, especially since he's not one of the fearsome armored behemoths, instead wearing a menacing mask and a dark cloak with arcane sigils sewn into it. His talents include manipulating nature to a deadly effect, infusing latent toxins into his spells, as well as attacking or immobilizing foes in vines.

## THE DREADED CONTINUITY

### What the Game is About

After being knocked out while exploring some ruins, you find yourself in a besieged Cathedral. You and your companions need to escape the country at all costs. No time to worry about why you're being pursued; if you want to live you have to save the questions for later.

Since this is just a quick adventure and not a full-blown epic, the question of "why am I being chased?" is something that doesn't necessarily need to be answered, similar to how we never find out what's in the briefcase in *Ronin*.

### The Story

A sorcerer and a rogue approached you in a tavern, asking you to help them explore some ruins in Alsatia. As a native of the land and a part-time archeologist you seemed to fit their qualifications, despite your misgivings about exploring ancient ruins due to a recently passed edict regarding that special permission was needed to investigate the ruins. Still, Eleak presents you with a signed exploratory order giving permission to investigate any ruins outside of the capitol.

The last thing you remember was that you were looking over some ancient construct that you had never seen before, nor had your research ever turned up anything similar. Then the cave was rocked by an explosion or tremor and you lost consciousness when something hit you in the head.

When you came to you were in a cathedral back in the capitol, surrounded by Eleak and Alynis. Outside there's a commotion and the clanking of heavy armor. Alynis tells you that Alsatia's Crimson Guard is attempting to force their way into the cathedral in an attempt to take the three of you into custody. It is at this point that you start to wonder whether or not that signed order was really on the level. However you don't have time to

question your new partners, as they insist that escaping the country is the only way to avoid capture and (most likely) execution.

The attending priest overhears your plight, and, almost reluctantly, reveals a secret passage that will take you to the edge of Alsatia's capitol city. When asked why he's doing this he reveals that he doesn't like the methods of the Crimson Guard, and doesn't wish anybody to suffer at their hands if he can avoid it. With a bidding of good luck he lets you, Alynis, and Eleak make your first steps towards freedom.

## **The World**

The world this game takes place in is divided into two continents. The larger continent has two nations on it. In the South is the Kingdom of Alsatia, where the game takes place, and to the north lays the Kingdom of Falcora. On the other Continent lies the Nation of Bolinar, which is the nation that both Alynis and Eleak hail from. The three kingdoms are in an uneasy state of peace with one another, having only just ended a war against one another 50 years ago. Trade exists between the nations, but trust is not one of the goods.

## **The Kingdom of Alsatia**

Appearance-wise the Kingdom of Alsatia is reflective of a renaissance-era European cities.

Politics-wise Alsatia is a militaristic nation, despite technically coming out on the losing side in the last war. The current leader, King Drathro, has recently announced a massive reorganization of the military from a defense force into something more aggressive. The Crimson Guard is the first of these new initiatives, acting as a sort of Special Forces group for the kingdom. Though right now they seem to be little more than the King's personal goon squad, exiling and executing numerous people deemed "dangers to the state"

Outside of the capitol there are 12 or so towns with guard posts interspersed as checkpoints between them, making sure contraband isn't being traded among the people. These towns and checkpoints will have to be navigated in order to reach either the docks at the town of Denkruk or escaping into Falcora. There are also two forests, simply called Northwood and Southwood, which are patrolled by the kingdom's rangers and the occasional druid.

# **ALL GOOD THINGS...**

Assuming you escape with your life there's an ending to all this, wherein you finally see what the object Eleak stole, although the explanation will still probably boil down to "powerful artifact that if the Alsatians used, they would be able to conquer the world".

Of course there's possibly a couple ways that could play out. Escaping to the coast would allow your party to reach their home nation and thus present the evidence directly, while going to Falcora would leave things far more open as to whether or not you three ever get back.

And then of course there's also the internal conflict of your own character, now a fugitive from his own country, to consider.

### **If your party goes to Falcora:**

You make your separate ways in order to throw off any remaining trackers you might have following you. Eleak and Alynis thank you with a sizeable amount of GP so you can fend for yourself in a now-foreign land. Making your way to a nearby town you walk into a tavern, still feeling very confused and a bit disenfranchised at being an exile from your home. While at the bar you overhear some people talking about a resistance movement to King Drathro forming in Falcora, with the intent to set up secret strongholds in Alsatia.

Still unsure of what to do with yourself, you quietly ask for information on where one could join such a movement, your heart and mind slowly coming to the conclusion that you need to do what you can to save your homeland.

Meanwhile we cut to a scene with Eleak and Alynis as they look over what they found (we don't see it, other than an otherworldly glow), and them discussing what effect such power would have if it ever got into the wrong hands. They look around, then head off again, looking for a way to the coastline

### **If your party goes to the coast:**

Your party is rescued by a ship belonging to Bolinar. As it turns out Eleak and Alynis were on official orders from their kingdom to find out information regarding rumors of Drathro re-arming his country.

Brought before the king of Bolinar after successfully reaching the country, you are debriefed and also apologized to for the circumstances that made you an exile. The king informs you of a resistance movement that has been formed by people who were exiled from Alsatia. He mentions that it could be beneficial for you to join them, but there is no hurry or demand for you to do so, since you will always have a home here in Bolinar, for your service to not only the country, but the entire world. You are given a large GP reward as well as a deed that will entitle you to have a house built anywhere in the nation.

He also promises that one day, hopefully soon, you'll be able to return to a friendlier Alsatia.

You are escorted out of the throne room, at which point the king turns to Eleak and Alynis, and asks them to see what it is they recovered. Eleak produces the object (again, not visible, but glowing) and the king comments on the power he feels emanating from it, he smiles for a bit, but then grows stern, saying that the object needs to be kept locked up



lest it falls into the wrong hands. Alynis says “That is of course, sire, if we are the right hands to hold it” And then we fade to black.

# Overstayed Welcome

## *Tech Bible*

Version	Date	Author
1.4	10/16/08	Edmund Dubois
1.3	10/9/08	Edmund Dubois
1.2	9/25/08	Edmund Dubois
1.1	9/23/08	Edmund Dubois
1.0	9/15/08	Edmund Dubois

## **Contents**

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  - 2a. Spell Tech Prototypes Needed <STPN>
3. New Item Tech <ITCH>
  - 3a. Item Tech Prototypes Needed <ITPN>
  - 3b. Glossary <GLSRY>

### *1. Latest Changes <LCHNG>*

*1.4 Alchemist's Inferno information and prototypes added.*

## **1a. New Event Tech <ETCH>**

**Crimson Guard Arrival “Timer”:** Not fully a timer per-se but it does have some timer-like qualities. As soon as a player enters a different area a hidden timer begins counting down. After 15 minutes of being in an area the game makes a 2d10 dice roll against a DC (Difficulty Class) of 75. If the total is greater than 75 then the Crimson Guard is spawned at the edge of the area and begins moving towards the player. If the DC is not beat then the game will roll again after 5 more minutes against a DC of 60, and then again 5 minutes later against a DC of 50. The game will continue to roll against this DC every 5 minutes afterwards until the Crimson Guard are spawned.

This is for the standard area. In a few select areas (as designated in the Main Quest and Area document), there will not be a timer. In some of the larger towns and areas, the timer will count down from 20 minutes.

**Crimson Guard Spawner:** This is a spawn item that will summon 5 Crimson Guard units on the edge of an area when the DC roll is beaten.

**Timed Crimson Guard Spawner:** This is a second spawner that will run off a 10-minute clock as soon as the first squad of Crimson Guard are spawned. If the player party doesn't leave a designated area that the Spawner is affected by within that 10 minutes, then more Crimson Guard are spawned in to either force the player to leave or kill the player.

**Runner Character Type:** The Runner is an informant for the Crimson Guard. If any member of your party gets within 20 feet of him, he will give out an auditory warning and begin to make best speed for leaving the area. Should he escape a new timer is started for the Crimson Guard that lasts an absolute 10 minutes and spawns them when it ends, there is no DC check for this.

## **1b. Event Tech Prototypes Needed <ETPN>**

- a) **Timer**
- b) **Variable DC roll mechanic**
- c) **Spawner**
- d) **Timed Spawner**
- e) **Runner Flight, Sight, and Flight scripts**

## **2. New Spell Tech <STCH>**

- a) **Water-based attack spells:** Since one of the bosses (Melfice) uses the water around him (from the coast), it's important we have him display a mastery of water just beyond controlling it; namely attacking with small tidal waves or a high-pressure stream of water. It should look like both these spells are being drawn from the waters of the coast if at all possible.
  - i. **Tidal Burst:** A swell of water comes up and hits a 9-foot-square area, flowing from the front 3-feet to the back. Does 1d10 damage to each target it hits in the first 1x3 foot block, followed by 1d8 and 1d6 as it flows.
  - ii. **Hydroblast:** A jet of water (note: this does not have to be a solid stream of water it could just be a re-textured fireball or magic missile) that hits a single target for 2d4 damage.
- b) **Water-based defense spells:** Melfice should also be able to use water to defend himself to a degree, creating a sort of funnel of water around himself that will decrease damage from sword and arrow strikes if not deflecting them entirely.
  - i. **Hydro Shield:** Melfice surrounds himself with a barrier of water that deflects 80% of all projectiles and reduces all melee strikes by 1d6 damage. Spell lasts for 3 rounds of combat (18 seconds).

- c) **Plant-based attack spells:** The other boss (Arthur), is a master of the plant life around him in the forest, and as such will use it to either slow down or harm the heroes. Ideal attacks will include summoning vines to impede/immobilize party members, as well as controlling tree branches and vines to whip out and hit party members. Some of these attacks should also carry small (1d4-1) amounts of poison damage they could deal out should an affected target become poisoned.
  - i. **Constricting Vines:** Vines that entangle a party member, dealing 1d4 damage and halving their movement speed for 2 rounds (12 seconds)
  - ii. **Vine Whip:** Vine that snakes about and whips a party member dealing 1d6-1 damage.
  - iii. **Bough Breaker:** Low-hanging tree branches slip out to swing into or hit party members dealing 1d8 bludgeoning damage
- d) **Plant-based defense spells:** Arthur can also use the plants to defend him, creating a wall of thorny vines that will temporarily block melee attacks.
  - i. **Thorn Barrier:** A wall of thorns appears in front of Arthur and blocks progress, and only suffers 1d4 damage per melee attack; arrows do not affect it. The spell lasts for 3 rounds (18 seconds) or if it suffers 12 HP of damage

## **2a. Spell Tech Prototypes Needed <STPN>**

- a) **Tidal Burst - A moving wave of water doing variable damage as it moves**
- b) **Hydroblast - Stream of water or modified fireball/magic missile**
- c) **Hydro Shield – Column of water surrounding a person**
- d) **Constricting Vines – Vines that come off of trees and the forest floor and seem to entangle party members**
- e) **Vine Whip – Vine that comes off the forest floor and smacks a party member**
- f) **Bough Breaker – Branches that extend and swing back and forth**
- g) **Thorn Barrier – A wall of thorny branches that pop up in front of the caster**

## **3. New Item Tech <ITCH>**

- a) **Alchemist's Inferno:** A more potent form of Alchemist's Fire, the Alchemist's Inferno item is found in only one place in the game, the Alsatian Military Research Facility (where it's being produced). Alchemist's inferno can either be used as a thrown weapon, or through a magic timer located on the holding canister can be set to burst open after a set period of time. The weapon has also had a delivery system made for it to be fired by ballistas and trebuchets. When broken open, the chemical spreads out over a 3x3 square area and deals 1d8 fire damage to anyone unlucky enough to be caught in it. They will continue to receive 1d4-1 fire damage if they stay in an affected square, or 1 point of fire damage if they move out, and until the flames on themselves extinguish. As to the fire itself it can spread out one square in all 4 directions 2 rounds (12 seconds) after initially being broken open, and then all flames will extinguish naturally after 10 rounds (60 seconds), if they weren't extinguished in some other fashion.

### **3a. Item Tech Prototypes Needed <ITPN>**

- a) Alchemist's Inferno Fire Timer
- b) Alchemist's Inferno Fire Spread Spawn
- c) Alchemist's Inferno time-delay detonation timer mechanic (player control option)

### **3b. Glossary <GLSRY>**

**d4** – Four-sided die.

**d6** – Six-sided die

**d8** – Eight-sided die

**d10** – 10-sided die

**DC** – Difficulty class. Basically any dice roll made against a C of a specific number has to tie or be greater than that number to beat it.

# Overstayed Welcome

## *Art Bible*

Version	Date	Author
1.2	10/16/08	Edmund Dubois
1.1	9/28/08	Aaron Breton
1.0	9/16/08	Edmund Dubois

## **Contents**

1. Latest Changes <LCHNG>
2. New Scenery Assets <NSCN>
3. New Monster Assets <NMNS>
4. New NPC Assets <NNPC>
5. New Placeable Assets <NPLC>
6. New Item Assets <NITM>

### *1. Latest Changes <LCHNG>*

*1.2 Alchemist's Inferno Item added, MG changed to Gargotaur in name.*

### *2. New Scenery Assets <NSCN>*

**Cathedral of Solitude (Interior/Exterior):** The Cathedral where you start the game and wake up. It's not a cathedral in the sense of its size, although it's larger than a typical church. It's ornate columns have been stripped bare of precious metal in many places, presumably by the Alsatian Military to support their rearming effort. Despite this it still is a very reverent looking-place, even if it's currently under-seige. There's a secret passage underneath the altar that leads to the outskirts of the Capitol. Although the player won't initially know why, it can be inferred that the priest in the cathedral was part of the resistance movement.

**West Alsatian Military Research Facility (Exterior):** Near where the major crossroads of the two paths out of the country, there is a small base nestled in a forest.

## **3. New Monster Assets <NMNS>**

**The Crimson Guard:** The Crimson Guard is the fearful and imposing members of King Drathro's security force. Wearing Black and Red armor with gold trim, the Guard are a faceless goon squad consisting of some of the most skilled soldiers and mages. The mages do not wear armor, rather opting for a full cloak in the same livery colors as well

as a mask that obscures their face. Some of the more powerful casters also have arcane sigils woven into their robes and cloaks that glow when they cast magic.

**The Minotaur Gargoyle a.k.a. Gargotaur:** The Gargotaur is a great stone beast designed to work as a guardian. At first glance it just appears to be a Minotaur made of stone. Yet once it spreads its massive wings and flies, warriors wielding weapons such as swords will be hard pressed to cause any sort of damage to this beast. On its chest is etched in the stone the flag of Alsatia. The Gargotaur wields a great stone battleaxe, making him a very powerful foe and one even the most skills fighters would have a problem defeating. Powerful yet not very intelligent, the Gargotaur may be easy to outsmart, but in a match of brute force, none can match this fearsome beast.

#### **4. New NPC Assets <NNPC>**

**The Priest:** The priest in the temple that you talk to at the start of the campaign. It should be dressed in reasonably good-looking vestments.

#### **5. New Placeable Assets <NPLC>**

**The Flag of Alsatia:** The Alsatian national flag, or at least the one with King Drathro's personal coat-of arms on it, is featured prominently throughout the land, especially on guard stations. (see concept art)

#### **6. New Item Assets <NITM>**

**Alchemist's Inferno:** A new weapon being developed at the Alsatia Military Research Facility in Southwood. Placed within a glass vial about 3 hand-widths in length and one hand-width in diameter, it is still capable of being thrown a decent distance. This is a good thing because it can cover a 3x3 square area in fire the instant it breaks open. Or, if being used as a time bomb, can be set using a clockwork timer (up to 1 hour) which is attached to a chime of opening which is set off when the timer runs out, forcing the vial of Alchemist's Inferno open and setting it off and dealing devastating fire damage that way. The liquid when inside the vial is a drab orange-yellow color that seems to just faintly glow with the untapped potential of the power it contains. In the context of the game this weapon could be used against the facility making it in order to destroy the whole place, or at least render it useless.

# ***Overstayed Welcome***

## ***Main Location & Quest Guide***

<b>Version</b>	<b>Date</b>	<b>Author</b>
1.2	10/12/08	Edmund Dubois
1.1	9/25/08	Edmund Dubois
1.0	9/17/08	Edmund Dubois

### **Contents**

- 1. Latest Changes <LCHNG>**
- 2. Locations/Quests – Pre-Crossroads <LOCTP>**
- 3. Locations/Quests – North Path <LOCNP>**
- 4. Locations/Quests – West Path <LOCWP>**

*1. Latest Changes <LCHNG>*

*1.2: More quest objectives added.*

*2. Locations/Quests – Pre-Crossroads <LOCTP>*

### **Alsatia**

Alsatia is where the main story takes place, a country bordered on 3 sides by water, and to the north is bordered by the nation of Falcora. Alsatia has recently been in a slight upheaval, with the power-mad King Drathro II rearming his country, installing radically new and tougher security reforms, and having entire systems of caves and ruins in the country sealed off for some reason. As your party accidentally earns the wrath of the king's elite Crimson Guard, you now have no choice but to escape the country.

**Primary Quest:** Escape the Country. This quest is the one that, above all, you have to fulfill in order to beat the game.

Before the point at which the player must make a choice of which path to escape, there are a series of towns and guard outposts the party has to go through. They are listed below in order of encounter. Some of the locations have sidequests that will extend the time it takes the Crimson Guard to catch up to you.

### **Outskirts of Alsatia**



After taking the secret passage out of the cathedral in the opening scene, the party emerges on the edge of the kingdom's capitol, in what basically amounts to a small village with farmland. There's a small potion shop located here but otherwise not much else of note. It's best to keep moving before any Crimson Guard show up.

**Side Quest: Cause Distraction** – It occurs to you that some of the outlying farm plots are very dry and could easily be set afire. Such an incident would pull guards away from their posts to deal with it, allowing you to slip away easier

Effect: DC of Crimson Guard appearance in next area scaled back by one interval; less guards at main gate

**Main Quest Objective: Open Exit Gate:** The gate that leads to the outbound path is locked shut as per orders of the king. If you can acquire the key located in the gatehouse or somehow persuade the guards to open it, you'll be able to leave.

## **Easton**

Easton is a small smithing town near Alsatia, where weapons and armor, as well as tools, can be purchased and sold.

**Side Quest:** none

**Main Quest Event: First Runner** – just outside of the town your party will encounter the first of the Runner enemies who can alert the Crimson Guard to your presence. This one will notice you and escape but there is no penalty. This is merely to introduce the enemy.

## **Alsatia Customs Post**

The Alsatia Customs Post is a large guard station where all incoming parcels and persons are checked for contraband. Numerous dissident people are held in nearby holding cells before being sent off to prisons. There is also a small alchemist's shop set up.

**Side Quest: Incite Riot** – Freeing the people under suspicion in the holding cells could not only make for a distraction but a possible armed revolt.

**Main Quest Objective: Bypass Customs** – The easiest way to get past customs would be to steal a government pass and perform some forgery on it (hence why you have a rogue in your party) and just be waved on through. There's also an area of the wall surrounding the post that's very weak and thus could be broken through, but the odds of being seen are high. And of course there's always the riot option.

## **Hapan Villiage**

Hapan Villiage is a small farming town located on the route to the Trade Crossroads. Not much to do here other than skirt by local patrols.

**Side Quest:** None

**Main Quest Obstacle: Runner:** There is a runner in this area but he's not very fast, making it easy to take him out before he leaves the area.

### **Malachi's Folly**

Malachi's Folly is so named for an Alsatian General who met his end in a brutal ambush on this site in the last war. All that stands here now apart from wreckage of numerous war machines is a small guard post with a garrison. The party will either have to bluff their way through or defeat the garrison of about 10 guards.

**Main Quest Objective: Get Past Garrison** – If you fight your way through the DC of the Crimson Guard spawn will be lowered by 5 on the first roll, if you bluff your way through it will be unaffected. The reward for fighting is more possibility for XP and loot.

### **Arwilkens**

Arwilkens is the last village before the Trade Crossroads. Since it's directly after that convergence point on the way to the capitol, there's a variety of shops in the town; Everything from weapons and armor to magic items and potions can be bought here if you have enough.

**Runner:** This runner is a little faster than the last one. If he gets away the Trade Crossroads will have Crimson Guard in it about 30 seconds after you enter that area. He should not be that big of a challenge however.

### **Trade Crossroads**

The Trade Crossroads is pretty much just a point at which the two major roads in Alsatia converge. It is here where your party will have to choose which path to take.

**Primary Quest Objective:** Choose whether to head North to Falcora or West to the Port of Alsatia at Denkruk

**Mini-boss:** The Minotaur Gargoyle (Gargotaur)

As the party approaches the crossroads they see a statue between the fork in the road. The statue appears at first glance to be a Minotaur, but with wings. It holds a great battleaxe in its hands. It appears to be ready to attack, like it could spring to life at any second. As

the party crosses by the Minotaur, it springs to life and attacks the party. It must be defeated in order for the party to continue.

### **3. Locations/Quests – North Path <LOCNP>**

#### **Northwood Frontier Trading Post**

The Northwood Frontier Trading Post is exactly that, a Trading Post where various merchants have set up shop. Recently the area has seen more guards looking over it, perhaps due to the new crackdown on contraband.

**No Timer:** Since you've come from a branching path the Crimson Guard are unsure of where you might be. As such there is no timer in this area.

#### **Hunter's Quarrel**

Hunter's Quarrel is actually a large hunting lodge located just within Northwood. Recently it's been appropriated by the military as a guard station. As per usual you will either have to bluff your way past or fight.

**Side Quest: Cause Distraction** – Some of the local hunters are vocally upset that the military seized their lodge. If you can incite them to do something about it, it should keep the guards busy enough to allow you to slip past. The reward for this will be that the DC for the first Crimson Guard roll in the next area will be at 90, and then decrease by 10 each interval.

**Main Quest: Get past or defeat the force at Hunter's Quarrel** – It'd be fairly easy to use the paths through the trees to get past the lodge (especially if you complete the sidequest)

#### **Hidden Fortune**

Hidden Fortune is an old cave system that used to be filled with a wealth of riches, although over the years it's been strip-mined almost completely bare.

**Side Quest: Create Rockslide** – If one were able to knock out some of the support beams in the main mine shaft, it could cause a collapse that would delay the Crimson Guard even further. The Time interval before they could possibly show up at Last Glance will be set to 15 minutes if this is done.

**No Timer:** There is no timer in this area.

**Main Quest Obstacle: Runner:** The runner in here is capable of firing arrows as he attempts to flee, and can even deflect other arrows. If he should escape the Time Interval before the Crimson Guard could possibly show up at Last Glance will be set back 5 minutes.

## **Last Glance**

Last Glance is a small guard tower that the party has to cross paths with just before the final encounter at the border of Alsatia and Falcora. Either bluff your way past or take them out, either way you're almost out of the worst of it.

**Main Quest Objective:** Get past garrison. After getting past the garrison, the party will come to another big clearing where they will face off against Arthur and his bodyguards.

## **4. Locations/Quests – South Path <LOCSP>**

### **Middleton**

Middleton is the largest town in the western part of Alsatia, just east of the Alsatian Naval Yard. As such it is home to many soldiers and shipwrights.

**No Timer:** Since you've come from a branching path the Crimson Guard are unsure of where you might be. As such there is no timer in this area.

**Primary Quest Objective: Gain access to the Southwood Frontier Trading Post –** You'll need a trading license to get to the trading post from here. The reason for this is due to the crackdown on people trying to flee at the Port of Alsatia. Either forge or steal one from the trade office.

### **Southwood Frontier Trading Post**

Located within the forest of Southwood, the trading post is similar to the one in Northwood.

**Runner:** The runner here isn't very fast but he'll be shooting magic missiles at you as he retreats.

### **The Retreat**

What appears to be a village of Elves is in fact an internment camp for them. The nearby military research facility frequently hits the village with spells and magic items to test the effects.

**Main Quest Obstacle: Cripple Alsatian Research Facility –** You find that due to the nature of the town, any attempt to leave now would almost certainly put the Crimson Guard on your trail too fast for you to get away. Months of experimentation have made

the elves too weak to mount a resistance, so it falls to you to do whatever you can to destroy the nearby research facility and thus be able to make your escape.

### **Alsatian Military Research Facility**

The Alsatian Military Research facility has been attempting to find new spells and alchemic-based weapons to use on their enemies. Destroying this facility would not only draw guards away from other areas, but you might be able to find some interesting items among the buildings.

**No Timer:** Since this is essentially a big mission and you've managed to discreetly approach the facility, the Crimson Guard are unaware as to your location leaving you with plenty of time to take out the facility.

**Main Quest Objective: Destroy Facility** – You'll have to take out a trebuchet, a research building, a barracks, and a series of holding tanks holding volatile spell components in order to completely destroy the facility.

### **Harkan's Lookout**

Harkan's Lookout is a guard outpost located in the Dragonscale Foothills, a range of foothills and small mountains that serve as the gateway to the Dewclaw Peninsula. You can either go right through it or find an alternate path through the foothills to reach Denkruk.

**Runner:** The runner in this area will either be found in the alternate path or just after the guard outpost. He shoots magic missiles and moves quickly in an attempt to escape. If he does it guarantees the boss encounter at Denkruk will be starting out in their favor since they know you're definitely coming.

### **Denkruk**

Denkruk is the location of the Port of Alsatia, the last free trade port in Alsatia after King Drathro's reforms. If you want to get to safely through you're going to have to defeat an elite member of the Crimson Guard.

**Main Quest Objective:** Reach the Port of Alsatia, defeat Crimson Guard soldier and bodyguards

## **Appendix 2: Beta-Test Questionnaire**

### **Overstayed Welcome Playtest Questionnaire**

1. What type of games do you generally like to play?
2. What type of gamer would you classify yourself as (casual, hardcore, recreational, etc)?
3. Have you ever played Neverwinter Nights before? And how much? (Tried it, completed original chapter, completed xpacs, modder yourself)
4. Were there any problems following the main storyline? If so, what?
5. Did you get stuck at any point during the module? If so, why? (Didn't know what to do, monsters too hard, bug?)
6. Were any parts of the module too easy to get through? If so, where?
7. What did you like most about the module? Why?
8. What did you dislike most about the module? Why?

9. If you had to pick one thing to change about the module, what would it be?

Additional Comments (we value all your feedback!):

## Appendix 3: Tutorials

### *Tutorial: Creating an Opening Cinematic*

Note: There is a tutorial for this on the Bioware site, but this updates it to more current versions of some programs. For this tutorial you will need:

Microsoft Powerpoint 2007 – gotten from Microsoft office

Camtasia Studio 5.0 – found here <http://www.techsmith.com/camtasia.asp>

The RAD Video Tools – found here <http://www.radgametools.com/bnkdown.htm>

Also, Camtasia and the RAD Tools will only work on Windows, so if you use a Mac, you can create the powerpoint, but you will need to switch to a Windows Partition to use the other programs necessary for this tutorial.

1. A cinematic in Neverwinter Nights is basically just a spruced up Powerpoint slide show. The first step is to make the slide show. Open up Powerpoint and make a slide show. Each new slide can have new text, a new background image, and colors, whatever you want to do. Remember that the slides need to be easy to read so that players of your game can understand what is going on in the movie. Do not go overboard with bright color contrasts and don't make the slide too complex. Players need to be able to read the text on the slide and look at the picture if there is one.

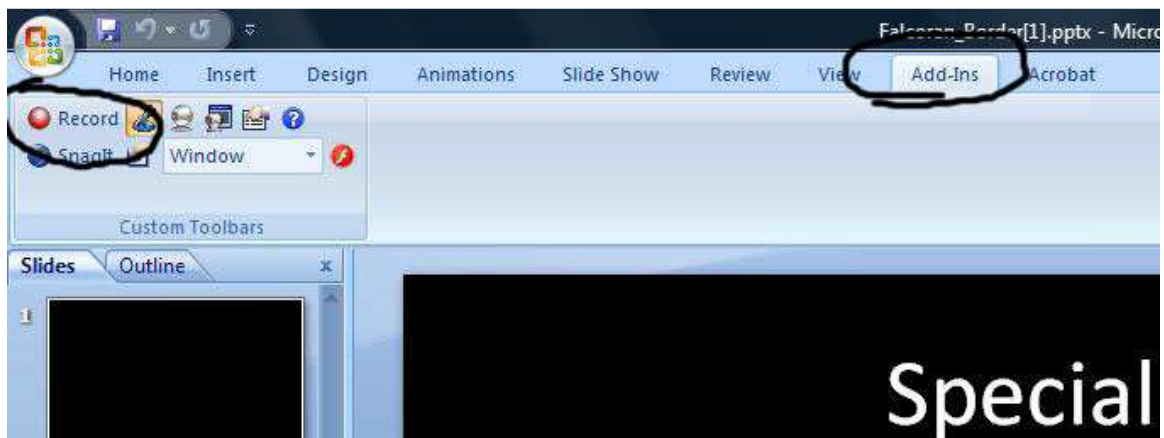


2. Once the presentation is done, you need to set up your scene transitions. This is located on the animation tab near the top of the window. This allows you to set transitions between each slide. There are a variety of transitions to pick from so go ahead and mess around with them until you find some you like. You do not have to use the same transition for each slide. I recommend a simple fade transition so it doesn't distract the player too much.

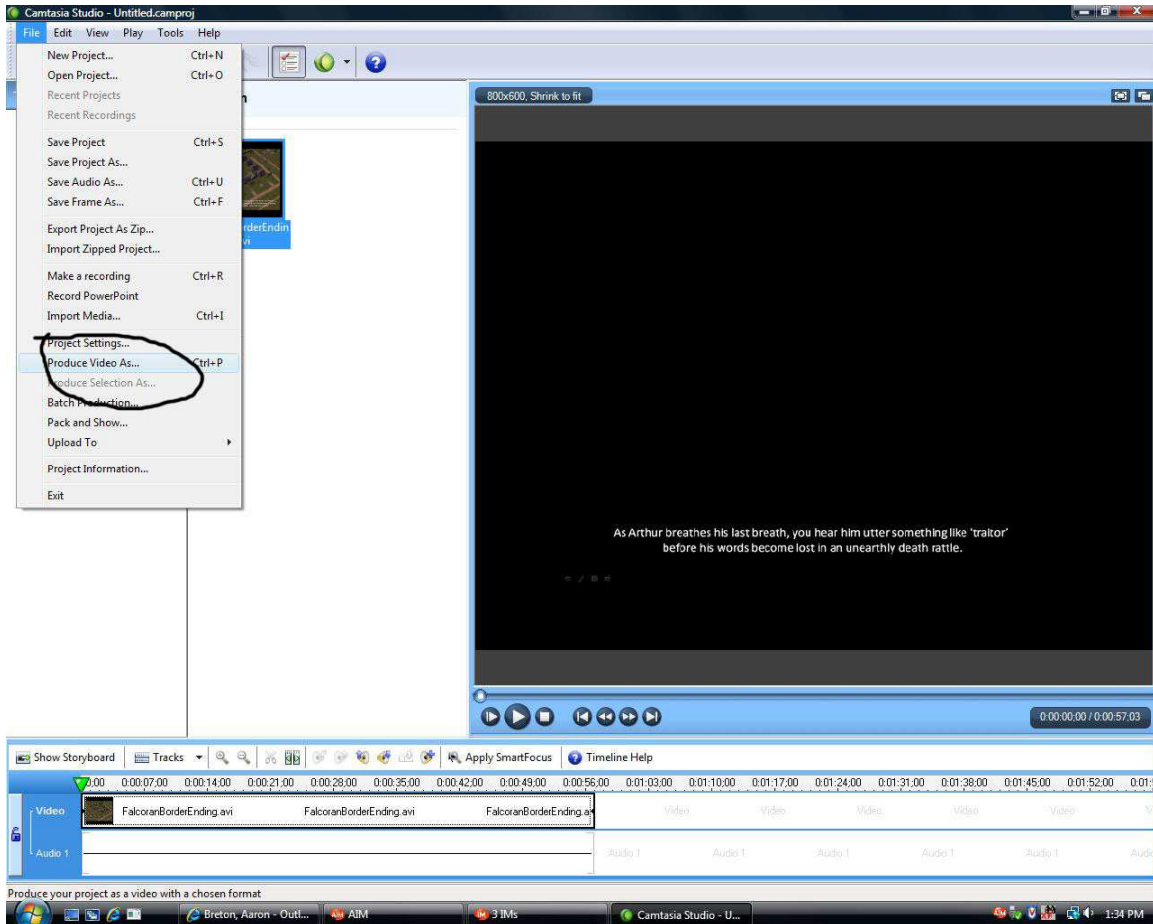


3. Once you have selected the scene transitions, you need to set up the slide show to automatically go to the next slide after a certain amount of seconds. This allows you to let your slide show run on its own later when you need it to. To do this look under the animation tab all the way to the right. There is a section called “Advance Slide”. This has two options and the one we want is “Automatically After”. This has an option that lets you set the amount of seconds before it switches to the next slide in your show. A good rule of thumb is to set it for 2-3 seconds longer than it takes you to read your text and get a glimpse of your picture. You need to do this for each slide in your presentation. Also since Camtasia will record the mouse you should make your starting slide a bit longer before it goes to the next one so you have time to start recording and get the mouse off screen. You can edit it later. Test it once you are done to make sure it transitions smoothly.

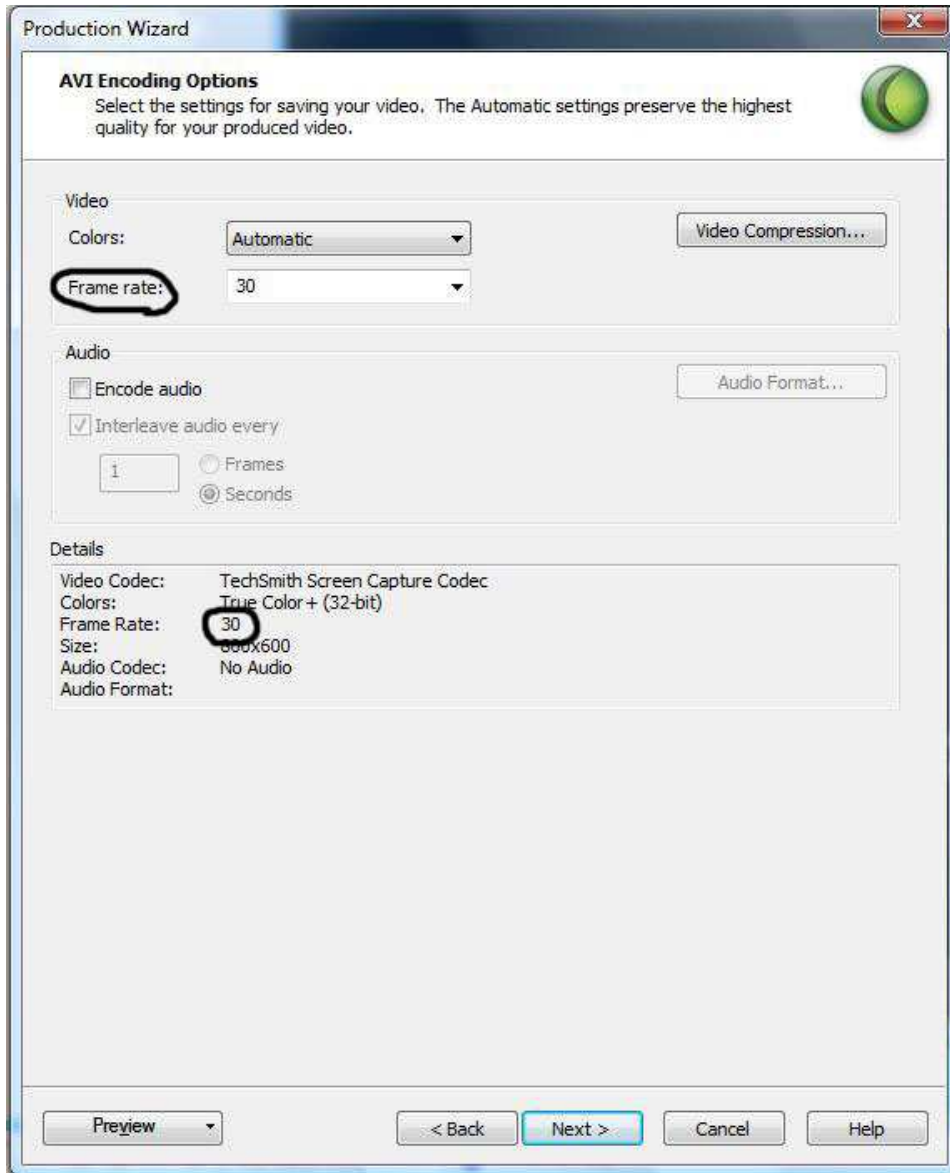
4. Once your presentation is flowing smoothly, it is time to record it using Camtasia and make it into a movie. If you are using Powerpoint 2007 and Camtasia 5.0 you should have an option to take footage from Powerpoint and put it directly into Camtasia to edit. This can be found under the add-ins tab.



5. Once you click record your slideshow will start to play. A window will show up in the bottom right of your screen. Click this once more to start the recording and move the mouse off screen. Once the slide show is done playing, it will ask you if you want to stop recording or continue, click “Stop Recording” and save the file to your desktop. Now you can open the movie in Camtasia.
6. Once you get your movie into Camtasia, you can edit off some of the beginning where the mouse is show and edit anything else if you want. Some people may also use Adobe Premier Elements, but Camtasia will work fine for the purpose of this tutorial. When you are done editing, we need to Export it as a movie file. So click File->Produce Movie As...

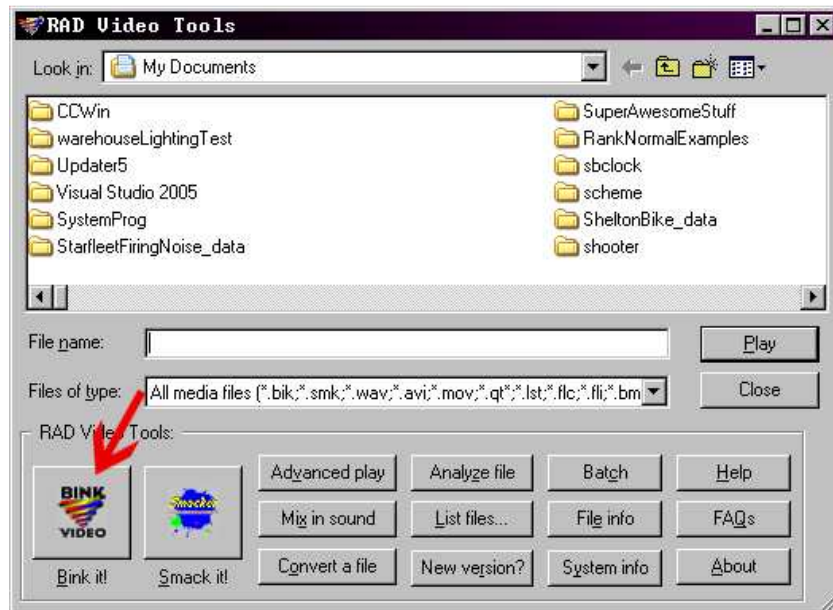


7. There are many preset options for compressing and making the video, but we want to make a custom set, so select that and hit Next. When it asks what type of file to make, select .avi then hit Next again. Once you get to the window that says “AVI Encoding Options” there is one thing that needs to be changed. You need to make sure your Frame rate is set to 30, which is how we want to export it. If you did this right, the Details at the bottom should change from Automatic to 30.

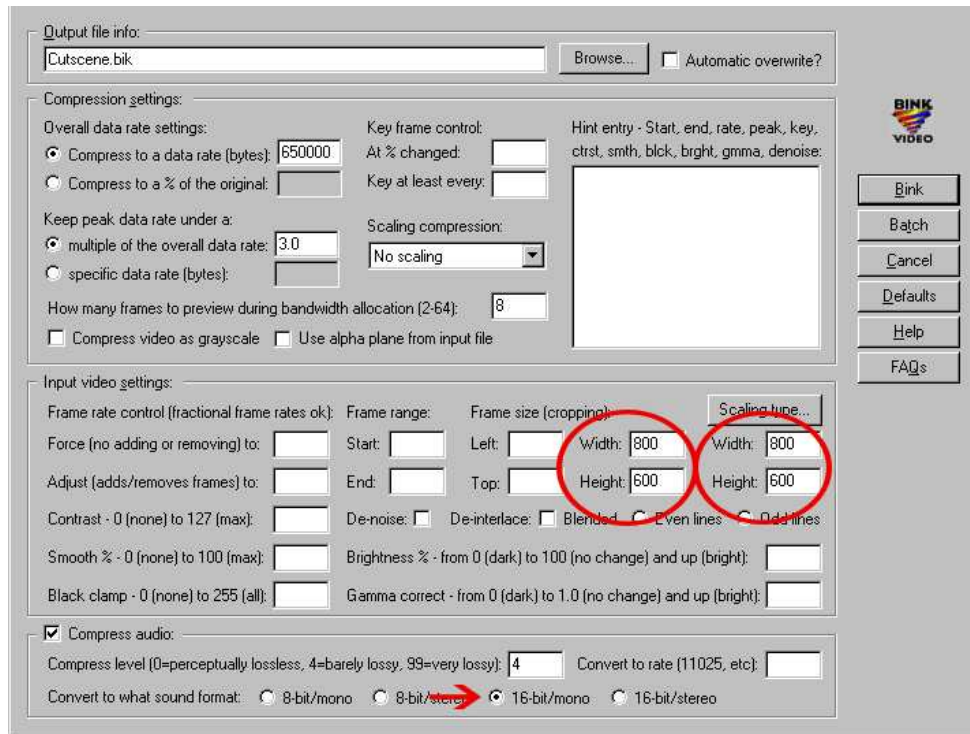


8. The rest of the options are pretty much up to you. You do not need to encode audio because we won't be using it in this tutorial. As a good measure when you have the option to change the size of the movie is to make it 800x600. This is the easiest for the converter tools to change it to the file type recognized by Neverwinter Nights. Once all these have been done select a destination to send your file and click Finish. It will take a minute for it to export the movie.

9. Now you have to convert the movie file into a format that NWN will recognize. To do this, you need to download the free RAD Video Tools from <http://www.radgametools.com/bnkdown.htm> . After installing it, open the program and you'll be asked to provide a video file. Choose your video and click the button marked "Bink It!"



10. You'll then be asked to give it a filename and choose your compression settings. I would recommend leaving the default compression settings in the top half of the window alone, because using those we were able to take a 250MB video file and get it down to about 4MB. What you will want to do though is adjust the input video settings to 800x600 in the fields indicated (since that's the size NWN recognizes), and adjust audio compression to either 8 or 16-bit mono. Apparently 16-bit mono makes the video size a bit larger but it's probably not too noticeable nowadays.



11. Once that's done just click the "Bink" button, and wait the few minutes it takes to compress the video into the .bik format. Once it's done, place the movie in the "movies" subfolder of your Neverwinter Nights directory.
12. Now you have to get it into your module. Since we used the movies to end the module, we'll discuss how to do that. What you need to use is Aurora's "EndGame" function. Essentially this function asks for a movie file from the "movies" subfolder, minus its .bik extension. All you need to do to call it is, in whatever script you're using to check for your endgame condition, have this line of code:

```
void main()
{
    EndGame("Ending");
}
```

where "Ending" is the name of your movie file. This will play your movie, and then play the standard Neverwinter Nights credits movie. There is a way to get it

so that the credits won't play, but that involves making a separate module containing just your movie file as the opening module, and people would still have to manually exit that. Besides, it's worth giving credit to the creators.

## ***Tutorial: How to create a Timer***

1. Create a new script.
2. Create a new method, for example:

```
Void SpawnOrcs(){  
    // When the timer runs out of time, the function you've just created will be called  
    // so put in code here for whatever you want to be run when the timer runs out.  
}
```

3. In the main() method use the DelayCommand() method that is already available to you by the engine. The parameters it requires are a float time, in seconds, and the action or method that is going to be called once the timer runs out.

Your main() method will look something like this:

```
Void main(){  
    DelayCommand(900.0, SpawnOrcs());  
}
```

You're done! Of course, there's much more meat that's needed to make this script minutely useful, but this is the general idea on how to create a timer.

The example above will start a timer that counts down from 900 seconds and when it runs out, it will run the method SpawnOrcs().

**Tip:** Use local variables to keep track of whether or not the timer has already begun or not.



For example, if you've created a timer and placed it in the "OnEnter" section for the Area properties, multiple instances may run at the same time if the player saves and loads the game while in that area.

First, get the Player Character (PC) object.

Next, make sure the PC is valid and make sure that the variable Timer\_Running is false.

If the check passes, set the variable Timer\_Running to true and start the timer.

Place this functionality in the main() method and it should look like this:

```
Void main(){  
    Object oPC = GetEnteringObject();  
    if((GetIsPC(oPC) == 1) && (GetLocalInt(oPC, "Timer_Running") == false)){  
        SetLocalInt (oPC, "Timer_Running", true);  
        DelayCommand(900.0, SpawnTimer());  
    }  
}
```

## Appendix 4: Concept Art + Level Map

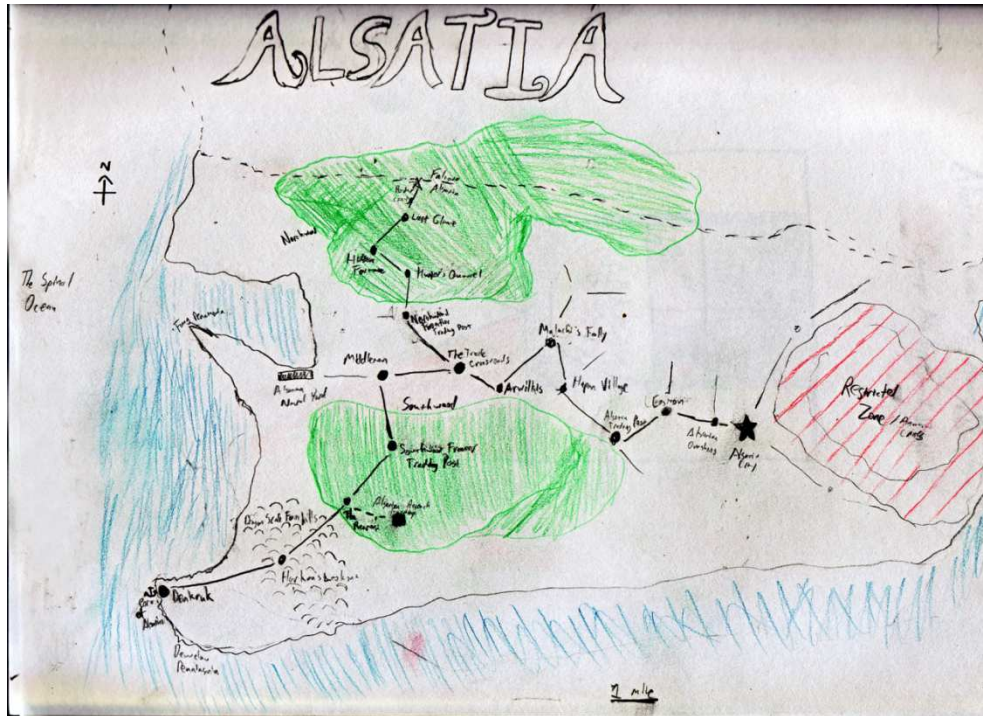


Figure 11: Map of the Kingdom of Alsattia

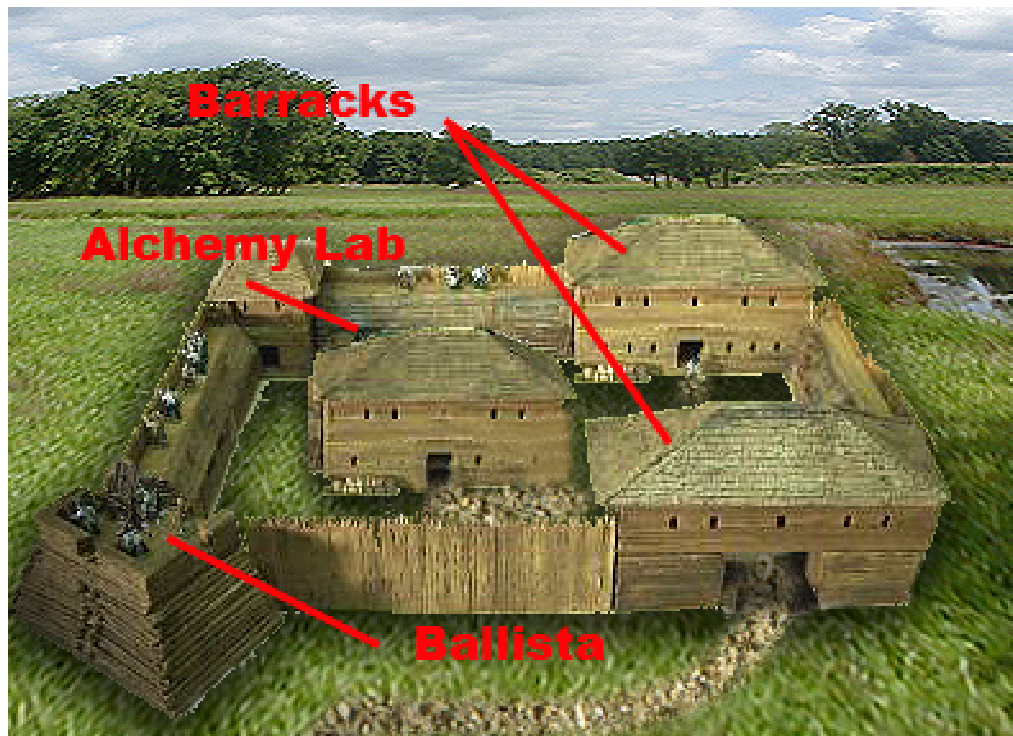


Figure 12: Initial Concept Design of the Research Facility



**Figure 13: Image of a Book on Fire, mostly used to represent thoughts on the Journal Editor**



**Figure 14: Concept art for The Retreat**



Figure 15: Concept art of the Cathedral where the game begins

## Appendix 5: Script descriptions

**Alchinfern\_timer:** Performs a SKILL\_USE\_MAGIC\_DEVICE check against a difficulty of 30 and destroys the crate1, crate2, and ballista objects in 1800 seconds if true or 900 seconds if false.

**Cgfonspawn:** The OnSpawn script for the Crimson Guard which makes them follow their walkwaypoints.

**Cgfperception:** The OnPerception script for the Crimson Guard which makes them attack the player if he/she is seen.

**Chancespawntimer:** A script that rolls 10 d10 dice and checks its sum against an initial DC of 70. If it loses, it will roll again in 300 seconds against a DC of 60, decrementing its value by 10 every time the dice roll loses. When the dice roll wins, a timer begins counting down from 900 seconds and when the time runs out, it spawns a group of Crimson Guard in the area. This script is placed in the area's properties.

**Change\_faction:** Gets two objects by their tags and sets the faction of the first one to that of the second.

**Check\_cratevalid:** Checks if crate1, crate2, and ballista objects have been destroyed yet.

**Disabletrap:** Commands Eleak to search for nearby traps and disable them.

**Forcedspawntimer:** A timer that executes the spawnncrimson script after 600 seconds have passed.

**It\_alchinferno:** Damage effects and visual effects of the item, Alchemist's Inferno.

**It\_alchinfernoen:** Damage effects and visual effects of the item, Alchemist's Inferno, when the player enters the radius of it.

**It\_alchinfernoex:** Damage effects and visual effects of the item, Alchemist's Inferno, when the player exits the radius of it.

**It\_alchinfernohb:** Damage effects and visual effects of the item, Alchemist's Inferno, while the player is in the radius of it.

**Ondeathcreateobj:** Checks to see if an object has been destroyed. If yes, then create another object at a specific location.

**Onenterbossareas:** Sets a PC local variable that keeps track of whether the player has entered the area or not before. Goes into the OnEnter tab of the area's properties.

**Onheartfalcobord:** Checks to see if Arthur, CGF1, and CGF2 objects have been destroyed yet. If yes, end the game. Goes into the OnHeartbeat tab of the area's properties.

**Onheartportalsat:** Checks to see if Melfice, CGA1, and CGA2 objects have been destroyed yet. If yes, end the game. Goes into the OnHeartbeat tab of the area's properties.

**Runawayrunner:** Causes the Runner NPC to run to the nearest waypoint called NotifyGuard.

**Runnerperception:** If the Runner NPC sees the player, then execute the Runawayrunner script.

**Runnerspawntimer:** If the Runner NPC reaches the NotifyGuard waypoint, then spawn a group of Crimson Guard in the area in a specific amount of time.

**Sp\_boughbreaker:** Damage effects and visual effects of the spell, Bough Breaker.

**Sp\_constvines:** Damage effects and visual effects of the spell, Constricting Vines.

**Sp\_hydroblast:** Damage effects and visual effects of the spell, Hydro Blast.

**Sp\_hydroshield:** Damage effects and visual effects of the spell, Hydro Shield.

**Sp\_thornbarrier:** Damage effects and visual effects of the spell, Thorn Barrier.

**Sp\_tidalburst:** Damage effects and visual effects of the spell, Tidal Burst.

**Sp\_vinewhip:** Damage effects and visual effects of the spell, Vine Whip.

**Spawncrimson:** Script that spawns a group of Crimson Guard into the area and then executes the forcedspawntimer script.

**Trig\_cutscene1:** Sets a PC local variable that keeps track of whether the PC has seen the first cutscene before. Goes into the OnEnter tab of a trigger's properties.