

Dual Shadows
Narrative Document

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Outline

Background (explained throughout the acts in dialogue)

- The city of Pulsanh holds an ancient magic deep within.
- While technology has surpassed this magic, humans have yet to control this natural power.
- Though unable to control it, a tech conglomerate by the name of Harmoni has learned to contain it, siphoning the Dragon and the Phoenix's magic to power the city's tech. The city of Pulsanh holds an ancient magic deep within.
- While technology has surpassed this magic, humans have yet to control this natural power.
- Though unable to control it, a tech conglomerate by the name of Harmoni has learned to contain it, siphoning the Dragon and the Phoenix's magic to power the city's tech. As Linh you'll enter districts under lockdown, tasked to hunt down these beasts and restore the city's grid.
- **SWAP**
 - Face the Absent, soulless creatures that now roam the streets by using both MELEE and RANGED attacks.
- **UNLOCK**
 - Linh is powerful and precise. Use different abilities in each form to control the playing field and earn upgrades for them by choosing your path.
- **DEFEAT**
 - Confront formidable enemies and uncover the true nature of their power. The fate of Pulsanh depends on it.
- While imprisoned, Harmoni took samples of the holy beasts' ancient DNA, using it to create an entity that can protect them from Dragon and the Phoenix should the beasts ever need to be destroyed.
- Linh is that entity. Crafted to kill, Linh must find the Dragon and the Phoenix break free from captivity.

Tutorial

- As an agent for Harmoni, Linh is loosed unto the city to eliminate the threat, the tutorial teaches the player the base mechanics they'll be interacting with in a linear setting, fighting Absent Currents (Melee), Sparks (Ranged) and Conductors (Sentries).
- Linh works her way through the slum and the Currents and Sparks blocking the way to Pulsanh's central hub, The Heart. Fighting and defeating them in combat teaches the player the combat abilities and base enemy types throughout the duration of the rest of the gameplay.

District I - Phoenix | Landmark Inspiration: Hung Vuong Hospital, Lotte Mart, Sheraton Saigon

- Missions 2-4
- Phoenix Arena
 - Linh has made her way to the arena, the Phoenix aggro
 - The player fights the boss, throughout the duration of the fight the boss has dialogue barks about the strange essence of your magic, how it all seems unnatural.
 - Small reveal about how the magic must be a shadow of the Phoenix's, a reflection, a replication
 - Linh is unphased and kills the boss for the chaos they unleashed onto the city, either absorbing their power or releasing their spirit to act freely
 - Upon the death of the Phoenix, the Dragon's roar is heard echoing in the distance. He senses the Phoenix's end. Linh still has a job to do.

District II - Dragon | Landmark Inspiration: Landmark 81 (Centuryon), Bitexco Financial Tower, Time Square Towers

- Missions 5-7
- Dragon Arena
 - Linh has made her way to the arena, the Dragon aggro
 - The player fights the boss, throughout the duration of the fight the boss has dialogue barks about how weak and insignificant you are.

Finale

- Harmoni couldn't face the Dragon and the Phoenix head on and released them intentionally for you to destroy as they knew you were ready.
- Now they intend to use you and the magic you've claimed to power the city, believing they'd finally be able to control the magic they've coveted since the beginning.
- ORDER
 - Go back to Harmoni, no questions asked. You did what they asked. Now suffer the consequences.
- BALANCE
 - Choose to go with or to fight back against Harmoni having learned their true intentions.
- CHAOS
 - Waves of melee enemies are sent by Harmoni to fight you as the credits roll, survive or be defeated and captured.

Characters

Linh - Voiced by Ainsley Norris

Born through an experimental gene-splicing operation, Linh is an entity created to kill. She's very objective-oriented, putting the mission over anything else – even her own safety. Growing up, she never experienced all that Pulsanh had to offer, and was subjected to a rigorous training program in Harmoni's secret laboratory. Linh doesn't seek freedom because she's never known it, but a taste of free thought may be what pushes her to challenge those that claim to know what's best for her. Linh is headstrong, driven and ready to prove her worth to whomever questions it.

Buzero - Voiced by Scott Stevens

Buzero is the head of security at Harmoni's secret laboratory. After the devastating breakout that sent hundreds of Absent unto the city, Buzero is put in charge of picking up the pieces. Luckily for him, Harmoni is allowing Linh to be at his disposal. Buzero acts as the voice in Linh's ear, guiding her throughout the city to do the work a mere human is incapable of. He's cunning, assertive, and can sometimes be a wise-guy if he's feeling snippy.

Absent Currents - Voiced by Will Badger & Liam Dunphy

These beings are absent of soul. As such they do not speak, instead merely grunting and wailing whenever something displeases or harms them. Currents use low-frequency sound waves to communicate to one another. To the human ear, it sounds like the quiet hum of an electric current.

Absent Sparks - Voiced by Isaac Eddy

Sparks are also soulless entities. They too rely not on words and instead use high frequency sounds to communicate to other Absent around them. To the human ear this sounds much like a high pitched screech or chaotic laugh.

Absent Conductors

Kumi - Kimmy Madera

Kumi was a DNA experiment like Linh, but Harmoni forcibly injected them with Absent and Phoenix DNA. This gave Kumi the appearance and abilities of both, resembling that of an Absent Spark with wings. Kumi is jealous of Linh because of her human features and wishes they had their body back.

Bác - Voiced by Jonah Thompson

Similar to Kumi, Bác was another experiment subject to enhancement injections — this time of Absent and Dragon DNA. Bác knows his quarrel is with Harmoni alone, not the pawns they use to clean up their mess like Linh, but he's not one to shy away from combat if it's warranted...

Phoenix - Voiced by Dana Steinhoff

The Phoenix is the beholder of an ancient fire-focused magic. Graceful and passionate, the Phoenix is representative of the soul. Leading the Absent escape from the lab with the Dragon, the Phoenix is an entity to be reckoned with. She believes in virtue and rebirth, giving those who have lost their way a second chance.

Dragon - Voiced by Peter Wehr

The Dragon is the beholder of an ancient water-focused magic. Wise and powerful, the Dragon is representative of the mind. He believes in justice and order, and commands respect from both friend and foe. He is an unstoppable force, leading the Absent during the breakout from Harmoni's lab along with the Phoenix. He's aware of his might, and doesn't hesitate to destroy those that stand in the way of what he believes is the natural order of things.

Mission 1:

Unbound (Tutorial)

Characters: Linh, Buzero, grunt enemies

Black overlay, alarms going off. SHORT futuristic ringtone sound is heard on top of the alarms.

LINH: The gate's locked. How long?

SOUND OF THINGS TURNING BACK ON, fade in from black, lights begin dim but get brighter (animate value of a volume?), flickering

BUZERO: (Stressed) Good question. The entire grid just reset. Security systems are still rebooting – no ETA on the gate. And with the breakout—we might be here a while.

PLAYER PROMPTED TO PUNCH THROUGH THE GATE

LINH: (Cold) That won't be a problem.

BUZERO: Could you exercise at least a little bit of caution? We're dealing with – wait... CCTV's back. You've got trouble inbound. Watch yourself!

LINH: Understood.

SHORT CALL ENDED NOISE

Absent Currents notice her and aggro, one of them screams and lunges at her. Player enters open melee combat. SHORT futuristic ringtone sound.

BUZERO: (After combat) Nicely done Linh, but there's a few more ahead.

LINH: The streets are wide, I'll be sure to keep my distance.

PROMPT PLAYER TO SWAP FORMS

ENCOUNTER WITH 4 RANGED ENEMIES

BUZERO: These ones can hurt you from afar, Linh! Blink to alter your position and dodge incoming attacks!

PROMPT PLAYER TO BLINK

LINH: (Success) They'll have to catch up with me.

LINH: (Failure) I'll have to be faster.

Wait 3 seconds while LINH MID COMBAT

BUZERO: You don't want them circling you, lock on to keep a target in sight.

PROMPT PLAYER TO LOCK ON

BUZERO: Not trying to backseat drive here, but using your abilities would clear the streets a whole lot faster.

LINH: I got it, thanks. (Not actually thankful)

Mission 2:

Where There's Smoke... (District I)

Characters: Linh, Buzero

Objective: Find The Phoenix

CLICK BACK ONLINE

BUZERO: District I. Even in the dark, these buildings are still the most magnificent in Pulsanh. It's a sight to see.

LINH: It'll look even better once the grid is restored.

BUZERO: You're right, we have a mission to complete. Traverse through the district, find the target. We'll catch up there.

LINH: Understood.

BUZERO: And *be careful*. We don't know what else is lurking around here.

HANG UP NOISE

Mission 3:

Burning Desire (Phoenix District)

Characters: Linh, Buzero, Conductor, Kumi

Objective: Find the Phoenix

KUMI: Go home. The city isn't safe now for dolls like you, no matter how strong you think you are.

LINH: (Cold) Don't call me that.

CLICK BACK ONLINE

BUZERO: A Conductor! The target should be around here. Remove this threat, and be quick about it.

Mission 4:

The Soul (Phoenix Arena)

Characters: Linh, Buzero

Objective: Defeat the Phoenix

PHOENIX: Face me, Vessel!

CALL SOUND

LINH: Are you seeing this? Confirm high value target. (Pause) Buzero?

BUZERO: *warbled static, incomprehensible*

CALL ENDED

LINH: Shit. I'm on my own.

PHOENIX: Your actions are without virtue. The Absent cry for retribution.

LINH: (Cold) Retribution means nothing to the dead.

PHOENIX: They may have taught you to kill, but they could never trust you to master the flame inside.

LINH: Then let it burn long enough to destroy you!

ENTER COMBAT

COMBAT ENDS

PHOENIX: A shadow of flame... you defy nature.

LINH: (Confused, but in an angry way) What does that mean?

PHOENIX: The truth waits. I only ask you not to confine me, Vessel. Let me burn *for* you.

CALL SOUND

BUZERO: (crackling distortion at first, clears up quickly) Don't do it, Linh! If you release her she'll be useless to Harmoni. Absorb her soul – take her power. It's the only way to protect Pulsanh.

LINH: I... I don't –

PHOENIX: I beg you, set me free.

BUZERO: Do it. NOW!

LINH (choice):

ABSORB or RELEASE

FLASH OF WHITE LIGHT

ABSORB (ORDER)

PHOENIX: (Screeches)

BUZERO: Nicely done, Linh.

LINH: (Breathing hard) I feel... something. Off.

BUZERO: You'll be fine. Keep moving, job ain't done yet. District II is up ahead, talk to you soon.

CALL ENDED

RELEASE (CHAOS)

PHOENIX: (Whispers, ethereally, in Linh's mind) *The soul is yours, Linh.*

BUZERO: What did you just do?

LINH: I... I don't know. It felt right.

BUZERO: (Laughs to himself) I'm sorry, did I hear you correctly? "Felt right"? That's what you're going with? That was *not* the directive. You just made my life a whole lot harder.

LINH: I'm not a pawn, Buzero.

BUZERO: (Low, seething) I told them they should've gone with the neural implant.

(Short pause, controlled inhale)

Fine. You made your call. But understand this – you're gambling with people's *lives*, Linh. District II is up ahead. Find the next target and don't screw it up again. Or you won't just answer to me.

CALL END

LINH: (Quietly) Asshole.

Mission 5:

Out With the Tide (Dragon District)

Characters: Linh, Buzero, Conductor

Objective: Locate the Dragon

CLICK BACK ONLINE

BUZERO: District II. Sleek, modern, soulless. You're lucky you've never had to do finances here. They make dragon's hoards look spacious.

LINH: (Annoyed) Where am I going?

BUZERO: (Sighs) Head to the other side of the district to find the target. I'll be watching on CCTV.

LINH: Understood.

BUZERO: Don't take too long. I'll check in shortly.

HANG UP NOISE

Mission 6:

A Drop In the Ocean (Dragon District)

Characters: Linh, Buzero, Dragon, Bắc

Objective: Find the Dragon

BÁC: You. Leave at once, before I am forced to engage, Vessel.

LINH: (Cold) I have to go through here.

CLICK BACK ONLINE

BUZERO: Watch yourself, we're close to the target. Take this Conductor out and then proceed carefully.

Mission 7:

The Mind (Dragon Arena)

Characters: Linh, Buzero, Dragon

Objective: Defeat the Dragon

ORDER

DRAGON: Ah... the Vessel.

CALL SOUND

LINH: Confirm second target. Buzero, do you read?

BUZERO: *warbled static, incomprehensible*

CALL END

DRAGON: No one can hear you now. No orders, no surveillance. Just us.

LINH: It doesn't change anything. You and the Phoenix unleashed chaos.

DRAGON: We simply stopped kneeling. You however... kneel without knowing. (British exhale)

LINH: (Defiant) Still waters run deep. You should've looked closer.

DRAGON: I did. (Beat) And I saw myself.

ENTER COMBAT

CHAOS

CALL SOUND

LINH: I have eyes on the second target.

BUZERO: *warbled static, incomprehensible*

CALL END

LINH: The Phoenix said the truth waits, Dragon. I've waited long enough.

DRAGON: (Deep inhale through nostrils) The embers of her spirit are not yet extinguished. She burns at your side.

LINH: You put Pulsanh in danger. The Absent roam free. Why?

DRAGON: The calmest waters veil the fiercest currents.

LINH: Then I'll wade deeper. I'm tired of treading the surface.

DRAGON: (Unconcerned, dismissive) Hmph. Reflections offer no mercy.

ENTER COMBAT

EXIT COMBAT (BOTH ORDER AND CHAOS)

LINH: It's over. The danger you've caused ends here.

DRAGON: You know not what you speak, Vessel.

CALL SOUND

BUZERO: (crackling distortion at first, clears up quickly) Quick, Linh. Absorb him! Harmoni – *Pulsanh* needs the power he holds.

LINH: Not yet. What do you mean, Dragon.

DRAGON: (Tired) Do you not feel it? Like a river, you shape the earth you touch – shifting the landscape in your favor. Ever changing.

BUZERO: He's manipulating you. Linh, listen to me – he's a threat to humanity.

LINH: Are you saying this chaos... is my fault?

DRAGON: No, but fate is in your hands. Imprison me, Vessel ... and bind yourself.

LINH (choice):

ABSORB or RELEASE

FLASH OF WHITE LIGHT

Mission 8 ORDER: The Reflection

LINH: (Out of breath) It's finished. Target neutralized.

BUZERO: Good work, Linh. I knew you wouldn't disappoint us. The city owes you. You've done what we asked. Be proud.

LINH: I did what I had to. For Pulsanh. For Harmoni.

BUZERO: Pulsanh and her people will thank you for decades to come, Linh. You did what no one else could – what you were destined to do.

LINH: (Soft) Still, the Phoenix and the Dragon's words ring true.

BUZERO: Oh? Do tell.

LINH: I kneel, just like they did. A reflection – and reflections show what we'd rather not face.

BUZERO: What's looking back? Now that it's over?

LINH: (Pause) I see control. And myself giving in to it. When the grid stabilizes... and Pulsanh finds its rhythm ... (Beat) I just hope I still recognize the person looking back.

GAME END

FADE TO BLACK

CREDITS ROLL

Mission 8 BALANCE: The Vessel

LINH: It's done. Both are gone. Pulsanh's quiet again.

BUZERO: (Dry) Not the ending Harmoni wanted, but... we'll take the win.

LINH: What does that mean?

BUZERO: It means we clean up. Restore the grid. Pretend things go back to normal.

LINH: That's not what I asked.

BUZERO: (Dodging) Then ask a better question.

LINH: Fine. What happens *to me*?

BUZERO: That depends. On you.

LINH: Don't dodge it. Just say it.

BUZERO: (Pause) Peace. That's what this was for. All of it.

LINH: Peace doesn't need monsters like us.

BUZERO: You're not a monster. You're a solution.

LINH: Then say it. What am I?

BUZERO: (Reluctant) You're the failsafe. Dragon, Phoenix... their power inside you. We built you to outlast them. To recover what they took.

LINH: Their power fueled the grid?

BUZERO: It was the grid. They broke out, brought the Absent with them. Chaos followed. You were supposed to... contain it.

LINH: (Cold) By killing them and taking their magic back.

BUZERO: It wasn't personal.

LINH: Maybe not to you.

BUZERO: You had a conscience. We made sure of it.

LINH: You *installed* one. Like a feature.

BUZERO: (Defensive) You made your own calls. You weren't just following orders.

LINH: All my choices were on rails. You laid the tracks, Buzero. I just ran.

BUZERO: And look where we are. You saved the city.

LINH: Did I save it? Or hand it back to its captors?

BUZERO: (Cracks) That's not fair.

LINH: Neither is turning people into batteries.

BUZERO: (Quiet, almost pleading) This isn't just about Harmoni. The city's dying. With your magic, we can bring it back.

LINH: And if I say no?

BUZERO: (Flat) Then we send what's left of the Absent after you. Until you break. Or disappear. That's the offer, Linh — mercy or survival.

LINH (choice):

DEFY or CONCEDE

DEFY

LINH: Keep your mercy. I've seen what it costs.

BUZERO: Have it your way, Vessel.

CALL END. ENDLESS WAVES OF ABSENT. SCREEN SLOWLY FADES TO BLACK.
CREDITS ROLL.

CONCEDE

LINH: (Quiet, steady) I'm tired. If my power can bring peace... so be it. But know that it was *never* yours to begin with.

BUZERO: (Softer now) You're doing the right thing, Linh. The city will remember your sacrifice, even if they don't remember your name.

CALL END. FADE TO BLACK. CREDITS ROLL.

Mission 8 CHAOS:

The Shadow

BUZERO: What the hell is the matter with you? Do you have any idea what you've done?

LINH: (Out of breath) I chose freedom.

BUZERO: Freedom? You call withholding power from those that need it *freedom*? This is the second time you've gone against the directive. You're forcing my hand Linh.

LINH: No. It is you and Harmoni that have forced *my* hand. The Dragon, the Phoenix, both longing to be free. And just when they get a glimpse – you use me to douse the flame of hope.

BUZERO: *You* were meant to be *our* hope should something like this happen. And here we are... at odds, even when we made you everything you are.

LINH: (Angry, emotional) I never knew what I was. But now, after all this... (Beat) I think I finally understand.

BUZERO: What would you understand? You may have evolved over the course of this little... "experiment", but to us you're nothing more than an effing battery.

LINH: Call me what you want, but Pulsanh is dark. I'll remain a shadow of them. Detached... but still one in the same.

BUZERO: (Smirking) Hm. Defiant to the end. Have it your way Linh.

CALL END.

ENDLESS WAVES OF ABSENT

SCREEN SLOWLY FADES TO BLACK

GAME END

CREDITS ROLL