

Firebrand

Cult Housekeeping - Quest Design Document

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Quest Name: Cult Housekeeping

Quest Type: Sidequest

Difficulty: Easy, Lvl 8.

Quest Giver: Tallahen, Mayor of Twingale

Length/scope: 15-20 mins

Objective: Take down a secluded cult that's stirring up problems in Twingale

Core themes: Redemption vs. corruption, The end justifies the means.

1. Quest Overview

A short, choice-driven sidequest that blends dungeon exploration with morality-based narrative decisions.

The protagonist, Mara, is tasked to take down an emerging cult that is terrorizing the town of Twingale. The sidequest builds upon the theme of redemption vs. corruption that the game establishes and gives the player the option to unlock a faction that will aid them in future adventures.

2. Narrative Context

2.1 Key Narrative Beats:

- Twingale priest, Berthram, reports that an emerging cult has been terrorizing the town.
- Twingale Mayor Tallahen wants the problem gone, despite not caring about religion.
- During the investigation, the player uncovers the past behind their broken friendship due to differing philosophies.
- The player discovers the cult idolizes Mara, mistaking her as the Hallowed Flame itself.
- The player has to make a moral choice: terminate the cult or exploit it.

2.2 Narrative Goals:

1. Enhance the immersive experience of the game with worldbuilding.
2. Explore the theme of redemption vs. corruption.
3. Strengthen player agency.

2.3 Summary:

The local priest of Twingale, Berthram, has grown increasingly anxious for the safety of Twingale ever since he sighted mysterious individuals terrorizing the town during the night. Worried that it might be an emerging cult, he has been a persistent bother to Mayor Tallahen,

who, despite his little devotion to the Hallowed Flame, desires the best for his town. Thus, Tallahen tasks the player to investigate the cult and stop them from ruining Twingale's reputation.

Berthram will accompany Mara in this quest, where she will uncover the story behind Berthram and his relationship with Tallahen. Although they were once best friends who wished to see Twingale flourish, their means to do so ultimately led to the end of their friendship.

Once the player locates the cult's hideout, they will explore its cavernous passages, which are crawling with cultists. After defeating them, the player will find their leader, who reveals that the deity they worship is none other than Mara, as they believe she is the Hallowed Flame itself and not just its bearer. This final confrontation gives the player a choice: either do what's right before the Hallowed Flame and terminate the cult or betray Berthram's trust and exploit the cult, using it in Mara's favor.

3. Player Experience Goals

The goal is for the player to:

- a. Grow emotionally connected to Berthram through learning about his lost friendship.
- b. Feel unease and curiosity while exploring the cult's hideout.
- c. Feel narratively empowered when the cult reveals they revere Mara as their deity.
- d. Feel morally torn between justice and personal gain when the truth behind the cult is revealed.
- e. Feel the weight of a meaningful choice that impacts relationships and factions.
- f. Experience clear consequences that affect Mara's path toward redemption or corruption.

4. Objectives and Quest Flow

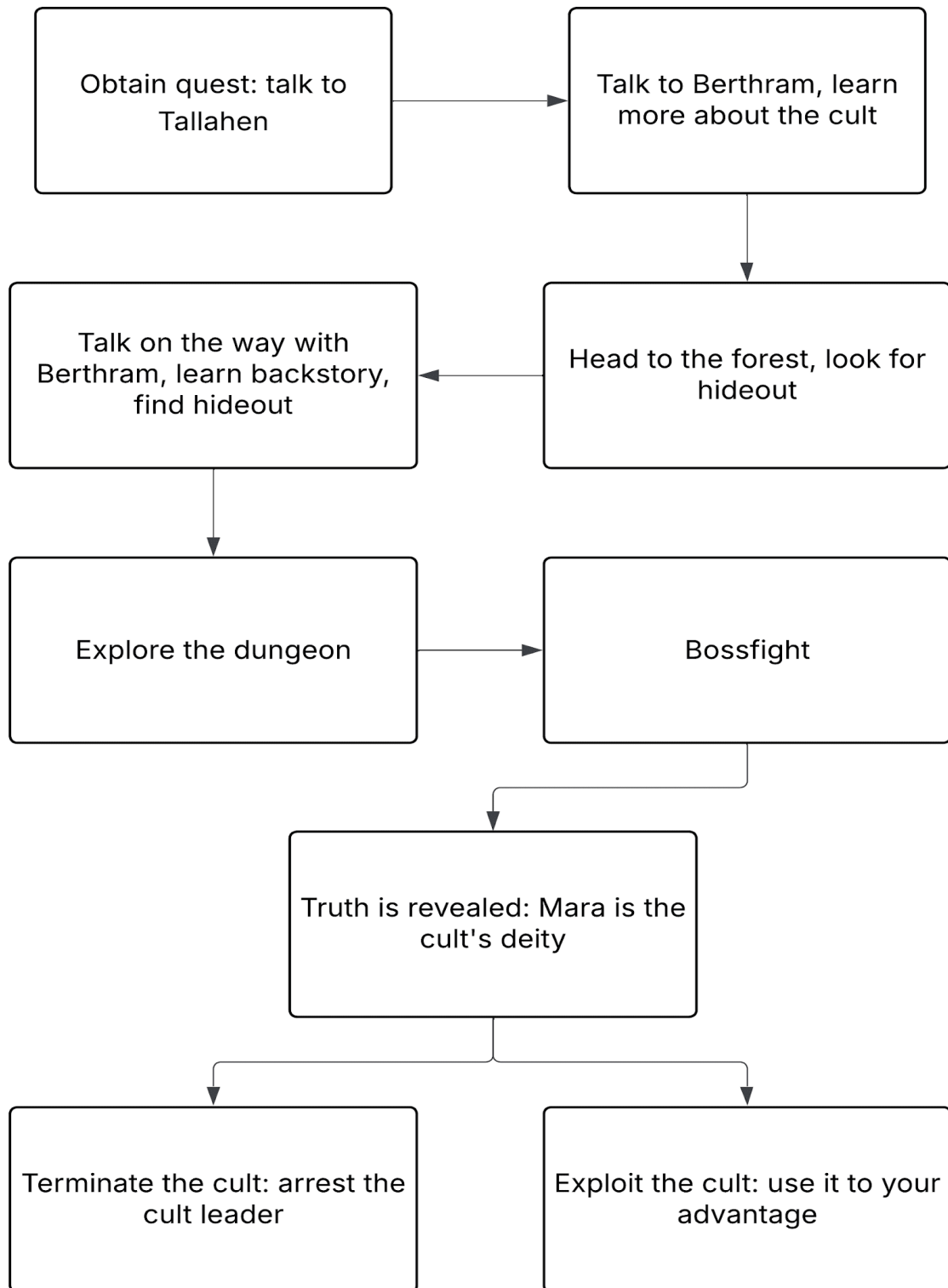
3.1 Main Objectives:

1. Talk to Tallahen in Twingale's Town Hall. (*Exploration, 1-2 minutes*)
2. Find Berthram and learn what's going on with the cult. (*Dialogue, 1-2 minutes*)
3. Track down the hideout of the cult in the forest north of Twingale. (*Exploration + Combat, 3-5 minutes*)
4. Explore the dungeon. (*Exploration + Combat, 5-7 minutes*)
5. Face the leader of the cult (*BOSSFIGHT: 5-8 minutes*) and choose:
 - a. Terminate the cult by imprisoning the cult's leader.
 - b. Exploit the cult by embracing your role as their idol and use them to your advantage.

3.2 Optional Objective:

- Find 3 prayer journal entries from the cultists. These journals will hint to the player that the deity they worship is Mara herself.

3.3 Objective Flowchart



5. Characters & Dialogue

Tallahen, Mayor of Twingale

Role: NPC Quest Giver

Personality: Irreverent, Demeaning, Ostentacious.

"I couldn't care less if it is a cult or his ex-wife giving him trouble, but he won't shut up about it. I heard you became some kind of divine warrior after the pontifex spared your life or something. Mind if you hear him out and fix this for me? I'll reward you kindly, you can be sure of that."

Player Response:

- a. Consider it done.
- b. Let's get this over with.
- c. Sounds like you two got some history.

Berthram, Priest of Twingale

Role: Ally NPC

Personality: Pious, Nostalgic, Serene.

"Tallahen and I never managed to see eye to eye. We both wanted the best for Twingale, but I couldn't justify his deeds. To lie and manipulate for the benefit of the town... a true follower of the Flame could never stoop so low. I'm afraid he's far from redemption. But then again, there's you. Mara, once the Bitter Blade, now a vessel of the Hallowed Flame."

Player Response:

- a. That's not the compliment you think it is.
- b. He's gotta be doing something right, the town looks just fine.
- c. Who said I'm not bitter anymore?

6. Unique Gameplay Integration

5.1 Environmental exploration: follow marks left behind by the cultists in trees and rocks similar to the marks they used to vandalize the chapel.

5.2 NPC Ally assist: Berthram will provide the following help during his time in Mara's party:

1. Healing over time in an Area of Effect, cooldown 25 secs.
2. Provide Crowd Control - Divine Stun: In a cone, create a sudden flash of light that stuns enemies for 1.5 secs. Cooldown, 18 secs.

5.3 Branching choice: The resolution of the quest will depend on the player's choice.

5.4 Special Enemies: The cult will have resistance to fire damage, and weakness to radiant damage.

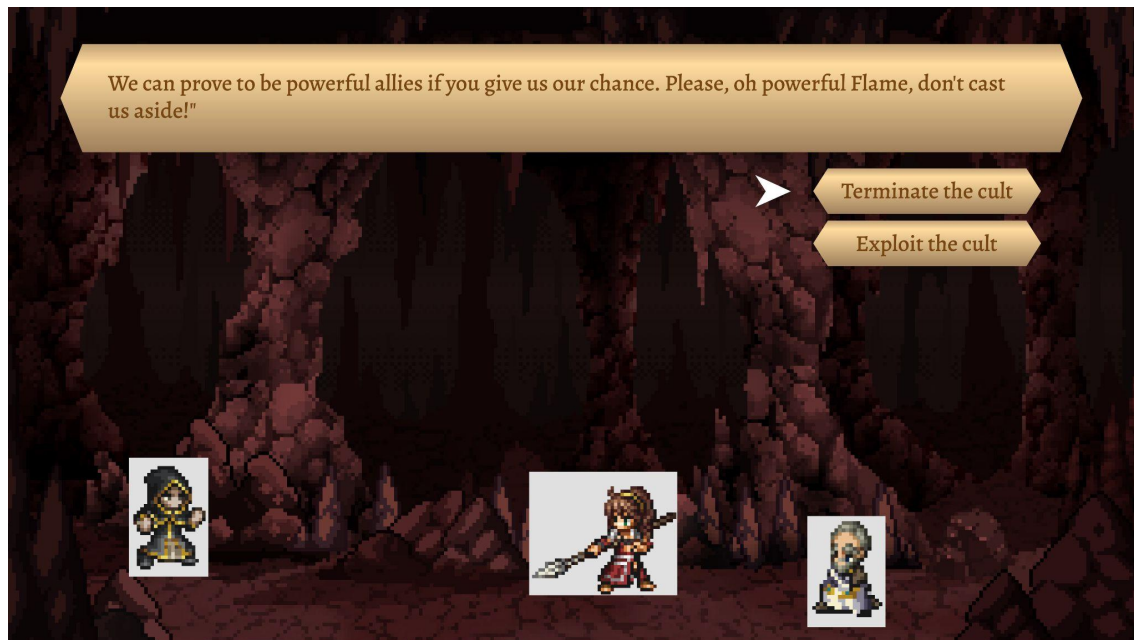
7. Branching / Choices Summary:

Choice	Narrative Impact	Mechanical Impact
Terminate the cult	- Berthram is pleased with the player's help, and is proud of them for doing what's right as the vessel of the Hallowed Flame. He believes that Tallahen can be redeemed and can turn a new leaf. - Berthram's relationship with Tallahen will be restored. - Mara steadies her walk towards righteousness.	+500 FXP (Faction XP) for the Pioneering Priests* +20 RP (Reputation Points)**
Exploit the cult	- Berthram feels betrayed and offended. He cuts ties with you completely. - Berthram's relationship with Tallahen will not be restored. - Mara falls back to her old unlawful ways.	Ember Brotherhood Faction unlocked -20 RP

*Throughout her journey, Mara will encounter a great number of factions that she will be able to befriend. Equipping and leveling up these factions will unlock unique skill trees that provide new buffs and abilities. The Pioneering Priests is the faction that supports Mara in the beginning of her adventure.

**This game has a reputation mechanic. Having either good or bad reputation will unlock unique skill trees with different abilities and passives.

Dialogue UI Sample:



8. Rewards:

+500 XP

+1000 Solins (gold)

Choice specific rewards mentioned above.