

ECHOES

Written by

Cole Barrios

Additional Writing by

Leopold Chen & Jennah Saqib

Email: c0le.b4rri0s@gmail.com

ACT ONE

SPLASH SCREEN

Title cards flash on-screen and somber music swells: USC GAMES, BERKLEE COLLEGE OF MUSIC, etcetera.

FADE TO:

MAIN MENU

A still image of BEIRA (late 20s, fae queen, blonde pixie cut, jewel crown) in action, along with a text menu featuring the Echoes logo, "NEW GAME," "SETTINGS," and "QUIT."

In the background, slightly faded, is the interior of a tall stone temple, cracked and hollow.

The player selects NEW GAME.

BEGIN CUTSCENE:

EXT. CRUMBLING CASTLE - NIGHT - CUTSCENE

The player hears the chaos unfold before they see it: roaring flames, clashes, and low, earthy rumbles sound off from all angles. A grizzled voice shouts above the clamor:

ROYAL GUARD

For the Queen! Hold the line!

A red flash, then a PAINTED IMAGE - a fortress in the background reduced to rubble as thick, rotting veins crawl from newly formed fissures.

A ring of ROYAL GUARDS (wood-clad, blasting stone from their palms) fight to hold back a crowd of ROTTING FAE (mutilated, human-shaped) as Beira, wounded, runs into a forest.

CUT TO GAMEPLAY:

EXT. TUTORIAL SEQUENCE - DARK FOREST - NIGHT

The player gains control of Beira as she runs onscreen, into a murky, claustrophobic forest covered in ROT (a red, pulsating, flesh-like substance).

BEIRA
No time to grieve. I have to lose
them.

The screen flashes red, indicating damage taken. Beira is missing several hearts.

Beira runs down a winding path through the forest, learning the game's movement. She groans in pain.

BEIRA (CONT'D)
He nearly got me.

After moving further through the forest, several rotten fae leap from the trees and begin pursuing Beira.

BEIRA (CONT'D)
Get away from me!

If the player does not run away, the fae swing at Beira, damaging her. Should she keep taking damage, Beira will die, and respawn at the beginning of the tutorial sequence.

Beira runs away from the rotten fae, narrowly dodging swing after swing, until she reaches...

EXT. TUTORIAL SEQUENCE - CLIFFSIDE - CONTINUOUS

A dead end. Below the cliff lies an endless void, revealing that Beira had been running through a floating island.

As Beira approaches the cliffside, however, time slows, and another floating island appears in the FOG OF WAR. On the island, a FAERIE RING (mushroom circle) glows blue.

Popup message: "JOYSTICK UP + RIGHT TRIGGER"

The player does the input, making Beira dash onto the faerie ring. The rotten fae cannot follow her here.

Another floating island shows up in the fog. Beira dashes to it. The small island she left shakes and falls into the void.

Following the cracked stone path on this new island, the player runs into a LARGE STONE TABLET covered in rot.

Popup message: "READ WITH A"

If the player interacts with the tablet, they can read more about the area's lore. For all lore text, refer to the Environment Interactions Reference Sheet.

The tablet is too large to walk past, but there is a ring on the other side of the island that the player can dash to.

Dashing to the other side reveals another floating island. This island has several broken pillars painted red with blood, and more rings for the player to practice dashing.

EXT. TUTORIAL SEQUENCE - LAST BASTION - NIGHT

The rings lead to a large bastion, pulled apart by rot and island fissures. It is eerily quiet.

The bastion's stone brick walls are lined with torn banners, as well as more blood and rot. Beira enters through a fracture.

The first thing the player sees when entering the building is an armored corpse pinned to the wall. Torn paintings and smashed furniture fill the space with signs of battle.

Moving even a little opens up the fog of war and reveals several more mutilated corpses, both fae and monstrous.

One of the bodies dressed in fancier clothing has an ENGRAVED BRACELET that Beira can pick up.

BEIRA
(pained)
I'm gonna be sick...

Exiting from the other side of the bastion, Beira enters a small garden. Everything is wilted except for a small glowing BRIGBERRY BUSH.

BEIRA (CONT'D)
Brigberries! These should keep me
going a little longer.

Beira eats the berries with a satisfying crunch, recovering most of her health.

The player dashes from ring to ring, island to island. Each island is more disturbing than the last, infested with rot, battle scars, bodies, and demolished infrastructure.

EXT. TUTORIAL SEQUENCE - COMBAT ISLANDS - NIGHT

A ROTTED SOLDIER (armed rotten fae) stands over a bastion guard's corpse under a dead tree. The player must dash through the monster to get to the next ring.

Dashing through the monster kills it.

BEIRA
Farewell.

Beira runs up a tight, winding path, towards an island covered in dense RED MIASMA.

Beira steps foot on the island, and the miasma closes in. A rotted soldier spawns from a pool of blood.

On either side of the soldier are faerie rings that the player must use to damage the soldier.

Once the soldier dies, the miasma disappears, revealing a new island. This is a recurring game mechanic that requires the player to defeat an island's enemies before progressing.

Beira dashes to a fractured island with a worn gazebo at its center. Inside the gazebo is a dead guard holding a LETTER and an ENGRAVED BRACELET.

The player may choose to read the letter. It's a letter to the guard's beloved:

The guard and his squadron died trapping a group of rotten fae in a makeshift trench. He hopes it was enough to hold off the invasion so those in the bastion could escape.

Next island. Rotted soldiers trapped in a makeshift trench try to attack her, but they're out of range. Three or four dead guards lay in the trench with them.

After dispatching the soldiers, Beira dashes to another island with rot, faerie rings, and dead bodies.

BEIRA (CONT'D)
The spymaster's hideout is just ahead. I can recoup there.

Beira reaches a combat island with two waves, then an island with a brigberry bush.

BEIRA (CONT'D)
Almost there...

Beira dashes through several small pathway islands, devoid of any signs of rot or combat.

There's a small archway on the last island, with a crow carved into the headstone. Beira dashes through the arch...

EXT. TUTORIAL SEQUENCE - HIDEOUT ENTRANCE - CONTINUOUS

And into darkness. The island is covered in a red fog, obscuring everything and shrinking Beira's vision circle drastically.

The fog lifts slowly. As Beira's vision circle grows, the first thing that the player sees is a DEAD SPY.

BEIRA

No, the rot's spread here too? How did he know?

The circle grows to its full size. Only traces of the hideout remain. Fangs, flesh, and rotten soldiers cover the island.

Somber music swells again as Beira battles with multiple waves of enemies.

After Beira defeats every wave, a second or two pass in silence. The red miasma remains.

BEIRA (CONT'D)

Strange. The miasma isn't dissipating.

The ground and screen shake. The player's controller rumbles. Tense music plays as rot pools all over begin to pulse.

BEGIN CUTSCENE:

EXT. TUTORIAL SEQUENCE - HIDEOUT ENTRANCE - NIGHT - CUTSCENE

Beira turns to face a pool of blood-red slime that rises into a cloud of thick mist.

The mist fades, and ROT (Archfae of decay, skull mask, wine-red cape) emerges. The rumbling stops.

ENTER DIALOGUE:

Dialogue boxes with character expressions slide up. Enter & Exit Dialogue refer to instances where the game uses these boxes. Any VO missing those transitions is diegetic.

ROT

Enjoying your stroll, Beira?

Beira readies herself for combat.

BEIRA

YOU--!

ROT

Aww, touchy subject, I suppose. Did you really think you could escape?

BEIRA

I owed it to my kingdom to at least try.

Rot laughs.

ROT

Your kingdom is no more. I'll take the reins from here.

EXIT DIALOGUE.

Rot summons several projectiles aimed at Beira. On impact, she shouts in pain. The player's HP drops to zero, and Beira falls to her knees.

The miasma at the edges of the island picks up speed, trapping the warring monarchs in the eye of a red storm. The rumbling begins again. Rot lifts his hand.

Vibrant streaks of gold and blue light shoot out of Beira's body and into Rot's hand, turning red.

BEIRA

This isn't over...

As all the light leaves Beira's body, it desaturates entirely, leaving a grey husk.

CUT TO:

DEATH SEQUENCE - CONTINUOUS

Beira shouts in pain, then falls to the floor. The screen fades to black. In large red font: "YOU DIED."

CUT TO GAMEPLAY:

INT. TEMPLE HUB - SPAWN ROOM - NIGHT

RESPAWN SEQUENCE:

A ray of moonlight breaks through the ceiling onto the grassy floor of a broken down crypt. Blue and gold particles coalesce under the moonlight, and from them, Beira rises.

The player regains control over Beira.

BEIRA
I... died?

The player leaves the crypt.

INT. TEMPLE HUB - WELL OF MEMORIES - CONTINUOUS

The player moves into a long chamber with an empty well and a statue in the well of a hooded woman.

Beira groans.

BEIRA
My head... It's all blank.

The well has a PLAQUE at the end of it with lore about the temple and the hooded woman. Refer to the Environment Interactions Reference Sheet.

If the player interacts with the plaque:

BEIRA (CONT'D)
I feel like I know you.

The well fills with water, and a menu opens. From the menu, the player can choose to replay the crumbling castle cutscene or any future ECHOES (painted flashback cutscenes).

The player exits the chamber.

INT. TEMPLE HUB - MAIN HALL - CONTINUOUS

The player enters a large hall. On the left side is a mural of Beira in full queenly regalia. On the right is a small tent and lit lantern, along with tons of supplies and papers.

On the opposite end of the hall is a large archway serving as an exit.

BEIRA
I need information. Maybe I'll find more outside.

If the player walks over to the mural:

BEIRA (CONT'D)
That's me.

If the player interacts with the lantern:

BEIRA (CONT'D)
Someone was here recently. Maybe I
can meet them if I return.

One of the loose papers is interactable. It's a TRAVEL LOG--
the author was looking for someone. Refer to the Interactions
Reference Sheet.

If the player exits, the first run begins.

EXT. AREA ONE - STARTING ISLAND - NIGHT

Entering the island from the temple archway, Beira sets foot
on what might at one point have been a patio or backyard. The
face of the temple is debilitated beyond repair.

BEIRA
Just need to get my bearings.

The player moves further down the island.

Lying in Beira's path is a withered corpse and a trail of
blood leading from the faerie ring at the end of the island.
Its arm extends towards the temple's entrance.

The corpse has a scythe jammed into its head.

BEIRA (CONT'D)
Who did this to you?

Stepping past the corpse causes it to melt into a puddle of
blood like the enemies in the tutorial.

Beira's heart skips a beat. The screen flashes red with the
faint image of Rot.

BEIRA (CONT'D)
I remember now. I... Was killed.
Rot.

The player exits the island.

BEIRA (CONT'D)
Rest well.

EXT. AREA ONE - NIGHT

The player dashes from island to island, encountering COMBAT
and various types of LOOT. Refer to the Game Design Document.

Beira makes comments For encounter dialogue, refer to the
Callout Sheet.

EXT. AREA ONE - BREN'S SHOP

The player reaches a SHOP island. The music becomes much more cheerful and strange. The island is full of crows, and at the center is a worn gilded tent full of supplies.

The player enters BREN's (mountainous, eccentric, greasy crow motif) vision.

An exclamation mark appears over Bren's head.

ENTER DIALOGUE:

BREN
Your Highness? You're alive!

Beira enters a combat stance.

BEIRA
Who the hell are you?

BREN
I'm Bren. You don't recognize me?

BEIRA
...I'm afraid not. I don't remember much. Why are you so surprised to see me alive?

BREN
You were gone for centuries, my Queen. When you left, death and decay came knocking.

BEIRA
Rot. I do remember dying by his hand.

BREN
Well!
(clears throat)
I'm certainly not an enemy. You can stop glaring daggers at me.

Beira exits her combat stance.

BREN (CONT'D)
In fact, you may find me helpful.
For a few Favours, of course.

Beira stares at Bren blankly.

Bren sighs.

BREN (CONT'D)
 Favours. You know. The coins that
 materialize when a fae pays you
 thanks.

Beira's face softens.

BEIRA
 Oh. I may have a few.

EXIT DIALOGUE.

The player may purchase items that make them stronger from
 the diegetic selection of items in Bren's tent.

BEIRA (CONT'D)
 Favours... They're thanking me for
 putting them out of their misery.
 Rot will pay for what he's done to
 them. To me.

END OF ACT ONE

ACT TWO

If the player dies during their first run of Echoes:

DEATH SEQUENCE

Beira shouts in pain, then falls to the floor. The screen fades to black. In large red font: "YOU DIED."

BEIRA

No, I can't die here! Rot...

FADE IN:

INT. TEMPLE HUB - SPAWN ROOM - FIRST DEATH

RESPAWN SEQUENCE

BEIRA

I'm back. I can come back!

INT. TEMPLE HUB - MAIN HALL - CONTINUOUS

The player moves back through the hub. The mural glows again. Interacting with it allows the player to customize their loadout. Refer to the GDD for more details.

Bren stands to the right of the exit, near the tent and supplies.

An exclamation mark appears over Bren's head.

ENTER DIALOGUE:

BEIRA

Bren?

BREN

My Queen! You found your--uh, my safehouse. I'd make an offer, but you seem to be fresh out of Favours. I do have something for you, though. Here.

Bren hands Beira a JOURNAL, unlocking the journal mechanic. Refer to the GDD for more details.

BREN (CONT'D)

So you won't forget more, yeah?

BEIRA
Thank you. How much for it?

BREN
This one's on me. It's the least I
could do.

EXIT DIALOGUE.

The player can enter dialogue with Bren in the hub whenever they want. Refer to the Dialogue sheet for specifics regarding location, content, and context.

Example player-prompted interaction:

ENTER DIALOGUE:

BEIRA
So. Your safehouse? Tell me the
truth.

BREN
Er...

BEIRA
Tell me.

BREN
It was a sacred place. A temple
dedicated to you and the Queens
before you.

EXIT DIALOGUE.

BEIRA
Before me, huh...

The player exits the Hub.

EXT. AREA ONE - STARTING ISLAND - SUBSEQUENT RUNS

Upon beginning subsequent runs, Beira will occasionally make a comment about her state of being. Refer to the Callout sheet for specific comments. For instance:

BEIRA
He won't escape my grasp. Even in
death.

EXT. AREA ONE - EXIT ROOM - NIGHT

The player reaches the end of the first of three areas. At the end of each is a uniquely decorated exit room, featuring a miniboss and lore text of different shapes and sizes.

The player clears the exit room for the first time. The miniboss's body glows red. Beira is prompted by a popup to mash a button.

BEIRA

Their power calls to me as if it
were mine from the start.

As the player mashes the button, Beira raises her hand. Red streaks of light shoot out of the miniboss's body and into Beira's hand, turning blue and gold.

Beira shines brightly as the miniboss's body desaturates and withers away, leaving behind an ECHO ITEM. Interacting with Echo Items triggers Echoes like the first painted cutscene.

In this case, the echo item is a FLOATING LANTERN (refer to Items sheet).

BEIRA (CONT'D)

A lantern--from a celebration. I
was there.

Picking the lantern up reveals a still scene:

BEGIN CUTSCENE:

EXT. CASTLE BALCONY - BEFORE THE FALL - LATE AFTERNOON

Thawne and Beira overlook coronation festivities. There are chanting, dancing, laughing and singing sounds in the distance.

Beira leans on the balcony.

BEIRA

You shouldn't be here.

(softly)

I shouldn't be here. I'm not ready
to take her place.

THAWNE

You look like you needed someone at
your side, and you're more than
ready. Your mother would be proud.

Thawne puts his arm around Beira's shoulder.

BEIRA
Thanks, Thawne.

Beira leans her head on his arm.

CUT TO GAMEPLAY:

EXT. AREA ONE - EXIT ROOM - NIGHT

BEIRA
Thawne... He felt very dear to me.
I wonder if he's still alive. I'll
keep an eye out.

The player leaves the island, entering...

EXT. AREA TWO - STARTING ROOM - NIGHT

BEIRA
Eile was so lively in that
memory... And now, it's desolate.
(growling)
Rot.

EXT. AREA TWO & AREA THREE - NIGHT

Area two and area three, due to scope, are pretty much the same outside of ramped difficulty and different minibosses with their own attached lore.

Through environmental interactions, callouts, and dialogue, the player is shown the tyranny that Rot has since wrought--motivating Beira to save the kingdom.

For more details, refer to the Dialogue, Callout, & Environment Interactions sheets.

EXT. AREA TWO - EXIT ROOM - NIGHT

Defeating the miniboss triggers a button mash, and another scene in which Beira draws light from the body. The miniboss drops a STORMGLOBE (refer to Items sheet).

BEIRA
A stormglobe... I embodied winter
frequently as queen.

The stormglobe is an echo item. Picking it up reveals a still scene:

BEGIN CUTSCENE:

INT. THRONE ROOM - BEFORE THE FALL - DAY

The entire room is draped in snow.

BEIRA (late 30s, powerful, regal) sits on a throne covered in ice. Icicles hang off her fingertips and eyelashes.

Her nose and lips are a pale blue, and her expression is soft.

THAWNE's (late 30s, frustrated, matted hair) image reflects through the ice wall. He kneels at her feet, but his expression is defiant.

BEIRA
(pleadingly)
Thawne, please understand.

THAWNE

My Queen, what is it exactly that
I'm supposed to understand!? The
Court thinks that you're
overstepping. And...
(beat)
I agree. I can't keep defending
your actions.

Beira's voice becomes cold.

BEIRA
I, the queen, overstep?

A harsh blizzard rushes over the visual.

CUT TO GAMEPLAY:

EXT. AREA TWO - EXIT ROOM - NIGHT

Beira scoffs.

BEIRA
I got really angry there... We must
have been fighting over something
important.

EXT. AREA THREE - EXIT ROOM - MUCH LATER

After trekking through the final area, defeating the miniboss, and taking back her powers, Beira stands before a shattered crown and an epic, rusted iron gate.

BEIRA
My old crown. Rot used it to power
his vile puppets.

The SPIRIT QUEEN'S CROWN is an echo item. Picking it up reveals a still scene:

BEGIN CUTSCENE:

EXT. CASTLE GROUNDS - NIGHT

Beira stands bloodied as she watches the carnage unfold. Her domain is overtaken with decay as undead fae rip out of the ground, attacking her soldiers.

ROT appears on the top of a hill in the distance.

BEIRA
THAWNE!!! I'LL KILL YOU!

Rot delivers a chilling smile and mocking bow.

CUT TO GAMEPLAY:

EXT. AREA THREE - EXIT ROOM - NIGHT

BEIRA
Thawne... I thought... How Dare He.

The player enters the iron gates.

END OF ACT TWO

ACT THREE

EXT. ROT BOSS ROOM - NIGHT

Beira walks through the wrought iron gates onto the island.

Across from her, Rot leans upon a viny throne woven from blisters, tendons, and flesh.

ENTER DIALOGUE:

BEIRA

Thawne, you were my friend. Why?

ROT

Beira! So glad you could join us.

BEIRA

Us?

EXIT DIALOGUE.

Dramatic, distorted boss music blasts and several rotten enemies spawn from pools of rot and blood. Rot summons a barrier around himself.

ROT

Did you honestly believe that I was your friend? The Thawne you knew is gone, along with your reign.

BEIRA

I'll make you pay for your treason, Rot.

ROT

Ugh, you're so dramatic.

If the player dies during the boss battle:

DEATH SEQUENCE

ROT

Now this is making me quite nostalgic.

More dialogue of a similar nature takes place the next time the player reaches the boss room. Refer to the Dialogue sheet.

If Rot hits zero health:

ROT (CONT'D)
AAAAARGH!

Rot doubles over clutching his chest. Beira walks around to face him.

BEIRA
Was it worth it, Thawne?

ROT
Beira, wait, please. I'm sorry--

The player is prompted to dash through Rot one more time in order to kill him.

If the player chooses to hear Rot out:

ROT (CONT'D)
I never meant to hurt you. It was a necessary evil. You know I didn't want this, but your policies took away our sovereign rights. You made me do it. It was your fault--

Beira dashes through Rot one last time. Rot gasps his last breath before slumping forward. Rot's body glows red.

BEIRA
Monster. The only power you held over me was the power that I gave you.

Beira is prompted by a popup to mash a button.

As the player mashes the button, Beira raises her hand. Red streaks of light shoot out of Rot's body and into Beira's hand, turning blue and gold. Beira's body glows brightly.

Rot's body decomposes rapidly, leaving behind a STUFFED FAWN.

The stuffed animal is an echo item. Picking it up reveals a still scene:

BEGIN CUTSCENE:

EXT. CASTLE TOWER - LAVISH BEDCHAMBERS - NIGHT

A solemn stone tower. One of the windows is lit from the interior. A red mushroomed vine withers as it hangs from the sill.

Visible through the window and cloaked in harsh candlelight are Beira and Thawne as children.

Thawne, slightly older and much taller, looms over Beira as he hands her the same stuffed fawn. Beira hesitantly grabs it from a distance.

BEIRA

I can't accept this. I'm not allowed--

THAWNE

Then hide it! It'll be our secret until you're Queen.

BACK TO:

EXT. ROT BOSS ROOM - NIGHT

Beira walks back out the iron gates silently.

As Beira walks back to the hub through each Exit Room and Starting Island, the CREDITS roll across the screen.

THE END.