

EVERYQUEST

Elevator Pitch

A Roguelite Tactical RPG about imagination, alternate timelines, mental health, and at least seventeen talking monkeys.

Characters

- Morgan “MC” Chase (*Must Always Be In Party*)
 - Quiet kid trying to figure out what they want to do with their life
 - Is the Player Character, and can have their name, appearance, and pronouns set by the player
- Bhrugu Deshpande (*Party Member*)
 - One of MC’s Best Friends
 - Neurotic Perfectionist, Obsessively Politically Active
- Evan Chase (*Party Member*)
 - MC’s Younger Brother
 - Isn’t really all that concerned with where he’s going in life, and is content to just try and be there for the people around him
- Amber Reeves (*Party Member*)
 - Moved into the City recently, hasn’t made much effort to make friends
 - Misses her smaller hometown, isn’t having a great time adjusting to the city
- Ryoko Yamashiro (*Party Member*)
 - Kind, but awkward; Probably going to end up as valedictorian
 - Has studied hard for all her life thanks to overbearing parents, and wishes for adventure and excitement
- Daniel Garcia (*Party Member*)
 - A little spacy, always wearing headphones
 - Dedicated to becoming someone important by making great things
- Milo Simmons (*Party Member*)
 - Surly and withdrawn
 - Has struggled a lot to get where he is, and is tired of having to fight for everything
- The Voice
 - Ruler of the Everything
- End of Days
 - Cult dedicated to destroying the Everything
- Marilyn Price
 - Pessimistic, Sullen Girl that not many people know well

Gameplay

EVERQUEST will be divided into two distinct sections, as is typical for a lot of RPGs; the Dungeon Overworld and Battles. There is also a central area known as The Hall, which plays similarly to Dungeon Overworlds, but serves a different purpose.

The Hall

The Hall hosts the entrances of the game's main 7 dungeons, as well as a number of side dungeons to allow players to raise their party members' levels. By bringing back Items from Dungeons, Players can also gain the ability to craft Charms at the Smith-O-Matic 3000, which can be equipped to Party Members to give them special abilities. Charms cannot be de-equipped inside of Dungeons, and count towards Players' carrying weight. Players can also use any Boosters they've found on their Party Members to improve their stats.

Overworld

In the Overworld, the player explores floors of the dungeon, where they will be able to find Treasure, NPCs to talk to and trade with, and Enemies to fight. They are also capable of managing their Party Members' Inventories by changing their equipped Weapon and Armor, trading items between different individual Party Members' Inventories, and throwing away Items.

Dungeon Structure

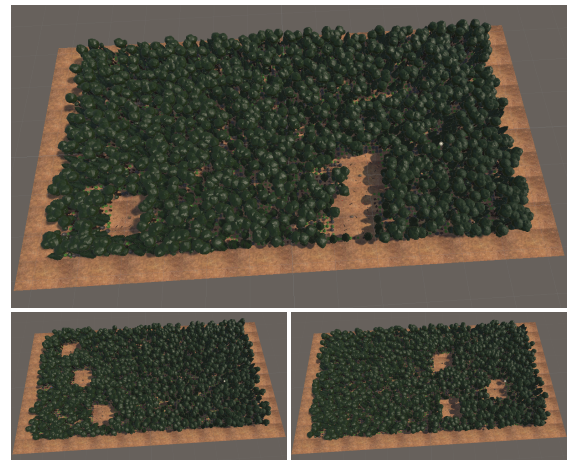
Dungeons consist of a number of floors, each of which is home to a number of pre-designed rooms, which can host NPCs, Shops, Treasure Chests, Portals to the next floor, and various Decor that your Party Members can comment on. (Early Terrain Generation is demonstrated in the images to the right.)

Each Dungeon has a unique pool of Items and Weapons that can be won from Battle. Bringing them to the end of the Dungeon will convert them into different types of Scraps, which are used to craft Charms and Boosters back in the Hall.

Dungeons must be started from the top each run, but Rooms within the Dungeon that host Story Events are only triggered the first time that room is reached. The Rooms will appear in consecutive runs, but will mostly be empty.

Battles

Battles take place on a Hex Grid, with cells being able to be occupied primarily by Party Members, Enemies, and Cover. Upon defeating all Enemies, the battle is won.



Standing next to Cover can block certain types of attacks, but will also degrade by a certain amount every time it does so. When cover degrades, the chance it will block an attack is lowered.

Party Members and Enemies have six stats:

- VITAL (Vitality): How much damage they can take before being defeated.
- PHATK (Physical Attack): How much damage they can deal with Melee Attacks.
- RNATK (Ranged Attack): How much damage they can deal with Ranged Attacks.
- BLOCK (Blocking): What percentage of damage is blocked when they take damage.
- SPEED (Movement Speed): The maximum number of tiles they can move per turn.
- CARRY (Carrying Capacity): The total weight of items they can carry at one time.

Party Members can also equip a Weapon, and an Armor. Both provide Boosts to certain stats. All Weapons can be used for Melee Attacks (because after all, if you can carry something, you can walk up and bludgeon someone with it), with some unlocking a Ranged Attack;

- Straightshot: A basic thrown or fired projectile. Can be blocked by cover.
- Lobshot: A lobbed projectile. Can hit enemies regardless of cover, but tends to be weaker.
- Multishot: Similar to the Straightshot. Can fire multiple shots per turn, but the individual shots are much weaker.
- Wildshot: Hits all enemies (and allies) within its area of effect. Can be blocked by cover.

On their turn, Players get to control each of their three Party Members to move any number of tiles (within the maximum determined by their SPEED), as well as to use an Item or Weapon they are carrying (some Charms will add additional actions that can be taken instead). Weapons can alternatively be set to perform a Reactive Attack, allowing them to automatically attack an enemy that moves out of cover within their range once during the enemy's turn (if no enemies leave cover within the weapon's range, then no attack is performed). Players can also change Weapon or Armor on their turn, if they are carrying any that they aren't using.

Enemies can do everything that players can, with the exception of using Items and Changing Weapons. Instead of it being based on Equipment, Enemies are capable of various types of attacks innately.

After winning a Battle, the Player receives Items, as well as XP to level up their characters and Boosters to improve their characters' stats. Items can typically be used a predefined number of times in Battle for a certain effect, such as dealing damage to anything within a certain area, blocking attacks, or using it to heal themselves.

Thematic Resonance

The idea for this game was preceded by the idea for its story. The Story, as a whole, was written with two major themes in mind:

1. It's your responsibility to try and live your real life in a way that makes you happy.
2. Knowing that, there's still only so much you can control in life.

With these themes in mind, I set out to create a game around it that fit those themes. And what better way to express those themes than a Roguelite?

To fit the first point, I strove to try and give Players relative freedom in how they build their characters. This is accomplished through the Charm System not limiting abilities to certain Party Members, and the ability to allocate Boosters freely among them.

Now, the second point. Each Dungeon you run allows you to prepare to a certain degree, but you are still at the mercy of the Random Number God; all you can do is try to adapt your strategy to make the best out of whatever the Dungeon gives you.

Admittedly, the Tactical RPG side doesn't have quite as much thematic resonance. I just played Mario & Rabbids: Kingdom Battle a little while back, had a lot of fun, and wanted to try my hand at making a similar style of game. And then, when making this game, I decided that it might be interesting to try and see if I could make the Tactical RPG framework mesh with a Roguelite structure.

Story

Prologue - The Everything

After finding a strange crack in the wall near the bathrooms during their School's Career Day, Morgan and Evan Chase find themselves in a grand hall, with one large closed door in the back of the room. They find another of their classmates, Bhruhu, also in the hall. A voice from above speaks to them, welcoming them to "The Everything"; a world that stores all possible futures, from the ones that are likely to be, to the ones that only exist in the imaginations of a single person. The Voice explains that the "Surreality Generator" in the back of the hallway they are currently in is responsible for managing the timelines, as well as maintaining the forward flow of time in their home world.

As they talk to the Voice, MC, Evan, and Bhruhu learn that five of their classmates have wandered into the Everything over the course of the last six months, and (against the Voice's advice) left the hall through the large doors, sending each of them to the greatest future that they can imagine. Since the Voice cannot leave the Hall, it enlists the three to try and track down their missing classmates, providing them with special brooches that allow it to pull them back to the Hall from anywhere in Time.

Chapter One - Monkey Business

The first student that the team search for is Amber Reeves, who went missing 2 weeks ago. Upon going through the door, the party arrives in the Backworld Jungle, a possible location billions of years into the future, where humanity's influence on the world has been wiped clean. The world has returned to nature, and some animals have evolved sapience. Bhrugu is worried about what may have caused humanity to go extinct in this timeline. Evan attempts to assuage his fears by telling him that it's only one possible timeline.

While searching for Amber, Evan finds a sketchbook of hers, which is full of drawings of people that none of them recognize from around town. They also find that the address on the back of the sketchbook, to be returned to if lost, lists Amber as living in a town on the other side of the country. Bhrugu puts together that the people in the book are from the town in the address.

Eventually, the team find that Amber has been taken in by a group of talking Monkeys, who hold an almost religious reverence for Banana Trees. The monkeys also seem to have similar features to the people drawn in Amber's Notebook. The party attempts to convince Amber to come home with them, and she agrees, but the Monkeys refuse to let her leave, and take her away deeper into the Jungle.

The party decide to split up; Evan and Bhrugu will attack the Monkeys' recent banana harvest to draw their attention, and MC will go rescue Amber. The plan doesn't quite work, and the three are brought in front of Mayor Monkey. While talking to him, Evan is able to enrage Mayor Monkey into a fight by saying that Mangos are better than Bananas. After defeating him, Amber is released. She thanks the Monkeys for caring for her, but says that she's realized that she needs to move on from the past. Amber joins the Party, and they return to the Hall.

Chapter Two - A Pirate's Life For Me

The next student that needs to be found is Ryoko Yamashiro, who has been missing for 2 months. Upon going through the door, the party arrives in the Great Buccaneer Reef, a possible location centuries into the future, where global warming melting the ice caps has given way to a worldwide ocean and eternal Summer. Humanity survives on boats and islands, where Pirates run rampant.

After asking around in a local town, the party learns of the Dread Captain, a feared Pirate matching Ryoko's description. After learning that the captain showed up around 2 months ago, the party decide to start attacking the other Pirate Crews within the Great Buccaneer Reef in order to get the Dread Captain's attention. Bhrugu mentions having been tutored by Ryoko in the past, and notes that becoming a Pirate seems remarkably out-of-character for her.

Before doing so, they find a group of hooded figures in town square calling themselves "End of Days." Their leader warns the party that there are too many doomed timelines in the Everything

to justify the forward motion of time. Seeming to recognize the brooches, they plead with the Party to return to the Hall, and destroy the Surreality Generator. Evan angrily refuses, causing End of Days to fight the party in an attempt to steal the brooches. After losing, the members of End of Days use a strange clockwork mechanism to teleport away.

The party rent a ship of their own, and begin attacking other Pirate Crews. After defeating enough, they encounter the Dread Captain's Crew, and are able to confirm that the Dread Captain is indeed Ryoko. Amber tries to convince Ryoko to return with them, but she refuses, and sends members of her crew to fight them. After beating them back, Ryoko flees, and the party pursues her.

Upon reaching Ryoko's Island Hideout, she fights them, alongside her most loyal shipmates. Ryoko reveals during the fight that back at home, her parents dictate her every waking moment, forcing her to attend hours of tutoring and college prep courses. She yells at the party to leave her alone, so that she can finally have some amount of excitement and freedom in her life. After defeating her, Amber and Bhrugu promise that if she returns home with them, they'll try their best to help her be her own person and stand up to her parents. Ryoko reluctantly says goodbye to her crew, and joins the party.

Upon returning to the Hall, Bhrugu questions the Voice about End of Days, and their assertion that the majority of timelines lead to doom and destruction. The Voice doesn't entirely answer his question, claiming that every timeline has something in it that makes it worth living in.

Chapter Three - Dungeons and Dragons

The next student the party searches for is Daniel Garcia, who has been missing for 5 months. Upon going through the door, the party arrives in Arcania, a possible location centuries into the future, where a meteor full of "Magicinite" impacted Earth, causing all Technology from the Industrial Revolution and beyond to stop functioning, and many parts of the world to return to Medieval Feudalism. However, it also mutated swathes of humanity into Mythical Creatures such as Elves and Orcs, and imbued the world with Magic, which is currently being studied worldwide.

The party decide to seek an audience with King Sherman I, ruler of Arcania. Along the way, they run into End of Days, who unsuccessfully try to steal the brooches again. After reaching King Sherman's palace, they learn of the Arcania Institute, where a man matching Daniel's description has been hard at work assisting the Dean in discovering new Spells.

Upon reaching the Institute, the Dean welcomes them, but refuses to let them see Daniel. He then turns to address a crowd and demonstrate a new spell, which he claims to have discovered entirely on his own. The party infiltrates the Central Chamber, where they witness the Dean listening to Daniel describe a new spell he's discovered. After the Dean leaves, they talk to

Daniel, and learn that the Dean has not told him that he is taking sole credit for the Spells that Daniel is creating. Upon learning the truth, Daniel tries to rationalize that he knows he created the spells, and that's enough for him. However, Ryoko convinces him that he has value as a creative, and shouldn't let himself be taken advantage of.

The Dean is unwilling to let the party leave, and summons the Institute's Mascot, a Dragon, to attack them. The Dragon immediately eats the Dean, and attacks the party. After defeating the Dragon, they return to the Hall.

Chapter Four - Life on Easy Street

With only two students left, Milo Simmons, who has only been missing for three days, is next on the list. Upon going through the door, the party arrives in the Glitterfields, a possible location millenia in the future. Here, the Asteroid Belt has been mined for resources, and a floating city has been built in its place, where robotic labor allows Humanity to live in luxury. Fragments of the Asteroids float around in space, glittering as the Sun's light reflects off them, giving the City its name.

Shortly after arriving, the party realize that they have been branded as fugitives, with a reward for their capture. They hide in a History Museum, where they learn that the Glitterfields were not formed out of just a Mining Operation, but also as a way for a number of wealthy citizens of Earth to escape societal unrest and climate change.

Eventually, they find Milo, and try to convince him to return with them. He does not want to leave, citing that he's gone hungry for days at a time due to a lack of money in his home world, and here all his basic needs are met. Police robots burst in and arrest the party, and Amber yells at Milo to visit the museum as they are dragged off.

The party's brooches are confiscated, and they learn that End of Days hacked the Glitterfields' Police Database to get the robots to arrest them. Milo breaks the party out, having decided that he'd rather struggle than live on the backs of all the people like him that were left behind on Earth. The Party find End Of Days attempting to break down the brooches to allow their clockwork teleporter to access the Hall, but manage to fight them off and steal back the brooches before the process is completed. The leader of End of Days is unmasked, and revealed to be Marilyn Price; the final missing student, who has been missing for a full seven months. She sics WardenBot, the leader of the Police robots, onto the party, before teleporting away with the rest of End of Days.

After defeating WardenBot and returning to the Hall, Bhruugu confronts the Voice about Marilyn. The Voice sadly tells her story, which it regards as its greatest failure: after she arrived, the Voice gave her the Clockwork Teleporter so that she could go anywhere in the Everywhere, and explore to her heart's content. However, upon arriving at the best future she could imagine

through the great door, she was driven to despair by what she saw, and chose to start End of Days to prevent it from ever becoming the Future. The Voice disabled her Teleporter's Ability to return to the Hall to protect the Surreality Generator, so she began exploring the Everywhere, recruiting hopeless members of doomed timelines to build her group's ranks, and searching for any way back into the Hall. Daniel wonders what sort of timeline would drive her to do this, and the Voice reluctantly opens the way to her timeline.

Chapter Five - And I Feel Fine

The party arrives in a timeline simply known as The Apocalypse. Everything is reduced to desert and ruins, with an authoritarian government ruling over the scraps. Evan incredulously wonders how this could be the timeline that Marilyn wants, only for Ryoko to correct him: the Voice said that people's ideal timelines aren't the best ones they could possibly end up in, but the best ones that they could dream up.

After venturing through the wastelands, they find End of Days' Base. After defeating Marilyn's five-person Inner Circle, as well as Marilyn herself, the Inner Circle teleport away without her. Marilyn gives up, questioning what the point of life even is if the future can end up this awful. The party try to cheer her up, telling her that every future has some sort of upside, and promising to try and help her see the good. Marilyn is unconvinced, but doesn't struggle as she is led back to the Hall.

Before the Voice returns everyone home, Bhrugu, who has been quieter than usual since learning Marilyn's story, speaks up. He agrees with Marilyn that some futures are too dangerous to allow them to come to pass. However, he argues that the Surreality Generator isn't the problem, but the solution. He approaches the machine, ignoring the Voice and the party's objections, and begins to enter commands himself, insisting that with the power of the Generator, they can force it to create an ideal future for their home world. Waves of time energy flood the room, and the party is knocked out.

The party wake up in a ruined Hall, and find Bhrugu and Marilyn missing. They look out a gaping hole in the wall where the Surreality Generator used to be, and find Timelines being forcibly knotted and woven together, leading up to a glowing point at the top. The Voice pleads with them to stop Bhrugu.

Chapter Six - UTOPIA

The party venture through a bizarre mashup of all the Timelines they've explored so far, finding familiar characters and scenery being forced into the same worlds. Eventually, upon reaching the top of UTOPIA, they find Bhrugu desperately trying various combinations from all the various timelines, in an attempt to create the perfect future. Marilyn silently watches him from the sidelines. Bhrugu summons a giant amalgamation of Plants, Bits of Pirate Ships, Spellbooks,

Robotic Pieces, and Sand, which he calls “The Guardian,” to buy himself more time to find a true Utopia.

After defeating The Guardian, the party force Bhruhu to stop using the Generator, and talk to them. He admits that he knows that he’s probably never going to be able to make a truly perfect future, but feels like he’s the only one who even cares, and thus has to try. Evan assures him that the future probably isn’t going to be perfect, but reminds him that he’s not alone in trying to find one that’s at least Good Enough. Bhruhu resolves to try and put the future on a good path through living a good life back home. Marilyn asks him to try and help her learn to see the world that way, and he agrees.

As they prepare to use the Generator to fix the Timelines and reset everything back to how it used to be, the Inner Circle of End of Days arrive, and destroy it.

Chapter Seven - Out of Time

The Everywhere begins to collapse, as timelines begin to glitch between each other and slowly fizzle out. The Voice, whose life is tied to the Everywhere itself, begins to slowly die.

Marilyn, feeling responsible for the chaos, willingly shares her life energy with The Voice, allowing it to continue living for just a little while longer. It guides the party to find the five pieces of the Surreality Generator, each of which are in different areas of the Collapsing Everywhere, and are guarded by a different member of the Inner Circle, who, due to being from the Everywhere originally, have been corrupted by its collapse. After collecting all five pieces, the Voice opens a doorway to the Beginning of Time, before giving Marilyn the knowledge on how to repair the Surreality Generator and disconnecting from her, causing its death.

Upon arriving in the Beginning of Time, Marilyn attempts to reassemble the Generator, only to be interrupted by the Inner Circle, who have fused together into a beast known simply as “Oblivion.”

After defeating Oblivion, they put the final piece of the Generator in place, and both the Everywhere and the Voice are restored in a bright flash. The Voice opens a portal back home, and the party leave the Everywhere together, ready to live their lives to the fullest.