Season 4
Patch 4.0

This season is all about polishing existing mechanics, expanding the depth and variety of gameplay, and keeping you immersed in the fantastic world we all love.

First and foremost, we've refined the quest system introduced in Season 3, making it more engaging and rewarding for players. We have also migrated skills and spells to the database, paving the way for more diverse and intricate damage types.

Secondly, we recognize that a major weakness in the gameplay right now is in the end game. With the removal of remorting gear, there was a lack of incentive to engage with the end game dungeons. In season 4 we are striving to solve that issue in a couple of ways, with a major new mechanic and some slight rebalancing of renown.

This season, we're thrilled to introduce racial skills and affinities, which bring vulnerabilities, resistances, susceptibilities, and immunities to various damage types. These features will add a new layer of strategy and depth to character creation and combat, as well as further differentiate the diverse races of our world.

Prepare to explore a major new zone at the launch of Season 4, with an additional zone planned for release soon after. This expansion will offer fresh challenges, intriguing storylines, and memorable encounters.

We've also enriched the gameplay for several classes with new spells and skills, and fine-tuned the balance to ensure that every adventurer can find their place in the world.
Get ready to embark on an unforgettable adventure in Season 4

New Zones

We are excited to announce the coming of two major new zones to be released in Season 4.

The City of Erolos - Xanada

   Erolos, the underwater city, is a true wonder that captivates tourists from every corner of the globe. From breathtaking coral reefs to sprawling kelp forests and exotic marine creatures, the city offers an unparalleled view of underwater life. The merfolk who call Erolos home are hospitable, always eager to share their city's rich history with visitors. Once a bustling trading hub, the city has seen a noticeable decrease in the number of visiting traders. Some rumors suggest that the merfolk are deliberately keeping the trade contracts from being renewed, while others whisper of a deeper, darker reason. Regardless of the truth, there is an unmistakable sense of unease among the remaining traders who are wary of conducting business in a city with an uncertain future.

Coming soon Orcan Clans: The Skarag

   Deep within the Skarag Peaks, the shamanistic Skarag Clan has made their
home. These orcs, once goblins, have adapted to the mountainous terrain,
growing strong and resilient as they embraced the challenges of their
environment. With reverence for the great winged eagles, especially the
ancient Skyrazor, the Skarag Clan draws strength and wisdom from their
connection to these majestic creatures.

   Delve into the Skarag Peaks to uncover the lore and history of this
fierce clan, and explore the enhanced Fangmaw Clan area for new story
developments and improvements. Face the mighty Skyrazor and discover
Maugrim's updated drops, including a powerful new item, as you immerse
yourself in the world of the Orcan Clans.

New Mechanic: Relics

In Season 4, we are thrilled to introduce a brand-new game mechanic called Relics. These
unique and powerful pieces of equipment are rewarded to players upon remorting, provided they
have completed certain tasks or quests during their previous mort. This includes "Cleansing the
Catacombs," "The Stained Forest," "The Defiled Temple" (new), and obtaining the third tier of a
class's starting kit upgrades.

For example, a Necromancer may become eligible for their weapon Relic upon completing "The
Stained Forest," a ring Relic after "Cleansing the Catacombs," a necklace Relic by unlocking the
third tier of their starting gear upgrades, and a robe Relic from the "The Defiled Temple".
Conversely, a Warrior might qualify for their weapon Relic from "Cleansing the Catacombs"
instead, with different eligibility requirements for other quests and tasks.

What sets Relics apart from other items in the game is their ability to persist through remorts.
When you complete one of the designated quests or tasks and become eligible for a Relic, it will
be automatically granted to you upon remorting. For example, if you obtain eligibility for a Relic
during remort 2, you will receive it in remort 3. However, if you don't complete the corresponding
quest or task in remort 3, the Relic will not be granted in remort 4.

Relics will also scale with your character as you level up, growing in power at levels 1, 5, 10, 14,
and 18. This new mechanic addresses the issue of a lack of incentive to engage with end-game
dungeons, as previously players would lose their high-level gear upon remorting. Now, Relics
offer players an exciting way to retain some of the rewards they earned through their efforts
while continuing to experience the game's progression.

Class Starting Gear

In Season 4, we are excited to introduce a new, more engaging system for Class Starting Gear.
This new system replaces the previously planned class-specific one-time purchase option,
offering players a better sense of progression and customization.

Our improved Class Starting Gear system features three tiers for each class, allowing players to
gradually unlock more powerful and class-specific gear as they invest essence into their

account. Each tier will unlock three additional gear slots, designed to complement your chosen class's playstyle and abilities. The new system encourages strategic decision-making while providing a more rewarding sense of progression.

To promote overall consistency across player expectations, there'll be some similarities between the sets. Each set will feature a class themed bag at tier 1, each class will get their weapon at tier 2 and each class will get a relic at tier 3.

You will be able to see what slots each class gets from each tier by checking the help entry for the upgrade in the Essence Shop.

Please note that the previously implemented Mage Starting Kit has been taken back to the drawing board to align it with this new system. To ensure fairness, all players who purchased the Mage Starting Kit will receive a refund of 3 essence. We apologize for any inconvenience caused and believe that this new approach will result in a more satisfying and balanced gameplay experience for all.

Reintroduction of Kill Caps

We understand that some game mechanics can be met with mixed feelings, but we believe that the reintroduction of Kill Caps will ultimately enhance the overall game experience. Kill Caps were an original mechanic that became unintentionally disabled during the migration to the database in Season 1. As we bring this feature back, we want to emphasize its strengths and our commitment to monitoring its impact on gameplay.

Kill Caps encourage players to explore new areas and engage with a diverse range of mobs, adding depth and variety to the game. By capping the experience gained from repeatedly killing the same mob, we aim to prevent players from falling into repetitive grinding routines, while also promoting a richer and more engaging experience. To address potential concerns, we have adjusted the system to make it take twice as long to reach the cap on a mob compared to when it was first introduced.

We acknowledge that this change may come with some challenges, and we want to assure you that we will be closely monitoring its effects on gameplay. Your feedback is invaluable to us, and we will continue to iterate and refine the Kill Cap mechanic based on your experiences and suggestions. Thank you for your understanding and support as we work together to make the game even better.

Quest Improvements

In Season 4, we've made significant improvements to the questing system with a focus on enhancing user experience. Our goal is to make quest interactions more intuitive and user-friendly, so you can spend less time navigating menus and more time adventuring.

Previously, the quest system revolved around the "quest" command, which had several subcommands for starting, listing, completing, viewing info, and abandoning quests. While these commands still work, we've introduced more natural language alternatives to streamline your questing experience:

1. "complete" - Use this new command to complete quests without needing to type "quest complete."
2. "start <quest_id>" - Start quests effortlessly by typing "start" followed by the quest ID. "Accept" has also been added as an alias for "start" and can be shortened to "ac".
3. "abandon <quest_id>" - Abandon quests easily with the new "abandon" command, followed by the quest ID.

We've also made it simpler to gather information about available quests. When you examine quest givers, they will now display all the quests they offer, which is a more natural alternative then "quest list". Additionally, you can now simply type "list", and if you are not in a room with a shopkeeper, it will default to quest givers to keep the actions consistent.

Furthermore, we've added a handy new feature to locate nearby quest givers. By typing "where quest," you'll be shown the closest quest givers, along with the lowest minimum level quest they offer.

Finally, we've addressed the issue of immersion and intuitiveness when it comes to quest progression. In the past, if you had already defeated 5 Diamond Clickers and later discovered the related quest, you would be required to defeat them again to fulfill the objective. We have now improved quest tracking to keep track of objectives even before you officially start a quest. While you will still need to initiate the quest in order to complete it, any previously accomplished objectives, like defeating the 5 Diamond Clickers, will be recognized and marked as complete once you start the quest. This change aims to provide a more seamless and immersive questing experience for our players.

We are very excited about the new quest system, but focusing on improving the user experience is crucial to setting it up for success, and leveraging it to bring more life to Ishar.

Skills and Races

In Season 4, we've taken significant steps to enhance the depth and diversity of skills and races, creating a more immersive and strategic gameplay experience.

Firstly, we have migrated skills to the database. While this change may not have an immediate impact on gameplay, it opens up a wealth of design possibilities, as demonstrated by the introduction of racial skills. In our ongoing efforts to make races a key mechanic in the game, we have begun implementing racial skills that can be learned at certain levels. This feature not only adds unique abilities to each race but also increases consistency between player expectations and the abilities of the creatures they encounter. Please note that this mechanic is currently in its trial phase and will be tested and refined across a few races before full implementation.

Secondly, the migration of both skills and races to the database has allowed us to fully realize the concept of damage types, which has been unfinished for decades. Previously, skills and races featured "forces" that were intended to be dealt and resisted, but these forces were never properly checked. For example, spells like Fireball and Flaming Hands used the "fire" force, but Fireshield did not check for it, only checking for specific spells. Similarly, Earth Elementals were meant to take bonus damage from bludgeoning damage and be immune to poison damage, but this mechanic was not fully implemented.

With the updates in Season 4, we have introduced "affinities" for races. These affinities consist of vulnerabilities (2x damage), susceptibilities (1.2x damage), resistances (0.5x damage), and immunities (0.1x damage) to various damage types. This new system encourages strategic decision-making and enhances the unique characteristics of each race.

New Skills

Necromancer

Necromancers are receiving a new series of debuffs called "Banes". Only one bane may be active on a target a time, casting a new one will remove the previous one.

Bane of Frailty - Reduce the targets Fortitude by level / 6.

Bane of Clumsiness - Reduce the targets Reflex by level / 6.

Bane of Ineptitude - Reduce the targets Expertise by level / 6.

This may be expanded in the future with more - a thought I've been considering are debuffs to introduce a vulnerability or susceptibility (see above).

Renown Adjustments

One of our other focuses this season was smoothing out various issues with the gameplay cycle, particularly around the end game. One way to address this is by adjusting weights of renown granted from quests. We expect this to be an iterative process as we continue to figure this out.

Spear Quest - No longer grants renown. This was skewing people towards good far too much. The 1 million xp to cruise through levels is enough of a reward.

Bil Hroth - Killing Bil'Hroth is now a quest for 1 renown. Reminder - eventually all of these end game quests will be migrated to be "true quests" in the new definition. We ran out of time with the rest of the updates in this season and we did not want to continue to withhold this quest.

Cleansing the Catacombs - Is now worth 2 renown

The Stained Forest - Is now worth 3 renown.

The Defiled Temple - is worth 2 renown

Balance Adjustments

Essence

Character Creation: Perks has been reduced to 5 Essence

Character Creation: Alignment has been reduced to 2 Essence.

Anyone who had these upgrades will be credited back essence for the difference.

Multiplay

In an increased attempt to balance the solo vs multiplay disparity, we are altering the XP / Heal bonuses to -20% for 3, 0% for 2 and 30% for 1. The idea here being that 2 or 1 is the preferred mode of play, and I you want the power and convenience of playing three chars, you will be penalized.

Gear

Blessed Knight Gauntlets: Down to +8 attack from +15 attack - this is a needed adjustment after making +attack flat instead of a percent.

Fiery Dagger: Down to +8 attack from +15 attack for the same reasons as above

Bug Fixes

- Current XP rate displayed in "remort" was not displaying correctly. This has been fixed, and the entire experience gaining process now uses the same number displayed, which will also fix inconsistencies.
- Double speed item decay has been removed for now as it was causing problems with items never decaying. We still believe this may be necessary, but a slower, more precise change will be made to item decay timers.