

Character Backgrounds, Expressions + Lines - Varia Chernova

Character Design Materials from Crimson Apple - Fantasy Mystery Game

Context: Below is character information on two of the key NPCs in Crimson Apple. The Lady, an evil manifestation of dark magic that tries to influence the player to lead innocent townsfolk into her deadly trap, and Barkeep, her escaped minion, whose sole purpose now is to keep the remaining denizens of Bailok safe in the tavern.

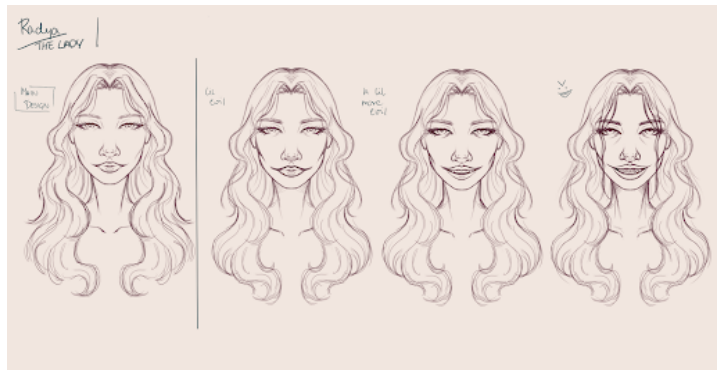
Also attached are expression lists and sample lines that were shared with the artists to inform character art. The characters in Crimson Apple appear in the form of a **Sprite**, full body art that can be found in the environment, and a **Portrait** inside a dialogue box when one is initiated.

The Lady (Radya)

Character Background:

Before anyone knew her as The Lady, Radya, was a rather contentious young woman. Born and raised in Bailok, an only child to mild-mannered parents, she never shied away from expressing her disdain for the "rural traditions" of her "commonfolk" community. Unwilling to contribute to the workload of the town or participate in Bailok's goings-on, unless

those revolved around herself, Radya believed others should recognize that she was meant for something grander than dirt and labor. After a time, attempts to persuade her to join ceased, and her life turned into one of isolation. However, one place in Bailok seemed to evoke something opposite of disdain for her. A modest apple orchard on the outskirts of the town. The young and ambitious farmer responsible was more than happy to indulge her dreams of opulence and due respect. But when Radya started to talk of leaving Bailok, using the farmer's earnings and money from selling the land the orchard stood on, it became clear to him that his ambitions did not have a place in her vision of their future. Furious that she had wasted her precious time with someone who wouldn't simply put their silly hobbies aside for her sake, Radya wandered into the darkness of the forests that surrounded the town. And though it was the eve of the Harvest, her absence at the celebration wasn't out of the ordinary, and it wasn't until the following morning that the farmer came looking for her. In her frustration, Radya did not notice just how deep into the woods she had stumbled. And in the dark, she didn't realize that she had been standing on the bank of Lake Temna until it was too late. In the water, her anger mixed with the magic of an ancient spring, imbuing her with unimaginable power, while also corrupting her mind. She uses her magic to lure the townsfolk into the lake's fog and turn them into her minions, so that they may feel what it is like to be insignificant and Disposable.



Key words: scorned, powerful, corrupted, insignificant, disposable.

Expression List + Character Lines/Barks

First form: Human

The Lady will first appear as a disembodied voice that calls out to the player in the darkness, then a silhouette. Once the player steps closer to the tavern, she will present herself to be a kind maiden, inviting the player to make good on the promise they have apparently made. Save the people trapped inside the tavern.

She is calm, soft-spoken, and determined to help. However, when anyone tries to plant any seeds of doubt against her in the player's mind, she becomes defensive and agitated.

Sprite:

In her human form, standing outside the tavern, patiently waiting for the player to enter.

Reserved pose, neutral hands, somewhat unsure.

Context	Expression	Line
Greets the player and reassures them.	Inviting, welcoming - shy smile, looking towards you	<i>"Step closer, do not be afraid"</i>
Cares for the townspeople. Urges the player to help them.	Concerned, upset, worried - raised eyebrows, sad eyes, lowered head	<i>"Do not delay. We do not have much time or I fear we'll be too late."</i>
Instructs the player on what needs to be done. Convinced this is the only way.	Determined, focused, ready to act - furrowed brow, tense face	<i>"Help them find their way out and I will keep them safe."</i>
Warns the player to not trust the inviting look of the tavern.	Suspicious, mistrusting, spiteful - narrowed eyes, a side-eye.	<i>"Do you see it? A mockery. A lie. A spider's web. The warm light to pull you in, the melody to keep you from leaving"</i>
Hears other characters warn the player not to trust her.	Offended, defensive, angry - mouth open as if to speak, tense eyebrows.	<i>"You choose to believe those lies? Your mistakes will cost them precious lives!"</i>

Second form: Monstrous

Once the player reaches the third battle, The Lady will reveal herself as the one in charge of the evil fishfolk. Elements of her physicality and appearance will seem a little less human, and her speaking manner will become more commanding and manipulative.

Though here she is undoubtedly the monster, she is still reserved and fairly calm, convinced the player poses no threat to her plan. She is eager to let her minions deal away with what she perceives to be only a minor inconvenience.

Sprite:

In her evil form, in the middle of the battlefield, intimidating the player with a calm arrogance.

Confident stance, performative, displaying power.

Context	Expression	Line
Celebrates the fact that the player has walked into her trap.	Scheming, plotting, knowing more than you do - A smug expression, looking down on the player.	<i>"Shame, you could have been more useful to me, oh well, now I just need you to not stand in my way!"</i>
Making fun of the player for being so naive.	Threatening, toying with you, deranged - twisted toothy smile from under her brow.	<i>"Don't you think they look lovely as my little dolls? Come see for yourself, maybe I'll let you join our game."</i>
Yelling at her minions.	Giving orders, shouting - an open mouth, angry expression.	<i>"Cease them, you useless chum!"</i>
The tide of the battle is turning against her.	Surprised, taken aback, in disbelief - confused expression, gasping.	<i>"Impossible, how are you still standing?!"</i>
the battle is over, and she promises the player will pay.	Annoyed, disrupted, vengeful - tense expression, gritting teeth, nervous	<i>"No mind ... next time won't be so easy!"</i>

The Barkeep (Terr)

Character Background:

Once a part of The Lady's minion army, The Barkeep's main wish is to keep those around them from meeting the same fate they once had.

It is impossible to say how long The Barkeep has spent under The Lady's curse, but it was long enough for them to have no recollection of ever being anything but what they are now. A twisted amphibious creation, a design of a woman possessed with revenge and the dark power within her.

However, perhaps The Lady's overconfidence in her plan, or simply her habit of overlooking those around her, had led to her hold on The Barkeep loosening. Just enough for them to make their escape.

Now a fugitive in hiding, in their sheer panic, The Barkeep is unsure how they've made it here, to The Crimson Apple tavern. What they do know for sure, is that as long as they and those who have also found themselves there stay here, they are safe.

With time, The Barkeep had explored more of the tavern, discovering the true source of their protection. The Fountain of Destiny. Knowing the unruly power it possesses, they fear it to be a danger, rather than a solution and opt not to test the fates, lest it leads to the ruin of their only place of safety. In their eyes, anyone who dares to mess with the Fountain is naive to believe the risk is worth it.

The Barkeep truly believes there is no way to stop The Lady, and all who have made it this far should just make the most of the respite the tavern provides.

Keywords: minion, fugitive, twisted, safe, fear, joy.



Expression List + Character Lines/Barks

The player character sees The Barkeep for the first time, straight after the first battle sequence. Butcher and Barkeep are standing over the player character, discussing how best to help them regain consciousness. Having just fought fishpeople, the visage of another one startles the player character, which in turn, scares the Barkeep, and forces them to get on the defensive right away.

Once the situation is diffused, the Barkeep will retire to their usual activity, which is tending the bar. They will stay there for the remainder of the game.

The Barkeep is calm and reserved when speaking with others, yet outwardly suspicious of the Player Character. They make it very clear that their priority lies with keeping the people in the tavern safe. Any attempts to disrupt that, even well-intentioned ones, are met with opposition fuelled by doubt. When speaking, Barkeep can be quite snippy, often throwing sarcastic quips at the player, especially as a response to any accusations cast on them.

Sprite

The Barkeep will always be behind the bar, keeping an eye on the rest of the tavern.

Standing behind the bar, cleaning something in their hands, looking out to the main floor.

Context	Expression	Line
Plays along with the player suggesting The Barkeep might eat them.	Smirk, sarcastic, pranking you - creeping smile out of the corner of the mouth, playful eyes, side-eye.	<i>"Who said I'm not going to eat you? Maybe I'm just deciding on how best to season you."</i>
Offers the player an item to keep them safe.	Apologetic, sincere, lowering their guard - upturned, sad eyebrows, looking away, embarrassed, slightly parted lips.	<i>"You're going to need this. Keep my friends safe."</i>
Answering the player's questions, telling them they are being quite naive.	Serious, concentrated, contemplating - Furrowed brows, tightened features, direct eye contact.	<i>"You must understand that you can't just stop her. You are toying with something beyond us all."</i>
The Barkeep finds out that it was the player who sent out their friends to a certain death.	Angry, blaming the player, furious - Scowl, almost animalistic, ready to kill you.	<i>"You did what? She has them now! You killed them you weak-minded fool!"</i>
The player character finds out the Barkeep knows more than they lead on.	Dismissive, secretive, avoidant - Looking away, guilty.	<i>"I just wanted to figure it out before anyone else got too close."</i>