



# *Jeren*

*Warriors of the Spiral Path*

*working title*



## The Story

For thousands of years, inhabitants of remote Himalayan mountain regions have told tales of the Yeti, a fearsome creature with an ape-like body and a human-like face. Folklore describes a huge savage beast with a high-pitched whistling scream and supernatural powers. Superstitious locals say that sighting the creature can bring ill fortune and even death.

But the sacred texts tell a far different story of the prophecy of the Yeti who hold the key to Shambhala – the sacred realm where the enlightened watch over humankind. The end of the Yeti could mean the closure of Shambhala forever – and perhaps the end of humankind! Now the future of the Yeti is threatened by a Westerner bent on their destruction.

You play Shi Kai Quan, a young Shaolin monk with the privilege of responsibility for two orphaned adolescent Yeti. Under threat from a mysterious enemy, lead your group through treacherous terrain and uncomprehending suspicion. Use the natural resources of life around you, and the great beasts themselves. Explore a vast and rich world, with settings ranging from lonely monasteries to bustling villages to snow-capped mountains.

Set in 1930s Western China and the Tibetan Himalayas in some of the world's most awe-inspiring locations, several events that give our story room to roam in its scope have taken place or will shortly become apparent.

China, where we start our journey, is beginning to throw off its feudalistic past and the whole countryside is boiling with intrigue and unrest, which spills frequently over the border into Tibet. There are no large armies for the player to avoid or fight, but he will have to be careful about travelling around the countryside.

Europe is also having an influence on the area. In Germany, the rise of the Nazi movement has been strangely paralleled by a rise of fascination with mysticism and a sense of enquiry into alternative methods of controlling events. The future shadow of eugenics has not yet fallen, but interest in human origins and race has never been so intense and wealthy tycoons from the West are sponsoring missions and explorations into the area.

Set over 6 chapters, the player will travel through exotic locations trying to locate the mythical homeland of the Yeti whilst avoiding detection and capture by the minions of a bitter anthropologist who want to capture the Yeti for their own nefarious purposes.

# The Game

You must brave the physical challenges of the spectacular natural environments along your path, as well as your own personal demons. Under instruction from your master, your task is to get the Yeti to their mythical homeland safely, however your job is also made more difficult by the presence of foes that conspire to prevent you from completing your task.

You will need to use your Kung Fu skills to protect yourself from these enemies and all your mental skills to solve the mystery of the Yeti and the location of their homeland through a variety of challenging puzzles. Your path takes you through breathtaking mountain scenery where you'll meet a variety of interesting characters and unwittingly learn the ancient Shaman arts that you will need on your journey.

The setting and content will appeal to a wide audience of all ages who enjoy mental and physical challenges within the context of a strong storyline.

The game will reward the player's creativity by presenting a variety of methods to solve problems. Taking advantage of the wildlife in the region, the player is able to possess any animal (using the ancient Shaman art of Drongjug) and use their specific skills to solve the puzzles.

The game takes place in a rich, immersive environment in which the storytelling component is intimately entwined with varied gameplay elements. Gameplay is focused primarily on adventuring and puzzle-solving, while action elements will serve to enrich the gameplay by adding excitement, threat and drama.

ॐ Exercise your skill in the ancient Shaman art of 'borrowing', allowing you to take possession of any beast – crawl undetected as a mouse, soar above the landscape as an eagle, fight as a Yeti

ॐ Use your Shaolin Kung Fu training and your magical Shaman skills to protect yourself

ॐ Lead mythical Yeti – 7 feet of solid muscle with an untamed attitude – on an epic journey to their mythical homeland

## Features :

ॐ Fresh, immersive, plot-driven game-play

ॐ Dramatic storyline and exotic locations with real-world inspiration

ॐ Intuitive interface & controls

ॐ Creature Labs' artificial life technology for realistic characters and life-like environments

# The journey

Each chapter within the game reveals aspects of the story of Kai's journey. While he starts off with only a rough indication of the direction in which to travel, he slowly learns about the mythical home of the Yeti and how this relates to his own personal growth towards enlightenment. The objective of each level is to get the Yeti from the start to the end through a series of challenging encounters and puzzles which must be overcome using the group's various skills, as well as the abilities of the local wildlife.

Fifteen years have passed since two orphaned Yeti cubs were discovered by Sifu Shi Jing Sen, an aging Shaolin monk from the White Crane Temple and the creatures have grown into towering slabs of strength and energy. For years, he has been piecing together what he could learn about their legendary homeland where they can live in peace.

Kai's own journey begins in the comfortable surroundings of the White Crane monastery where he learns his martial skills and the way of the sacred warrior. The old master tells him of the ancient myths of the centre of the world, where he believes the Yeti can live in safety from humanity. The sacred texts, however, can not agree whether it is a physical location or a sanctuary that only the spiritually prepared may reach. The master has decided to send his young student to find the answer. He hopes that the experience will prepare Kai Quan for either eventuality. But first he sends the young man on an errand outside the temple and Kai returns to a scene of chaos and destruction, the old master mortally wounded, his home burning around him and the Yeti taken by a mysterious westerner. Kai sets off to rescue the Yeti and thus begins his journey.

Travelling a spiral path through China, Bhutan and Tibet, Kai visits the spectacular stone forests of Yunnan - a land of towering mountains covered by rich tropical forests and abundant wildlife where he learns the identity of the shadowy figure who has taken the Yeti. He realises that this is now one of his biggest challenges as the obsessive nature of his adversary threatens all their lives. Kai must rescue the Yeti and locate their homeland, but his search for answers to the mystery lie beyond the mighty Himalayas and he must brave the harsh environment and his ever-threatening foes to reach it.

From the snowy alpine reaches to the vast Tibetan plain, Kai travels to the land of his birth - a land of magic and mystery, made all the more mysterious by an increase in mystical forces and evil spirits raised by a local nomadic sorcerer. A race is now on between the Kai and his group and the all-consuming passion of his enemies. The final showdown takes place deep within the sacred mountain - Mount Sumeru - the hub of the world. A great tree with a spiral of stairs carved into its trunk connects the three realms and at its pinnacle is the land where the immortals watch over the earth.

The final chapter - more than any other - depends on what the player has done before and his Karma will be key here. The player will need to have finely honed his borrowing skills and be prepared for a final confrontation between himself and his nemesis. The sacred land is hidden - protected by a psychic barrier so that no one can find the kingdom that is not meant to. Those who are not wanted are swallowed by crevasses or caught in avalanches. People and animals tremble at its borders as if bombarded by invisible rays. By vanquishing the evil forces that hope to prevent him and his group from reaching his destination, Kai learns the secret of Yeti and is able to enter the sacred realm.

# The mechanics

Your role in the game is to control the player character, Shi Kai Quan, on his epic journey. When Kai Quan possesses another creature's form, he controls the body of that creature. The same sets of controls are used to guide Kai Quan's normal form and any animal body he has possession of. As a Shaolin monk, Kai Quan is very athletic and is able to run, jump and climb quite well, although most animals will have individual skills that surpass his in many areas.

## Borrowing (Drongjug)

Kai Quan's most important ability is the power to borrow the forms of other animals (including his Yeti) – possessing them, in effect. When borrowing, Kai Quan inhabits the animal's body while his own human body sits in the Lotus (meditation) position.

Whilst borrowing, and assuming that the player has commanded them to stay, the Yeti will stand guard over Kai's form and protect him from misadventure.

Borrowing is possible even in animal form, meaning that Kai Quan can chain from animal to animal.

## Actions whilst borrowing

There will be a wide range of animals available for borrowing, all having unique characteristics and abilities relevant to the puzzles presented. The player can also take advantage of inter-animal relationships to create distractions.

## Chi

Chi is a form of energy that is present in all things. Called Prana in Sanskrit, this vital energy affects physical health, mental alertness and emotional stability. In the game, this Chi energy is similar Health in other games, but it has other uses as well.

Chi can be regained through meditation or by eating certain herbs for a temporary boost. High Karma can also increase base Chi levels.

Borrowing and combat will use up small amounts of Chi. If this runs out while Kai Quan is borrowing, he is ejected back to his own body. When not borrowing, Chi returns at a reasonably rapid rate. This means that an injured player will have more difficulty borrowing should he choose to ignore his health. Some animals resist borrowing more than others, burning through Chi faster than a more placid creature would.

## Auras

These glowing effects surround animals in the game world and inform the player of the borrow-resistance of different types of creature.

One of the mystical power-ups Kai Quan learns is that of Advanced Auras. This temporarily boosts the quality of Auras, showing the current emotional state of the individual creature, as well as its borrow-resistance.

# The mechanics

## Combat

As a Shaolin monk, Kai is well-versed in the martial arts and practices the form known as White Crane Kung Fu which originated in Tibet. Approximately 20% of the game will involve some sort of action component and combat is a key part of this. Combat, however, will need some strategic thought on the part of the player, as indiscriminate killing is contrary to the monk's teachings and will result in Karma reductions. That said, the young monk recognises the existence of violence in the world and will certainly use it to defend himself if necessary.

## Karma

Karma represents 'rightness' - how proper Kai Quan's conduct has been and shows his progression through the game. The player's Karma score consists of two internal variables added together to create a total Karma score:

- ॐ Inherited Karma - This represents the burden of Karma carried forth from their previous life. Certain good acts can reduce the negative Karma, essentially bringing it closer to zero.
- ॐ Acquired Karma - This is the bad Karma incurred by the player's own actions. This is a zero value that becomes more negative in response to evil deeds.

The following will affect the player character's Karma:

- ॐ Exit borrowing leaving behind highly stressed creature or injured creature
- ॐ Killing or injuring any creature or non-player character
- ॐ Using excessive force during a combat situation

## Effects of Karma

The Karma mechanism exists to "encourage" rather than force the player to complete the game in a positive manner. As such, Karma does not affect progress in the game, but relates to the way in which animals and humans react to the player character and provides other, minor rewards such as:

- ॐ Character variations, extra cut-scenes, activities and shortcuts
- ॐ Some animals can only be borrowed with high Karma levels
- ॐ Bonus areas of the map are only accessible via these hard-to-borrow animals

## Increasing Karma

Throughout the game there will be opportunities for the player to improve his Karma. These will take the form of optional missions and other opportunities such as turning prayer wheels or a Tai Chi exercise.

## Inventory

Kai Quan can carry and use various items. In the course of his travels he also learns a number of mystical 'power-up' abilities. If the player wants to select an item or power-up for use, he does so through the Inventory. His inventory items include:

- ॐ Chi Restoring, Reviving and Calming Herbs
- ॐ Ritual Dagger, Broadsword and Staff
- ॐ Healing and Mental Strike Spells
- ॐ Materia Medica and Bestiary



## The hero

Shi Kai Quan is young and idealistic and this influences much of his character. At 18, he is headstrong and liable to rush into things. He is fiery and full of a sense of 'what should be' - a trait that could get him into trouble. He cares deeply for all life and has developed his talent for animalistic empathy to a surprising degree. Despite his youthful enthusiasm, he follows the old teachings closely. He prefers not to use violence, but if violence is directed against him, he will reflect it back using his deadly Shaolin Kung Fu.

Kai Quan is Tibetan by birth and has come to the White Crane temple to learn the medical and martial skills for which it is renowned.





## The Yeti

Huk is a 15 year old male Yeti. A great hulking creature, even in adolescence he's grown large and intimidating. Growing up within the confines of a Shaolin monastery was difficult for him as his instinct is to roam alone. He often managed to escape the temple grounds and roamed amongst the pandas and monkeys of the surrounding Mountains. However, his fierce loyalty to the old master and his sister ensured his inevitable return.

At more than 7 feet tall and weighing between 300 and 350 pounds, Huk is a frightening sight. However, his large size and intimidating appearance belies a loyal and gentle temperament.

Huk's sister is slimmer and more agile than her brother. She's extraordinarily curious and this trait has got her into trouble many times. She's adept at opening locked cupboards and boxes and can't seem to resist a closed door.

Less of a wanderer than her brother, she has never given into the temptation to escape, preferring the quiet solitude of the temple grounds. She has, unfortunately, a great fear of water and the many rushing rivers that surround the White Crane Temple probably do a good job in keeping her close to home.





## The Master

Kai's old Master, Shi Jing Sen, was born into a wealthy family from Yunnan province, and his father was a respected minor warlord allied with the western forces fighting against Hung Hsiu-ch'üan during the Taiping rebellion. He learned to speak English from the British soldiers and other western visitors that frequently visited.

By 1920, he had attained the status of Shaolin master and travelled over a great deal of northern India, Tibet and China. He learned much from the Tibetan lamas at Shalu Monastery with whom the White Crane Temple had a close relationship. Whilst in Tibet, he stumbled across a western anthropologist who had been separated from his expedition and the result of the encounter left a mother Yeti dead and the westerner scarred both mentally and physically. Once he had sent assistance to the injured man, Jing Sen disappeared from Tibet with the mother Yeti's two orphaned offspring and returned to White Crane Temple.

The Master has achieved a great age and wisdom to match. He prefers to instruct his charges by giving them riddles and parables in the way of the Zen masters, the solving of which is a lesson in itself and always suffices to lead the pupil onwards towards his own epiphany.



## The Wildlife

Western China and the Himalayan mountains are home to some of the rarest and most endangered creatures on earth. From the tropical jungles of Yunnan to the cloud forests of Bhutan to the high alpine steppes of Tibet, exotic birds and animals abound.

Besides the more familiar, but still endangered Asian Elephants, Tigers and Giant Pandas, Kai will encounter such amazing creatures as the Clouded Leopard and the Pallas Cat.

In the spectacular surroundings of Tibet, the elusive Snow Leopard, Blue Bharal, Serow, Kyang and Chiru can be found alongside Wild Yak and the

Tibetan Macaque.

The path to the Yeti's homeland is fraught with danger and the way is open only to those with eyes that can see and understand the sacred spiral path of the Wheel of Life. Using the unique abilities of the indigenous wildlife and their special vision modes, Kai must locate Shambhala and enter with his Yeti charges.



# The Enemy

Xiao Khan is a nomadic warrior from the vast central Asian plains. Fierce and warlike, these nomads are said to be like a race of giants with angular features, never seen without a sword at their side.

Xiao Khan was known to be a warrior in the service of a Kham warlord who was killed in the Chinese capture of Dege in 1932. Now 'Ronin' - a warrior with no master (a disgraceful and shaming thing) he's taken on by a bitter western anthropologist to lead a band of brigands in search of the Yeti.

Xiao Khan is a shadowy figure with far more power over the westerner than anyone realises. He's a black magic sorcerer and has no qualms against using his magic powers for evil means. He's well-educated and familiar with the stories of Shambhala and the advanced race that controls the magical land. More than anything, he wants to get his hands on that power.



## The protectors

Throughout the game, Kai will also need to overcome his own internal demons and other evil spirits who wish to prevent him from completing his task. Benevolent spirits will help explain the meanings of his encounters while the wrathful ones will test his will and strength of character.

Among these benevolent spirits are the Dakinis or Sky Dancers, who are the protectors; concealers and recoverers of spiritual communications, texts and other objects. Even in the days of medieval, patriarchal Tibet, the feminine powers of the natural world and the individual powers of great women practitioners have always been recognised and revered and within the game, these feminine protectors will challenge Kai and reward his progress throughout the game.



## The Wrathful Demons

Dakinis can also erupt out of other realms and are capable of shifting shape. They may manifest as beautiful young maidens or goddesses or as decrepit old crones. They can appear as voluptuous and alluring or as threatening and frightening monsters. Some Dakinis are part animal and have the heads of boars, tigers, crows, bears, jackals or a host of other strange creatures.

These wrathful beings represent the worst in the souls of man and overcoming these internal demons is the key to enlightenment and important to Kai's progression to Shambhala.



## Advanced Praise

“The esoteric level themes of defeating anger, jealousy and so on are excellent... In short this title has a compelling back-story and many potential gameplay elements that will work together well, alongside a refreshing pacifist ethos.”

—Sony Entertainment Europe

“...not only is the area of Eastern Mysticism, Shaolin Discipline and the Mythology of the Yeti a rich and previously untapped source of material but that the story, characters and scenarios you have woven from these are potentially such stuff as great IPs are made of.”

—GameWorld 7

“The design document ... presents a remarkably inventive concept and a solid design framework. In the view of the team at ihobo, this is one of the finest design concepts in recent years, and deserves to be a significantly successful product.

Equally intriguing is the decision to pursue a metaphysical aspect to the game structure. This level of attention to game components outside of the core aspects of the product speaks of a genuine attempt to produce a game that goes beyond the usual limits of computer game narrative.”

—International Hobo



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