Working Title: Solved

Basic Elements

Player Goals

The player begins the game as an initially anonymous detective in 1930s London. The player is then presented with a case to investigate, this will demonstrate the primary mechanics of the game to them. A case is solved when the necessary evidence is uncovered by the player. In each case there may be implicit or explicit references that point to a wider narrative i.e. clues that link some crimes together – therefore allowing the player to speculate in what way they are related, details referring to the backstory or personality of a character such as the protagonist or antagonist. The main goals for the player are the exploration and investigation of each environment that they are in, and to discover for themselves the bigger picture of the game world.

Primary Mechanics

The player can walk around the area they are in, interact with certain objects they walk up to, use tools to uncover hidden detail, pick locks with lock pick tool, record findings in the notebook tool, inspect scenes at a closer angle, communicate with people they walk up to, move to other scenes through entrances/exits, fast travel around to different locations on the map.

Win/Lose Conditions

To solve a case, the player must have sufficient evidence gathered and must know enough about the case to answer several questions correctly about it, as well as selecting the correct culprit(s). If the player gets a number of questions wrong or selects the wrong culprit, they must revisit the crime scene and try and find the details they missed.

Theme

Narrative Conceit

The city is rife with crime and uncertainty following several significant events happening concurrently, such as the Wall Street Crash a few years earlier, the rise of fascism in Italy, Spain and Germany and the threat of war. The game has a noir-based narrative with a deep sense of mystery which is central to the experience.

Player Character

The player takes the role of Robert Humphries, a middle-aged detective who is reserved and stoic in his demeanour, his mannerisms reflect his mysterious and traumatic past, but also his unrelenting sense of duty. He is tall in appearance, has a short moustache and wears a brown overcoat and vintage looking fedora. His face often contains a severe, grave but attentive expression.

Setting

Noir 2.5D 1930s London, therefore most cases take place on a rainy night. The city contains many places the player can visit for clues such as pubs, theatres, markets, shops etc. Each with unique characters that dwell in those areas.

Play Experience

When the player begins on their first case, they are introduced into the basic game interactions so that they can intuitively use them later in the game when cases get more complex and hence harder to solve. They will go into the game knowing very little about the characters or the setting, but casual gameplay will subtly grant them a sense of over-arching narrative. The game will conclude with the final development of the main characters and a satisfying sense of resolution. The game is intended to give the player a sense of freedom and autonomy to allow the player to feel as if they are making critical choices as a detective would, this would allow the game to become an almost secondary world for the player.

Design Values

[Experience, Challenge, Tactical thinking, Decisiveness, Strategy, Mystery]

1. The experience from playing the game and learning the core mechanics should feel satisfying to the player as if they are intuitively using their knowledge and overcoming obstacles as a direct result of their in-game skill.

2. A sense of openness and creativity is constant throughout i.e. the player can move to other locations mid-case and find clues that relate to that case.

3. Each case solved must feel like a puzzle piece that is a part of a much bigger picture.

4. Each NPC must feel unique and valuable to the player in some way, and so can become helpful in a variety of ways across multiple cases.

5. Each case must vary in difficulty and must tend to get more difficult as the game progresses.

6. The game must be logically consistent, for example, if a clue relates to something that the player already knows, it must be able to explored by the player in a logical way, such as, if an object like a medal with a named inscribed on it is found on the scene, the player must be able to look for that person in game and enquire more information about it.