Reverse Module

Game Design Document

Overview

Theme / Setting / Genre

Theme

The game focuses on the theme of Utopia/Dystopia balance . The main goal is to challenge the player to think about what is wrong with the world today and how one can act to make things better. The means to that is to present an interesting world setting (following below) and the events taking place in the world setting should trigger the players' curiosity and questioning.

Genre

- Open World RPG with puzzle elements.

Setting

The game is taking place in the future after a cataclysmic event called the Void. During the events of the Void, Earth was destroyed by nuclear weapons and the people tried to find uncorrupted places to live. We are in Aezla (which is Little Barrier Island in New Zealand).
The Void also is responsible for the appearance of some creatures called the Aes that affect the area around them in different ways (for example the Aes can steal memories from people, make them lose some of the five senses, reduce their stamina or attack or defense etc.). The technology of the era we are in allows for genetic modification and also the use of bionics and cybernetic parts on humans. There are two major cities in the game (Visthansia and Gaia) and a village (Trithor) in the middle of a forest (Trithor Forest). Furthermore, there is a big mountain range in the center of the island called Aezla Mountain. The tallest body of the mountain is cut in half horizontally and a Desert exists therein. The bottom part of the mountain is connected to the top part by huge tree branches. Finally there is also a large forest

on the northern part of Aezla where aborginals still live and believe in the power of the Balannce Tree (a tree that has been enhanced by the humans before the Void when the Void World War happened).

In Visthansia people can have one of two microchips on them. The first one doesn't allow them to physically hurt other people, the second one calls the police if they're in trouble. These microchips are not mandatory but people can have them and get paid for them (they may choose to have one or both of them on). It is usually considered unethical to not have one of these microchips (called the SEC microchips) on you if you are a citizen of Visthansia.

In Gaia people can surgically change their likes/dislikes at will, meaning if a person doesn't like their current job they can make themselves like it. During the game the citizens of Gaia will try to have complete control over their intellectual work, so for example if a music artist releases a song they can select what group of people can or cannot listen to that song (eg. criminals, people of opposing political ideas or simply people with specific personality traits are banned from listening to it) which will result in an imbalance of the world (explained in #Story).

Story

Story (Brief)

The game begins as Aelor, a police student of Visthansia (the city where people can wear microchips to not hurt other people), is on her way to defeat a memories manipulating creature as part of her graduation from school. After defeating the creature she somehow gets infected by a disease where a person presents a mark somewhere on their body and another person presents the exact same mark, the two people have to meet or they die.

Desperate she looks for various solutions to her problem and finally finds herself in a jungle beyond the center of the world where an ancient tribe resides. She finds her pair and tries to take her to Visthansia to cure. After a series of dramatic events Aelor kills the girl, in the process fiinding out the truth about the world she lives in. She heads to the top of the mountain at the center of the world where she defeats the Balance Aes and returns the Aes to their original form while also giving Etenrll Life to the people of Aezla. This is where the game ends.

Story (Detailed)

Introduction

The game begins when Aelor, our protagonist, needs to defeat a creature that manipulates the memories of people for her graduation as a police officer in the city of Visthansia, where people wear microchips that don't allow them to hurt other people (but only if they want to and get paid for it).

Also, in this city children can't talk because of a creature. At the time the game begins, a creature has appeared oni the mountain in the center of the world that sucks everything to it and makes them disappear.

The effect of the creature doesn't seem to be apparent on places with civilisation and roads, so Aelor follows the road to the place where the creature that manipulates memories is in the hope that he will be successful in finding one.

The mark

Aelor after managing to get to the right place finds the memories creature and defeats it. After that she passes out. She wakes up in nearby village where her saviour tells her she's been infected with a disease where a person presents a mark somewhere on their body and another person presents the exact same mark, the two people have to meet or they die (in about a period of 6 months).

This village is well known to live in an eternal 3-day cycle. One day villagers of the past appear in the village, othe next day villagers of the present and the third day villagers of the future. This cycle repeats eternally.

Aelor can help with various side quests there. After leaving the village she heads back to Vithansia to go to the hospital where recorded cases of the Pair disease are kept in a database.

(Prototype ends here)

Looking for salvation

Aelor goes to the hospital where they can't find any match for her mark, telling her there's nothing else they can do for her, unless a match shows up in their database. She has a call with a specialist in Gaia that tells her to go find him so he can examine her properly.

Determined to find a cure she decides to go to the second big city of the world where people can surgically change their likes/dislikes at will. After she gets to the second city, she realizes the whole city is in an uproar. Apparently, the artists and scientists of the city demand to have complete control over their work, meaning that only people that they approve can use their inventions/enjoy their creations.

Aelor makes her way to the hospital and asks the specialist for help. After examining his own database he tells her that her pair is in the jungle noone visits beyond mountain Aezla (the mountain at the center of the world) . When she asks how it's possible for him to know that, he tells her that he has connections with people there and he's seen the same mark on one of the girls there, as his database reminded him.

The center of the world

Aelor decides to head back to Visthansia and reports what she has to do to the headmaster of the Police Academy. However, the officers and students there are upset as a student (Faey or Arthas) has vanished. They all think that the Balance Aes has sucked them to the center of Mount Aezla but noone can go. Aelor decides to volunteer to help her friend as she's heading there in any case.

Voices of the children

Aelor makes her way to the middle part of mount Aezla, where there is a horizontal cut with a desert is and finds a village with ethereal beings all talking in children's voices. Apparently their voices are not loud but they can somehow be heard over a great distance.

The creatures are friendly and tell her that the place where the Void took place is on top of the mountain (the Void is a cataclysmic event when noone knows what happened and transformed our Earth to the world of the game). She also asks where the Balance Aes resides and why it hasn't harmed her yet.

The Silence Aeses tell her that she's the chosen one to destroy the Balance Aes which resides at the place where the Void happened. She asks who chose her and the creatures respond the Eternity Aes. She then asks where she can find the Eternity Aes and the creatures tell her she will find it where she's headed.

Friend or Foe

Aelor makes her way deep in Zerma jungle and finds a tribe of ancient people living there. The people there are not speaking the language she understands but there, clear as day, is a girl with a mark as hers on her thigh. Excited, Aelor shows her mark and tries to explain to her that they need to go to a hopsital to install a Reverse Module that will cure them, with no luck though.

She decides to go to the chief of the clan and there she sees paintings of the creatures with the voices of children on the walls. She decides to draw the solution to her problem to the chief clan and once the chief understands he agrees to tell the girl to follow her.

On their way back the duo hears the voices of children in distress and they see the whole body of the Visthansia police killing the creatures that live in the desert in the middle of the mountain.

The girl loses her mind and stars running towards the ethereal creatures' village. Aelor follows and witnesses the girl use magic on her colleagues. In complete shock she tries to stop her only to be attacked. The Visthansia police start attacking the girl and Aelor, in agony, starts attacking her friends to save the girl that will save her life.

The chosen one

Suddenly a great hum is heard and massive amounts of creatures from all over the world start attacking the Visthansia police which soon are all dead. Aelor passes out.

After she wakes up she's all alone with countless bodies dead around her, both of police officers and ethereal creatures. The girl is gone and Aelor is left all alone. She goes back to the village only to learn that the girl hasn't been there since she left with her. Asked where she is, she tells the tribe that she lost her when fighting a creature and passed out (lying to them). The chief tells her to pray by the Eternity Tree just outside the village.

Aelor heads there out of curiosity and starts praying as an act of respect the people of Zerma village. Suddenly, the tree starts talking to her, telling her she's chosen to destroy the Balance Aes. When Aelor asks why her, the tree tells her her mom and dad visited the tree (as Aelor's dad was a State Relations secretary) and it felt her overly kind and determined nature.

A violent Aes tried attacking her but the tree saved her and she befriended that Aes. And that happened again with the Memory Aes where she should have died. She tells her that she's safe and under the tree's protection. Aelor has so many questions but the Eternity Aes doesn't tell her anything else, including where the girl is.

Not knowing what else to do she heads back to Visthansia hoping the girl might be there (as she drew a map to the chief clan of where "salvation is").

Once she gets there she is welcomed as a hero as the children can speak again and when asked what happened she explains (minus the fact that she attacked her colleagues). She heads to the hospital to ask if any weird girl has come by to which the answer is no. Not knowing what else to do Aelor decides to go the second city to see if the girl is at least there.

Chaos

On her way there she sees an ethereal creature that has somehow survived the onslaught. She chases it and finally catches up with it. She makes clear that she is a friend and asks the creature what its connection is with the voices of the children in Visthansia.

The creature explains that the creatures inhabiting the land are people from before the Void that have become their dreams and experiences in this world. So for example if someone didn't express their feelings before the Void they want a voice in this world. As such the Silence Aeses are stealing the voices of Visthansia's children.

Aelor, not losing her chance to ask, also express her curiosity of what the Balance Aes is. The creature explains that it's the most powerful Aes in the land and that in order for a new Void not to happen, the world must be in complete balance, so in order for people to be happy they have to have experienced equal sadness.

Aelor is ready to ask more questions when the girl with the same mark appears. When she sees her she attacks her and they fight. Aelor fights her and wounds her gravely. She immediately takes her to Visthansia to be cured. The doctors aren't able to save her unfortunately and tell Aelor there is no solution anymore. When Aelor

checks again the mark is gone from her body.

Truth and Lies

Extremely curious of how she's still alive Aelor decides to ask her doctor (Aesthim) of what has happened. Her doctor tells her that he has no idea what's going on as most people find their pair and get cured. She's a very special case where her pair died before she could be cured. Aelor is very suspicious of the situation and decides to ask her professor at the academy (Faerkon) if he's ever heard of something similar again. He seems extremely stressed but doesn't tell her anything. Aelor decides to take things to the extreme and go back to the Silence Aes that is in Trithor forest in case it can tell her something.

The creature explains that the Void was WW III and that the governments of Aezla have been trying to avoid another WW for a millenium by using any means they can, including lying to their people. It also tells her that the latest in a series of inventions is DNA manipulation. They are secretly changing the DNA of their people through Soft X Rays to make them kind and drive them away from war.

Aelor can make a decision to join them or go against them here (something that will matter in the sequel). Finally the Silence Aes tells her that Eternal Life has also been invented but the Balance Aes doesn't allow the people of Aezla to have that and that's why it has started being offensive to them.

Ending

Aelor decides it's time to face the Balance Aes. Once she gets to the middle of Mount Aezla, she finds no village any more and a path to the top of the mountain in its place. She climbs the path and finally finds the Balance Aes, a creature of light and

darkness. She defeats it and all the Aeses in the world are returned to their former selves, be it human or animal, plant or object. Also the people of Aezla can now have Eternal life.

Core Gameplay Ideas

- Modular Augmentations (Depending on the personal Karma you would like to favour for Aelor).
- Graphics (LODs that change) that change according to the main charatcer's abilities and current Karma state.
- Enviromental puzzles that lead to different paths according to what the player chooses to do.
- The player chooses the traits of his best friend (even customizes his appearance if possible) (their best friend will be their love partner in the end) at the beginning of the game with a number of questions (akin to Morrowind) and this friend (male, female or LBGTQ+) takes different actions according to the player's choices in the game, with multiple potential endings for them.
- A Scan Visor. For better understanding the world and lore of the game.
- Ability for telekinetic powers if you befriend/defeat the appropriate Aes.
- Aes can have any kind of shape or form (they are the strongest feelings and desires of people from before the Void World War).
- Puzzle Areas (like Temples, Dungeons and Ruins) to gain new abilities.
- Real World Data (like the numbers of endagered animals in the real world) will be used for different events in the game. For example if the number of white tigers decreases some characters in the game vanish for a period of time and come back. If this number increases positive enviromental or stats effects may happen in the game. It will also be used for the personalities of the characters in the game. This will be a thing in all three Reverse Module games.
- Behind the shoulder camera (with the choice for the player to have it behind the left or right shoulder and select distance to the right or left). The player may also choose to have a centered camera in the settings.

Atmosphere

The atmosphere of the game aims to be a combination of North European culture with influences from the Middle East and Asia. Armour and equipment in general can be inspired by all these locations as also clothes worn by NPCs and characters. This should be combined with a futuristic feel to reflect the era the game takes place in. Vagrant Story could be an inspiration for all these. The music will be electronic for the most part akin to Moby with the appropriate feeling for each area. The dialogues should be short and not tire the player with too much info or be too imposing on him concerning the meanings the game tries to convey.

Specifics

• Visthansia

Visthansia is seperated in 4 Biomes according to the ethical beliefs about technology. So for example these 4 Biomes are:

- People who have SEC1 on.
- People who have SEC2 on.
- People who have both SECs on
- People who despise the SEC

Also, the SEC can have "modules" on it the wearer chooses so as to access different technologies available in the city which is a Smart City.
Visthansians have invented Magnetic Circuits which don't require power to function and can have, thus, technology that seems like magic without the need for any kind of power source.

• Gaia

In Gaia the Biomes are seperated into religious beliefs so for example the 4 Biomes could be:

- Christians
- Muslim
- Buddhist
- Atheist

Gaians are not that technologically advanced but they do use some of the tech Visthansia has invented, powered through replenishable forms of energy though like Solar energy and Wind energy though. They do have a more advanced connection with the Aes though and is not uncommon to befriend them to achieve various goals needed for the lives of the citizens.

• The Void

The Void is the period that was deleted from history by the Aezlan governments in favour of peace between the two cities on Little Barrier Island. It started in 2053 A.D. when WW III ended and lasted for 1052 years up to 3105 A.D. . 3 years later the cities

of Visthansia and Gaia were formed. Visthansia was home to the the more progressive people that survived the carnage, while Gaia was where the conservative people gathered. Trithor was founded by the people who chose no side as their main goal was to leave the past behind and focus on their survival on the only island of Earth that has seemingly not been infected by the nuclear polution.

The governments of the cities immediately decided to stop recording historical events in the hope that people in the future would forget about WW III and what seperated them.

The decision for no military forces was also decided at that time.

Around 100 years later, in 2148, the Aes started appearing on the island with the first Aes influencing the life of Aezla being the Timeshifting Aes that made life in Trithor almost unberable and isolating the inhabitants of the village from the rest of the world.

During the remaining 900 years not much happened, apart from new Aeses appearing over time, and the cities were allowed to become prosper and advanced like no city on earth was before.

Stats and Karma

The game operates in a hierarchical way. First and foremost there are three types of karma which are the Primary Attributes. Following is their description:

1. Sanchitta
 These are the accumulated works and actions that you have completed in the past. These cannot be changed but can only wait to come into fruition. This is the vast accumulation of karma that encompasses our countless past lifetimes. This comprises every action that you have ever made in your past and present lives.
2. Prarabdha
 Prarabdha is that portion of the past karma that is responsible for the present. These are the ripe and fructuous actions and reactions. The things that you did in the past make you what you are today. It cannot be avoided or changed, but only exhausted by being experienced.
3. Agami
 Agami Karma is the Karma we are creating for ourselves right here in the current moment. It is the action that we create and the choices we make right now, as we live this present lifetime.

These 3 types of karma encompass all attributes and stats present in the game. As Aelor fights or befriends Aes (the creatures that are mostly defined by karma) her stats and attributes change depending on the karma class and specific attributes of that particular Aes.

The specific parameters present in the game are:

- Vitality - Prarabdha
- Implant/mental integrity - Sanchitta
- Aes Rapport – Agami
- Athletics - Prarabdha
- Spirit – Agami
- Brawl - Prarabdha
- Guns - Sanchitta
- Security (computers and locks) - Sanchitta
- Will - Agami

Now, Aes are differentiated by their nature (Hostile or Calm) and Karma class.

Above each Aes there are icons representing these attributes. Red if the Aes is actively Hostile and White if it's Calm. And Blue if it has any attributes concerning Sanchitta, Green for Prarabdha and Purple for Agami.

The specific stats based in the game are:

- Health (Vitality)
- Mana (Aes Rapport)
- Attack (Brawl/Guns)
- Defense (Vitality)
- Mana Attack (Aes Rapport)
- Mana Defense (Aes Rapport)
- Stamina
- Agility (Atheltics)
- Technical Ability (Security/Mental)
- Charm (Spirit)
- Luck (Will)

Characters

Visthansia

Aelor

Gender: Female

Background: The main character of the game. A teenager of 19 years old that has enrolled in the Police Academy with the goal of helping the people of the city as best as she can. She's lost her father at the age of 15 when she was about to start speaking due to the Silence Aes. She's upbeat but determined and counts a lot on her best friends (Arthas and Faey) to help her in time of trouble. She is destined to defeat the balance Aes by the end of the game.

Arthas

Gender: Male

Background: One of the two best friends of Aelor. He's a big guy, witty and kind. Also a student of the police Academy, with the goal of driving bad Aes away from the city of Visthansia. The son of a police officer himself, which he lost in an excursion against a really nasty Age Aes when he was just 4. He's also 19 years old and his romantic preference between Faey and Aelor will be influenced by the Best Friend Test at the beginning of the game.

Faey

Gender: Female

Background: The other best friend of Aelor. Kind, serene and doesn't talk too much, quite on point when she does though. Both her parents live and she joined the Police Academy in order to protect her loved ones. Her romantic preference and closeness to Aelor will also be partially influenced by the Best Friend Test at the beginning of the game.

Elisa

Gender: Female

Background: Aelor's mother. She's kind, a little angry at the world and wise. She's 43 years old and lost her husband 4 years prior to the beginning of the game due to a heart attack. She is always supportive of Aelor's decisions, trusting the mind of her daughter and her abilities. She doesn't play a huge role in the game but some dialogue choices the player makes when talking to her can influence things.

Trevor

Gender: Male

Background: Elisa's husband. A secretary for the State Relations office of Visthansia, he died at the age of 49 due to a heart attack. He was brought in Visthansia's hospital but not in time for him to be saved. His wife loved him dearly and she's still angry at the doctors of the hospital for not being able to save him.

Valar
Gender: Female
Background: Arthas's mother. She's also a big lady, kind and strict. She doesn't very much like the fact that her son has enrolled in the police academy, still feeling grief for the loss of her husband on a mission that happened 15 years ago. She's very supportive of Aelor and likes a bit more than other Arthas's other friends.

Aekon
Gender: Male
Background: Arthas's father. A very determined and kind police officer who gave his life to save the people of Visthansia from a serious increase in Age Aes's numbers near the city. He loved his son dearly but Arthas barely remembers him. Still, he's proud to be the son of a hero.

Mary
Gender: Female
Background: Faey's mother. She's extremely kind, positive and silent most of the time like her daughter. Very supportive of her daughter to make the right decisions, she also will play a role in some quests in the game according to what the player chooses.

Teon
Gender: Male
Background: Faey's dad likes to call himself "a little runaway". He's upbeat, positive like his wife and daughter but likes to talk too much and have fun. He's very outgoing and always pleasant to other people. His kind nature though can be very easily reversed if someone is rude to him though. He's supportive of his daughter's choice , although he wishes she would become a diplomat. Also plays a role in specific quests the player can take on.

Faerkon

Gender: Male
Background: The professor responsible for the final year students of the Police Academy. Also the Academy's Principal. Very strict and pragmatic. He takes 0 misbehaviours and always wants the best of and for his students. The player will have to talk to him a lot throughout the game so the choices made in their dialogues will influence a lot of things.

Aesthim

Gender: Male
Background: The doctor responsible for the Pair Disease and the one Aelor will visit on her quest to heal herself from it. Quite serious, kind and compassionate about his patients. He will also play quite a big role in some particular choices in the game.

Phaedon

Gender: Male
Background: Visthansia's governor for the past 8 years, Phaedon is a manipulative, unethical and greedy man that will do anything to remain in power. Extremely egocentric, he has enemies all over Visthansia that would like to see him rot in jail for the crimes he's commited or worse.

Mor

Gender: Male
Background: Visthansia's blacksmith, a kind and tired soul that has been through a lot, losing his sister in a terrific accident known all over Aezla as The Visthansia Incident when a nuclear reactor exploded killing thousands.

Cindy

Gender: Female
Background: Mor's wife, they met in school and have been together since even before they could talk. She's a serene and kind woman with a great sense of empathy for others.

Odysseas

Gender: Male
Background: The son of Mor and Cindy, Odysseas is a 9 year old child with big dreams of opening a Pharmacy in Visthansia. He's playful, kind and stubborn.

Amarilia
Gender: Female
Background: Sister to Odysseas. She is 11 years and wants to become a lawyer. She's kind, serene and loathes lies and injustice.

Ellie
Gender: Female
Background: The third child of Mor and Cindy, Ellie is a very energetic 7 year old. Always curious and defiant she's always up for the next adventure.

Evie
Gender: Female
Background: The youngest daughter of Mor and Cindy, she's an overly happy and playful 5 year old kid that likes all the attention she can get. She's still learning Sign Language.

Zaelos
Gender: Male
Background: The frontman of No More, the biggest rock band in Visthansia. He's arrogant, kind and spoiled. Always looking to impress the masses he will go above and beyond to sustain his title as the Rock King of the city.

Quests

Phase 0 (Beginning of the game)

Visthansia

Main

Memory Lane
Description: You need to head to Trithor Forest and defeat a Memories Aes to graduate from the Police Academy.

Side Quests

Pick your Poison
Description: Arthas suggests you train before heading out for Trithor. There are 3 different kinds of Aes you can fight, Fear, Delusion and Arrogance Aes. Defeat 3 of them and return to Arthas.
Connection: -

Helping Band
Descirption: Zaelos is exhausted from too many shows lately. Bring him a potion to revitalize him.

Time of the season
Description: Odysseas asks you what's your favourite season. Choose wisely.
Connection: Silent Gamble (Phase 2)

The Delivery Woman
Description: Mor wants to give Cindy some flowers for her birthday. Help him by picking up some roses and delivering them.
Connection: You get what you give (Phase 5)

Sins of the Past
Description: Phaedon faces is being threatened by the Free People of Visthansia for "his involvment in the Visthansia Incident". Go around and find info on who's threatening him.
Connection: Pay the Man (Phase 3)

Targeted platforms

The main targeted platform for the game is the PC. This includes Windows and Linux.

Monetization model

The game will be free on Steam.

Game Engine

The game will be made in Godot.

Audience

The main audience is people in the age range of 15- 30 as they are the most likely to like this kind of thought provoking game and also enjoy the gameplay mechanisms that will be in it

Project Description (Brief):

The project aims to be accessible and enjoyable by everyone with the goal of establishing a new franchise that can branch out to all forms of media. The main focus of the game, in contrast to most futuristic games, is Utopia and how it could be achieved in a technologically advanced future. The end goal is to create a life-changing experience that will make the player change his/her behaviour to make the world a better place to live in.

Project Description (Detailed)

The game will use RPG elements to create a feeling of flow and progression in the player and also allow us the freedom to create stories that the player will find interesting to invest time in. The goal is not to make the game as long as possible but rather to make it as enjoyable and thought-provoking with a lasting impact on the player.
To that end we will use a Dark Souls like (in the sense of addictive) fighting system that will keep the player interested. Health will be lost on a per-fight basis (and gradually increase after the battle) (more in #Fighting System). Combined with the RPG and puzzle elements of the game (Puzzle Areas like Temples and Dungeons) should create a rather interesting experiene for the player.
The subject of Utopia, while so sought after by humans, especially of a young age (which is the usual age of gamers), has seen surprisingly little coverage in the media of any kind. By undertaking the challenge of using this theme we have some unlimited potential for innovation and growth that will provide benefits beyond mere profits in the long run.

What sets this project apart?

A not so used theme

Utopia is a theme that has not been used so much in any media. While many artistic creations have the end goal of Utopia, very few feature a world that is already Utopian. This will create a very special kind of atmosphere that will feel fresh to the players.

Challenging themes within the game

The world setting we have created allows us to seamlessly implement many interesting sub-stories and side-quests that can be very interesting and provide food for thought. This will allow us to keep the player's attention while also ensuring a lasting impact for our game.

A perfectly balanced experience

By using innovative themes with a classic gaming experience we can create a balanced videogame that anyone can enjoy and remember. Seasoned players will like the familiar gameplay and fresh story and theme while new players will enjoy the accessibility of a stellar fighting system that will take into consideration the effects of the weapons used, strategy to defeat an enemy according to their karma and abilities dependant on that karma, as well as the combination of Aelor's previous karma state and current weapon and ability choices to take advantage of that state (more in #Fighting System). There's something for everyone here.