WIP Name: Pilus

General aesthetics: Pixelart – as typical for RPGs, Sort of biomechanical(?) inspired by games like disco Elysium and fear and hunger. Definitely have character portraits like disco Elysium has, and use the crosscode dialogue system.

Fear and hunger gameplay – I want a similar aesthetic for the overworld.

Disco Elysium portraits.

A potential vibe to go for with the combat UI.

Hopefully the game ends out a little more lighthearted than these lmao, I want the aesthetic to be kind of dark, but have moments that show the humanity of the characters, as the darkness is supposed to reflect the world itself.

Meta Themes:

Basically, use peoples’ preconceptions about typical RPG tropes and ideas to trick people into making particular decisions.

* RPGs usually have multiple endings, including a “good” and “bad” ending, so have some decisions that seem to tend towards one of those. E.g. something that seems like it would gain a new party member etc.
* “Experimental doctor” arc, usually this gives the player various buffs, but on completion the player will get a small permanent debuff.

Due to some of these permanently effecting the story/gameplay in an “objectively bad” way, there will be autosaving after each of these to a singular save slot.

Saving mechanics: Start the game with a warning saying the game autosaves at important times but will not always autosave. Before important bosses or after important moments the game will save. There will be 1 save slot, which will just be accessed with “save” and “continue” buttons. Probably going to just write everything to a text file in the game directory.

Combat mechanics: Most of the regular encounters will be typical RPG combat, inspired by fear and hunger as in most enemies will relatively complicated and won’t be a pushover. The only benefit for fighting an enemy will be getting its DNA, so the player should fight each enemy only once, to keep combat interesting. Boss encounters will have the same mechanics for the person attacking (roughly), but I want to add that one idea I had of moving around and dodging the enemy’s attacks in the overworld to reach the buttons – this will be reserved for important moments for effect.

Combat ui general idea:

A diagram of a face and a circle

Description automatically generated with medium confidence

Obv not actual sprites yet :/.

Start by making a scrolling menu class with box size, and data. Make it work with an arbitrary amount of player characters and enemy characters.

Have a list of players and list of enemies and loop through each until combat ends.

Some abilities can only be used once each combat

How to add a new player ability:

* Add function in the player class
* In combatcontroller, add it to the target selector
* Put it in playerdata when obtainable

Backend things to do:

* Combat system extras – status effects, attack bonuses, effect / buff / debuff indicators
* Single MC combat.
* Combat (bosses)
* Combat fleeing, based on enemy toughness basically.
* Combat defending
* Once combat abilities
* Shop
* Inventory / equipment menu
* Movement and interaction
* Title screen / saving
* Dialogue and decision making

Design things to do:

* Enemy design
* Ability design
* Intended builds
* Bosses

I haven’t thought of names yet D:

Story Premise / backstory:

Humans have recently discovered a method of transferring genes and parts between each other, but over time this process has become too easy to do, and almost everyone has some sort of change from their original selves. In the beginning, the doctor who invented the technique tested it on his wife, who eventually died from her body being overloaded from replacing almost every part of it. After further research, the doctor found out that the body has limits to how much changes it can handle, small changes having less effect to larger changes such as replacing limbs. A few years later, the doctor created synthetic genes in a laboratory, not coming from a person and not requiring a donor, giving people genes is now looking like a promising technique for healthcare. This is not how it continued. Soon the gene transfer techniques become quicker, easier and less intrusive, making them more widespread in public. This created a “black market” of genes, small groups of people would dig graves and even murder to gain access to desirable genes. Now, a few decades later, this has escalated so much as to create the undercity, a run-down part of the city run by gene trafficking overlords. Opposed to the undercity, the rich live lavishly taking their pick in the best genes from around the city and are the only people who can afford the still expensive.

Story overview:

Introduction: Starts with a news broadcast stating that the doctor is dead at the old age of 73 due to unknown causes. The broadcast states that he was one of the most influential figures in modern healthcare and society as a whole and gives a brief overview of his life [yayy organic way to introduce backstory]. The broadcast then cuts to a speech from the minister of health, starts sounding all generic. The tv switches off. Your sibling (the minister of health) says something like “not my best work” and there’s a little conversation between you and your sibling to introduce you both as characters. Your sibling then asks you to deliver a letter, saying it’s very important it gets delivered properly.

You then walk down the streets and get a little look at the world, something doesn’t quite seem right, some of the people don’t seem quite right. You then get confronted by a scary man who blocks the path in front of you, so you decide to go down the alleyway path. You then run into another large man who knocks you to the ground and laughs. The man from before comes from behind you and says “seems it was easier than we thought”, they then discuss the fact you aren’t the minister themselves, and what they should do with you, they decide to take a “souvenir”, your eye. The last thing you know is they pick you up and you pass out.

You wake up in an unknown dark place to a boy poking at you asking if you’re ok. You, being confused ask what happened, apparently the two men just dumped you here, without an eye. You then panic and realize your eye is gone. The boy asks you to help you out, and you agree.

You then continue off int the streets of the undercity with the boy showing you around the small area he lives in, you discuss how you got here and that you want to leave. He agrees to help you leave and try to find your eye. The boy suggests it could’ve been the current overlord who took your eye, and you start trying to find information about him.

After a little digging you find the location of his hideout and take a visit, the “receptionist” dismisses you for not having an appointment and you can’t get to see him without being known by one of the other overlords. There are 3 other overlords which you can visit in any order. After the first one the “receptionist” says “maybe if you knew the others”.

Overlord 1: a swamp type area, water flow puzzles, and some other npcs giving lore.

Overlord 2: a volcanic cave, mostly combat encounters.

Overlord 3: brutalist architecture, maze type puzzles and a shop/trader.

After talking to each of the overlords you get brought out the back to talk to the real overlord, you ask him if he can let you out of the undercity, obviously he says no. After a bit of convincing, he says if you can prove your strength in the undercity, he’ll let you pass, if you aren’t strong enough, you become his “workers”. Then begins a scripted boss fight for you to lose, he just keeps increasing his status over time and decreasing yours until you lose. You then pass out and are moved deeper into his compound.

Once you wake up the guards escort you to a dormitory with many other people. From discussing with then you find that the overlord is quite sensitive to insults and challenges, and feels he has to prove himself. So, challenging him and beating him in something simple could prove effective at wearing him down. After working at chopping trees, listening to the guards, it seems like they don’t enjoy working under the overlord, so you manage to convince them to let you back as an audience to the overlord.

The next day you challenge the overlord to a fight and boast that he won’t hit you at all this time. Another non-scripted boss fight happens, where you keep getting opportunities to boast that his next attack will not hit you, for each successful boast, his def drops dramatically, and you get an extra opportunity to attack him. When you defeat him, he lets you pass, after divulging that it was not his men who stole your eye, and it could’ve been the prince - the only other person above him in the city.

On return to your house, you and the boy find that your sibling is missing… and you remember back to the guys who attacked you earlier. The journey into the royal palace begins.

At the entrance you realize you can’t get in, and the boy suggests entering through the chemical plant. You two then sneak in through the ventilation ducts in the chemical plant. This place has some mechanical puzzles, and some physics puzzles. In the middle of the area a scripted encounter with guards who escape happens. The area continues until walking across a high catwalk above a vat of acid, when the head guard comes along, and a boss fight occurs. The headguard is strong and can’t be damaged initially. But reaching the end of the catwalk reveals a button that drops the catwalk and the head guard into the acid, he then climbs up and can be fought normally. When you beat him, you gain access to the royal palace.

The royal place is strange, all the populated areas have no encounter, but the non-populated areas have many. The populated areas have puzzles involving moving people around to clear a path. In this area, there is a guard post, where you overhear that your eye is in the treasury. The second area is the prince’s living area, this is a stealthy area, having to stay out of the prince’s LOS and reach the treasury room. Upon looking for your eye he prince enters the room holding your eye, rolls it along the floor towards you and before you can put it in, a boss fight begins. Upon reaching half health he gets bored and leaves, stating “well, I guess you’ll never find them then, ill be in the throne room.” In reference to your kidnapped sibling.

You now have to find the prince in the throne room where the real boss fight begins. The prince has a few phases where he keeps switching out genes and changing attacks. During his final phase, he breaks the floor and you fall back into the main area of the palace, where you finally beat him and take his key. With this you can access where your sibling is held.

(WIP – I think this this is bad)

The next day, the prince makes an announcement about being attacked in his own home, and orders your arrest. When police arrive at your house, the overlord brings you back to his compound, and commends you for taking the prince down a notch, and tells you to leave town, which ends the game.

END