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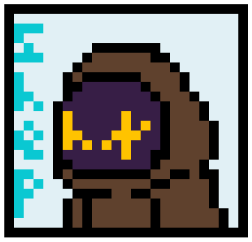
BACK END MEMORIES

(Feedback Questions at the bottom)

Character Bios:



Shep (The Shepherd): main player character; a virtual entity capable of traversing the void between reality and spirituality, granting them a unique ability to communicate with the forgotten memories of computers and electronics. This ability inclines The Shepherd to act as the vessel for redemption; guiding the lost souls towards a new life, or towards their rightful resting place.

Zizi(Point&Shoot Video Camcorder Model 225): Zizi is a 6 year old birthday girl from Chicago, trapped in a cycle of waiting for her surprise. She is a projection of the last video recorded on a Flip Video Camera, representing a (relatively recent) snapshot in time of an era where home video was at its height, and contrasting it with where it has fallen today; replaced by smartphones in less than 5 years. She sits within one of the many abandoned

buildings used as waste sites for electronics in the city (Chicago).
(The name Zizi is “calculator spelling” of the numbers 225)

Dopi(Ipod): Dopi is a “picker”, a young boy filtering through the heaps of electronic garbage located near Agbogbloshie Scrapyard, Ghana. Dopi works tirelessly among other pickers, separating precious metals and electronics from the waste to resell in markets as a means of income. Although the fumes of burning waste have caused him to develop a chronic cough, he fills his days by playing the music from an old Ipod he found among the refuse. He is a collection of digitized musical notes and choruses from iconic early 2000’s songs, using them as his primary form of communication.

LEE (Nokia 3310): Lee is one of millions working out of manufacturing facilities across China, spending hours under harsh conditions, with little pay, putting together parts in an infinite assembly line of Nokia phones, only for them to be shipped out and sold across the world at massive markup. He

spent years collecting defective pieces of the phone, assembling it piece by piece at home in an attempt to understand the hype behind this “revolutionary” product firsthand.

Just as he neared finalizing the device, the market demand for Nokia began to dwindle, resulting in the factory's shutdown and widespread unemployment. Unable to reconcile the real cost of the phone on his life, he continues to play its legendary snake game over and over, lost in an indefinite pursuit.

(Most of these names are “calculator spellings” of the numbers or straight up just reversed:)

Early Character Dialog:

ZiZi story:

[Offscreen] “Over here! Over here! Look this way!”

“Okay 1..2..3– Happy Birthday to you! Happy birthday to you! Happy birthday dear-”

[s*ilence*]

[child's voice offscreen] “Hello? Helloo! Where did everybody go? Mom?”

[*crying*]

(*Upon encountering:)

[Zizi] “Hello? Is someone there?”

[Shephard]”...”

[Z] “Do you think you can help me find my family?”

(*Upon delivering back to the surface)

[Zizi] “Oh my gosh! I didn’t think anyone would come for me. Thank you stranger!”

[Z] “I wish I had my cake right now. I was just about to blow out the candles and make my wish, but then I looked back at mom. She was holding the camera they got me. All of my friends were there and even people I didn’t know too. Like you! But then everybody was gone! Did everyone grow up ? Maybe they all forgot about me.”

[Shephard]”...”

[Voice offscreen] ”Shhh! I think she’s coming! Everybody hide!”

[Z] “Wait. Mom? I can hear them! They’re throwing me a surprise! Oh yeah! She said we were moving somewhere new soon, wow! Thank you so much stranger! I’ll remember you! Don’t worry, you can have a slice of cake too :)”

(*Mission complete: Repurposed flip video cam*)

Additional characters: LaserDisc, Google Glass, BlackBerry Phone, Gameboy, Pagers, Tamagochi, FlipPhones

Class Questions:

First Impressions:

What are your initial thoughts on the characters above and their bios?

Do any of the characters stand out to you as particularly interesting or relatable? Why? Are there any characters that feel underdeveloped or uninteresting?

Design and Visuals:

How do you feel about the visual design of the characters? Do they match their described personalities? Do the visuals & assets give you a clear sense of the tone (e.g., dark, whimsical, futuristic)?

Are there any that feel inconsistent or out of place?

Do you feel emotionally drawn to any of the characters? Are there any you'd like to learn more about? Why/why not?

Dialog & World-Building:

Based on the early assets, what kind of world or setting do you imagine this game takes place in?

Based on the minimal dialogue, what tone or mood do you think the game is trying to convey?

Overall Experience

Based on what you've seen, would you be interested in playing this game? Why or why not? What would make you more excited or curious about the game?

Does the game remind you of any other games, movies, media? If so, which ones? How do you think this game could differentiate itself from those comparisons?

Improvements:

What aspects of the game (characters, visuals, dialogue, etc.) do you think need the most work or refinement?

What impactful piece of technology would you add to the game

Sources:

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