



The Architect Hestia

Ten Pager Design Document

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Introduction

The Architect Hestia: a game in which the player finds themselves in a dystopian world where extreme wealth and poverty have torn society. Players play as Elian Cross, the protagonist who is amongst the poor Rusthavers and becomes a symbol of hope and change in this divided world. The game is divided into two interconnected societies – Auravale and Rusthaven in which the player assumes a pivotal role in each society every time they die. In Rusthaven Elian leads a rebellion against the oppressive wealthy elite with minimal resources stealth and wit. In Auravale Elian becomes part of the rich, facing the consequences of the actions made from the wealthy while fighting off the rebellion with an abundance of resources. The two narratives are linked and Elian develops relationships with characters on both sides, where all actions in one society translate to the other.

Key Gameplay Points

- Death switches the society you are in.
- Two different stories are told through both the Auravalian and Rusthavener society.
- Both stories converge towards each other, with the outcome of that convergence in the players hands.
- Auravalian society encourages more sporadic, fast paced gameplay.
- Rusthavener society encourages stealthy, tactical gameplay.
- Three different abilities (passive, tactical, ultimate) for each society.



Splinter Cell Conviction ([link to source](#))



Cyberpunk 2077 mod ([link to source](#))

Key Technical Points

- Third person shooter
- Action / adventure
- Stealth / survival
- ESRB: M (Mature)
- Age range: >17
- Target platform: PlayStation / Xbox

Executive Summary

Death Mechanic

The game revolves around a dual-sided conflict where players experience both Auravale and Rusthaven. Scripted shifts force players to switch sides, mastering each side's tactics. Companions and abilities are vital in navigating opposing challenges. As the narratives converge, players must choose a faction to conclude the game.

Abilities

Players encounter different abilities in Auravale and Rusthaven. Rusthaven's "Shadow Blend" grants invisibility in low light, fostering stealth-based approaches, while Auravale's "Marksmen's Advantage" highlights enemy weak points, offering a strategic advantage in combat engagements. These distinct abilities shape diverse strategies for navigating the challenges presented by each society.



Crafting & Upgrades

Players can craft and upgrade equipment and tools to enhance their abilities and strategic advantages. Utilizing resources found in the environment, they can create items or modify existing gear, allowing for customization and adaptability based on the chosen playstyle and situation.

Moral Complexity

The protagonist forms deep bonds on both sides, risking the safety of loved ones during escalating conflict. His unique perspective, understanding both narratives, places the burden of choice on the player's shoulders when the pivotal moment arrives.



Exploration & Puzzles

The game encourages exploration of diverse environments, unveiling hidden secrets, and collecting lore-enhancing items. Players solve puzzles strategically placed within the game world, offering challenges that unlock new areas, providing a deeper understanding of the conflicted universe and rewarding the curious and attentive player.

Diverse Environments & Play Styles

Players encounter diverse environments and play styles driven by the death mechanic. Moving from Auravale's affluent opulence to Rusthaven's desolate slums showcases stark visual contrasts. These differences deeply influence gameplay; Auravaliens boast resources for varied combat encounters, while Rusthaveners rely on stealth, scavenging, and wit to navigate the challenges posed by Auravale's might.



Play Experience



Emotional Impact

Mechanics are crafted to evoke a variety of emotions shaping the player experience. Successful execution of abilities or maneuvers in combat elicits a rush of adrenaline and excitement while navigating Rusthaven's stealth-driven challenges induces a sense of tension, frustration and anticipation.

A moral dilemma is faced when forming emotional ties with characters from both societies. These connections make players question their actions, aware that all choices could harm loved ones. As only the player understands both sides, they grapple with the morality of their decisions, feeling the emotional weight of every action taken.



Narrative Integration

Abilities shape how players engage with and perceive the narrative. Auravale's heightens the perception of combat prowess while Rusthaven's emphasize stealth and evasion. This influences players' understanding and immersion in the contrasting environments.



Immersion

Fluid transitions and controls from combat to stealth, keeping player engagement and immersion.



Rewards

Immediate feedback and rewards when players strategically utilize their unique abilities.



Learning & Mastery

Gradually introducing players to all gameplay elements and abilities cultivates a learning curve that encourages skill mastery. As challenges escalate, players adapt and hone their skills while directly comprehending not only their own capabilities but also those of their adversaries.



Accessibility

Customizable settings and difficulty levels ensure an accessible and inclusive experience for various skill levels.



Flow State

Streamlined UI minimizes disruptions, enhancing player experience of deep concentration and flow state.

Goals / Objectives

Primary

To end the divide between Rusthaven and Auravale. Rusthaveners don't want to live under the oppression of Auravale, and after the killing of Althea Sterling Auravale believe they need to put Rusthaven down.

Secondary

- Learn and understand the complexities of both societies.
- Master various combat techniques, adapting to the different gameplay styles.

Tertiary

- Discover and collect items or lore scattered throughout the world.
- Explore the world to gain insights on the game's universe.
- Level up and develop both versions of the main character, Elian.



Narrative

In a world scarred and burdened by the harrowing divisions, a story unfolds where the balance between wealth and poverty teeters on the brink of chaos. 'The Architect Hestia' is a journey into a dystopian world where society is torn by the imbalance of wealth.

Prologue - A World Divided

To end the divide between Rusthaven and Auravale. Rusthaveners don't want to live under the oppression of Auravale, The year is 2175 and the world that we once knew has crumbled. Extremes of wealth and poverty have fractured society, creating a divide that seems impossible to bridge. In Auravale, the rich live opulent lives in their gleaming skyscrapers, insulated from the suffering of the sprawling slums in Rusthaven. Elian Cross, born into this desolation lives everyday struggling for survival where scarcity, oppression, and despair are constant companions. after the killing of Althea Sterling Auravale believe they need to put Rusthaven down.



Arcane ([link to source](#))

Act 1 - A Spark of Rebellion

The game begins as Elian's life takes a dramatic turn. An unexpected encounter with a group of rebels sparks a fire within Elian. They are tired of living in the shadows of the elite, tired of watching their loved ones suffer. Elian joins the rebellion, a ragtag group of fighters who believe in a world where the wealth is shared, and power is in the hands of the people.

Along the way, Elian forms a deep bond with two charismatic rebels in Kira and Finn. Kira is the rebellions strategist and Finn, a skilled mechanic, works on building weapons and tools to aid the rebels in their quest. During this time Elian learns the importance of stealth and scavenging, improving on his guerrilla tactics.



Act 2 - A Twist of Fate (Part 1)

In Auravale, a woman named Althea Sterling is tirelessly working on constructing powerful weapons that threaten to deepen the divisions between them. Kira and Elian devise a plan to eliminate Althea. However, fate takes a different course when Elian finds himself captured during the mission and faces a formidable interrogation led by Commander Roland Voss. The revelation of Rusthaven's impending assault seeps into the room and unflinchingly Voss ends Elian's life.

Elian's demise places him into the heart of Auravale. A different reality where he exists in the inverse of his previous life. Within the splintering leadership of Auravale, discord reigns supreme, sowing seeds of uncertainty and leaving questions looming over the city's future. Under the guidance of Isabella, Elian's training continues to evolve. He masters the intricacies of combat, honing his skills with an array of weapons and tools. A profound connection blossoms between Elian and Isabella. However, fate takes an unexpected turn when the blaring alarm announces the intrusion of unidentified assailants into their sanctuary. Elian and Isabella spring into action, weapons at the ready, defending their haven against a chaotic and unrelenting onslaught.



Act 2 - A Twist of Fate (Part 2)

The aftermath reveals a heart-wrenching truth: Elian's beloved mother, Althea, has fallen victim to the intrusion. His initial resentment toward his mother's work on potent weapons, perceiving it as a source of division, is near removed in its entirety. In her death, he finds a legacy and a means to avert further bloodshed. Fueled by an unyielding determination and a thirst for retribution against those responsible for his mother's demise, Elian embarks on a path to honor her memory. He believes that by completing Althea's research and forging the formidable weapons she had envisioned, he can safeguard Auravale from the looming assault. This conviction is further cemented by Commander Roland's revelation of Rusthaven's imminent attack, solidifying Elian's resolve to forge a future that transcends revenge, seeking to safeguard the city from impending turmoil as his mother once feared.



Act 3 - The Convergence

The two narratives in the game become increasingly intertwined.

Elian's unwavering commitment to continue his mother's work on the formidable weapons sends ripples of uncertainty through the heart of Auravale. The city's elite, grappling with suspicions about Elian's true intentions, stand divided. Victor watches with growing unease. He perceives Elian as recklessly driven, fearing that his actions might inadvertently lead to Auravale's demise. In response, Victor orders an assassination targeting Elian.

As danger closes in, Isabella catches wind of the impending threat and rushes to warn Elian and shield him from harm's way. The first wave of assailants descends upon Elian but he fights with ferocity and determination. In the crucible of combat, Elian discovers the unsettling truth: more adversaries are en route, determined to ensure his demise. In the chaos that unfolds, Isabella joins Elian's side. Together, they confront the second wave of hitmen sent by Victor. As the battle rages on, fate takes a cruel turn, separating Isabella and Elian in the heat of the struggle. Isabella can only watch in horror as one of the hitmen delivers a fatal blow to Elian, killing him instantly.

Elian is thrust back to right before his death by Commander Roland in Rusthaven. This time, destiny follows a different course, and Kira and Finn manage to stage a daring rescue, getting Elian away from the clutches of his captors. The journey continues, building toward the inevitable clash on Auravale's doorstep.

Yet, death becomes a recurring theme for Elian as he traverses between the two worlds, each returning him to moments before his death prior, inflicting profound moral dilemmas upon his soul. In Rusthaven, the presence of Isabella and other familiar faces from Auravale triggers a deep introspection, raising haunting questions about the cost of their shared struggle. Conversely, in the realm of Auravale, encountering beloved figures like Kira and Finn challenges Elian's resolve, leaving him torn by a profound dilemma: "Is the sacrifice of life ever truly justifiable for the sake of our cause?"

Amid the chaos of war, as the battle rages on relentlessly, Elian begins to perceive flaws in both Auravale and Rusthaven. The lines between right and wrong blur, and he finds it increasingly challenging to cast one side as righteous and the other as evil. The weight of countless deaths and resurrections bears down upon him, driving him to question the very essence of their struggle.



Arcane ([link to source](#))



The Last of Us Part 2 ([link to source](#))



Arcane ([link to source](#))



Act 4 - The Final Confrontation

The Battle of Auravale erupts. As the battle rages on, the price of war becomes increasingly evident, with each life lost weighing heavily on his conscience. The relentless conflict pushes Elian in the Rusthaven world ever closer to a fateful encounter with his counterpart in Auravale.

At long last, the two versions of Elian stand face to face, their gazes locked in a profound reflection of their shared destiny. Twins almost, separated by the divide of wealth and poverty, they are poised for a final confrontation. But before they engage in battle, a pivotal prompt appears, placing the outcome of the war squarely in the hands of the player.

The player must make a momentous choice, selecting either the Rusthaven or the Auravalian side to conclude this epic struggle. The decision made here will determine the ultimate victor in the Battle of Auravale and shape the destiny of this divided world.

Epilogue - A Tale of Two Realms

The world has been irrevocably altered, its destiny now determined by the outcome of the Battle of Auravale. In one possible reality, Auravale stands as a beacon of prosperity, building a better life for the people of Auravale, and embracing their new future. Alternatively, Rusthaven breaks free from the chains of oppression, their struggle for equality and justice finally realized.

Yet, amidst these transformed worlds, the toll on Elian becomes strikingly apparent. The days of traversing realms with each death are gone. Now, he must grapple with a life where his actions led to not only the loss of either Auravale or Rusthaven, but the loss of his loved ones along the way.



The Last of Us Part 2 ([link to source](#))

Characters

Elian Cross (Elian Sterling in Auravale)

Description

- Appearance: A young black man with brown eyes, slim and lean
- Type: Round and Psychological (Main Playable)

Archetypes

- Primary: Dreamer, Leader, Martyr, Survivor
- Secondary: Caretaker, Guardian, Rebel, Samaritan, Scholar

Traits

- Personality: Empathic, Altruistic, Compassionate, Resilient

Hopes, Fears, Wants & Needs

- Hopes: Equality, Justice, and A Better Future
- Fears: Failure, and Losing Loved Ones
- Wants: To End Conflict, and To Honor His Mother
- Needs: Closure, and Reconciliation

Kira Mitchell - Major supporting, Psychological, Round

Primary Archetypes

Analyst, Catalyst, Explorer

Personality Traits

Resourceful, Edgy, Stoic, Determined

Isabella Delacroix - Major supporting, Psychological, Round

Primary Archetypes

Enchantress, Samaritan, Warrior

Personality Traits

Resilient, Skilled, Enigmatic

Roland Voss

Bully, Bureaucrat, Elder, Ruthless, Authoritarian, Calculated

Finn Langley

Tinkerer, Mentor, Resourceful, Idealistic, Inquisitive

Victor Harrington

Guardian, Intellectual, Dubious, Pragmatic, Perfectionist



Values

Experience

Players engage in a dual-sided experience, navigating through stealth and combat scenarios in contrasting societies. The game offers third-person shooter mechanics blended with adventure, survival, and stealth elements.

Theme

The game delves into societal divides, presenting themes of wealth inequality, rebellion, and the struggle for equality. It illustrates the consequences of extreme wealth and poverty through the experiences of the protagonist, Elian Cross.

Point of View

Players see the world from a third-person perspective, witnessing the contrast between Auravale's luxury and Rusthaven's poverty. The game represents a dystopian future highlighting society's divisions and struggles between classes.

Challenge

Players face challenges with strategic combat, stealth mechanics, and resource management. The game's varying environments and play styles demand adaptability and mastery of both societies' distinct gameplay approaches.

Decision Making

Players make the critical decision in choosing the side to support during the game's conclusion. This decision influences the ultimate fate of the divided world.

Skills, Strategy, Chance & Uncertainty

Skills are balanced by requiring proficiency in stealth and combat, employing strategy in navigation and managing resources. Chance and uncertainty depend on your enemy encounters.

Context

The game is aimed at mature players (>17 years old) seeking a challenging and immersive experience. It's designed for consoles, offering a third-person shooter adventure set in a dystopian world.

Emotions

Multiple emotions from tension during stealth sequences to adrenaline rushes during combat. Empathy is triggered for characters' struggles and moral dilemmas, feeding a connection with Elian's emotional journey.

Dynamics & Components

Game System

Players control the fate of opposing factions in this third-person action-adventure. You'll shift between Rusthaven and Auravale, each embodying distinct survival approaches. Rusthaven demands stealth and wit due to limited resources, while Auravale favors aggressive confrontation with ample supplies.

Your experience adapts based on your chosen side, offering stealth abilities in Rusthaven or combat skills in Auravale. Deciding between lethal or subtle strategies shapes your path, granting flexibility in various scenarios. Between clashes, exploration uncovers mysteries and puzzles, inviting deeper immersion into this complex, conflicted world.

Objectives

Primary

To end the divide between Rusthaven and Auravale. Rusthaveners refuse the oppression, while Auravale sees Rusthaven as a threat following Althea Sterling's death. One side must be victorious.

Secondary

Get through each section/level learning more about each side and new combat techniques to use effectively.

Tertiary

Explore the world to uncover collectibles enriching your understanding. Manage resources cautiously (in Rusthaven) and enhance both versions of your character as you progress.



Procedures

Starting: Selecting "new game" or "continue" upon pressing any button.

Progression: Perform various actions (such as shooting, crouching, moving, etc.)

Special actions: Auravale and Rusthaven abilities, such as Shadow Blend, Temporal Echo, and Marksmen's Advantage.

Resolution: Adjudicated by system.



Rules

- You cannot have both perks, if you are Auravalian you have Auravale perks only.
- Players cannot use items they do not have



Boundaries

- No jumping ability.
- Defined linear path, players must align with the Elian's objectives.
- Prohibition from exiting the game map during play.



Outcomes

The game follows a typical single-player format where the player progresses by overcoming each section's challenges. Success is measured by advancing to the next stage. However, at the game's conclusion, the player determines the entire story's outcome by choosing a side (Auravale or Rusthaven) to win. The choice is unrestricted, offering the player the freedom to select their final outcome without facing any losses.



Conflicts

Enemies create obstacles, demanding decisions to bypass them based on available resources, environment, and chosen side. The conflict arises from having multiple solutions.



Players

The game centers on a single-player versus game interaction, focusing solely on Elian as the playable character. Players exclusively control Elian's actions and decisions.



Information Structure

Players have access to both open and hidden information in the game. They are always aware of their inventory, available actions, and immediate surroundings. They lack the knowledge of any progression items and enemy-specific details like health or ammo.



Feedback System

The game implements a positive feedback loop; progressing through a section rewards the player. Aggressive play yields more ammo in combat sections and in stealthy sections missing shots alerts enemies and makes resource replenishment difficult.

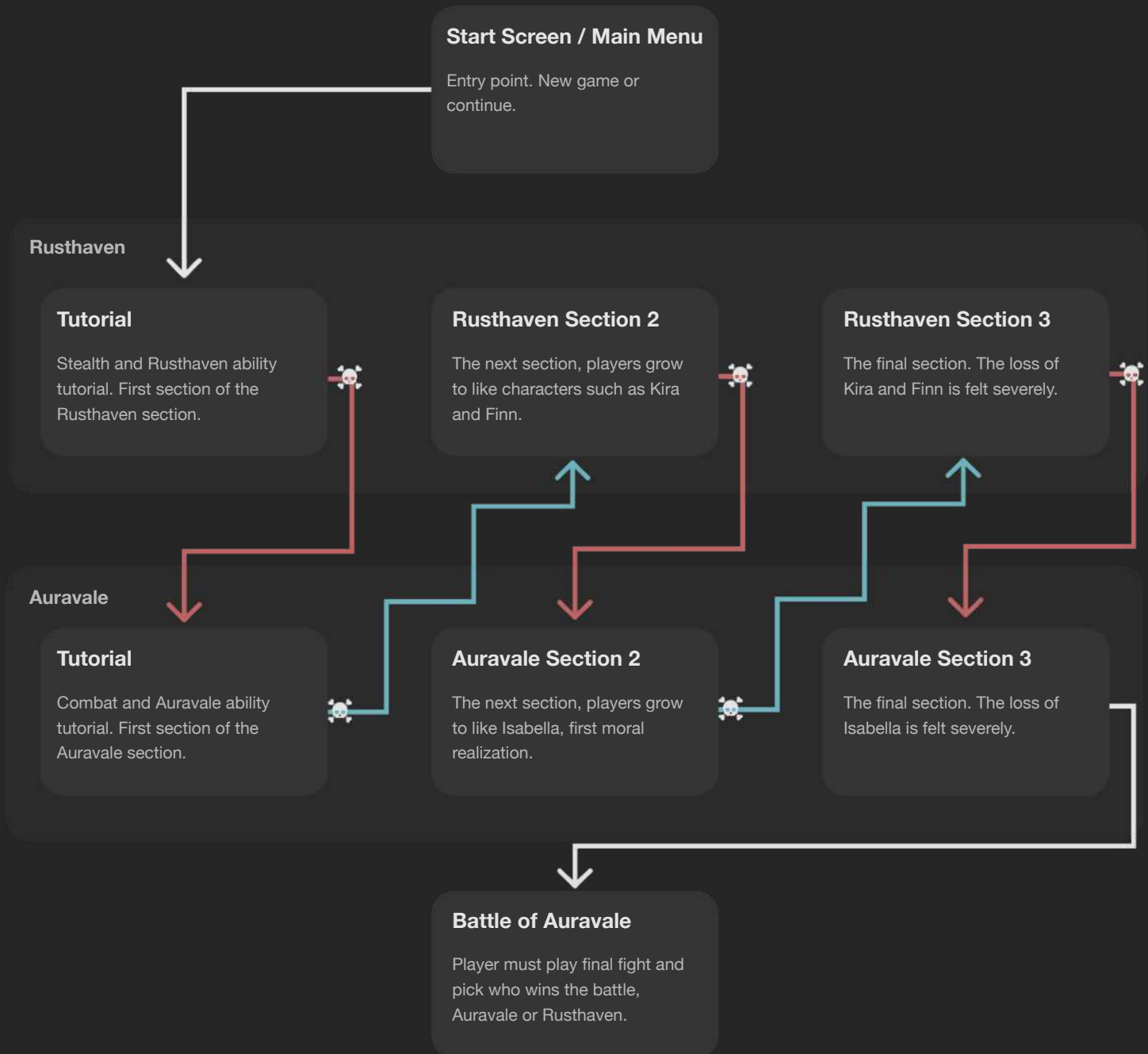


Control System

Designed for controller input, the game grants players direct movement control. However, players lack control over the enemies, which move independently and without discernible patterns.



Game Flow





General Gameplay

The gameplay revolves around navigating two contrasting societies, Rusthaven and Auravale, each representing different ideologies and survival approaches. The mechanics integrate third-person shooter elements, stealth tactics and survival that significantly impact the gameplay experience.

Rusthaven Gameplay Mechanics

Resource Scarcity: Resources are limited in Rusthaven, emphasizing the need for strategic resource management. Players must carefully ration ammo, consumables, and supplies.

Stealth and Cunning: With fewer resources, the gameplay heavily leans on stealth and smart maneuvering. Sneaking past enemies, utilizing cover, and crafting distractions are crucial.

Environmental Interaction: Exploration is essential. Players discover collectibles that deepen their understanding of the world, uncover hidden paths, and solve puzzles to access new areas.

Abilities and Tactics: Utilize Rusthaven's abilities like "Shadow Blend" for stealth, "Listen Mode" to highlight enemies, and the "Temporal Echo" to distract foes strategically.

Auravale Gameplay Mechanics

Exploration and Conflict: While less stealth-centric, exploration still plays a role. Players learn about enemy weaknesses and paths through "Hidden Intel," fostering a tactical advantage.

Strategic Decision-Making: The gameplay encourages players to adapt their strategies based on the environment, available resources, and preferred combat style.

Abundant Resources and Forceful Combat: Auravale offers plentiful resources, encouraging a more direct and forceful approach. Gun-blazing combat, superior gear, and aggressive tactics are common.

Combat Prowess: Players can adopt a more confrontational style. Abilities like "Marksmen's Advantage" aid in targeting enemy weak points for extra damage, while the "Wild Berserker" ultimate ability grants temporary enhanced damage and a protective shield.

Overall Gameplay Flow

Narrative-Driven Choices: The player experiences a compelling narrative intertwined with these mechanics, making choices that affect the storyline's direction without branching narratives until the game's conclusion.

Conflict Resolution: Encounters with enemies pose conflicts that players must navigate, using their preferred play style and abilities.

Puzzle Solving and Exploration: Between encounters, players engage in exploration, puzzle-solving, and resource gathering to progress.

Endgame Choice: The final choice between Rusthaven and Auravale determines the game's ultimate outcome, affecting the narrative without altering the core mechanics during gameplay.



Death

Narrative Catalyst

A narrative catalyst, triggering switches between the two contrasting societies, Rusthaven and Auravale, within the game. Each death prompts a shift between these societies, exposing the player to their unique challenges and ideologies.

Storyline Convergence

The game initially presents two distinct storylines, one for each society. As the game progresses, these storylines gradually converge, bringing the player closer to a pivotal moment where both narratives intertwine.

Value of Experience

With each death-induced society switch, the player gains knowledge and experience from both sides. This knowledge becomes instrumental in understanding the nuances of each society, their abilities, combat styles, and tactical approaches.

Impact on Choices

Influence on the player's choices and interactions with characters, environments, and conflicts. Fosters emotional attachments to characters on both sides, heightening the moral complexity and dilemma faced by the player.

Abilities

Rusthaven

Passive



Shadow Blend

You are invisible in low light

Tactical



Silent Intuition

Highlights enemies in red and useful items in green

Ultimate



Temporal Echo

Create a brief projection of yourself to distract enemies

Auravale

Passive



Hidden Intel

Gain information about enemy weaknesses or enemy paths without direct interaction

Tactical



Marksman's Advantage

Highlight enemy weak points, if shot while highlighted extra damage is dealt

Ultimate

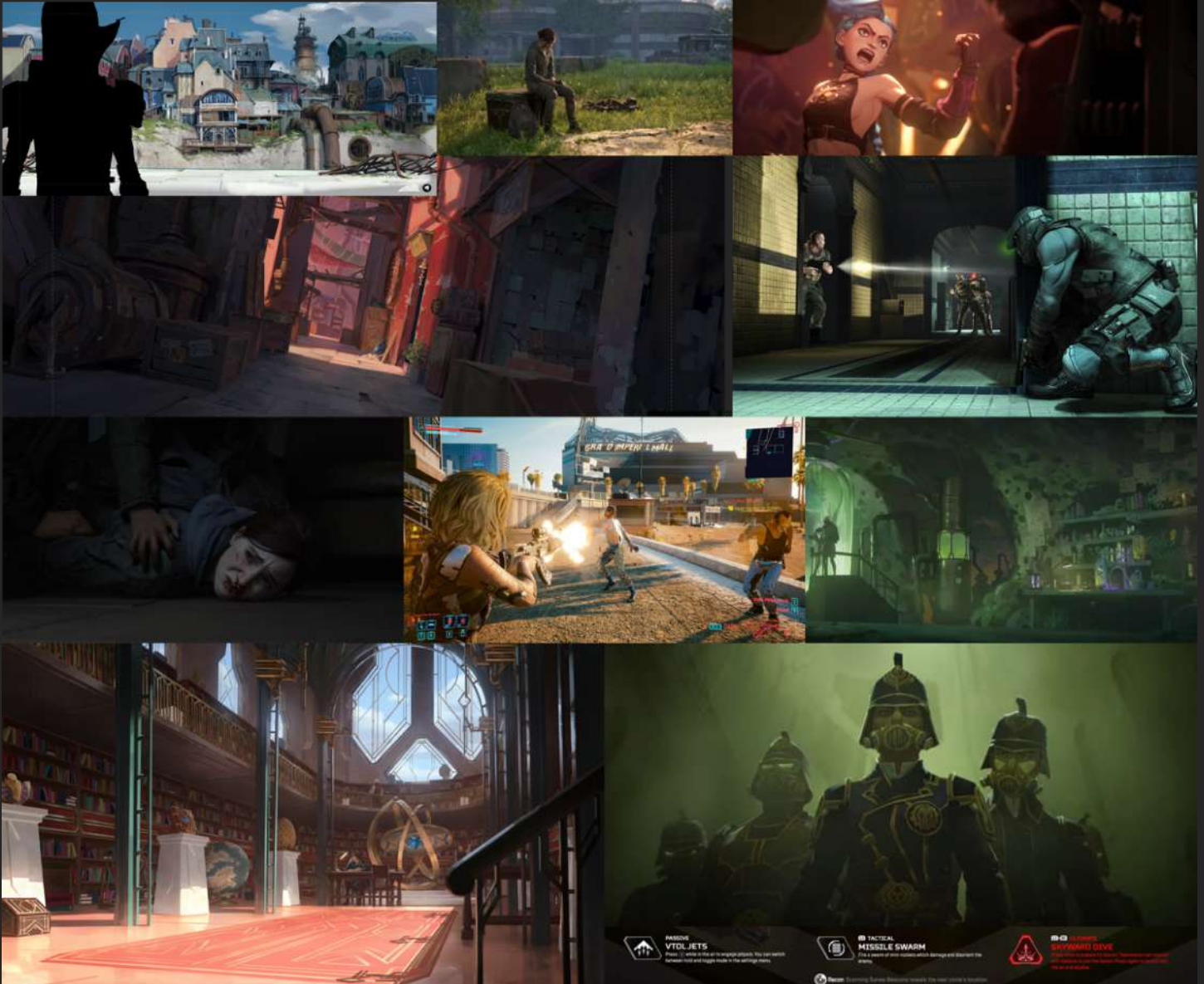


Wild Berserker

Grant yourself higher damage per shot, with a shield worth half health for a limited time

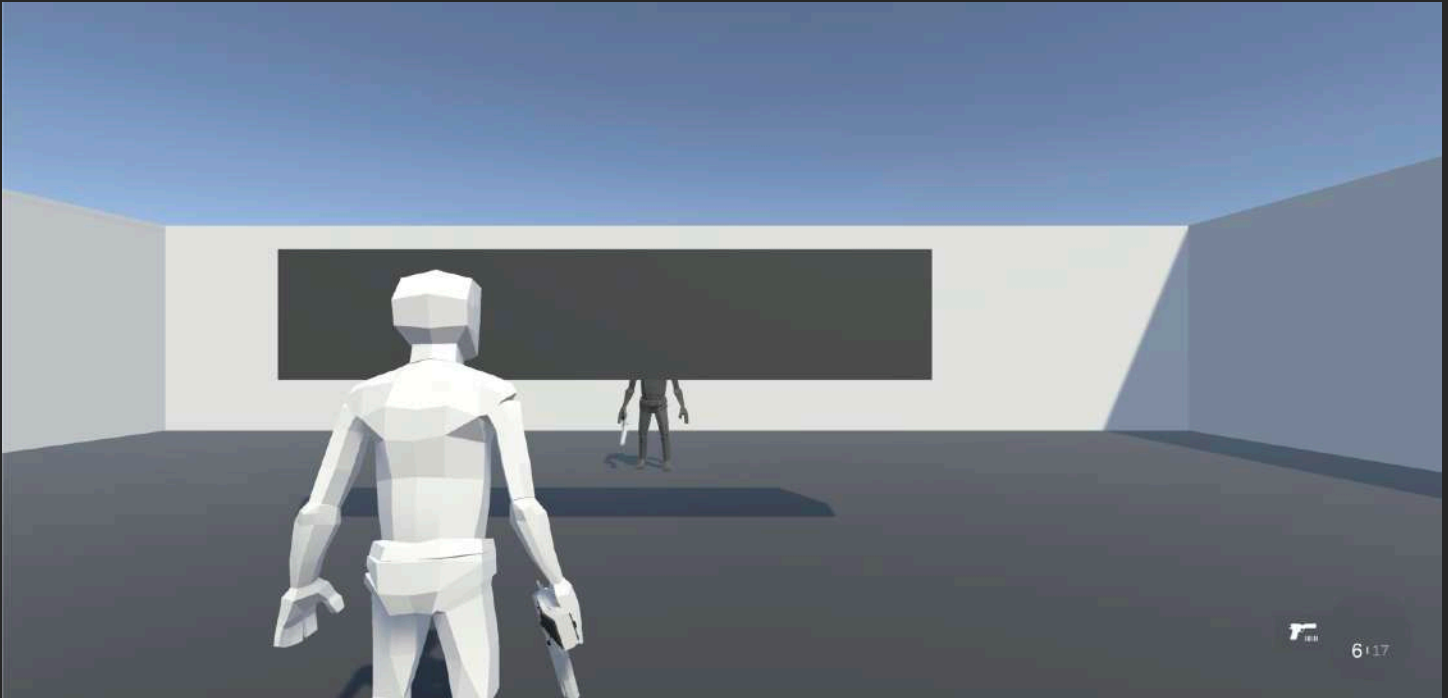


Direction





Interface



A prototype built in the Unity game engine

The interface prioritizes minimalism and immersion. Inspired by *The Last of Us*, a discreet HUD element — a small circle in the bottom right — elegantly showcases vital information like health, ammo, and other relevant details. Embracing a dynamic design, this interface seamlessly fades away when the player is not in combat, ensuring an uninterrupted, immersive experience throughout the game.

Controls

Movement	
Camera	
Run	
Crouch	
Interact	
Switch Weapons	or

Aim	
Shoot	
Reload	
Tactical	
Ultimate	
Activate Ability	