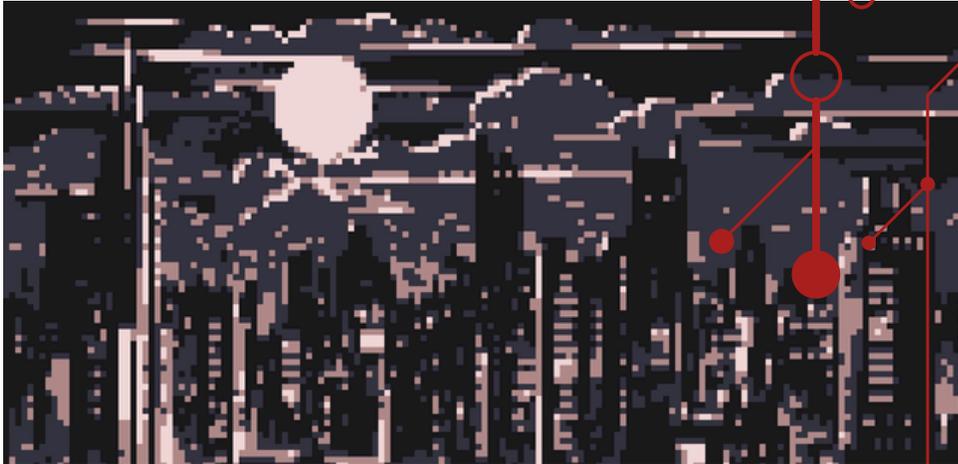


SCARLET CIRCUIT



Game Concept:

In Scarlet Circuit, the player is a resourceful pawn shop owner in a dying noir/cyberpunk city which is ruled by a powerful megacorporation known simply as 'The Company'. After humanity died off, The Company's AI-driven systems continued to operate, engineering a new population of advanced and intelligent cybernetic animals to keep the city's gears turning.

Beneath the city's surface lies the Abandoned Zones, old sealed off areas of the city filled with discarded human technology, malfunctioning security systems, and secrets that could unravel 'The Company's' tight control of society.

The player moonlights as a runner, a scavenger who illegally ventures into these dangerous areas to gather rare materials, scraps, and lost intel. Their ultimate goal? To escape Scarlet City. To do this, they must secretly build a highly advanced escape vehicle to bypass The Company's security walls, assembling parts from the materials they gather on their runs.

The game will also showcase a colorful cast of characters, each with their own quirks, secrets, and agendas. From shady dealers to loyal customers, these NPCs offer trade opportunities, valuable upgrades, and even the chance to build deeper relationships, whether as allies or potential romantic interests.

SCARLET CIRCUIT



The World:

At its heart, Scarlet City is divided into three distinct levels built on-top of each other:

The Sunrise District (Highest Tier): Reserved for The Company's executives and a few elite animals, these glittering towers seem almost otherworldly to those below. Few of the city's citizens have ever seen the inside of these luxurious sanctuaries, which remain cloaked in secrecy.

The Reserve (Mid-Tier): The industrial and commercial hub of Scarlet City, populated by the working class who keep the city's economy alive. Here, most animals work for one of the many factories or construction companies, but repair shops, black-market dealers, and underground clubs still exist.

Abandoned Zones (Lowest Tiers): Beneath the bustling surface lie the remnants of the old city, sealed off after a catastrophic event decades ago. These zones are lawless, dark, and filled with malfunctioning machines, rogue AI, and long-buried secrets. Only runners dare to enter, risking their lives for treasures that most citizens wouldn't dare imagine.

Core Worldbuilding Themes:

Artificial Life and Legacy:

Scarlet City's population reflects humanity's legacy, putting technological and economical advancements over the preservation of their own planet/species.

Oppression vs. Rebellion:

The advanced animals of Scarlet City exist because of humanity's technology, but they are also enslaved by it. This theme emphasizes the player's struggle to escape and reclaim their own agency.

Technology as Both Savior and Threat:

The game's unique blend of noir and cyberpunk settings emphasizes humanity's reliance on technology both as a tool for survival and a means of oppression.

SCARLET CIRCUIT



Applying Worldbuilding to Scarlet Circuit

Characters and NPCs: The inhabitants of Scarlet City are a blend of cybernetic animals with distinct personalities that mirror human archetypes, providing players with valuable insight into the world, providing resource management opportunities, and potentially deeper relationships.

The Abandoned Zones: The zones below Scarlet City are where malfunctioning machines, discarded technology, and hints of the city's human origins can be found. Old advertisements featuring human faces, relics like children's toys, or long-forgotten AI directives serve as haunting reminders of the past. This is also where the games card mechanics come into play.

Shops and Hub Interactions: Whether it's a Burl, the bear who crafts illegally modified weapons and gear, or Whisk the cat offering valuable intel that the player can use to get bargains. The player can chat with the NPCs to learn more about them, and choose responses that may alter their relationship level.

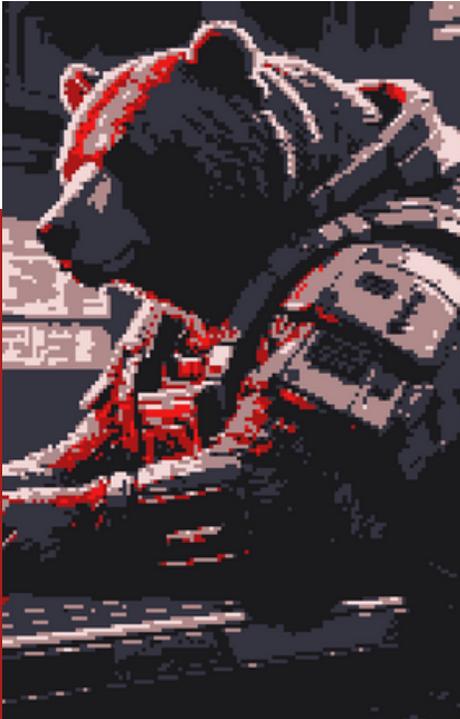
Narrative Subtext: While the gameplay focuses on survival and escape, the lore of Scarlet City's origins can be uncovered by curious players. Those who dig deeper might learn how humanity's obsession with control and progress ultimately led to their downfall, and how The Company's AI continues to perpetuate that legacy through its animal inhabitants.

Aesthetic and Art Direction: The cyberpunk animal concept allows for a unique visual touch when paired with the 8bit style. Utilizing a minimal choice of colors to evoke the oppressive nature of the world will also help to elevate the motivation behind the player characters ultimate goal within the game - to escape Scarlet City for good.

This history of the world will also be subtly shown through minor details within the world: from old human posters and advertisements in the Abandoned Zones, to verbal hints at the horrific pain animals go through when turned into their cybernetic during their youth.

SCARLET CIRCUIT

Characters and Barks



Burl

(Blacksmith/Mechanic)

Personality: Burl is a weathered, no-nonsense veteran of Scarlet City. He's an old bear who's been around long enough to see countless runners rise and fall. His words carry weight because he doesn't waste them.

Role: Provides upgrades for your escape vehicle or weapon mods in exchange for rare materials scavenged on runs.

Unique Dialogue Lines:

1. "The Company? They don't give a damn whether you survive out there or end up face-down in the Zones. You're just a number to 'em."
2. "Runners like you come and go. I've seen the best go out lookin' cocky and come back in pieces... if they come back at all."
3. "The dead don't get to learn from their mistakes. The Zones don't forgive, and neither do the folks runnin' the show 'round here."
4. "You hear that engine purr? That's me workin' my magic. Now, don't go bashin' it up."

Generic Dialogue Lines:

1. "Scrap ain't free, and neither is my time. Wha'dya need?"
2. "You bring me the parts; I bring the results."
3. "Take it or leave it. I've got work to do."
4. "Heh, I knew you'd come back mostly intact."

Characters and Barks



Whisk

(Detective/Information Broker)

Personality: Mysterious, sly, and impossibly well-informed. Whisk is a smooth-talking detective who always seems to know what's going on in Scarlet City whether it's rumors, trade secrets, or black market intel.

Role: Trades information, rare intel (a game resource), and occasional black market items the player can use in the Abandoned Zones.

Unique Dialogue Lines:

1. "Secrets are like rusted gears... worthless on their own, but put in the right hands? They'll turn the whole machine."
2. "Trust is a tightrope, kid. It takes balance and patience to walk it."
3. "Scarlet City's a hungry beast, always chewing on the careless. Don't be the next one it spits out, alright?"
4. "The Company calls me a thorn in their side, but funny thing about thorns—they keep the roses from getting plucked."

Generic Dialogue Lines:

1. "Bring me something worth my time, kid. I don't deal in small talk."
2. "Deals don't stay on the table forever. Make your move, or someone else will."
3. "Luck runs out quicker than credits. Better to have a backup plan."
4. "The city's got eyes, ears, and a long memory."

Characters and Barks



Tamir

(Doctor/Chemist)

Personality: Tamir is a calm, analytical, and slightly eccentric figure with the demeanor of an old-fashioned doctor. He is methodical in his work but carries a dry wit and an almost philosophical way of speaking at times.

Role: Tamir runs a clinic and chem lab in Scarlet City. Players visit Tamir to purchase medkits, stimulants, and more.

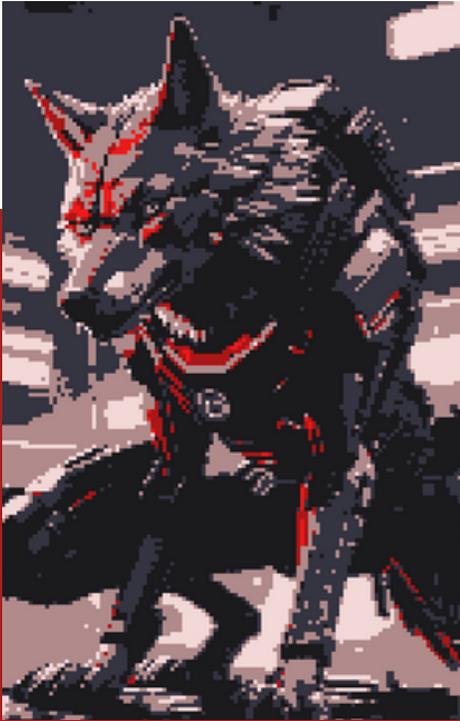
Unique Dialogue Lines:

1. "Pretty much everything in Scarlet City is poisonous ... some doses just take longer to kill you."
2. "Yes, my lab does break quite a few of The Company's codes... But what they don't know doesn't hurt them."
3. "I've been working on a new stimulant, but it requires a few... trail runs."
4. "Chemistry is the art of turning nothing into something. Sometimes that something comes in a bottle. Sometimes it explodes."

Generic Dialogue Lines:

1. "Maintaining one's health isn't a cheap endeavor! But I suppose neither is a funeral."
2. "You're still alive? What? No, I'm not surprised."
3. "Inhale this. No, don't ask what it is. You trust me, don't you?"
4. "You're not the worst case I've seen today. But there's still time!"

Characters and Barks



Rosie

(Guard/Underground-Fighter)

Personality: Rosie is scrappy, sarcastic, quick-witted, and enjoys poking fun at the player, but underneath her tough exterior lies a deep respect for those who prove themselves capable opponents.

Role: Rosie helps the player strengthen specific cards and abilities, offering training and enhancements for a price.

Unique Dialogue Lines:

1. "If you can survive me, the Abandoned Zones will feel like a stroll through the Reserve."
2. "You want my help? Then quit whining and put in the work. Or don't. I don't care."
3. "I'll make you stronger, but fair warning: you'll hate me by the end of it."
4. "I used to only work for The Company. Learned the hard way that they don't deserve loyalty."

Generic Dialogue Lines:

1. "Training ain't free, champ. Hand over the credits or scram."
2. "Your fancy moves won't mean squat if you don't know how to take a hit."
3. "The Company loves weaklings. Easier to control. You wanna prove you're not one of them?"
4. "Scarlett City's got enough dead weight. Don't make me add you to the pile."

Characters and Barks



Jack

(Cook/Saboteur)

Personality: Jack is quirky and high strung. Both deeply resourceful, and surprisingly loyal to those they trust, they also take pride in their culinary skills turning questionable ingredients into edible masterpieces.

Role: Jack runs the local watering-hole/bar where players can buy meals that apply in-game buffs, traps, and sabotage tools.

Unique Dialogue Lines:

1. "Mechanical hands? Good. Yours? Clumsy."
2. "Burl's dinner? Fixed up. Burl's weight? Still fat."
3. "Scarlet streets? Sharp teeth. Watch feet."
4. "Company makes. Company breaks. We fix."

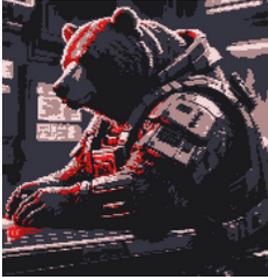
Generic Dialogue Lines:

1. "Eat. Fuel good. Get strong!"
2. "No touchy. Sharp knives. My hands only!"
3. "You? Need spice. Life's too bland."
4. "Dinner first, boom boom later."

NPCs will offer in game resource and inventory management opportunities.

SCARLET CIRCUIT

Shops & Trading Examples



- **Turbo-Charged Tank - (Vehicle Upgrade):** Increases vehicle fuel capacity, allowing for longer runs in the Abandoned Zones.
- **Shockwave Emitter - (Vehicle Upgrade):** Installs a defensive system that triggers a pulse to repel ambushes.
- **Fusion Battery Cell - (Vehicle Consumable):** Acts as a consumable item to supercharge vehicle cards in runs.



- **Encrypted Data-Stick - (Temporary Passive Intel Item):** Data from The Company revealing areas of the Abandoned Zones.
- **Trade Secrets - (Trade Intel for Credits):** In exchange for intel, Whisk will pay the player credits equal to it's value.
- **Scarred Deck - (Card Modification):** One card in the player's deck is given an ability (e.g., counterattacks or health regeneration).



- **Adrenal Surge - (Combat Consumable):** Temporarily boosts the player's card draw count until the end of the current battle.
- **Synth-Serum - (Combat Consumable):** Instantly restores a portion of the player's health during runs in the Abandoned Zones.
- **Caustic Cocktail - (Combat Item):** A throwable item that deals poison damage that has lingering effects for several turns.



- **Boom Bun - (Trap Item):** A disguised explosive in the shape of a pastry, used to distract enemies for a turn before detonating.
- **Sizzling Spice Blend - (Card Buff Consumable):** A consumable item that will slightly increase the effectiveness of the card's ability.
- **Cocktail Conversations - (Trade Credits for Intel):** In exchange for credits, Jack will reveal secrets they've overheard at their bar.



- **Bloodstained Edge - (Card Upgrade):** Rosie enhances a card, adding to it's damage, or ability effects.
- **Wolf's Instinct Training - (Ability Boost):** Grants a temporary buff that allows the player to anticipate enemy moves.
- **Scarred Deck - (Card Modification):** One card in the player's deck is given an ability (e.g., counterattacks or health regeneration).

SCARLET CIRCUIT

Gameplay Mechanics

Avatar Customization: Players begin by creating their own cybernetic animal avatar, though the player character will rarely be shown.

Card Deck Building and Combat: Players will acquire new cards in the Abandoned Zones, and from NPCs. The card system revolves around four distinct suits, each with unique themes and synergies:



Predator:

Aggressive, high-damage cards with predatory tactics. Perfect for frontal assaults and direct confrontation.



Prey:

Defensive, evasive, and reaction-based cards that are focused on survival and counterplay against enemies.



Artificial:

Cards that focus on augmentations, gathered traps, and buffs that the player can use to create distractions and deal damage.



Sapient:

Cards that manipulate enemies attacks through intelligence using tactical advantage, deception, and crowd control.

Vehicle Phase: Players are able to use additional cards specific to their vehicle when navigating through dangerous parts of the Abandoned Zones. These include modified weapon cards, special buffs, and extra armor.

Exploration Phase: Once players disembark and explore rooms or areas, the deck transitions to suits designed for close-quarters combat, traps, and survival mechanics.

Players are encouraged to mix and match cards from different suits to create their own strategies.

- Predator + Artificial: An aggressive, tech-heavy deck built for force.
- Prey + Sapient: Defensive and tactical, focusing on survival.

SCARLET CIRCUIT

Combat Card Examples:



Bloodlust (Predator Suit)

Type: Attack

Effect: Deal 8 damage to a single enemy. If the enemy's health is below 50%, deal an additional 4 damage.

Description: "Lethal precision, honed by instinct."



Pack Instinct (Prey Suit)

Type: Defense

Effect: Gain +1 to your shield for every Prey card in your current hand, including this one.

Description: "The herd protects their own."



EMP Pulse (Artificial Suit)

Type: Attack

Effect: Deal 2 points of damage now and stun the enemy at the end of your next turn.

Description: "Silence the machine before it silences you."



Thinking Ahead (Sapient Suit)

Type: Utility

Effect: View the top 3 cards in your draw pile and rearrange them in any order.

Description: "Foresight not hindsight."

SCARLET CIRCUIT

Resource Management

In Scarlet Circuit, resources are the lifeblood of survival and progress, serving as both currency and tools to overcome obstacles in the Abandoned Zones.

Ultimately, these resources are the key to acquiring the rare and vital vehicle parts scattered across the Abandoned Zones, necessary to upgrade their vehicle and escape the heavily secured walls that lead out of Scarlet City.



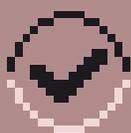
Fuel: powers the players vehicle, enabling movement between NPCs and while exploring the Abandoned Zones. Modifications and buffs can effect fuel capacity, but Scarlett City's tight control over fuel only permits one 'refill' per day.



Health: is vital for endurance in exploration, as dangerous combat and environmental hazards threaten to cut runs short. Certain items and buffs can alter health in various ways, but it resets after each run.



Intel: provides strategic advantages, revealing hidden pathways, enemy weakness cards, or uncovering secrets that can shift the tide of encounters or when bargaining for a better deal with NPCs.



Credits: functions as the standard currency in Scarlet City, allowing players to purchase crucial upgrades, acquire powerful cards, or bribe other NPCs for discounts and deals on items.

SCARLET CIRCUIT

Inventory and Items

In Scarlet Circuit, inventory management will affect the player's ability to grow their profit from the Abandoned Zones parts and scraps that they find. They will have limited storage spaces, both in their vehicle and pawn shop.



Backpack Hero - Example Inventory Management

Selling Items: Players can place certain items for sale in their pawn shop. Unique or rare items fetch higher prices, and certain parts and scraps can be resold to The Company for repurposing.

Crafting and Upgrades: Parts and scrap found in the Abandoned Zones can also be given to NPCs like Burl and Jack to craft upgrades for the vehicle, or traps to use on runs.

Trades: NPCs may request specific items from the player leading to rewards.

The limited inventory increases the risk and reward of every decision, whether it's venturing deeper during runs or selling an item for credits.

SCARLET CIRCUIT

The Players Pawn Shop

The player's pawnshop serves as their base of operations and a key source of credits in Scarlet Circuit. Run by an automated AI system known as VENDR, the shop operates like a self-serve vending machine.



Strange Hat

\$25 credits



Large Chalice

\$40 credits



Silky Bow

\$10 credits



Looking Glass

\$17 credits

Item Display: The pawnshop features limited slots for displaying items.

AI-Driven Sales: VENDR, the shop's automated AI, handles all sales while the player is away. The AI also tracks market trends and automatically adjusts prices. Market trends in Scarlet City are semi-random, with certain item types gaining or losing value based on events in the city, such as resource shortages or shifts in The Company's demand.

Profit and Restocking: Whenever the player returns to the shop after exploring or completing runs in the Abandoned Zones, they can check VENDR's sales report to see which items have sold. The profits from these sales are immediately added to the player's credits. Unsold items remain in their slots, giving the player the option to swap them out for fresh inventory.

Upgrades and Expansions: Initially, the pawnshop has a small number of slots available for sales, but players can pay credits or rare components to Burl to upgrade the system. Expansions might include additional selling slots, more accurate pricing algorithms, or even the ability to attract specialized buyers.

SCARLET CIRCUIT

Narrative Design

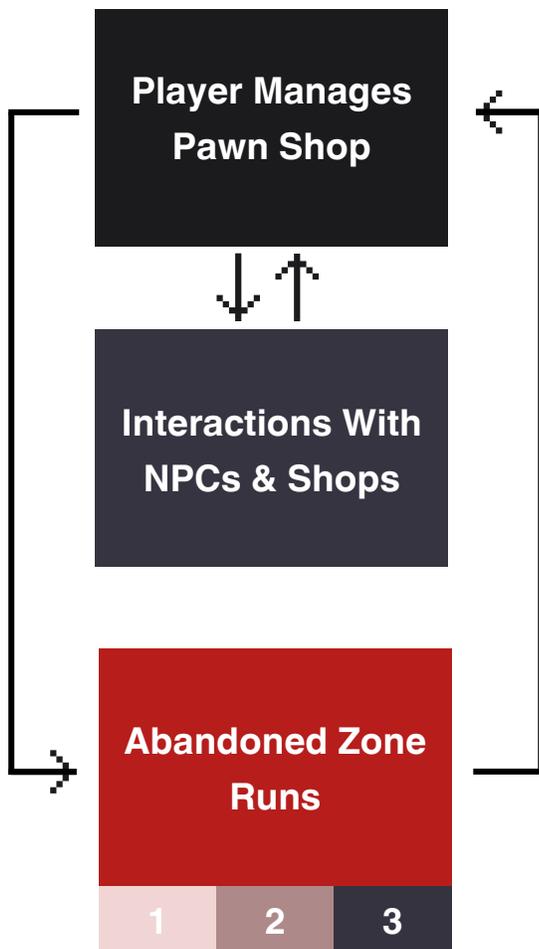
The Abandoned Zones: The Abandoned Zones are the heart of the gameplay and narrative loop. Each run into the zones pushes players deeper into the lore, uncovering clues about The Company's history and humanities failures.

Narrative Encounters: Some rooms in the zones are not combat-based but instead contain NPCs, lore fragments, or environmental storytelling elements that players can engage with.

Dynamic NPC Interactions: Some rooms in the zones are not combat-based but instead contain lore fragments, or environmental storytelling elements.

The Company as a Persistent Threat: As players progress, The Company becomes an increasingly active force in the narrative.

Narrative Gameplay Loop:



- Acts as the games official 'hub' area.
- Player places items for sale with different credit values.
- Can manage their deck of cards.
- Visit and speak to the NPCs.
- Make purchases and/or trade from shops including items, cards, and buffs.
- Get intel from NPCs who like the player.
- Player can explore the maze of the Abandoned Zones for valuable items.
- Hostile interactions and obstacles require utilizing card deck mechanics.
- Three tiers to descend down into.

SCARLET CIRCUIT

Art Direction



Concept Menu Screen

Pixel Art Style: The 8-bit pixel art style of Scarlet Circuit mirrors the fractured, dying world it portrays. It is a city bound by The Company's oppressive grip, where every pixel tells a story of survival. This retro aesthetic evokes a sense of nostalgia, yet its sharp contrasting colors will create a darker atmosphere that will play into the games themes.

Limited Color Palette: Scarlet Circuit will apply a minimalistic 5-6 tone palette that evokes a sense of nostalgia while embracing a distinct cyberpunk/noir aesthetic. The deliberate use of limited colors emphasizes the oppressiveness within Scarlet City, while the red highlighting shade shows a level of contrast that is jarring and thematic.

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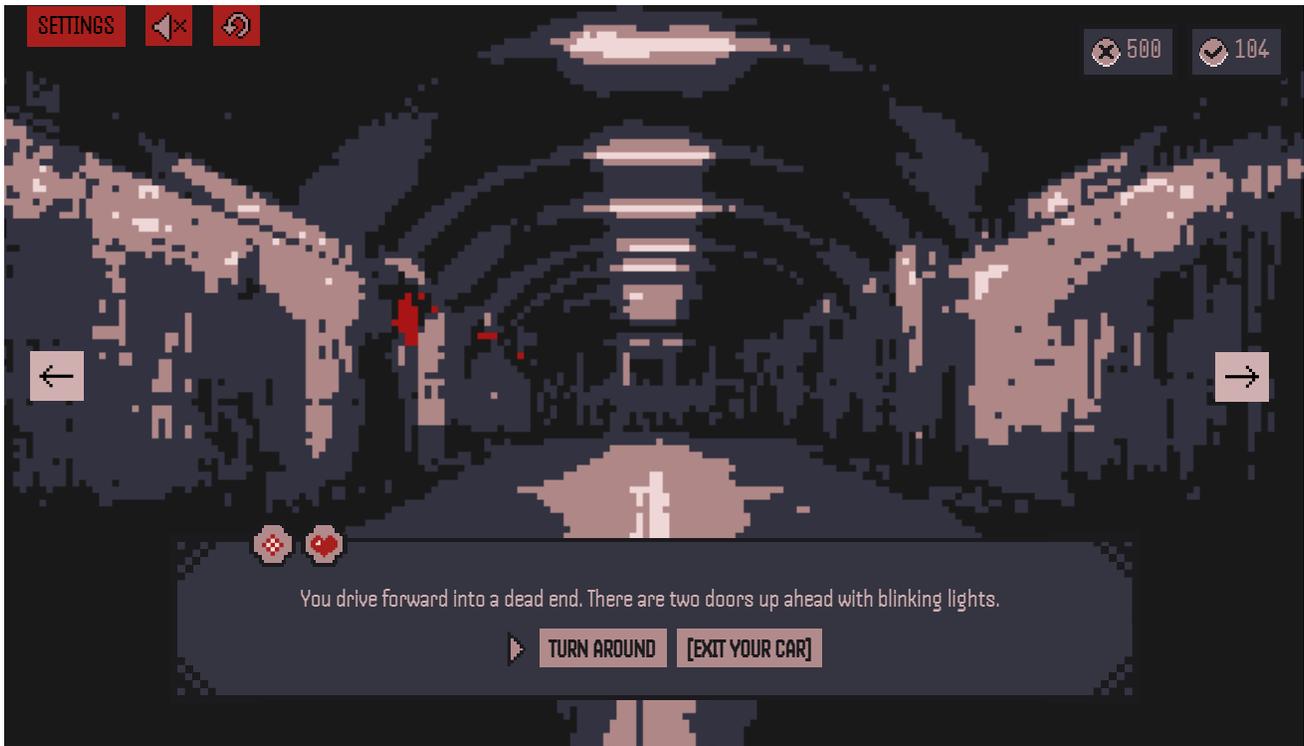
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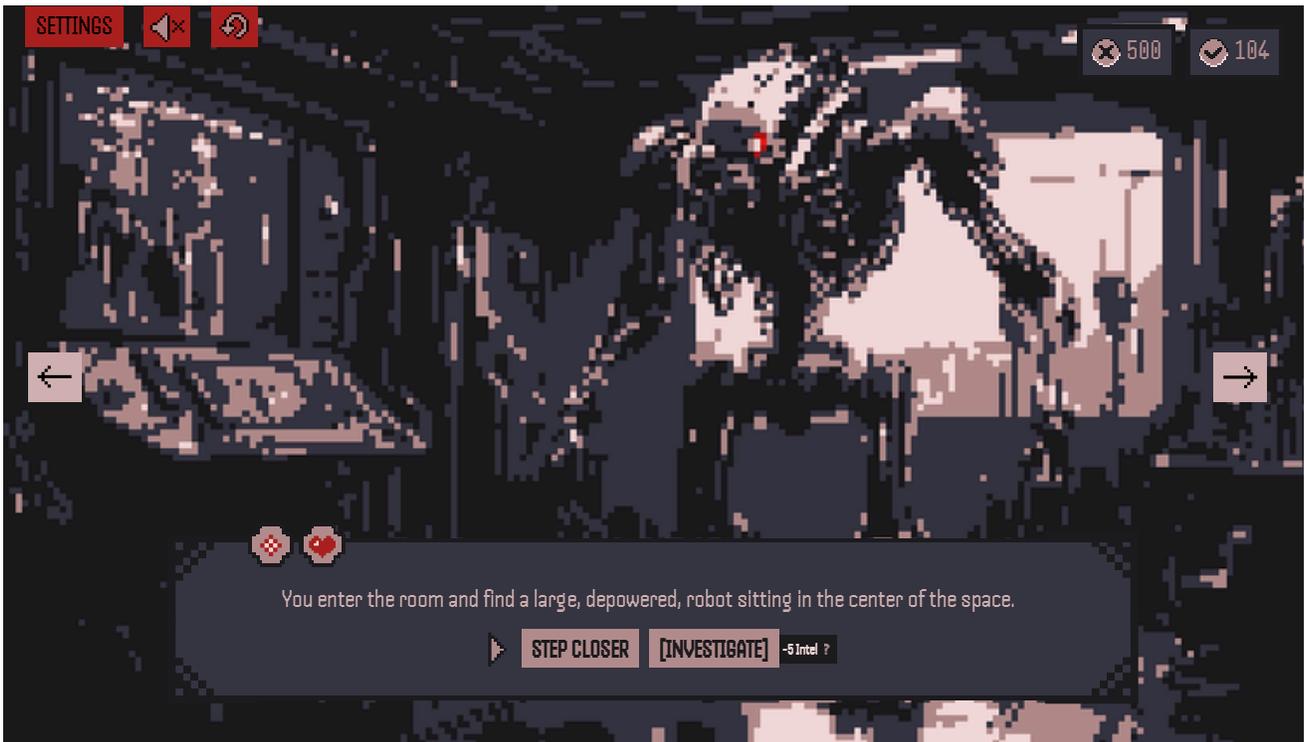
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SCARLET CIRCUIT

Concept In-Game Screens



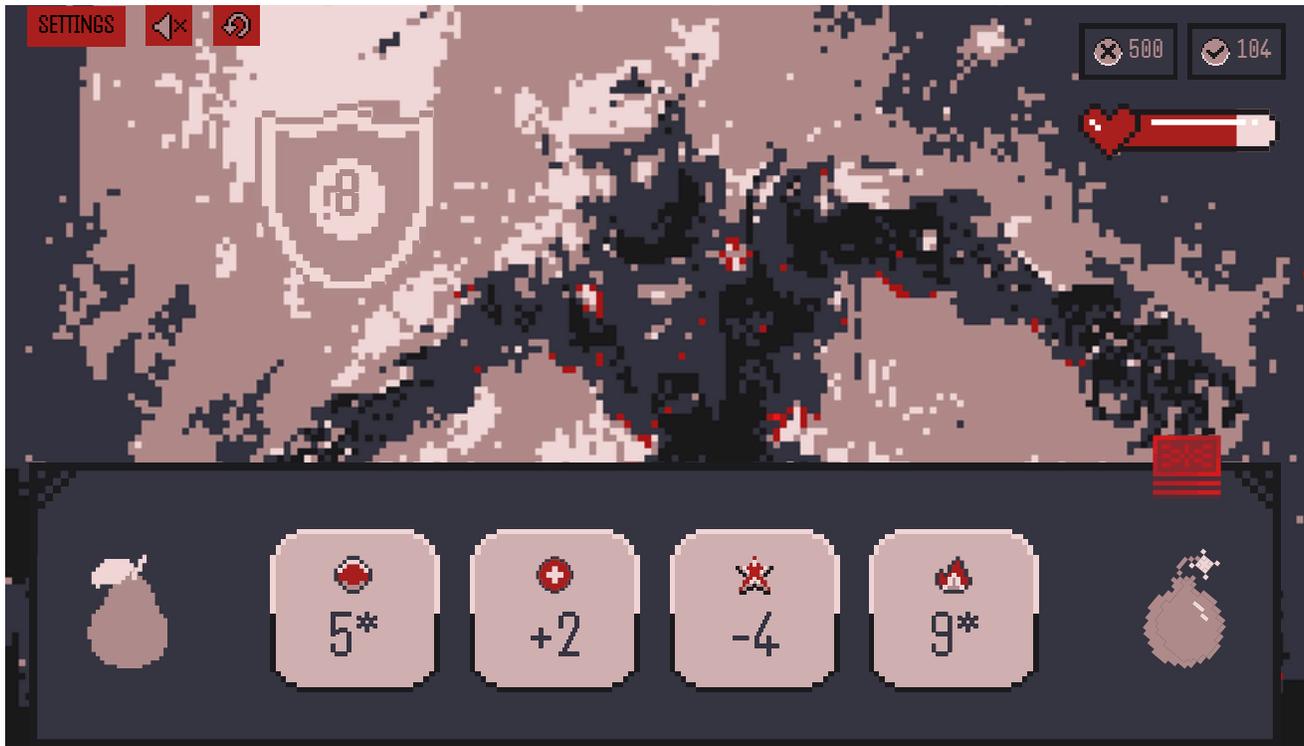
Concept Abandoned Zone Run Screen



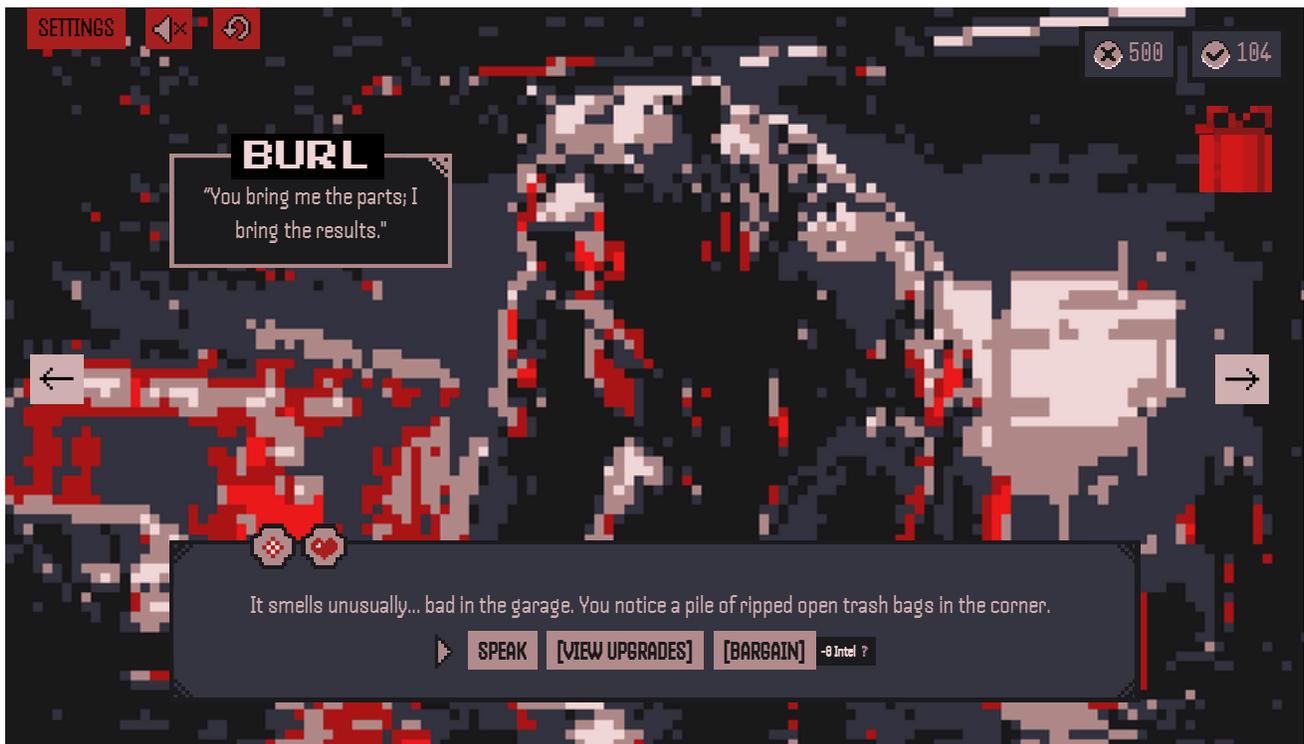
Concept Abandoned Zone Run Screen

SCARLET CIRCUIT

Concept In-Game Screens



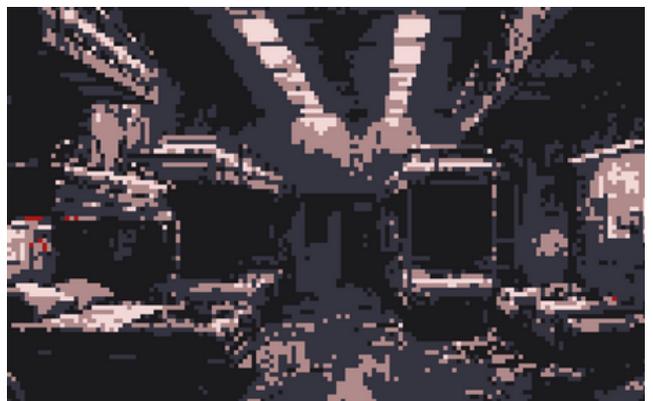
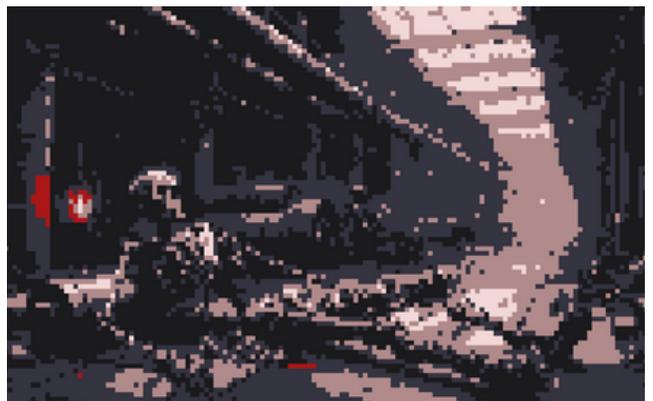
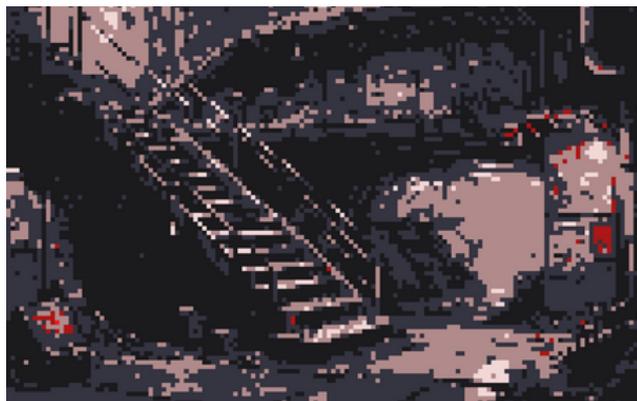
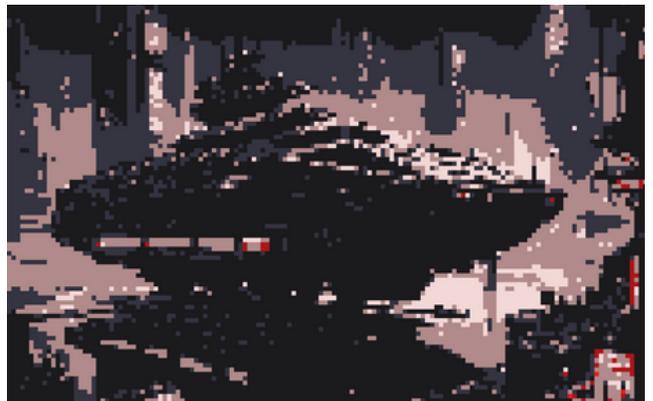
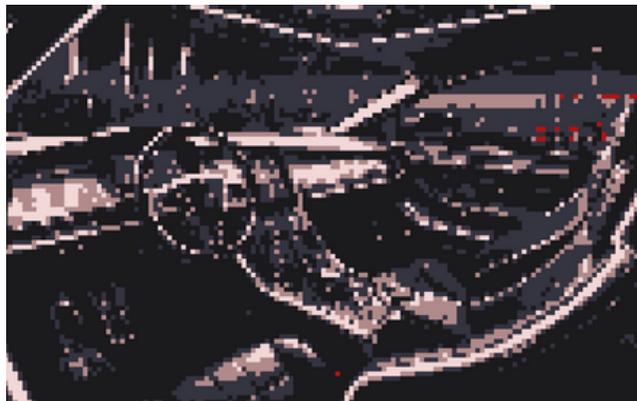
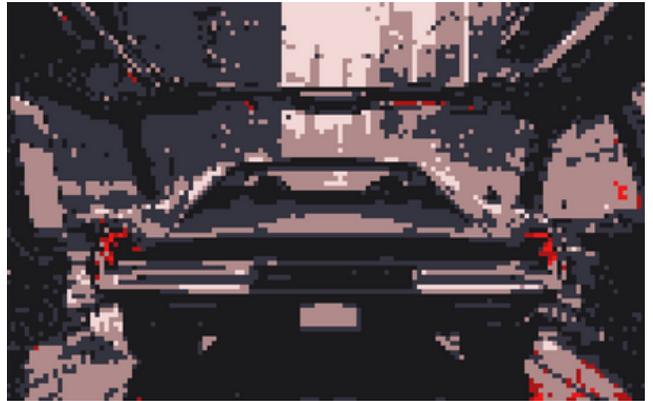
Concept Card Mechanics Screen



Concept NPC Shop Screen

SCARLET CIRCUIT

Concept Pixel Art



SCARLET CIRCUIT



Sound Design

The sound design in Scarlet Circuit emphasizes atmosphere and personality through a minimalist yet impactful approach.

Character Voices: Instead of traditional voice acting, the characters communicate using distinct ‘gibberish’ or type sound vocalizations, reminiscent of styles seen in games like Animal Crossing or Undertale. Each character is given a unique vocal identity by using different pitches, tones, and rhythms, which reflect their personality and emotional state.

▶ [Click Here to Listen to Example Character Voice Effects from Undertale](#)

Environmental Sounds: Ambient layers of buzzing neon, distant machinery, faint city chatter, and the occasional oppressive silence create a sense of immersion and unease.

Game Music: The music in Scarlet Circuit will feature a mix of retro 8-bit synths, pulsating beats, and simple melodies that adapt to the player’s actions—whether it’s the quiet tension of exploring the Abandoned zone or the upbeat action of a card battle.

▶ [Click Here to Listen to Example Music for Traversing Scarlet City](#)

▶ [Click Here to Listen to Example Music for Exploring the Abandoned Zones](#)

▶ [Click Here to Listen to Example Music for Card Battle](#)

In Scarlet Circuit, sound effects and music will be crucial to immersing players into the world, compensating for the visual simplicity of the pixel art style. From the eerie hum of abandoned zones to the cities streets, the soundscapes will need to carry the majority of the games emotional weight and atmosphere.