NEWMANITY

Concept : Newmanity is set in a non-defined future. Humanity is facing a new era. Transhumanist technologies have been developed for years. Everyone is free to modify their body, through mechanical or biological upgrade or by downloading their spirit into a substitute body. In that context, corporations at the top of technological progress have acquired tremendous power, and the different factions now fight for the future of humanity, or rather, its control.

Genre : Tactical-RPG

Target audience : Mature, PEGI 16 or 18.

Thematics : Science, human relationships, transhumanism, economics.

Gameplay elements : The game revolves around three different phases.

1) Dialogue phases

Like a visual novel, the game offers a lot of dialogues with non-player characters. The player is often offered multiple answers. Depending on the situation or the interlocutor, the dialogue options can alter the scenario, following multiple possible narrative patterns.

That part of the game allows the development of the world, the current situation and the characters in order to make it more interesting, and give more credibility to the plot.

In terms of interface, it will mainly feature an animated model of the interlocutor, reflecting the current emotion of the dialogue, with additional short animations done using the game's engine when an important event triggers. The lower part of the screen is used for the text, and during the answers, the list of choices appears in a clear fashion.

2) Research and preparation phase

This phase takes place in-between the two others, and serves mostly to manage ressources and prepare oneself.

Many options are offered to the player in term of management, before joining a dialogue or battle phase. Thus, it's possible to access a list of available units, to see their equipment, their upgrades and their statistics.

New allies can be recruited, depending on the visited location.

Shops can be accessed to obtain single-use items, some upgrades or favors that can be used later.

As for the allies, they can belong to one of the three factions, each with their own specificities. Depending on their faction, every unit can obtain upgrades/manipulations that determine their role and possibilities. The only exception being the Transferred, who use pre-built bodies. For instance, a soldier belonging to a mechanist corporation will have implants adapted to military tactics and at the high-end of technology. In the same faction, a mercenary from the lower-districts will have

questionable upgrades, adapted to more deceitful tactics. Forcing the player to add variety in their contacts to balance their team, even while being loyal to a single faction.

Ultimately, this phase allows the choice of the next objective. The player has access to a list of missions, each with their own acceptation fee, rewards and impact on the reputations. Each mission has a general description of the situation and the objective, as well as informations about the probable enemy encounters and the fighting ground, allowing the player to prepare in consequence. For example, an infiltration mission in the headquarters of a corporation in a the middle of the city cannot be approached the same way as a direct battle in the mountains.

3) Battle phase

Battle phases are the core of the game. Those sequences take the form of a tactical-RPG. Units are placed on a chess board with variable layout. The player selects which unit they'll use among those they have in reserve and put them down on predefined squares. The battles then take place on a turn per turn basis, with each turn corresponding to an ally or enemy character, depending on their speed.

During a game turn, the active unit has two actions. An action can be used to move in a number of squares depending on the terrain and the character's statistic, use an item, do a contextual action or do a battle action (attack/protect/etc...). A same action can also be done two times.

The point of view is placed above the battle, in isometric 3D. It's possible to turn the camera in four different angles in order to have a better look at the situation.

The terrain will have its importance. First, the type of ground can grant buffs/debuffs to units depending on their type. For example, a biological unit with a vegetal basis will be perfectly-suited for a battle in a forest environement, which will grant them dodge and regeneration bonus. Conversely, a tracked vehicle will have trouble moving around in the same environement. To continue on the forest example, trees offer great covers against attacks coming from above but can catch fire, which makes them disappear and inflict damages in the affected area.

Finally, battle actions take the shape and height of the terrain into account. For instance, a pistol shot has a long range but requires a line of sight, and thus cannot touch an enemy from behind a wall. While a a grenade can be lobbed over the wall or rolled on the ground, with limited range, which allows the player to bypass obstacles. Additionally, attacking an enemy from an elevated position increases the chances of hitting them, while attacking from below will be less efficient, and can even be blocked by some obstacles.

An unit's statistics (Health points, damages, defense, speed, moving range, etc...) depend of their level and the upgrades installed onto them. These also determine the possible battle actions.

4) Plot and World

Scenario : The game takes place in a non-defined period in the future. At the start of the game, almost every states have lost their power, following many years of liberalization and increased business opportunities. Thus, countries still exist nominally, with minor differences between them, and are often ruled by a puppet government, while the real control belongs to the biggest multinational corporations implanted on their territory, based on their deals, divergences and personal interests. The game starts with a revolution of cyborgs and robots taking control of the North American continent, following the reject of a law granting robots an equal statuts to that of the biological humans. This decision comes from an intense lobbying whose objective is to keep the mechanical units under control of the companies, like exploitable workers. This revolution is however done in a "civil" manner. The only victims are those responsible of the law's rejection, those who tried to physically oppose the robots' action and the military centers.

In that context, Noah Darwin, the main character and leader of a Private Military Society is forced to chose between supporting the revolution, or oppose it. In both case, his company will be almost entirely destroyed, either by the hand of the revolution or through a foreign counter-attack. The choice is still important however, since it will decide of the plot's orientation and the starting situation : If the player decides to help the robots, they will start by mostly working with them, in exchange of their support. While if they oppose them, they will have to flee and re-establish themselves elsewhere, using Noah's contacts to ally with another faction.

The plot will then follow the conflicts between the different groups, with their opposite viewpoints and objectives. The story will be change along with the player's choices, following one of eight possible paths for humanity : Biological/Mechanical/Informatical/Coexistence of the Three, each with a dystopian and utopian variant.

Factions :

Almost every characters are following one of the three possible futures of humanity :

- The mechanists follow the path of robotization. According to them, the future lies in the mechanics and its long-term possibilities. This faction regroups both the Sentient Artificial Intelligences (SIA) and the mechanically upgraded humans, often called Cyborgs. In terms of conflicts, their armament is mostly ballistic and energetic, close to a military armament. They look mostly human, with their modified parts hidden in prosthetics.

- The biologicals exist through genetical and surgical upgrading. From genic therapies, to addition of animal or vegetal characteristics, to gender-changing operations, their bodies are still made of biological cells, but can transform into anything. Their vision revolves around evolution by choice, by letting anyone be what they want, even if it would lead to the existence of multiple human species. This aspect is reinforced by the increase of sentient animal species, like chimps, crows or octopi. The biologicals enjoy showcasing their upgrades, with a lot of extravagance. This faction contains a lot of artists using their body as a canvas.

- The transferred are the most disparate and enclosed faction, they follow the path of virtuality. It consists mostly of hackers and technology enthusiasts. Instead of upgrading their bodies, the transferred have abandoned them to download their consciousness. The result is a file which acts as a mental savefile, allowing them to travel through the internet or take control of artificial bodies.

The part of that faction that's not affiliated to a government or corporation regularly has ideas of freedom and would rather stay alone and far away from reality, when they're not just trolls abusing the system for their own personal gains. By definition, they lack a regular appearance, and those who have bodies don't talk much, if at all about their status when confronted by strangers.

Important characters :

The game will include a certain number of non-player characters. Here's some of the most importants, mostly for their possible influence on the story and how it will unfold.

- Eden : CEO of a pharmaceutical enterprise and owner of numerous clinics, Eden is an intersex individual, at the high end of biological technologies. Made immortal by genetics therapy, their objective is to guide humanity toward perfection and freedom, no matter the time it would take, everybody shall be free to decide what they could be, no matter their train of thoughts, to their very body. That's the reason why their business are operating at a low breakeven point, by offering operations and medicines for the lowest possible price.

- The Hundred : That name originally designated a conglomerate of 100 wealthy individuals whose goal was to lead humanity according to their own desires, through economics, politics and eugenics. Three years before the start of the game, the hundredth member joined that group : Eygon d'Hecatia, a powerful geneticist. Since his introduction, the other members have seemingly changed their attitude, prioritising the newcomer instead of their older schemes. Actually, Eygon has been secretly infecting the council, the reunions never being done in person, he managed to progressively replace the others with other people closer to him. His objective is to make the world his playground, without anyone knowing.

- Connor : Leader of the movement for equality between biological individuals and machines, this Cyborg is the world's greatest specialist in artificial intelligence and owns an important number of research centers. He wishes to use science to grant a better future to everyone else. In his eyes, robotics could allow the elimination of the weaknesses inherent to biological lives, which would allow a moral revolution to take place and lead to the end of the current system to replace it by an abudance economy. Despite his vision of the world, Connor is a passionate person, who's often carried over by his own emotions.

- David : Connor's masterpiece, David is an SIA tasked with leading his researches. Their objectives are similar, but David has a more brutal view, considering the greater good that would come out of their actions to be enough to justify necessary sacrifices. David is the kickstarter of the north-american robotical revolution and will not hesitate to destroy anyone that opposes the dream of perfection from which he came.

- Ba Xian : Leader of the chinese robotics market, Ba Xian is a fervent supporter of the mechanization of humanity. Capitalist to the last degree, his objective is to ensure a maximum rentability through the advantages of steel. Thus, he supports the supremacist groups of SIA and cyborgs under many aliases, in order to impose his ideal without dirtying his hands, to then lead an humanity able to permanently work through the suppression of their natural needs. He also dreams to exploit robotics to explore space and its ressources.

- Rain : An autistic transferred, famous amongst countless nerd circles for her positions and her peculiar view on the world. The living link between many transferred communities, she defends an hedonistic future, where bodies would be made to minimize the required work and where spirits would be permanently connected and able to escape from reality. These thoughts and her inclusive progressism made her the leader of the Homo Ludens, groups for which the future of humanity should be leisure and games.

- Grigori : The life long president of the Russo-European congregation since 10 years, Grigori is actually the substitute body of a transferred at the head of the party since two generations. A control freak, his objective is to use transfer technologies to turn his population more docile, and create a perfect military force via adapted bodies and hackers directly integrated to the network.

5) Art Direction

The game will have a colored and fantasy style, in the same vein as cartoon shows like "Adventure Time".

This aspect allows more recognizable designs, via the distinct shapes and colors, which is very useful to rapidly identifiate the units and their role. But it's also in line with the general design of the game, which is not realistic and allows itself many fantasies on the possibilities offered (winged humanoids, weapons that wouldn't look out of place in a science-fiction production, etc...). A visual akin to that of a cartoon would allow an easier acceptance of these extravagances and the artistic licenses taken in comparison with reality.

Concerning the environemments, they will be varied.

From natural scenery, like mountains, lush forests or warm and cold deserts, to typical cyberpunk megalopolis with countless lights, omnipresent technologies and inequalities, each with their own specifities tied to the dominant faction. Thus, every city controled by the biologicals possess infrastructures made of genetically modified tissues and generally have a more chaotic aspect than the cyber cities, more straightforward but also more sensible to hidden resistance.

Each location will have its own atmosphere and will be quickly recognizable, as well as their inherent issues and possibilities.