THE CITY IN THE SKY | Game Design Document by Megan Fleming

The Pitch.

A video game set in the last city left in the world, built above a toxic layer of smog that has overtaken the Earth. When the city is bombed by an outside attacker, a young leader and a team of soldiers must venture to the surface to discover what they left behind.

The Concept.

The City in the Sky is a **sci fi / adventure RPG game** that prioritizes the growth of both character relationships and discovery of the world to solve the core mystery and win the game. Game mechanics such as shooting, sneaking, sensing, crafting, and foraging are used to advance both of these objectives.

The game will explore themes of **hope in the face of hopelessness, freewill** and **collaboration**.

Comps: The grit and feel of *The Last of Us* together with socio-political and classism themes similar to those explored in the 1927 Fritz Lang film *Metropolis*.

The Target Audience.

The City in the Sky is intended for a 17+ audience due to violence and horror.

The Selling Point.

The City in the Sky is based in a world unknown, a world shrouded in mystery and toxic smog. Half of the game will take place above (or at times, below) the fog layer in immense, futuristic cities where the player can wonder, marvel and uncover truths about the city and its citizens and rulers. On the surface, the player will be met with a fog layer that changes visibility depending on weather and time of day, therefore gameplay and fighting mechanics will fluctuate depending on visibility. It is a game that will rely on **sensing mechanics** through the **vibration of a controller** and through **sound** at times when the player can't see their own hand in front of them. Half of the game will be played as one character, **Riley Green** while the other half will be played as **Emelia Johns**, who depending on gameplay choices, can come together as lovers or fall apart as enemies at the end of the game.

Also in mind for The City in the Sky IP is to transcend various mediums as viable **transmedia** to be expanded upon in additional games as well as television, film and comic entries.

The World.

We are living in a post-apocalyptic world where almost all of the Earth's surface is covered with a toxic green smog, making life on the surface inhospitable. Only a handful of hardier species have adapted to survive on the surface.

Humanity's only salvation was this city, built above the skyscrapers of Kansas City. There were only enough resources to build one city, or so the history books say. On Day Zero, the last day the Earth's surface air was breathable, only two million people were let into the city, plus a couple thousand more who managed to climb their way onto the immense metal pillars supporting the platforms. Everything, everyone else on the surface was left to die.

The Architects responsible for building and maintaining the city and its harmony pass on their skills to future generations, as do the agriculturists, engineers, medical personnel and soldiers that keep the city running and safe.

On the night we pick up with the story, 60 years after Day Zero, the city's core fan system - the system vital to keeping the toxic smog away - explodes and the Lead Architect - who the player will know to be the old woman who fell from a tower in the teaser - goes missing. The player must go through the city collecting clues and eventually will discover that the bombing was from an outside attacker, and the Lead Architect's body has been found by a soldier on the surface.

The Player.

Fifty percent of the time, the player plays as **RILEY GREEN**, a young woman who has been trained her whole life to be an ARCHITECT. Architects are the most important people in the city, the city depends on them to keep the city growing at a steady, attainable rate. Riley will be pushed outside her comfort zone to become a true leader as she is forced to confront uncomfortable realities of the city and the Architect's role in it.

The other fifty percent of the time, the player will play as **EMELIA JOHNS**, a kind soldier who discovers the body of the Lead Architect on the surface floor while playing a game the soldiers play to blow some steam. Emelia is assigned to be Riley's protector, and they must work together to explore clues within the city as to what happened the night of the explosion. Eventually, they set out past the city borders and their relationship is complicated by a will-they-won't-they chemistry that threatens the whole recon operation.

The Core Loop.

The main core loop is to **explore** (clues to who caused the destruction of the tower, clues as to where to follow the potential villain, lore, etc), **traverse** to pursue the next clue (within the city or on the surface, and eventually, in other cities), fighting enemies and solving puzzles along the way, and figuring out what how you want to **respond** to the revelations the player/player character makes along the way (do you turn back, do you do you betray the city, etc). Rinse and repeat.

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