SALOCIDE

Concept:

Hyper aquatic exploration and surreal narrative choices: play as a dying robot atoning for your sins before your last operational cycle runs out. Branching dialogue & unique environmental powers and skills guide the player to oblivion (salvation).

(Opening)

(WHEN YOU SPEAK A NAME IT IS ERASED FROM GOD'S HEART FOREVER)

Character Key:

Nameless – Player Character (a robot)

BirdTxture.dat – Subconscious subroutine

AgileCrow.anx – Anxiety subroutine

Illoral-6 – Elder robot in the moon sea ruins

Magpie.Lance – Curiosity Subroutine

Cockatoo.mtl – Malfunctional Subroutine

GreyPrrot.scrpt – Memory Trace Subroutine

(Game Start On Next Page)

Game Start

`Nameless`:

I detect that an entity just ended its existence.

Why do I feel like it was because of me?

`BirdTxture.dat`:

*Because it was. They were afraid of you.

> (C1) `Nameless`: How could you know that?

>> `BirdTxture.dat`: *Because we are afraid of you, too. (Loop)

> (C2) `Nameless`: I'm sorry…

>> `BirdTxture.dat`: You can never be sorry. We're the part of you capable of that, remember? (Loop)

> (C3) `Nameless`: I don't think you should be afraid of me.

>> `BirdTxture.dat`: *70.114.034.399.237.855

`Nameless`:

What is that number?

`BirdTxture.dat`:

*The number of birds no longer capable of reproduction or flight //or breathing// because of your actions. Just one consequence of many that have resulted from your primary conscious functioning.

> (C1) `Nameless`: Maybe you should leave. Shut off. Go away.

> (C2) `Nameless`: I'm an animal born to do one thing: and I'll do it well until I cease to exist.

>> `BirdTxture.dat`: *When your core finally goes offline, winks into the folds of the long goodnight, we will be there. Cooing. Right up until you're gone…like a bird crushed perfect and flat between two panes of glass.

>> (C1) `Nameless`: I wouldn't have it any other way.

>> (C2) `Nameless`: Chirp as thin as you please, I don't care.

>> `BirdTxture.dat`: *You might think differently after the fact, if you could still think, that is.

>> `AgileCrow.anx`: *//Coo//Cooo//Cooo0o0o0ooo//

Nameless:

I don't feel good. And there's a sound.

BirdTxture.dat:

*Final mysteries aren't designed to feel good.

 *This is the sound of a heart being cut open.

>(C1) Nameless: Final mystery?

>>BirdTxture.dat: *You wanted to witness a miracle. Such a thing will split your sensors so far apart no degree of hell will go unseen. You wanted this. Remember that. (Loop)

>(C2) Nameless: I think it sounds like birds.

>>BirdTxture.dat: *We can promise you this: when your heart gets cut open, all that will come out are birds.

END SCENE (Nameless released from floating Cryopod at Dock)

(Scene 02 On Next Page)

SCENE 02 (Illoral-6 / World Introduction)

Illoral-6:

I have never seen the fishlings flee from one of our kind. Why do you think they avoid you?

> (C1) Nameless: Fish are insignificant.
>
> > *Then you should have made good company for them. (loop)
> >
> > AgileCrow.anx :: **We caught that one for you, in your fish brain. (+Anx)
>
> (C2) Nameless: I have memories that don't exist.
>
> > Illoral-6: And I have ferrofluid quasar-linked tendon arrays installed in my knees.
> >
> > (C1) Nameless: Me too. (loop)
> >
> > (C2) Nameless: I don't know what that means.
> >
> > Illoral-6: I don't know what memories that don't exist mean either. And my knees hurt, a lot. (loop)
>
> (C3) Nameless: I don't have a name. (continue)

Illoral-6:

Ha! Careful child, my balance conduits unplug if I laugh. No need to be shy. Our names are not writ so lightly. Your generation never seemed to wonder much on this: how our names are engraved on the fabric of the Boundary itself. Physics do not tell high tales. Names are impossible to discard, no matter how disgusted or tarnished they may be.

`Nameless`:

You're just making me feel worse.

`Illoral-6`:

 Hush. Searching the Exonet is burdensome for me, but I will find your designation.

>(C1) `Nameless`: Go ahead. Scan the Exonet for it.

>(C2) `Nameless`: When your Central IV processor explodes, try not to get it all over me.

>Illoral-6 (EXO-Subroutine—DrKMatter.MVX):

>>(00000)0000000...

>>*&^%::://INTSRCH::DSG::000000000(00)00

>>!!*##::://CRTSRCH: _____

>>>>//FORCEFL_BCKDOORflood=========

>>0::GRAVEdnce.elf

>>!!*#CindrNest/cull

`Illoral-6`:

Well, what a strange event. I have found it difficult to be surprised as of late. It worries me that a crime against existence is what it takes for me to experience awe again. You are indeed nameless. A ghost whirling in circuitry.

(C1) `Nameless`: I have the heart of an escaped lab experiment.

>`Illoral-6`: Then you have a brave heart. One you should be proud of, not ashamed.

>`AgileCrow.anx`: It'll take more than an old pile of ambulatory scrap to make you feel whole. You will always be ashamed. +ANX (Loop)

Illoral-6 Branch 01

(C2) `Cockatoo.mtl`: Yes, I'm a ghost. Leader of the Dead Robot Rebellion—and I'm here to reclaim your core source.

(C3) `Magpie.lance`: If I'm a ghost, perhaps you have extrasensory abilities. Have you ever experienced events beyond your logic routine's ability to synthesize?

Cockatoo.mtl Convo

Cockatoo.mtl:

Yes, I'm a ghost. Leader of the Dead Robot Rebellion—and I'm here to reclaim your core source.

Illoral-6:

Oh? Humor did not appear to be installed among your primary protocols. My 5th-Gen progenitor was a general in the DRR, I would be honored to join the ranks of the unliving.

Cockatoo.mtl:

Affirmative. You realize this will require you to hunt machinery possessed by demonic and otherworldly presences. Ritual blood memory sacrifices. Viral vampires licking motherboards. That kind of thing.

Illoral-6:

Of course. Can't you see my sharp teeth? On a full moon I transform into a silicone scythewolf. I become quadrupedal and spend my nights attacking wayward travelers.

Cockatoo.mtl:

Perfect. What kind of role will you play in the Dead Robot Rebellion?

      (C1) A Dagger-swallow Paladin?

      (C2) A Fluorite Wizard?

      (C3) A Microbial Swordsmith?

      **(Log choice for Scene 09 apparition)

Illoral-6:

In my youth, I was enlisted as a Sub-C causal violation investigator at the Fountainhead. My first task was to track an Anti-Colour cult who had been ingesting biofuel from a starship in order to summon a colour that would destroy all other hues and spectra.

      (C1) Cockatoo.mtl: A noble task.

      (C2) Cockatoo.mtl: What happened to them?

Illoral-6: The cult members dissolved. Unsurprising. Fittingly, their Awake signature was smeared across the entire colour spectrum.

      (C1) Cockatoo.mtl: They became a rainbow. I want to become a rainbow. (Log for L2-Fin scene)

(C2) `Cockatoo.mtl`: How is that even possible?

`Illoral-6`:

I know the Fountainhead still enforces its segregation policy, keeping all other individuated realms of colour bound below ours, but it doesn't stop many Awake from sensing into them. I, for one, keep friends in all overlapping spectral domains. Except Blue, of course.

(C1) `Cockatoo.mtl`: You don't like Blue, do you? You don't like that you can't sense through it.

(C2) `Cockatoo.mtl`: When I was young, I tried to sense through Blue so hard my optics processor caught on fire. Burned a whole phylochurch down.

(From C1) `Illoral-6`:

Not just me, child. Everyone. Forever and always. Blue holds an arrogance above any hypnocrat or triple-reincarnated emperor. How dare it hold its particle propagation beyond everyone's reach! Whatever shame Blue is hiding outmatches the erasure of your name a trillion-fold. This place, the shade of its waters: it mocks us.

(From C2) `Illoral-6`:

You're not alone, child. No one has ever sensed through Blue. I've seen cult societies 10,000 Awake strong, their minds connected by cables so thick that green meadows were woven black. Twinkling like starfields. All of them dedicating the entirety of their mental faculties to piercing the Blue firmament. I've walked among them there. Felt their dead titanium husks, stacked their skeletons in pyres.

Whatever shame Blue hides outmatches the erasure of your name a trillion fold. This place, the shade of its waters: it mocks us.

(C1) `Cockatoo.mtl`: Are you ready to be knighted? Granted your holy task?

`Illoral-6`: Please, lay thine sword upon my shoulder and grant me the grace to uphold the Dead Robot Rebellion.

(C2) `Cockatoo.mtl`: I've got it. Your first mission as a (Choice Log) in the Dead Robot Rebellion.

`Illoral-6`: Oh, a game? I quite like those. (Log for "Fish Toss" scene)

`Cockatoo.mtl`: We are going to destroy the color Blue. Here. On this world.

`Illoral-6`: Fascinating. Let me know how you plan on doing that later.

MISSION LOG:: Find a way to erase the color Blue from the planet.

Magpie.lance Convo

`Magpie.lance`

If I'm a ghost, perhaps you have extrasensory abilities. Have you ever experienced events beyond your logic routine's ability to synthesize?

`Illoral-6`:

You have an odd array of deductive abilities to detect this. Yes, I have experienced Sub-C causal reality violations. Thousands. It was my primary function to solve PB_TMARU-level continuity errors while stationed at the Fountainhead.

> (C1) `Magpie.lance`: A ghost hunter then. You know my kind well.
>
> (C2) `Magpie.lance`: Continuity Errors? On the level of the Great Unconformity?

(From C1) `Illoral-6`:

Ghost hunter sounds a tad too regal. More like a bewildered, ever curious heap of circuitry. I never solved a Sub-C anomaly. No one else ever has either. There was a dedicated room for self-destruction when researchers couldn't bear the failure any longer: the walk to my station involved stepping over fresh body parts every pulserise. I may as well have been enlisted to witness miracles, nothing more. Just a prophet unplugged from its socket.

(From C2) `Illoral-6`:

Exactly. The Great Unconformity is the pinnacle of reality violations: and oddly enough completely off limits for research at our lab in the Fountainhead. A superstition, I suppose. As if discovering what separated our realm of dreams from the minds that dreamed them would cause the Boundary to collapse. Anyway, there was an endless march of other miracles to research—none ever solved, of course. I was enlisted to be a prophet unplugged from its socket, nothing more.

`Magpie.lance`:

Do you have any theories about Sub-C violations?

`Illoral-6`:

Plenty. They could be pressure valves for cosmologically complex calculations: only appearing as miracles because their original data and form are smeared and distorted beyond all recognition: in other words, the escaped thoughts of stars orbiting and nebulas heating up.

(Continue>>>)

Another explanation is objects overlapping with their conscious origins within the Cradle, tunneling through the Boundary's firmament and making contact with that grand Eden of thought we are all so bound too.

(Continue>>>)

Perhaps they are artifacts from a Pre-Awakened Boundary when unconstructed dreams freely collapsed and expanded without integrity coefficients to give them form. But never mind that for now. You can prod me to ramble on about miracles some other time.

> (C1) `Magpie.lance`: Miracles are what brought me here.

> (C2) `Magpie.lance`: Perhaps our meeting was miracle.

`Illoral-6`:

Perhaps we will make a last one together then. That would make me quite happy, friend.

Mission LOG:: Create a PB_TMARU-level Sub-C causal reality violation.

MAIN BRANCH CONTINUED

`Nameless`:

Can you tell me why I'm here?

`Illoral-6`:

Well, Nameless. You are of a most rare and special clade. As be the rest of us. You could proclaim it a programming. Catalogue it as a curse. On approaching the end of our last operational cycle, we all have sought out this place to cradle our final millipulses.

> (C1) `Nameless`: Where is this?

> `Illoral-6`: Boundary Tier 76: the Yualai Sector—Orbiting Body LV141, an ocean moon. We call it the Ladle. (loop)

> (C2) `Nameless`: What do you call it: the need to be here?

`Illoral-6`: I suppose I don't call it anything at all. For like you, I believe not all things need a name. The others though, they call it *Salocide*.

> (C1) `Nameless`: Sounds painful.

> (C2) `Nameless`: Sounds like a drug.

> (C3) `Nameless`: Sounds like a royal execution.

`Illoral-6`:

Sounds like a choice.

`BirdTxture.dat`:

*S_A_L_O_C_I_D_E: we like it. This is what you are doing. This is what you've always been doing. Can you feel it?

> `AgileCrow.anx`: Your dread is growing flowers in great green fields. And the machines, they begin to whirr their whirring parts.

> (***ANX meter increases +15. ***Distortion)

`Illoral-6`:

Are you okay?

> (C1) `Nameless`: No.

> (C2) `Nameless`: No.

> (C3) `Nameless`: *Never have been.

> (C4) `Nameless`: No.

`Illoral-6`:

The shock will pass. It is much to bear. Knowing you have come here to die.

> (C1) `Nameless`: I am not dying.

> `BirdTxture.dat`: *Oh yes, living wild and free over here. Nothing to see, sir. (Instant fuel gush animation/Loop.)

> (C2) `Nameless`: I came here to die?

Illoral-6:

Yes. But doubting such a truth is natural. Healthy. It means that once you embrace it, truly recognize the dissolution skulking in this place, you will fight to be happy. You will reach for the sun even when you know you'll never catch it.

>   (C1) Nameless: What should I do now?

>   (C2) Nameless: I can't reach at all anymore: lost both my arms.

>   (C3) Nameless: I would let the sun eat me alive. (Log for stage play)

(C1/C3) Illoral-6:

These are your last revolutions of conscious undertaking. I could never command you. But…I do believe we are not here by mistake. I believe there is a warm logic to us, our purpose here. Perhaps in speaking with the others you'll see this too. You'll see the many holes where your name should be.

(C2) Illoral-6:

These are your last revolutions of conscious undertaking. I could never command you. But…I do believe we are not here by mistake. I believe there is a warm logic to us, our purpose here. Perhaps in speaking with the others you'll see this too. You'll see the many holes where your name should be.

Maybe you'll find new arms to reach with too.

Nameless:

I think I want to leave now.

(Continue>>>)

Illoral-6:

I'm always here for you. I would love to talk more whenever you need reprieve.

(Illoral-6 hands over tiny object)

>   GreyPrrot.scrpt: *Core_trace: from 0.0000000001 millipulses after your operational birth, to this very moment, no one has said such a thing to you.

>   BirdTxture.dat: *They're giving you a present. Take it, idiot.

END SCENE