

Overview

Title

Nonsentience

<http://mm.twoagainst.com/games>

Genre

Puzzle / Exploration / Dark Humor

Platform

PC / Xbox 360

Target Audience

Nonsentience is targeted toward a mature, intellectual audience ages 18 and up. It will appeal to fans of intricate stories and puzzles.

Story

Justine, the protagonist, has committed suicide. A mysterious research scientist comes across her corpse and decides to use it for his purposes. He brings her back to life as a cyborg in order to perform a myriad of experiments on her. During the procedure, Justine's mind becomes fragmented resulting in many of her memories becoming irrevocably lost or corrupted. The corruption affects many of her bodily systems, including those responsible for physical action and data manipulation. At the beginning of the game she awakes, and is entirely unable to move. Through these corrupted parts of her new self, she is able to travel to different realities where she can experience different parts of her psyche.

Characters

Characters

Individuals-

Delta

Justine was a fairly normal girl in her mid 20s that had simply fallen victim to her own isolation and the cruelties of the world. She took her own life, but little did she know she would be used as a Guinea pig in a scientist's experiment. Due the extent of decomposition at the time of the operation, many of her biological components had to be replaced. At the beginning of the game she awakes strapped to a table, unable to move, her mind slowly being destroyed by a mysterious viral attack.

As the game's protagonist, Delta adds a sense of focus, empathy as well as a feeling of mystery and a desire to understand her background. She is a reasonable addition to the game world because she starts off as an original human and because of this her pain and suffering is understandable. She is a plausible character because of the way the world is set up. Cyborgs are a possibility, albeit a rather shaky one. Her motivations are simple, yet they evolve throughout the course of the game, ranging from simple survival, to the desire for freedom and mastery over herself.

Delta has evolving relationships with Merlin, Dr. Edmunds and various facets of herself over the course of the game.

We believe she has appeal to the player, because her position is unique, yet understandable. Delta can be empathized with. We all seek mastery over ourselves and inner peace in some form or another.

Merlin

A previous experiment, that had considerably more success than Justine did (considering she's entirely immobile and being consumed by a virus, that's saying a lot). It takes the form of a half child, half mechanical creature with eyes that sentient thought had long left behind. It has fallen into disuse and disrepair with both its flesh and mechanical components decaying, albeit slowly. It has the unfortunate habit of bringing that not-so-fresh feeling into a room. Despite this, it occasionally takes on the physical motions of a playful child. Sadly, its mind is nothing more than data storage. This NPC guides Justine through her repairs providing guidance and hints as necessary.

Merlin acts as a Mentor, guide, companion, spirit animal and sidekick despite the fact that he's creepy as all hell. His presence and appearance is reasonable in that he was Edmund's first creation (and fatally ill son). Because of technological hurdles and the untested nature of Edmund's research, his appearance and psychology are plausible.

Merlin is only partially sentient, but there still a trace of a mind left in there. He is motivated to prove his sentience to Edmunds, and to assist Delta because he is lonely. These will be hard to put forth, seeing as Merlin is outwardly lacking in sentience, but actions will speak louder than words.

Merlin will appeal to people through being so very unappealing. He is disturbing, yet unique. The mental unrest he will cause will ensure that the character will stay with the player long after the game has ended.

Doctor Edmunds

This character is the person who “liberated” Justine's corpse and used it as an experiment in cybernetics and bio-mechanical augmentation. While not an entirely malicious character, he does intend to keep Justine in his lab for experimentation. Additionally, while Justine is grateful for what he has done for her, she has no intention of being someone's lab rat.

Edmunds adds a sense of cohesion, reason and focus to the game. He sets this series of events in action. His presence is reasonable in that he is a character with the mind, experience and will to make Delta what she is. He is plausible because he fulfills this sort of mad scientist stereotype, yet breaks it in not being malicious, but simply amoral. His motivations are explicitly stated to the player. He intends to test Delta. Should she win her freedom in the process then his experiment was a success, and no further testing is needed.

Edmunds is appealing because he surprises the player with the nobility of his goal, but the inhumanity/amorality of his methods.

Bosses-

JESS (Justine's Exoskeletal Super Structure)

This character is not by nature malevolent, but has become corrupted by the virus. This keeps Justine from leaving her examination table. It appears as a monstrous robotic version of herself, with a riveted on face.

JESS acts as a symbol of the mastery of her body, and is one of the focuses of Delta's change from her old self. The character will be reasonable because she acts as a juxtaposition of Delta's Bio-freak form. This is plausible because her mechanical aesthetic can represent Delta's new mechanical body parts.

Her motivations are to serve ME, and to subjugate Delta through force. She is the nemesis of Justine's Bio-freak form. This character is appealing as a monster because it is a grotesque mockery of self, and can be seen as an object to be mastered or destroyed.

jU5t33Nz (Corrupt Data Life-form)

As with JESS, this character is not malevolent, but is simply a victim of the corruption of her spiritual self. While this character is controlled by corruption, much of Justine's cognitive capacities are devoted to spreading the virus throughout her system. She appears similar to Justine's real self in form, but is composed of light and data. Her movements are unpredictable and jerky.

jU5t33Nz acts as a symbol of mastery of her own mind and is another one of the focuses of Delta's transformation from her human self. This character is reasonable because it fits in with the body-mind-spirit setup of the game. She is a plausible character because the world around her is one of her creations, so she should fit in aesthetically.

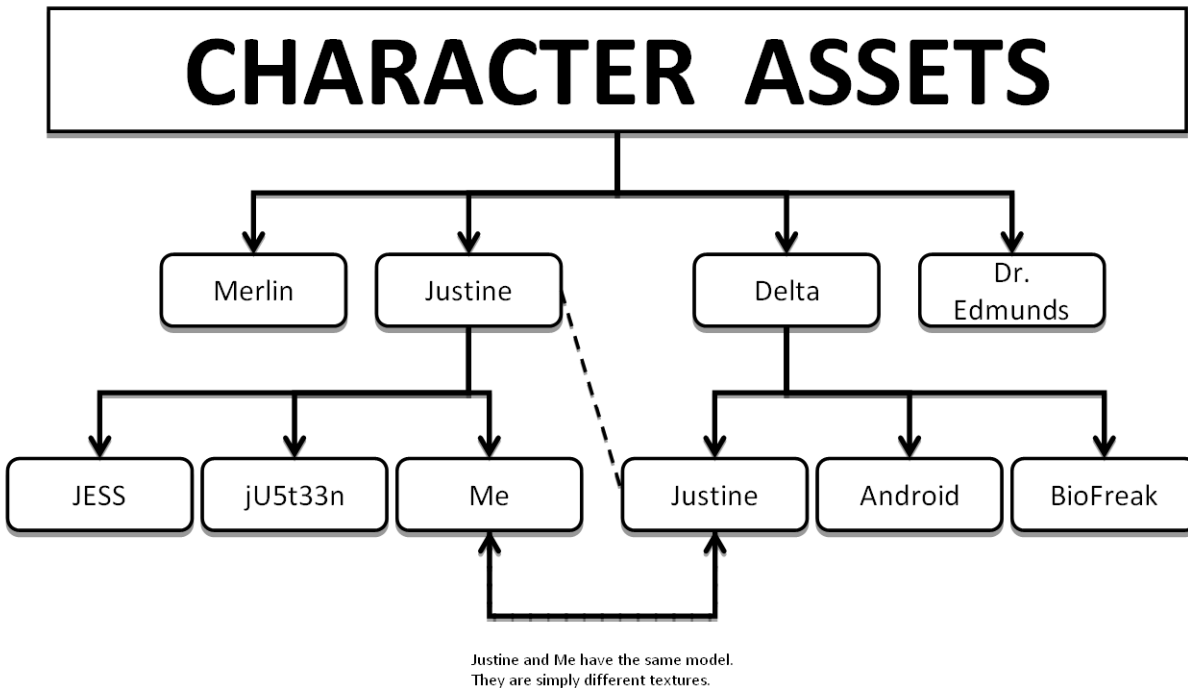
She is motivated to corrupt Delta's mind and will, turning it to the machinations of ME. She is the nemesis of Delta's android form. This character is appealing as a monster in that it is irreparably corrupted, and needs to be put out of it's misery, like a sick animal.

Me (Residual Antithetical Psychic Entity)

She is the game's only truly malevolent character. She is all the remains of Justine's former self. Much to her dismay, Justine was brought back to life, and because of this, her former self has been manifested in order to destroy herself once again. Her pain and self loathing is so great that it distorts the data and space around it. She appears as Justine once did, but stained with blood and corrupted by her own malevolence.

ME acts as a focal point and nemesis for the game, in a different manner than Dr. Edmunds is. Edmunds isn't malevolent, but ME is. ME's presence in the game is reasonable because it's pretty clearly established that Delta is effing crazy. She is plausible in that she is the source of Delta's corruption. She is motivated to take control of and destroy Delta. ME is appealing as a Nemesis in that she is horrific and tormented, yet takes a form that hits home for the player. She is malevolent yet sorrowful, the product of a cold and callous world.

Character Assets



Game Areas

Real World

This is the “true” reality where Justine is a cyborg with a cyberpunk aesthetic. The world is futuristic, minimalist, antiseptic and full of shiny technological architecture.

Bio World

This is a reality experienced through a fragmented memory where Justine is a horribly mutated human bio-freak. The world is still futuristic but filled with bio-technological architecture. The style is similar to a Zergling plugged into an electrical outlet. Justine must confront a fully mechanical version of herself, symbolizing her mastery over her new physical self and ascension beyond the limitations of her flesh.

Data World

This is a reality experienced through a mindscape of corrupted data. She is a disfigured android with exposed components in a world riddled with missing pieces and loose data streams. She must confront a corrupted data representation of herself, thereby halting the destruction of her mental capacities. This symbolizes her mastery over her mind, and her stability and security in the face of corruption.

Spiritual World

This is a nightmarish mindscape where Justine encounters the source of the corruption. Her suicidal and tormented self has been spreading through all of her systems like a virus to reclaim Justine's body for herself, and finally bring her existence to an end. The world around her is composed of pieced together memories that have been mutilated by her psychic impression. The style is similar to the Hospital scenes from Silent Hill 3. This symbolizes her mastery over her spirit, reclaiming her soul from the forces that caused her to destroy herself in the first place.

Aesthetic References

Real World

Portal, Assassin's Creed (future), Stand Alone Complex, Quake 2/4 Strogg, FEAR

Bio World

Starcraft, H.R. Gieger "Aliens"

Data World

Tron, Ghost in the Shell, Matrix

Spiritual World

Fatal Frame, Silent Hill, Ocarina of Time (water temple)

Gameplay

Basics

The player character must explore and solve environmental puzzles and is able to swap to different realities at will. Each reality will have unique aesthetics and abilities the player can leverage to reach the goal.

Player Abilities

Standard

-Walk, Open doors, Push boxes, Alcoholism

Inherent Abilities

- These are abilities that Delta gains access to when perceiving other worlds
- She only has access to them in those other worlds

Obtained Abilities

- These are abilities that Delta gains when she beats one of the bosses
- These can be used in any world

Bio-freak World

Inherent: Natural agility, Tentacle Grappling

- Delta has the ability to traverse on walls and ceilings. She also runs faster, and jumps higher.
- Delta has a prehensile tentacle, which replaces one of her arms. It can stretch, and tether itself to objects.

Obtained: Hand Detachment

- Delta can remove her cyborg hand, and control it remotely. It can move around, and perform some simple tasks.
- Delta loses the functionality of having two hands.

Data World

Inherent: Swap with object

- Delta has the ability to swap her location with the location of certain other objects.
- Swappable objects are limited by size, connectivity to the physical world, and digital security

Obtained: Bot Hacking

- Delta can hack into many other robots in the facility, and control them remotely

Spiritual World

Inherent: Astral Projection

- Delta can become ethereal when perceiving this world.
- She still needs to abide by level geometry, but she moves in three dimensions, and can't be harmed by enemies.
- She will still be detected by security systems.
- Any objects that need to be interacted with in another world will be highlighted, and color-coded to tell the player what they can interact with

Gameplay Scenarios

Scenario I

This scenario would consist of Justine's quest to regain her physical abilities. The initial situation would be explained by Merlin, the helper NPC, and would lead into Justine accessing her corrupt physical data file. From there she is transported to a world where biology and technology have run rampant, becoming hideous and chaotic. It is a dire warning about the need to master oneself, rather than letting what you are control you. As she navigates puzzles, she gains new abilities. At the end of the area awaits her mechanical self, a manifestation of what she must master, lest it seize control of her.

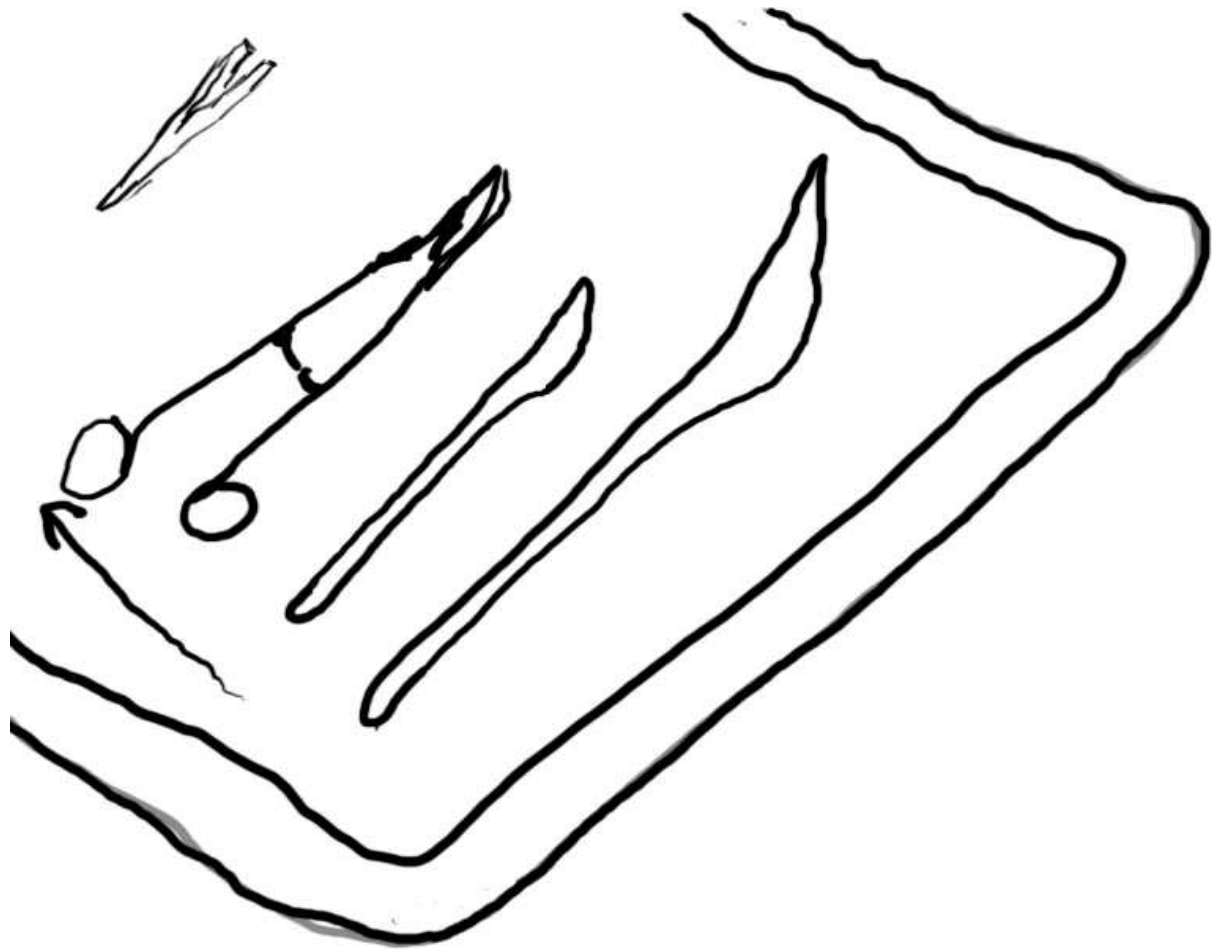
Scenario II

This scenario would play out between Justine and her former self. This is the final confrontation of the game, she has finally gainer her freedom from the scientist that rebuilt her and she has acquired all of her abilities. Previous encounters with her former self have given her abilities as well, but as she escapes and is faced with the possibility of having to go back to the world that treated her so badly, this dark part of herself re-manifests, and she is forced to battle her one last time, to finally free herself from her painful past and self-destructive impulses.

Intro Script

Camera fades in on surgical instruments

Dr. Edmunds: Life is a strange thing... it is such a mathematically improbable thing to occur, and yet, when it does, it flares into existence and is snuffed out in the blink of an eye. Our greatest tragedy is that such a great gift can be taken away so quickly...



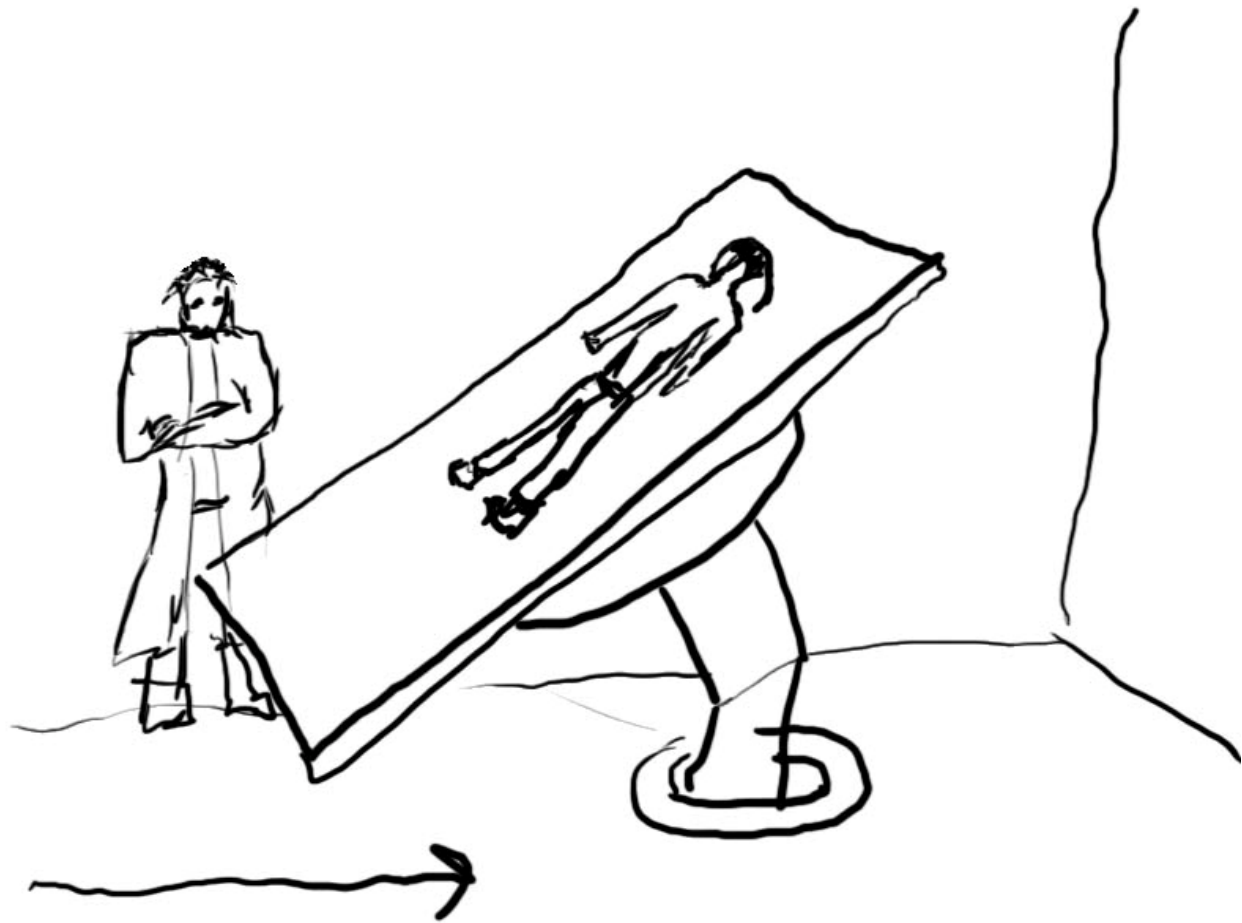
Camera flashes to Justine's corpse on an operating table and back to the surgical tools

Dr. Edmunds: Well, I will change that. It seems like such a terrible waste for such a rare gift to wither away in a matter of decades, or to be snatched away suddenly by illness, famine or war. It is always so shocking to me that Mankind strives to make this most precious gift so unbearable for each other... (Chuckles)



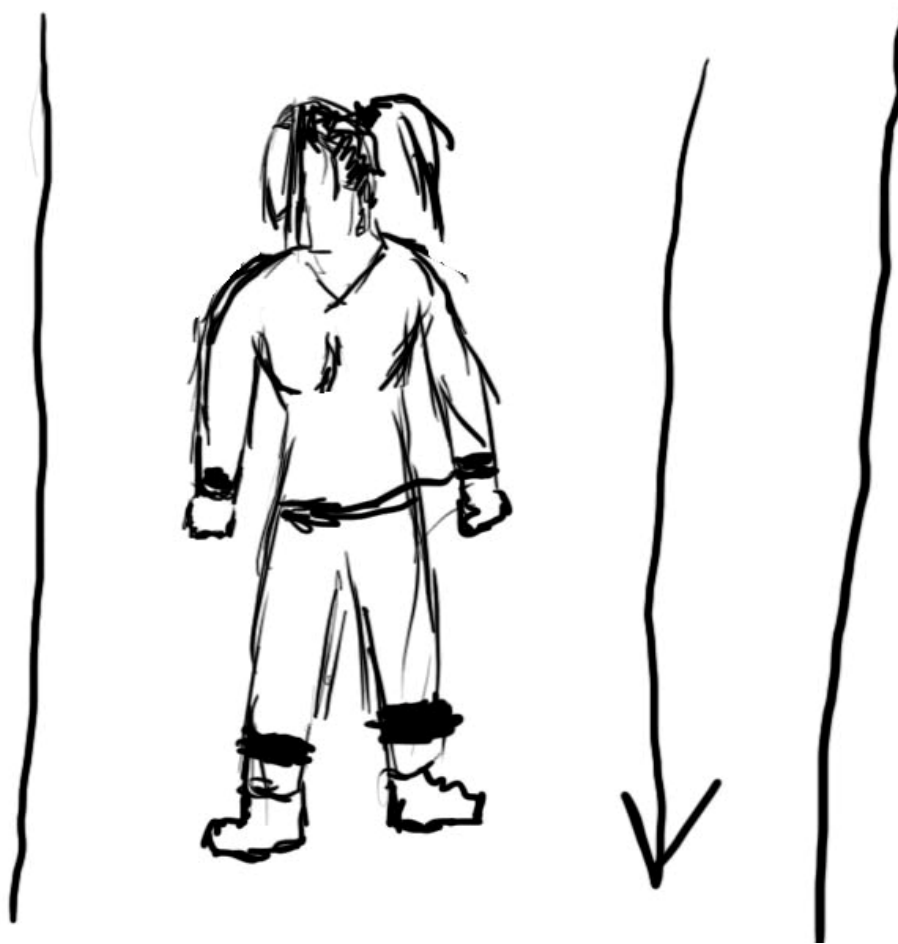
Camera pans around over the lab, Edmunds is standing near the table, with his arms folded

Dr. Edmunds: Listen to me, rambling on about humanity to a crowd of machines... Let's get started, shall we?



Camera pans down Justine's body, she is in bloodstained clothes, obviously dead

Dr. Edmunds: Subject is in her mid 20's, looks to be about 25 or 26. Caucasian, weighing in at about 125 lbs. Identification was not among the subject's personal effects, but the people at the morgue called her Justine. That bit of sentimentality aside, for the purposes of the experiment she will be called "Delta" from this point forward. While Delta has not completely decayed, many parts of her are... unusable, so for the purposes of this experiment, modification will be considerable. The extent of the modification will be between 45 and 65%. The time of the operation is 23:42 and 25 seconds and the first of the incisions will be along... (Fades out)



Camera fades back to bloodied surgical instruments, medical babble continues as the shot fades again to drops of blood falling through a sluice-like floor, camera fades out

Dr. Edmunds: (Fades back in, tired) ...currently 14:37 and 51 seconds...



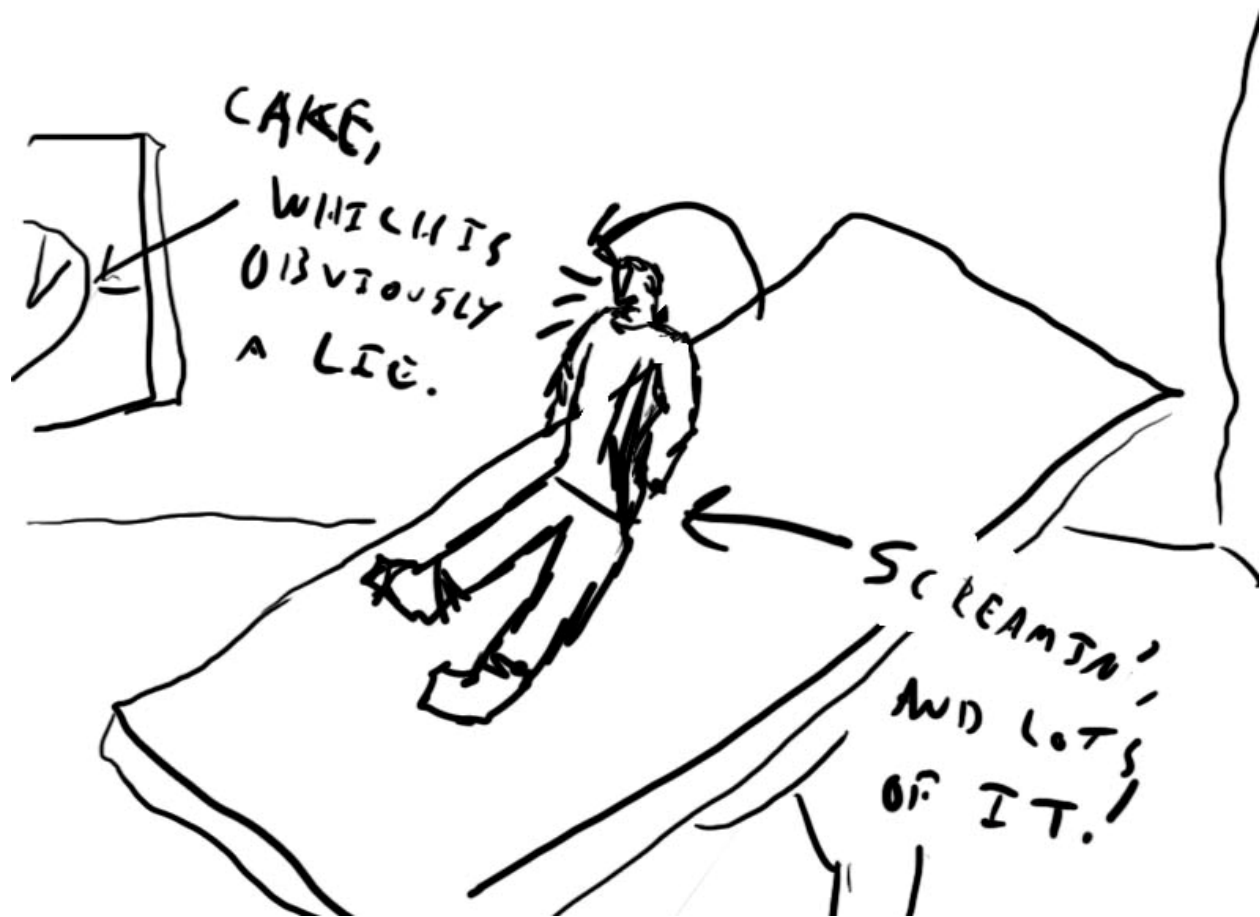
Camera fades back in; Edmunds is standing on the other side of the table, covered in blood

Dr. Edmunds: Let's see how she's feeling. Merlin, initiate startup procedure.



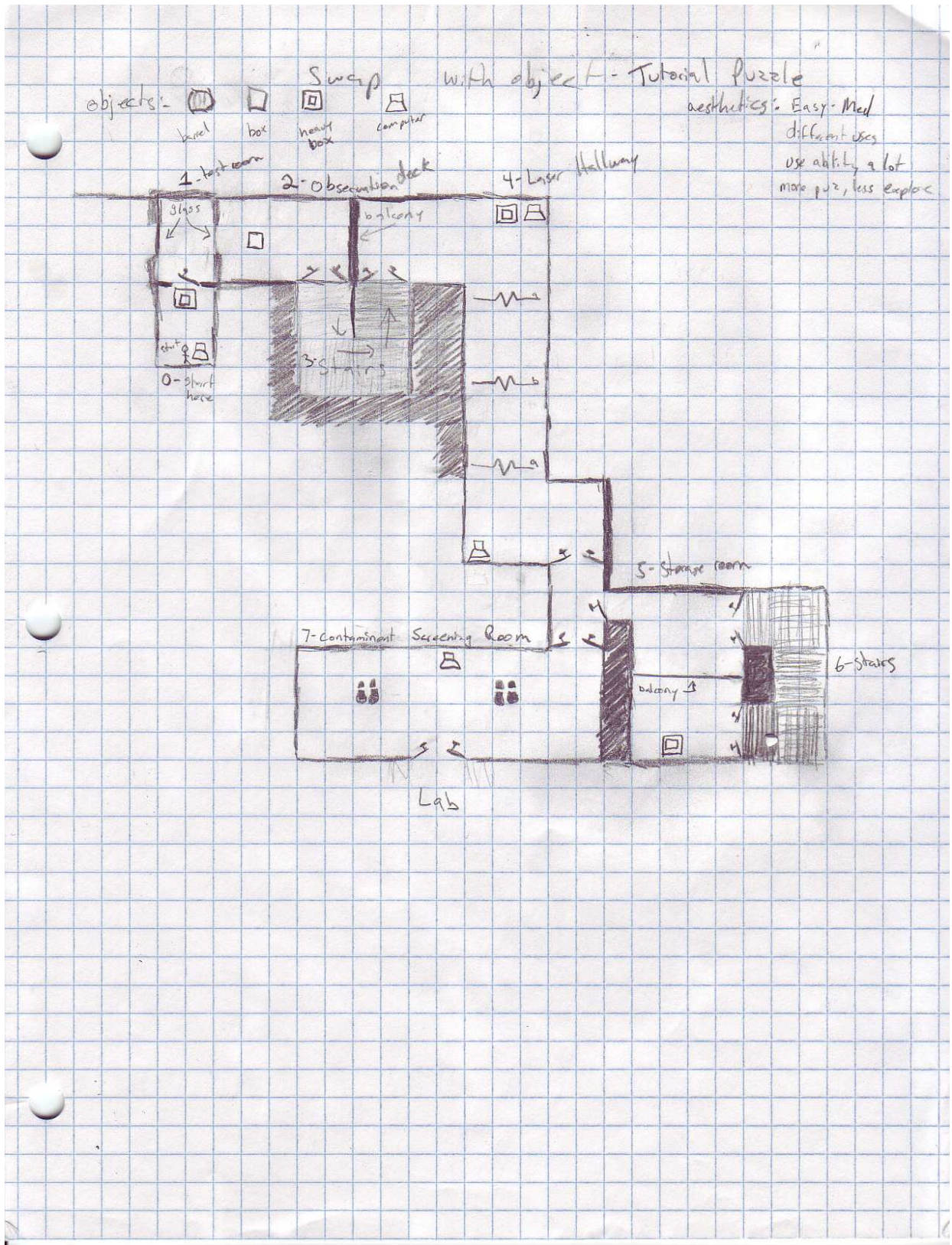
Camera cuts to pointed metal legs, spider-like, scuttling across the floor, it zooms out to reveal Merlin, a semi-decayed cyborg, who appears to have died in his early childhood. Merlin scuttles to a control panel, and after a bit of button mashing, Justine (now modified) sits bolt upright, and begins to scream at the top of her lungs, Edmunds is heard yelling "Shut her off, Merlin!" The noise stops abruptly, and Justine falls back onto the table

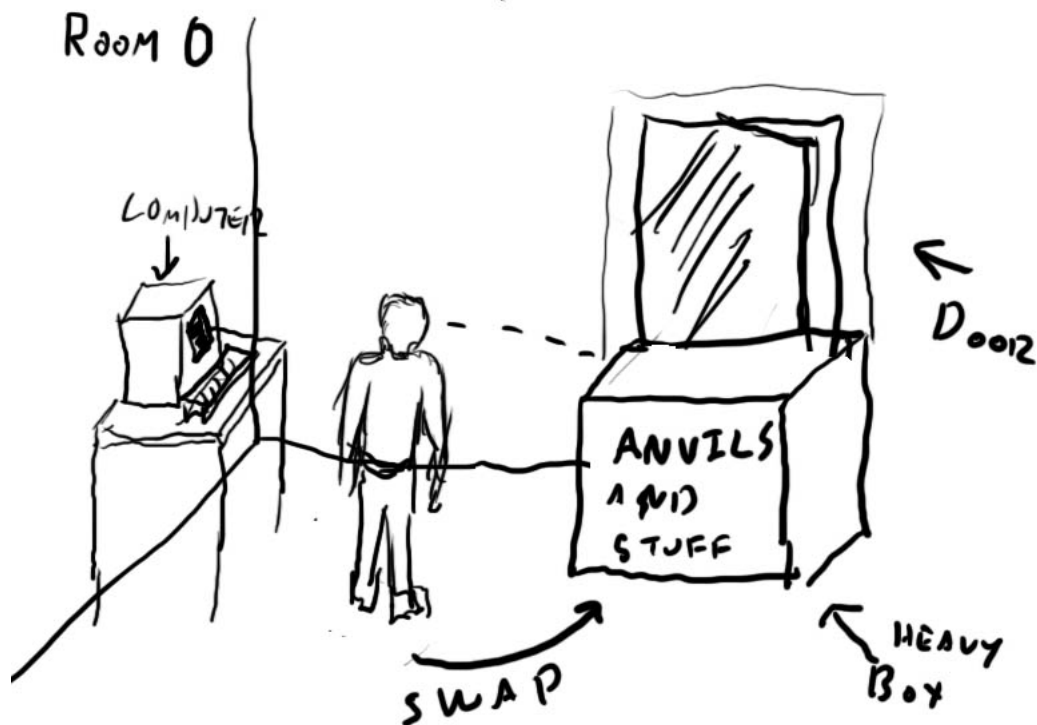
Dr. Edmunds: ...Damn it all, another screamer... I have a feeling this one is doomed to nonsentience, like all the others. Merlin, get the OCD bots to take her to Post-Op Room 4. I'm getting a nap; we'll give her an examination, and then incinerate her tomorrow morning, after we salvage the parts.



Camera fades to black, shuffling is heard, scene ends

Puzzle Storyboard





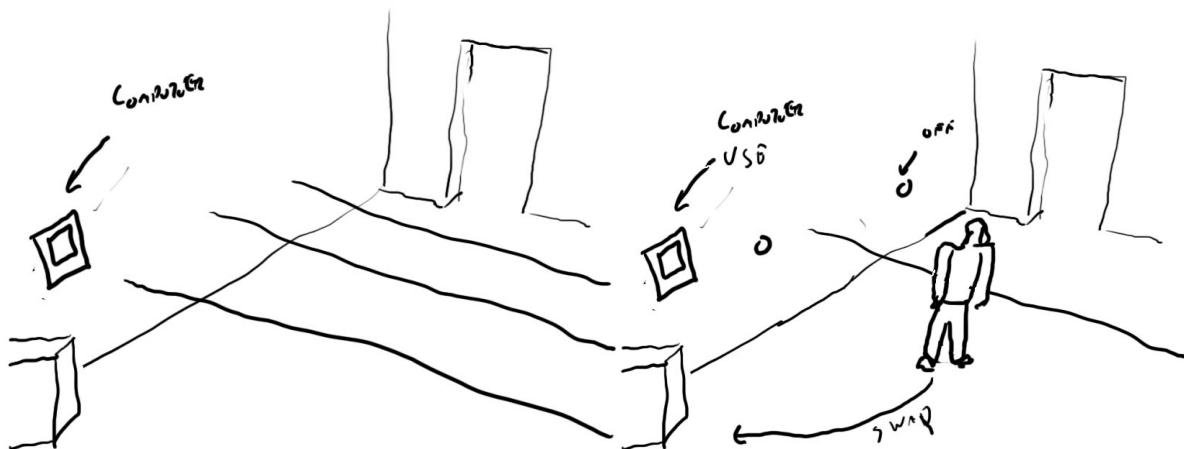
You arrive in "room 0" after getting the "swap" ability. A computer there will tell you some dark humor comment about the box blocking the doorway. You need to switch places with the box in order to go through the door.



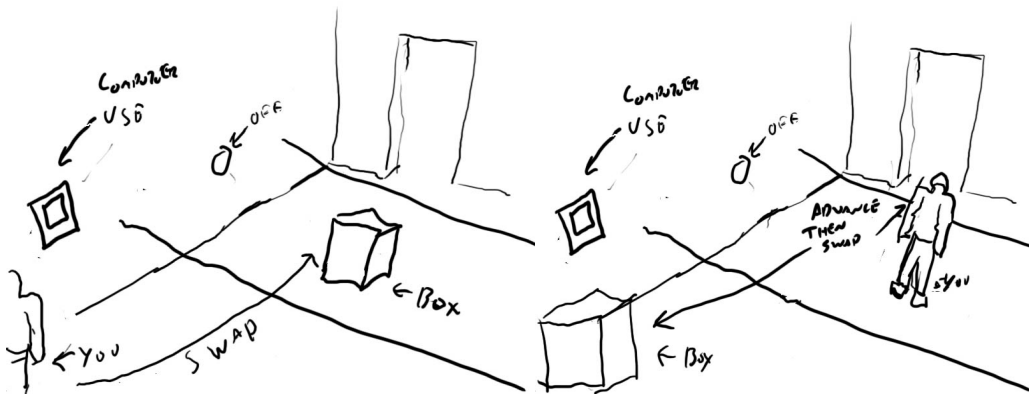
"Room 1" is a small, empty experimentation room with glass windows, and nothing in it. You can see a desk in "room 2" through one window. Swap places with that desk in order to get into "room 2."



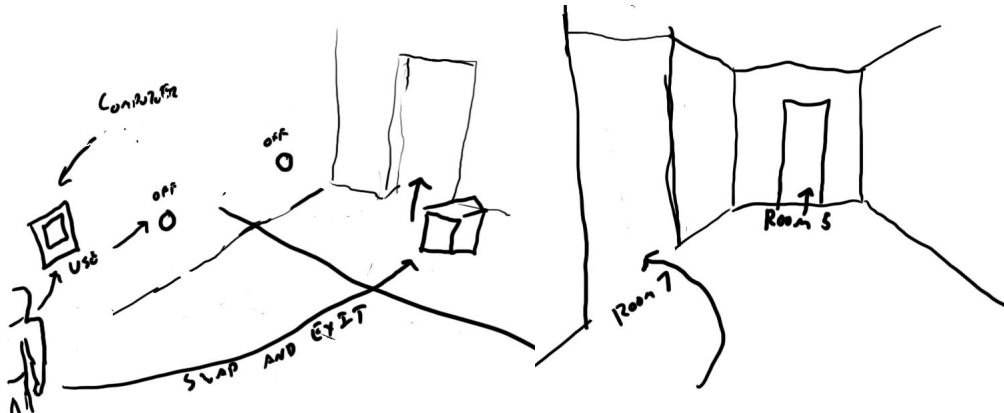
“Room 2” is an observation deck, from which a test sample in “room 1” can be observed. There isn’t much else to do in here besides go up the stairway (3) and into “room 4.”



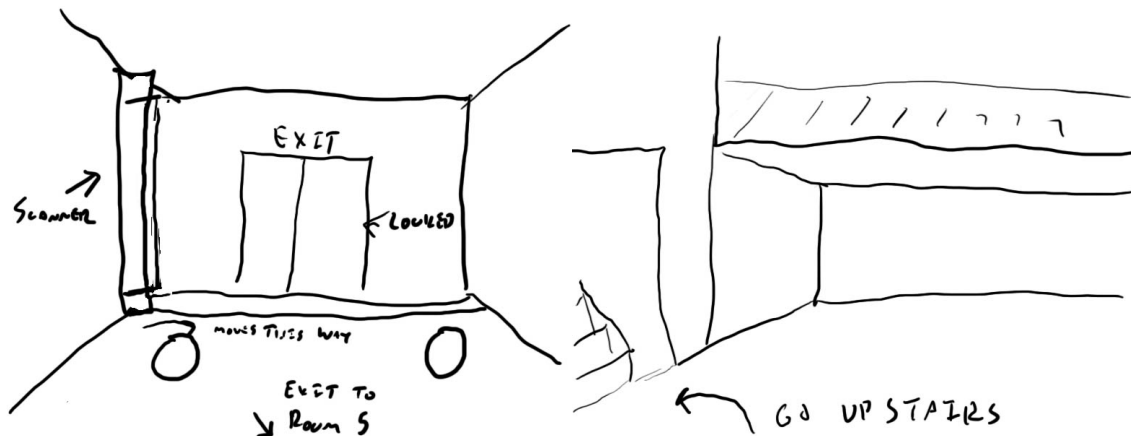
“Room 4” is a security hallway. On your side of the hallway is a box (or something) and a computer terminal. The terminal tells you that without the master code you need two people (one of which being a robot escort, most likely) and hints that getting across otherwise is futile. Through the hallway are three toggle-able laser barriers, the center one being off, and the outer two walls turned on. The terminal will allow you to toggle these walls on/off. The solution is to first turn off the outer walls. Then walk up to the middle wall (past where the first outer wall was).



Swap places with the box. Toggle the walls so that the outer walls are on, and the middle wall is off. Swap places with the box. Walk past where the middle wall was, up to the last wall, which is on. Swap places with the box.



- Go to the terminal, and toggle the walls yet again, so that the outer walls are off, and the middle wall is on. Swap places with the box. There is an identical terminal at the other end of the hallway, which makes sense, since people will be moving in both directions. This also allows you to go backwards. Exiting the hallway brings you to a 3-way intersection. Moving straight on ahead will take you to the last puzzle, in "room7."

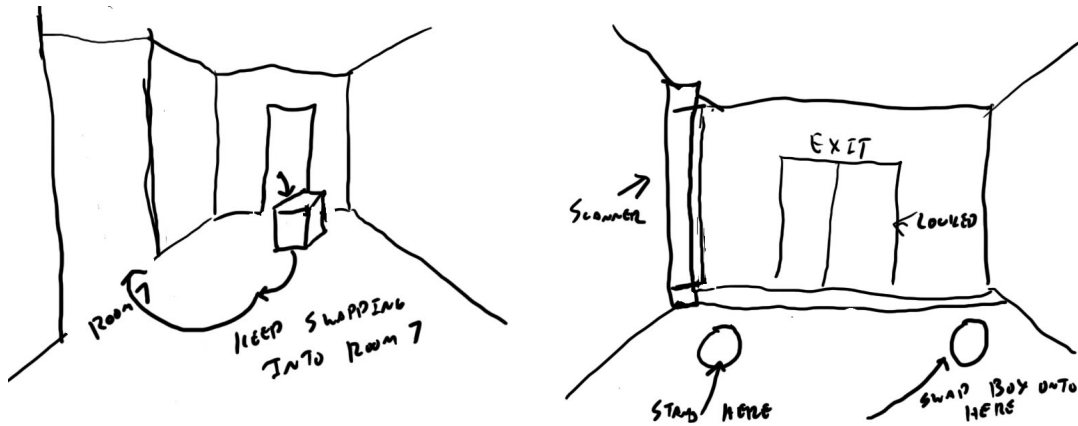


“Room 7” is a contaminant screening room. According to the convenient computer terminal, without the master password, you and your robot escort need to be scanned for anything that either shouldn't go into the examination area – or shouldn't get out of it. There are two screening booths that, upon activation, will both lock, and both booths will be scanned one at a time. The door will only open when both booths are scanned to have things in them, and both of those things aren't contaminated. There is nothing else in the room. To escape, you need to bring an object in from “room 5.”

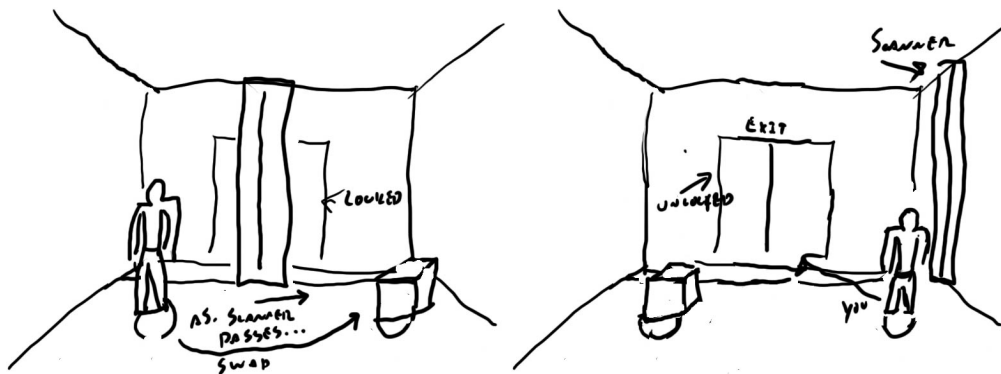
“Room 5” is a storage room. There are two levels to it, one of which is up a flight of stairs, and can be seen from below. There is a balcony that separates the two sections (in addition to the altitude change). The bottom level is for “clean tools,” but there is nothing in there to swap with. Up the stairs (6), are “hazardous materials and contaminants.”



There is a box of contaminants here that is swappable. Walk near the balcony, and swap with the contaminants so that the contaminants are visible from the lower level of “room 5.” Go to the lower level, and swap with the contaminants to bring the box down to the lower level.



Walk into the intersection, and swap again, and finally move into “room 7” and swap to bring the box into “room 7.” Walk into one of the screening booths, and swap the contaminants into the booth. Go to the terminal and tell it to start the screening process. The computer allows for enough time to get into the other screening booth.



In order to trick the machine into thinking both booths are contaminant-free, wait for the machine to finish scanning you, then while the machine slides across the room to screen the other booth, swap places with the box of contaminants. After being satisfied with the screening, the booths will unlock, and you will regain access to the rest of the lab again.

Climax Script

Nonsentience Climax Script

Edmunds: I have to admit, Delta, you’ve impressed me. I have to wonder how many others had your potential and I was simply too blind to see it. Imagine how much more we can learn together!

Delta: Don't misunderstand me; I'm grateful for what you've done. But I have no intention of sitting here and being your lab rat. You gave me life again, but now I'm going to go live it.

Edmunds: *pauses* ...you don't honestly believe that, do you? I agree, you truly are alive again, but have you even taken a look at yourself? Just what do you intend on doing once you walk outside? Who would possibly accept you?

Delta: I..

Edmunds: You were alone in your last life, and yet somehow you think it'll be different now that you look completely different? At least back then you could blend into a crowd. Where could you possibly go? It's not as if there are other people like you.

Delta: But I'm strong now! I can...

Edmunds: Quite. And how do you think people will react to that? These are the same people who were so cruel before, the people that left you cold and alone, the same people that caused you to destroy yourself. Yet now you want to place your faith in them? Face it, you belong here with me. People aren't ready for you, and they may never be.

Delta: No! I won't stay here. I never asked for this. I didn't come this far only to give up and resign myself to being trapped here.

Edmunds: What is so bad about this place? Aside from the overzealous security, there is no one to hurt you here. Here there is acceptance, here there is friendship, here there are no boundaries on what you can achieve, no constraints based on outdated ideologies. Here progress is held in the proper regard. Yes, there will always be failures, but once success comes, all the effort, all the blood sweat and tears are worth it. Why would you turn your back on this for the people who crushed your spirit?

Delta: I don't need people anymore. I am strong, and I am capable of making my own way. If I have to find somewhere peaceful where there are no people to be happy, so be it.

Edmunds: You don't get it at all do you? You're a monster to them, they will try to destroy you. Here you are safe. The outside invites only prejudice and disrepair.

Delta: I'm leaving, Doctor. Goodbye... and thank you.