This isn’t a ‘Development Record’. I hope, if anything, it provides the reader with some entertainment. I tried to keep this relevant to the project itself, but I also described some details about the places you can visit in the playable build that aren’t exactly visible or apparent.

It’s worth noting that as of 2013 (about 10 years since writing this) I have been experiencing nightmares likely due to some form of complex post-traumatic stress disorder. An interesting pattern I’ve noticed after several years is that they all take place in different locations in the same world. This project is an attempt to recreate this world in 3D so I can observe it in a ‘wakeful’ state, with the hopes that it’ll provide some therapeutic insight or, at the very least, catharsis. This document won’t talk about the contents of my nightmares, but interesting observations made during development.

Interesting observations. I call these observations because they are apparent symbolisms that I’ve noticed in this world that pertain to my outlooks on life, reality, society, and the many things about them that bother me. I don’t find it fair to make this a development record because these weren’t conscious choices to implement them, they were simply there already, if that makes any sense. I also don’t give credit to any of my thought processes in coming up with these symbols and metaphors, because they weren’t consciously placed but more so subconscious. These observations are like the way someone would attempt to interpret their own dreams, and when someone says to you “I want to tell you about a dream I had last night,” you’re typically in for a rather boring time. None of these observations come with any scientific or professional opinion, this is quite literally arm-chair psychology. This is also a rather deep dive into my personality, so be prepared to get to know me very well, arguably too well, but I’m an open book for anyone curious enough to read the text.

* I find it interesting that the Mental Hospital is across the road from the University, as well as just behind on the same road from the Military Base. More obvious that warfare is akin to mental illness, but school and academia as well? Upon not much thought I remembered: Ever since I can remember I’ve equated school to a prison or psych ward – barred or reinforced windows, no human rights, designed to keep people inside, systematically warping the most vulnerable people’s minds whether they be convicted felons or children or lost minds seeking guidance. There’s also the aspect of groupthink that applies to Academia and the Military that I find absolutely insane. The idea “I do it because that’s what everyone else does” is completely psychotic to me, and that type of illogical groupthink I find to be quite responsible for some of the worst things we do to each other as a society.
* I find it strange that the warehouse and industrial district is shaped like a peace sign when looked at from above, yet it is by far the most harrowing location – featuring such lovely places like warehouses, the office or hideout for organized criminal activity aka mafia, and the slaughterhouse which I can assure you, in my nightmares, isn’t used for farm animals.
* The Corpo Office is an interesting one. There’s definitely a lot of strong symbolism about capitalism in regard to that building:
  + The way it towers and lords over the city, can be seen from almost anywhere except the poor, run-down Warehouse District. A bit like money in civilization it looms over every activity and is almost invisible to the poor.
  + The way its shadow quite literally is cast over the town hall, Police Station, Fire Station, Hospital, and University speaks volumes about the way money governs our vital institutions and blocks them from the light, showering them in darkness.
  + Aesthetically, in my nightmares, the towering plaza is pristine and immaculate. Shiny, bright, and clean with perfect angles everywhere, full of all sorts of fun things like movie theatres, sports arenas, shopping malls, luxury hotels as well as stacks of offices all packed into this all-encompassing plaza, almost like a model capitalist eutopia. When inside it’s as if the outside world doesn’t need to exist, “it has everything.” Yet at the same time, it’s cold, sterile, soulless, competitive, and unfriendly. It has everything except genuine human connection, with so many fun distractions but nobody is smiling or laughing or enjoying themselves.
  + The proximity to the military base is telling. From almost every view in the city, the military base is mostly invisible; obscured by a forest and hidden away from society, an interesting metaphor in itself. However from the Military Base, the Corpo Office looms almost ominously directly over you, the only thing that stands out amongst the treetops. Or, if say from the upper floors of the Corpo Office, that is the only position to oversee the military, as if to say “War is big business” and inherently controlled by a capitalistic nature.
  + It literally feels like it owns the city. There’s a lot to unpack in just that sentence, as it does “feel” that way, and that “feeling” is hard to describe. It’s like a creepy feeling, but worse, like something awful is staring at you.
  + When you’re leaving the strip club, and look straight down the alleyway, you get a good view of the Corpo Office. Something about that feels like “When lust turns away from sex and goes down a dark alley, it takes you straight towards capitalism.” I could probably write another several thousand-word article on that idea.
  + It’s also a really easy route from the Crime Office and Slaughterhouse to get to the Corpo Office. Enough said.
* little interesting to be said about the housing “suburb” area, except for the distinct hierarchy of progressively nicer houses as it goes uphill towards the looming distant mountain.
  + There are two nice houses right next to each other that are worth noting. They are the home of two dream characters I have, and they are constantly bickering and fighting and stooping to terrible lows in some strange competition of “who is superior”, whatever that means. Dreams involving these two are typically incredibly sad. Interestingly it also takes centre stage amongst the other houses.
  + This area is exceedingly boring, and rarely do dreams or nightmares take place here. When they do, it is usually just passing through in some way. As an aside, it’s also worth noting that I never owned a home in these dreams, and I am either homeless or couch surfing or some mixture of both.
  + The Apartments and Fancy Apartments are typically just a setting for moments in dreams that take place in a fancy or otherwise apartment, good or bad, or anything in between. Most of the population lives in these buildings, and dream characters tend to identify with their floor numbers as if they were neighborhoods. Little more can be said about them.
* The commercial district also deserves its own small list of observations:
  + The overpass that is completely impractical and useless serves no other purpose than to be a nice view of the city to walk or drive on. I really like these walks or drives.
  + It would come as no surprise that this district is probably the most enjoyable, considering the activities there like bars, clubs, shops, and restaurants – it is by far the most communal and populated area in my dreams. It isn’t all good, of course, as the alleyways are typically even more populated with activity, good and bad.
  + The alleys and back-roads that link between everything are in fact as wide as the main streets, and they are host to all sorts of fun, strange, and scary activities. Things such as barbeques, impromptu concerts or parties, friendly and scary homeless people, drug deals, gang activity, prostitutes, gambling, fighting, and other such wild or hedonistic behaviour. Sometimes it’s fun, sometimes it’s wonderful, but it is also equally scary and dangerous, depending on where the dream goes or where I go in the dream.
  + The alleys are very repetitive and easy to get lost in, especially at night time or in dark settings. Typically in dreams or nightmares, it’s a situation where I have to keep my eyesight low towards the dark for incoming threats, and the only way to find my way out is to look up at the skyline, but the moment I do something will “get me”.
  + The nicer dreams typically tend to be parties or hangouts in these alleys and would feature fun and exciting excursions out to the main roads and establishments.
* The Island:
  + It’s far away, and a pain in the ass to get to. However, it’s a nice drive and quite scenic with flat ocean horizons all around you and the fresh air, the city far behind you, and the mountain far ahead. These moments would be incredibly peaceful, if not for the fact that I was on my way and had to go back to one of these islands soon, and any peace is always robbed by that anticipation.
  + At the ground level of the forward-facing side is a farm with big fields, though not all of it belongs to the farm. The farm is also owned by a mysterious old man who never speaks or looks anyone in the eye, and communicates only through facial expressions. Despite that, there’s something very calm about his demeanor and “vibe”, and when he’s around things feel safe immediately around me. Ironically, I only ever encountered him in some of the worst nightmares. I do not know this while dreaming but is only noticed in hindsight, and he appears in the city typically in the Warehouse district, and never the Commercial district. I have no idea what he represents.
  + The farm itself is quite peaceful, and in dreams I always find myself fantasizing about owning it. In real life however, I have absolutely zero inclination to own a farm per se, though I’m not opposed to growing food for myself and others, I do quite like that idea a lot and wish that was something we all could do (we can but I won’t get into that, another several thousand-word article right there). Bad dreams that occur here only happen when the farmer isn’t around, otherwise, the farm and its farmer together is one of the most peaceful spots in the entire place.
  + The far side of the island is also another nice spot to drive around. The entire circuit that wraps around both islands is a lot of fun to drive fast around, particularly with the change of scenery from city to countryside and the ocean bridge in between. The field on the far side of the island is either host to the more fun and enjoyable dreams taking place in large festivals or celebrations or features some of the more disturbing and nauseating dreams where I’ve woken up feeling sick, such as dreams taking place in a battlefield or strange blood-sport of some kind that everyone enthusiastically participates in except for me. I’m either forced to participate or am trying to escape it. Dreams here never feature the city as a setting, unless the mansion at the top of the mountain is featured, after that nothing makes sense.
  + The winding road leading up to the mansion is long and winding, and entirely obscured with trees on either side, with the rare glimpses of the city in the distance.
* The Gatsby/Somerton/Mason/Illuminati Mansion/Manor/Estate/Castle
  + This place is extremely weird.
  + When outside standing in front, the trees obscure the view from the top of the mountain. It’s almost as though whoever lives there didn’t select the spot for the view, but the isolated and hard-to-reach location.
  + It’s always visible, looming far in the distance even more ominously than the Corpo Office. You can never get a good view of it because it’s surrounded by trees, but the lights twinkle through the branches, and parts of its structure poke above the treetops. Sometimes there’s a blinking bright light, similar to a lighthouse seen in the distance, but not always.
  + The feeling of threat and dominating power of the Corpo Office is felt a hundred-fold by this mansion.
  + I call this place a mansion but it’s not the right description. In fact, I’m not sure what is. This place changes all the time, from dream to dream, and within the dream itself, everything from a mansion to a castle or church or Colosseum, sometimes made of stone, sometimes wood, sometimes new, sometimes old. I never noticed this while in the dream.
  + Dreams here are typically very trippy, sometimes quite fun and mysterious. But the nightmares are absolutely terrifying, and not in a disturbing or horrific way, but way more psychological; like I’m going mad, and feels like my mind is going to break or something.
  + There appears to be a group of people that live here. They’re not all related, some of them might be but I don’t know. It could be better described like the character in the game Clue in that they’re all very different people from one another, but not as color-coordinated. They’re eccentric, high and mighty, apathetic, and entirely unapproachable – the way I imagine billionaires or old money. I’m also convinced they’re not human, or not alive, or something. Like ghosts or vampires, something about them feels unreal. It also feels like they know everything.
  + I have no idea how I would be able to recreate this location in Unreal Engine as an explorable or interactive location. Not only with its changing structure, but the way the city changes shape, distance, orientation, or direction when viewed from the mansion. If this place were to be in a game, I imagine it would resemble the Elveden Hall in Suffolk, where the infamous Somerton Cult scene in ‘Eyes Wide Shut’ was filmed. Either that or Waddesdon Manor in Buckinghamshire.