

# Cinder Son – 2D Game Animator Pitch

**Project Title:** *Cinder Son*

**Studio/Team Name:** *Circus-Boy*

**Game Main Genre:** 2D Platformer -Metroidvania

**Game Secondary Genre:** Soulslike

**Art Style:** Hand-drawn 2D sprites and sprite sheet animation (inspired by titles like *Hollow Knight*, *Nine Sols*, and similar atmospheric games) with the Actual specific Art Style being a Hybrid of a comic/cell shaded artstyle and a secondary painterly/impressionistic artstyle.

**Development Platform:** Unity

## Short Introduction

This pitch is for 2D animators who are passionate about video games, have some free time, and are excited to commit to a long-term creative journey. It's especially suited for those who love Metroidvanias, Soulslikes, and richly layered worlds.

If you enjoy crafting moody environments, visualizing ancient civilizations, and animating monsters, gods, and fallen heroes, Cinder Son focuses heavily on those elements.

Cinder Son is built around deep lore, meaningful exploration, and environmental storytelling, with animation playing a key role in bringing the world and its characters to life.

We're looking for collaborators who are excited not just to "work on a game," but to build a living world that rewards curiosity and challenges player skill.

Important clarification upfront:

This project is not a job, There are no fixed hours, salaries, or deadlines imposed on contributors, Everyone involved works in their spare time, at a pace that fits their personal life , whether that's alongside a full-time job, university studies, or other projects.

In return, contributors earn real ownership percentages in the project, tied to long-term collaboration and contribution, rather than short-term pay, The goal is to build a small, committed creative team where each member has a genuine stake in the project.

## Story & Concept Summary

As of writing this, the game already features a well-developed lore, concept, and game mechanics. The summary below is a *very* condensed version to keep this document digestible. If it sparks your interest, please reach out, we'd love to share the full story, which makes up the bulk of our current material.

Please note: this isn't written in a traditional storytelling format. That's intentional. The game focuses heavily on environmental storytelling through scenery, NPCs, item descriptions, game events, side quests, and more so we don't necessarily need the story to be written "perfectly."



### Lore Overview

*Long ago, in a world shaped by gods, a powerful deity named **Valtoris**, guardian of life and vitality, defied the natural cycle of death. Obsessed with preserving life, he began harvesting the life force of mortals to forge eternal (but hollow) beings.*

*This defiance led the other gods to strip him of his name and cast him into **the Abyss of Unmaking**, a void of oblivion, But Valtoris did not perish, He consumed the*

remnants of lost souls in the abyss and reshaped himself into a dark god, **Valthorix**, the Shattered Divinity, a force of corrupted immortality and stolen essence.

After eons, Valthorix escaped the Abyss, bringing with him a plague of creatures called **Saperns** (constructed from stolen life essence and vitality), along with five fallen gods, twisted by his influence to serve as his generals.

Bound by divine law that forbade gods from killing their own, the pantheon dispatched **Caelthorin**, the Eternal Sentinel, a god of their own, to **imprison** Valthorix using the **Celestial Weave**, a sacred fabric capable of binding gods.

After a cataclysmic battle, Caelthorin, forced to improvise, shattered Valthorix's physical form and imprisoned them both beneath a remote island, To ensure secrecy and prevent mortals from ever discovering the prison (the Celestial Weave only binds gods, not mortals), the gods sealed the underground with a colossal stone.

Unbeknownst to Caelthorin, the island was home to a society of humanoid lifeforms who used the underground as their home, These beings were now sealed underground with Caelthorin and Valthorix, cut off from divine contact.

Caelthorin, remorseful, dedicated himself to protecting and advancing the trapped society by creating gardens, buildings, fighting off the immortal Saperns and generally advancing their civilization using his powers and helping their survival.

Over the centuries, Caelthorin's godhood faded due to severed divine ties. He died in a place later known as **Caelthorin's Rest**, Without his essence to suppress Valthorix's, the dark god's influence began to seep out, manifesting as a mysterious soul-consuming disease called **The Cinderblight**.

## **Present Day**

Centuries later, a brilliant man from a prestigious, technologically advanced race seeks a cure for his wife, who suffers from the **Cinderblight**, Inspired by a rumor from an afflicted adventurer, he journeys to the island prison, leaving behind his newborn son, miraculously born while his mother was dying.

The man and adventurer vanish.

Nineteen years later, that son (**the player character**) has grown up, unaware of his father's fate, He bears a unique **cybernetic arm**, crafted by his father in anticipation of the journey, His original arm was removed at birth, corrupted by the disease.

After discovering the truth about his past, the protagonist ventures to the island in search of answers, Once there, a servant of Valthorix, the same adventurer who once tricked his father, **traps him**, The servant intends to groom the son as a vessel for Valthorix's reawakening.

*In the depths, the player discovers:*

- *Remnants of lost civilizations*
- *Twisted Sapern beasts*
- *Scattered survivors afflicted by the Cindeblight who were gathered by valthorix's servants (mortals bearing Valthorix's essence, and thus trapped by the Celestial Weave)*

*The player learns that his father **led a resistance** against Valthorix and became a symbol of hope. His ultimate fate, however, is still unknown.*

*Guided ironically by the same adventurer who betrayed his family, the player may gradually absorb Valthorix's power. As this transformation unfolds, he must choose: succumb to the dark god's influence, or complete a secret divine weapon left behind by his father, a construct of celestial energy capable of **erasing gods**.*

## **Core Features & Planned Mechanics**

- **Semi-choice driven storyline** with **3 defined endings** based on player decisions.
  
- **Soulslike 2D combat system** featuring:
  - Parrying
  - Stance system
  - Stagger attacks
  - Special skills
  - A **grappling hook** used in both combat and platforming.
  
  - Wide variety of enemies and bosses which require mastering different playstyles and mechanics
  
- **One main currency** used throughout the entire game called "**Sapern resin**" :
  - Gathered from quests and directly from defeating saperns.

- Used as a currency among the survivors in the underground to buy all sorts of stuff (like materials for mechanical upgrades) and also used directly for player Mystical upgrades.
  - Lost on death like runes in souls games and can be recovered in the next life.
- Strong focus on **side quests, optional characters, and missable content** that rewards exploration and curiosity.
- **Dual-path upgrade and power up system:**
    - **Mechanical path:** upgrades to the cybernetic arm, grappling hook, main weapon, and other tools.
    - **Mystical path:** mystical abilities derived from Valthorix's essence, both passive and active.
- Fully planned **diegetic UI and in-game menus**, just waiting to be drawn and animated.
- **Comprehensive crafting and base development system:**  
Materials gathered from exploration, quests and defeated Saperns can be refined into advanced mechanical components, mystical reagents, and upgrades for weapons, tools, and abilities.

The player can rebuild and expand Caelthorin's Rest (the game's hub), construct machines, refining resources, and restore remnants of their father's old inventions.

Over time, the player can automate certain processes, delegating tasks to rescued survivors (like collecting materials and crafting items);

- **Rescue and Recruitment System:**  
Throughout the exploration of the game's world, the player can find survivors captured or lost within the ruins and Sapern

territories, Rescuing them and bringing them back to Caelthorin's Rest can unlock new dialogue, new shops, crafting specialists and base functions.

Some survivors can even join automated tasks or unlock unique side quests, expanding gameplay options as well as the capabilities and liveliness of the base.

## Basic Gameplay Loop

At its core, *Cinder Son* follows A classic **Metroidvania** gameplay loop:

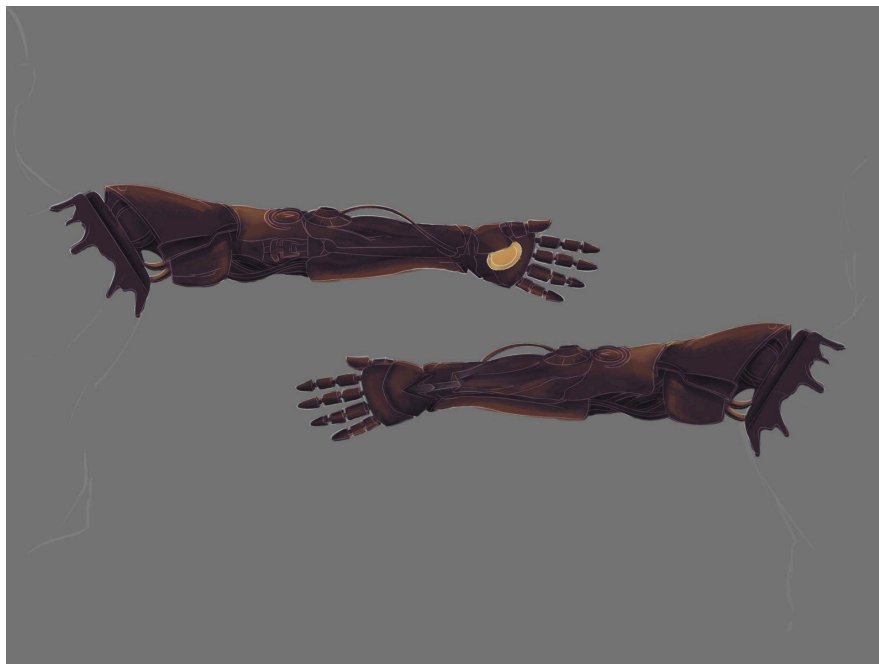
- Blind exploration of a massive, interconnected underground world
- Challenging platforming sequences and harsh enemy encounters
- Discovering **lore, secret items, NPCs, and new traversal abilities**
- Progressing the **resistance** against Valthorix's forces and defeating his **five generals**
- Uncovering the **truth about the world, the gods, and the player's own nature**

At a pivotal moment, the player is forced to **choose a path**, not fully knowing where it leads, culminating in one of three distinct game endings.

## Storytelling model

*Cinder Son's* world is designed with a deep Soulslike spirit and philosophy, layered, mournful, and full of quiet storytelling . Every ruin, mechanism, structure, tool and creature reflects the history and story of the game, every location breathes the consequences of divine conflict and mortal persistence, Lore is revealed not through exposition, but through active exploration and curiosity.

## Current main character 3d concept art



## 2 in game sprites and a sword prop





## A Little About the Team

We are currently a small team of three: two highly experienced programmers/Unity developers and one 2d artist, all of us grew up playing video games and developed a deep love for the **Metroidvania** and **Soulslike** genres.

We're 23, 20, and 21 years old , and we've been working on *Cinder Son's* concept and development in unity for half a year and we're now looking for a **2D animator** to join us on this journey and help bring our vision to life.

## How to Contact Us

If you've read this far and feel interested, or even just curious about the project, we'd absolutely love to hear from you.

Feel free to contact whenever you like through this post or via email at:

 [teamcircusboy@gmail.com](mailto:teamcircusboy@gmail.com)