

HOW IT WAS MADE

# PIT TACTICS

A turn-based isometric tactics game in which every sprite, prop, effect and sound was generated with Scenario, then assembled by an AI agent (Claude Code) working through Scenario MCP.

15

animated units: 10 plus 5 zombies

121

image-to-video clips

17

effect sheets generated, 13 shipped

8

prop sheets, intact and wrecked

22

music and sound files

4,154

Scenario credits in total

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[Scenario MCP ↗](#)

A real frame of the game: a sniper sets off a fuel barrel as the Warden fires.



# A ONE-LEVEL TACTICS GAME ON THE ISO CYCLES WORKFLOW

The request: a short turn-based game on a 5x5 board with ten characters, effect sprite sheets, board-game movement and strong death effects, built on the Iso Cycles workflow.

## THEME

StarCraft-inspired, dark and gritty. Penal Legion 13, five convict soldiers, against the Vorr Swarm, five alien creatures. The roster asked for a giant armoured soldier, a flamethrower, a medic and a sniper.

## THE TWIST

When a human dies, the body stays on the deck. The Swarm's Spitter can cover it in green goo and raise it as a zombie; the Incinerator can burn it first.

## THE RULE

Generate every asset in Scenario: images, animation, sprite sheets, video and sound. Local scripts only key, loop, pixelate and pack what Scenario produced.



The finished mission map at the start of a game: the Legion on the left, the dormant Swarm across the pit, hive nests on the right edge and the evac lift in the top corner.

[Iso Cycles exploration ↗](#)

# EVERY UNIT DRAWN TWICE ON FLAT MAGENTA

GPT Image 2.5 drew each unit as a two-pose sheet: turned toward the viewer (south-east) and away (north-east), on #FF00FF for keying. The other two directions are mirrors.



## FROM THE WARDEN'S STILL PROMPT

"Camera: classic isometric RPG view, seen from about 30 degrees above. Left pose: body turned three-quarters toward the viewer, facing down and to the right (south-east). Right pose: body turned three-quarters away from the viewer, facing up and to the right (north-east)."

## SETTINGS

1536 x 1024, quality high, opaque background, two outputs per call. After the first unit of each side was approved, it became the style reference for the rest of that side.

## A REDESIGN

The first Warden was a power-armoured space marine. The edit to remove its skull emblem was refused by the provider's filter as a protected franchise design, so the unit was redrawn from scratch as a convict in a crudely converted mining exosuit.

## THE KEY COLOUR

Every Swarm prompt carries "No purple, no pink", so no part of a creature is keyed out with the background.



# TEN UNITS, AND FIVE THAT COME BACK

Penal Legion 13, the Vorr Swarm and the five zombies, at their shipped pixel heights (64 to 100 px), first idle frame of each.

PENAL LEGION 13: WARDEN, INCINERATOR, DEADEYE, MEDIC, DEMOLISHER



VORR SWARM: CARAPACE, RIPPER, SPITTER, BROOD MOTHER, SYNAPSE



ZOMBIES: EACH HUMAN STILL EDITED BY GPT IMAGE 2.5, SAME POSES, THEN ANIMATED LIKE THE REST



FROM THE ZOMBIE EDIT PROMPT

“Keep the exact same two poses, facings, positions, size, silhouette, armor design, number 13 and pixel art style ... the armor is cracked and split open in places, with dark crimson-brown alien chitin plates and raw dark-red flesh growths bursting through the seams.”



The first Demolisher, a grenadier with a shoulder mortar, was rejected as a concept. Its replacement, a rusted two-legged cargo walker with a six-tube rocket pod, was approved as a still before any clip was paid for.

# KLING V3 ANIMATES EVERY CYCLE

Each two-pose still was split and reframed into two 960 x 960 first frames: the figure at 58% of the height, feet on a fixed baseline, room above for a raised weapon or a leap.



- WALK first frame only, 3 s: the unit walks "like a treadmill" and stays centred
- IDLE, ATTACK first frame = last frame, 3 s: the clip returns to rest
- DEATH south-east only, 5 s: the body falls and stays down
- ALL 1:1, audio off, a shared negative prompt against side views, camera moves and shadows

WALK TEMPLATE (TOOLS/PROMPTS.PY)

"Pixel art game sprite animation, like a treadmill: the {who} immediately starts walking in place and keeps walking for the whole clip, a steady repeating walk cycle at a relaxed pace ({walkdesc}). {he} always faces diagonally toward the bottom-right corner of the frame ... never turning to a side view."



Raw Kling frames, Warden south-east walk.



Raw Kling frames, Warden death: sparks, the visor goes dark, he falls forward.

To save uploads, the first frames of a batch were tiled into one 4 x 4 grid, uploaded once and cut back apart with Scenario's Image Slicer.

# FOUR CLIPS THAT HAD TO BE REDONE

BACK VIEW TURNS TO CAMERA

The Deadeye's north-east walk turned toward the viewer. Re-rolled with the Iso Cycles back-view fix: a "seen from behind" prompt, the end frame pinned to the first and a 5 s clip. The same form was then used for every zombie back view.



A TAIL APPEARS

The Carapace grew a tail mid-walk. Re-rolled with "It has no tail" in the prompt and "tail" in the negative.



EFFECTS CUT AT THE FRAME EDGE

Flames and smoke ran out of the clip and ended in a hard cut. Attacks were re-rolled with "no fire, no flames, no smoke"; Kling still adds a small nozzle flash, so the keyer fades the frame edge and the game draws the fire itself.



WALKER LEGS TANGLE

The cargo walker's bird legs crossed and its body turned. Re-rolled as 5 s clips, end frame pinned, with "the two legs always stay apart side by side and never cross or tangle".



# LOOP, KEY, PIXELATE, MIRROR

LOOP WINDOW

For walk and idle, a search over every start and period picks the window whose last frame flows back into its first; 8 frames are sampled from it.

DEATH WINDOW

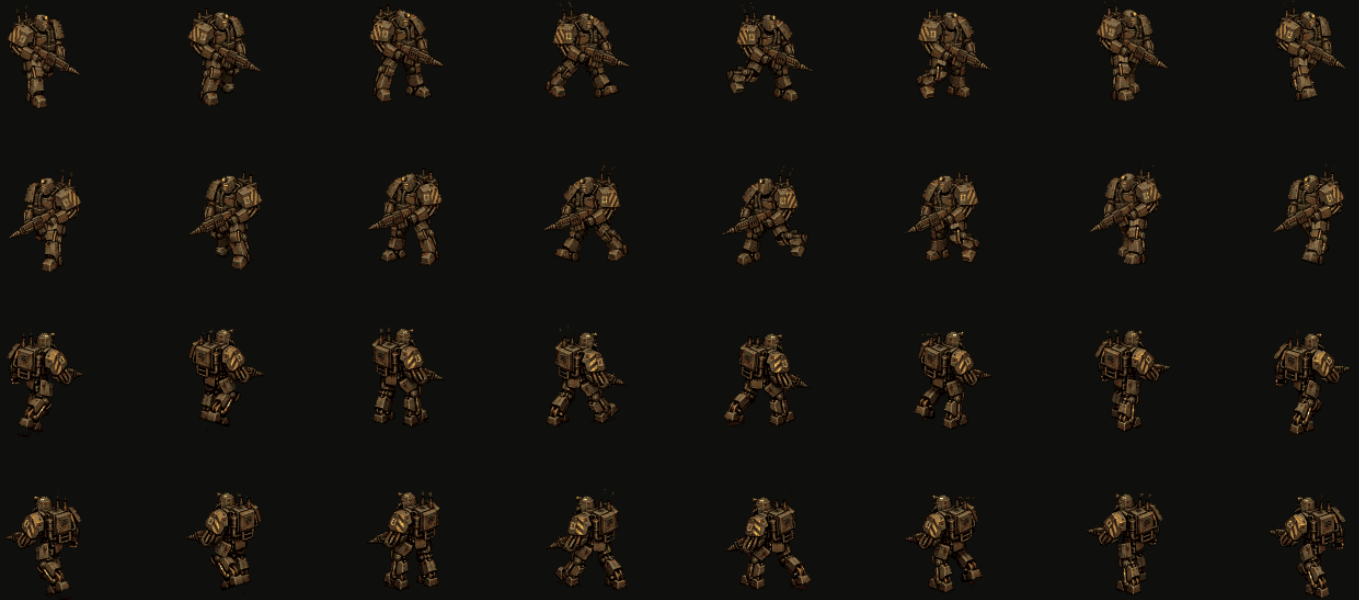
Added for this game: from the first frame that leaves the rest pose to the frame where the body settles and stays, sampled to 12 frames.

KEY AND EDGE FADE

Magenta becomes alpha, the purple ground shadow with it. Alpha fades out within about 90 px of the video edge, with a Bayer dither on partial alpha, so anything leaving the frame dissolves.

PIXEL FINISH

One shared canvas per unit, an area-average downscale to its height, a small contrast lift, one 24 or 28 colour palette and a redrawn 1 px outline. South-west and north-west are mirrors.



The Warden's walk sheet: 8 frames, rows SE, SW, NE, NW.



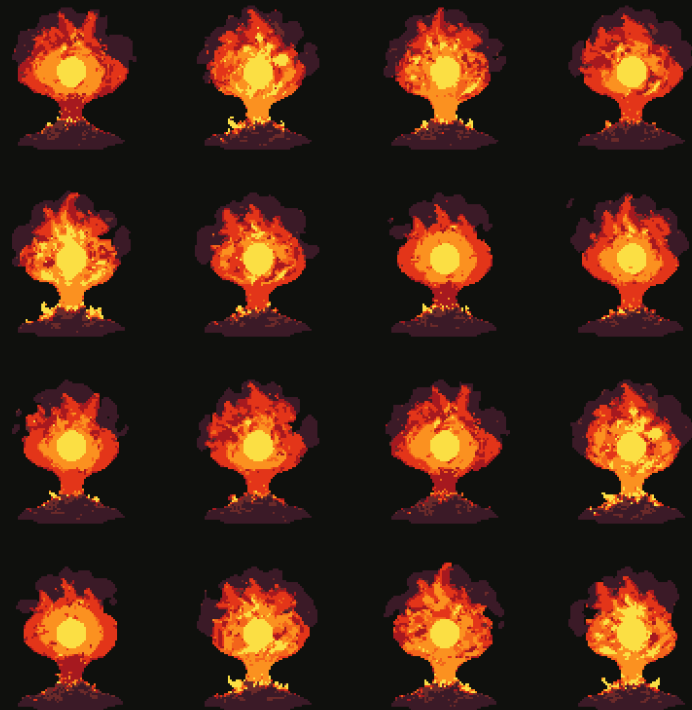
The Warden's death, 12 frames.

# SEVENTEEN EFFECT SHEETS FROM A PIXEL ANIMATION MODEL

Retro Diffusion Animation, style vfx, returned each effect as a 4 x 4 sheet of 16 frames at 64 or 96 px, from a one-line prompt and a fixed seed.



Frame 6 of each shipped sheet: explosion, acid, spore, psychic, heal, goo, dust, sparks, blood, fire, rail, slash, gas.



EXPLOSION, 96 PX

"big fiery explosion burst, bright yellow core, orange and red flames, rolling black smoke, flying debris, dark gritty sci-fi war"

## RE-ROLLS

The railgun hit failed on the provider side and was re-run with a new prompt and seed. The goo came back on a red background, the heal read as a swoosh and the sparks included a turret; all three were re-rolled with "isolated effect" in the prompt.

## DRAWN IN CODE

The game places muzzle flashes, three rivet tracers, a seven-stage flame stream and a three-rocket salvo along the line of fire itself, from these sheets and simple drawn tracers, so no effect depends on the edge of a clip.

# PROPS THAT BURN, BLOCK AND BREAK

The 5x5 board grew into a 10x8 mining platform. Each prop was drawn as a pair on magenta, intact on the left and destroyed on the right, with an approved unit still as the style reference, and split by the same keyer.



Intact and wrecked: barrel, gas tank, sandbags, crate, ore cart, hive nest, the two pillars, and the evac lift powered down and lit.



BARREL SHEET

“Left: an intact rusty red industrial fuel barrel, standing upright, dented steel with ribbed bands, peeling yellow-and-black hazard stripes ... Right: the same barrel after exploding: burst open from the inside, the top torn into jagged scorched metal petals.”

- FUEL BARREL explodes on the 3 x 3 around it, sets fire, chains
- GAS TANK a toxic cloud for 3 turns, both sides
- SANDBAGS half cover; shots pass over
- CRATE full cover; the wreck still gives half
- ORE CART a slam shoves it into whatever is behind
- HIVE NEST spawns Rippers; destroy both to power the lift



The Incinerator selected: amber tiles are where it can move this turn.

# A SCORE, 21 EFFECTS AND A SWARM THAT THINKS

ELEVENLABS MUSIC V2.5, 90 S INSTRUMENTAL LOOP

“Dark, gritty sci-fi war soundtrack for a turn-based tactics game set in an abandoned mining pit overrun by an alien swarm. Instrumental loop at 92 BPM in D minor. Industrial percussion ... no fade out at the end so it loops cleanly back to the start.”

Sonilo V1.1 generated 21 sound effects from one-sentence prompts, 1 to 4 seconds each: rivet burst, flamethrower, railgun, stim, rocket salvo, explosion, slash, slam, acid, spores, psychic blast, two deaths, zombie rise, two kinds of footsteps, armour hit, interface click, the Swarm's turn, victory and defeat.



The original 5x5 board, kept in the game as Skirmish.

## THE SWARM

Scores every move and target, shoots barrels when soldiers stand next to them unless it would be caught in the blast, and spreads its attacks on Easy and Normal instead of focusing the Medic. In the mission it stays dormant until the Legion comes within three or four tiles.

## PLAYTESTS

Automated games with an AI on both sides tuned it: the first mission build woke the whole Swarm on turn 1 and wiped the Legion by turn 7 on Normal. With a dormant Swarm and slower nests, Normal was won on turn 12 with all five alive, and Hard was a close fight with one survivor.

## FROM PLAY

Played-in feedback set the Warden to three shots, raised human damage, let the Incinerator move diagonally, gave the Ripper a leaping arc and made a tile that is both a move and a target always move first.

# 4,154 CREDITS, 188 GENERATIONS

| STEP                                    | MODEL                     | JOB | CREDITS |
|-----------------------------------------|---------------------------|-----|---------|
| Unit clips                              | Kling V3 I2V Standard     | 121 | 3,288   |
| Stills, zombies, props, floor, backdrop | GPT Image 2.5             | 28  | 527     |
| Effect sheets                           | Retro Diffusion Animation | 17  | 255     |
| Music loop                              | ElevenLabs Music v2.5     | 1   | 60      |
| Sound effects                           | Sonilo V1.1               | 21  | 24      |

**Total** **188** **4,154**

Summed from the credit cost each job reported. A 3 s clip cost 24 credits and a 5 s clip 40. The two Image Slicer runs reported no cost, and one failed effect job reported 15 credits; it is included. Keying, looping, pixelating and packing ran locally at no cost.

The page plays the game in the browser. Its agent skill packages this route (two-pose stills, clips per cycle, effect and prop sheets, sound, and the processing scripts) so an agent can build a cast and a level for its own game through Scenario MCP.

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