Reflection 1: How to Host a Dungeon

Nianyi Wang

I just played this week's reflection game with my classmates Zhuowen & Yichi in my apartment. The reason I wanted to play with them is that the manual is soooo full of words, and I'm always getting headaches facing an abundant amount of texts. By playing it together, there's so much more fun and we could split the tasks so that each of us could do what we're good at. I did the drawing, Yichi read the manual, and Zhuowen played as the director. It's really funny when we tried to add in trolling elements into our map. We were laughing the whole time. I hardly found there were any challenge in this game, as there's no winning or failure condition throughout the time we were playing. We played it on a whiteboard with erasable markers. When we were moving onto the next age, I accidentally "killed" a drawf. But as we moved into the monster age, the manual required us to use the "monster cards", but we couldn't find them in the manual. Zhuowen searched for it online, only to find that it's sold at a price. We all agreed that it's been a satisfying experience so far and we could stop right there.

Analyzing the mechanism of the game, I don't find it quite procedural actually. I mean, although the players are indeed following the manual to draw/create the map, but the instructions are so vague. It is very common to find at a later stage that the previously drawn layout is too narrow/nonsense for the background settings, or run into various other problems like the pen stroke is too thick, something is hard to draw, but most often times it's the scaling problem. There are too much freedom so it's hard to control the generation to lead to a (perfectly) good result. I think that it would be better if the game is played on a grid paper and the manual defines a rough scale for every element.

A white board with a drawing on it

Description automatically generatedA drawing on a whiteboard

Description automatically generated

A drawing of a map

Description automatically generatedA map of a mountain

Description automatically generated with medium confidence