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INFSCI 1450 Game Design  
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## **Xia's Revenge Main Document**

### **Overview Statement**

Xia's Revenge tells a story of love-turned-hatred, of loss of family, of a chosen family built on close friendship, and of revenge and protection of homeland. As a multiplayer social-deduction and card game combination, Xia's Revenge is set in the empire of JiangHu, where martial arts skills determine one's strength. With six unique characters guided only by their conscience (or lack thereof), it's a race of revenge and elimination.

Who is friend or foe? Dilemmas to trust or not to trust jumps at you throughout gameplay and you must keep surviving and learn to use your given resources to protect, or to destroy.

### **Audience**

Xia's Revenge's target Audience is any tabletop lover interested in social deduction, specifically open for anyone ages 14 and up, no gender preference. Research into similar games (Werewolf, Avalon, Deception, etc) have recommendation for around 13/14 years of age. This recommendation is out of consideration that for younger children it might be difficult to comprehend as it is a bit complex, and characters may be scary to children.

### **Currently Supported Platform**

Only Tabletop Board Game

Why? Only through tabletop and in person can make players feel an intense and role-playing experience with Xia's Revenge as the actions are collaborative and affect multiplayer. After character is assigned, every expression, every action of a player can become clues to deducing what their role is. Additionally, Xia is a card-set game, which makes it hard to shuffle and assign cards easily if not in person as tabletop, which takes away from player experience. Of course, if there's future implementation of the game onto mobile platform, there may be OS system requirements, but as of now, the game is purely designed for tabletop.

### **Similar Games and Inspiration:**

Mafia (Social Deduction RPG)

Werewolf by Stellar Factory (Social Deduction game)

Deception: Murder in Hong Kong (Social deduction to find the culprit)

Avalon - Role playing and task completion (two teamed social deduction – task completion)

Exploding Kittens (Inspired by it's action cards, formed a basis for the magic cards in Xia)

Why Xia's Revenge Stands Out:

How Xia's Revenge differs is the brand-new context of the backstory. Also, for the previously mentioned social deduction games, a card deck is provided to distribute the roles, afterwards, it could almost run itself. Players miss out as not much tabletop gaming is experienced. Xia's Revenge is built almost as a combination of Mafia/Werewolf and Exploding Kitten. While being

able to experience social deduction of everyone's character, it's also very card-action heavy, allowing everyone to engage with what's happening in the middle of the table.

### Gameplay Rules:

- Game is for 6 players, future expansion supporting 8/9 players
- Time board is from 0 to 30, every time a basic number card is played, the time board will add by the number played. Whichever player causes the board to go over 30 will die and the time board will reset to 0.

26	27	28	29	30
21	22	23	24	25
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1	2	3	4	5

- Character card determines a player's role from the beginning and the strategy they need to take to win the game
  - Magic cards are played to unveil a magic action
  - Basic Number cards 1-3
  - Infinite rounds until one team wins
  - Each player draws a character card
    - Xia (main character on side of good) - Keepsake can turn back time, clearing to zero once during gameplay (has to be Xia's turn)
    - Assassin (side of good)
    - Sidekick (side of good) - knows Xia
    - Healer (side of good) - has one revival chance to use on any player (if they are alive)
    - Demon (big boss - side of evil)
    - Demonite (side of evil) - knows the two players Demon and Sidekick (but not who is who)
  - Deal three cards to each player after character assignment
- At the beginning, the Time board is set at zero. One round is an iteration clockwise from a chosen player (oldest person in the room, youngest, unique trait collectively chosen)

### Play turn:

- Player starts off by playing a card. Has to play a card each turn. If a player runs out of cards, they are out of the game, and their character is revealed.

- Magic cards can play a card to a specific magic
  - Time card -5 or +5; Whoever goes over 30 will automatically die
  - Swap hands; switch all cards at hand with another player
  - Cancel; reject any magic cards played against you or any other player (except Revive)
  - Steal; randomly taking a card from any other player you choose
  - Revive (cannot be canceled)
  - Attack; forcing a player to play a card. Player can attack on attack. This creates an attack loop. Attack does not compile. If player 1 attacks player 2, player 2 plays attack on player 3. Player 3 forcibly plays a card (let's say a random number card). Player 3's turn ends, Player 2's turn ends, and continues from the end of player 1 (aka, next person after player 1).
  - Reverse; being able to reverse the ongoing direction
  - Magic Card: option to play as any magic card (aside from Swap and Revive)

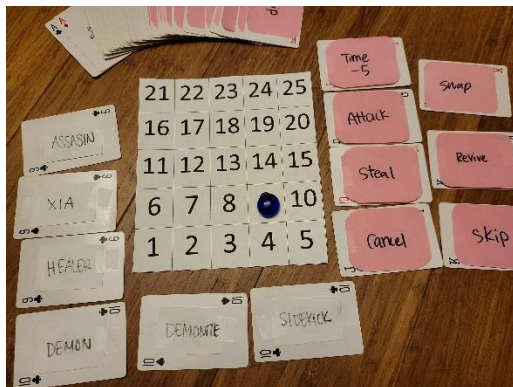
After each round (each player has a single turn), there is a Q&A time where each player has the opportunity to probe another player with a directed question (optional)

How to die:

1. If your played card causes the time board to go over 30, you (alone) are out
2. At your turn, you do not have any cards to play
3. You are killed through attack by another player

If a player dies within a round, the game stops for discussion time, where the players take turns explaining their deduction. The game ends when one team is completely obliterated, or when Kia is killed.

**Test run:**



After generating the Concept Document on how the basic features of the game will play out, a paper prototype was generated, and test run with 6 players. Through the test run, several game rules were overturned and further adjusted with feedback from players.

## Playtest Feedback & Key Adjustments

- “Time card should have a plus in addition to just -5. Or alternative option for the same magic card to add. I was the Demonite, and I didn't want to just like play the card, so I just kept it in my hand the longest time.”
- [Cancel cards too sparse]
- [Revive should have an alternative action, or not require two of revive]
- “Just an idea. Would be kinda cool to add character skills than just getting a role name.”
- Edge cases:
  - ran into situation where player had to play a card, but they were left with one revive and a cancel. There was nothing to cancel and the revive only worked with two cards.
  - Initial rule was for player to draw a card at the beginning of turn, which always guaranteed a player to have a card to play. A player's handcards were all taken through steal, but is the player still in the game?
- Magic Cards number should increase:
  - Time subtraction x8
  - Cancel x8 (feature cannot cancel revive, and feedback to increase the number)
  - Steal x8
  - Attack x8
  - Swap x8
  - Revive x2
  - Reverse [added] x8
  - Magic Card [added] x4
- Added magic cards (There wasn't enough cards, which resulted in continuous shuffling of the discarded pile)
  - Reverse; being able to reverse a direction
  - Magic Card: option to play as any magic card (aside from swap and revive)

## Features and Development:

To build a complete model of Xia's Revenge, which more test runs and prototyping, which will aim to add the following features in 12 months' time:

- Design for Game Box
- Design for Rule book, introducing game play in water calligraphy style and covering instructions for more edge cases
- Finetuning character's unique skills and how it can be utilized more in gameplay

Xia's Revenge will be very art-intensive, as the character role and story is intended to be told through its visuals. The art style will play a large part into building the gaming experience. The game box's art will be digital drawing style with lots of natural landscaping (of waterfall, traditional pavilions, lakes, mountains, and the interflow between all the features) while the

character cards are in water calligraphy style, very silhouette-like to maintain an aura of mystery.

### Character Design (Character stories/subplots):

Currently, the prototype of character design through research and combination of Procreate and Adobe Stock Licensed icons and graphics. However, future design aims to build a 360° art rendering of each character. Card pack design aims to be more assassin themed with water calligraphy art.



#### Xia:

**Xia has been passionately training for the past 20 years. When news of newly released Demons reach his village of Yusu, he knew it was time. He is prepared to take on the challenge and follow his parents' footsteps. With his parent's keepsake at his side, he finds he has additional power to manipulate time and mitigate the Demon's attacks. He has a gang to back him up this time. But will his fate be the same as his parents?**



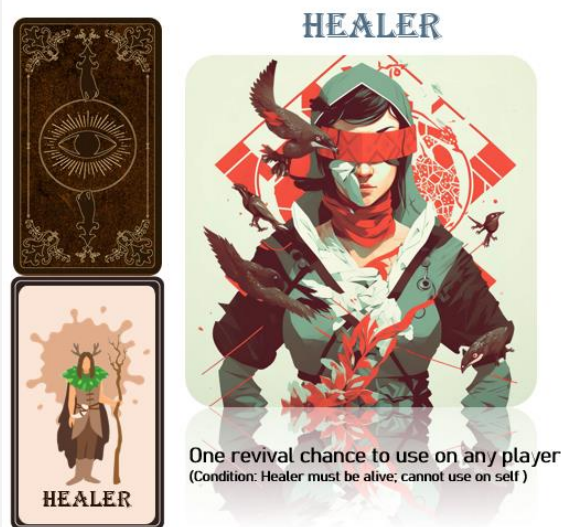
#### Sidekick Subplot:

Sidekick grew up with Xia. The family's parents participated in the same elite martial arts organization to help battle against the Demons. The closeness of their bond is why the character feature was built that the sidekick would know and protect Xia to keep Xia safe from Demon attacks.



#### Assassin Subplot:

Trained to be quick and fast, to complete assigned missions and ask no questions, the assassin is a loner, jumping from one city to another killing assigned targets from the Organization Sha. Assassin should be numb from all the kills, but why does he hesitate



#### Healer subplot:

Blinded at birth, the healer's power came at the cost of her parents' death. The villagers all say she brought bad luck into the family. However, only the animals in the outcast forest knows that her abilities goes beyond outward appearance. After crossing paths with Xia and the Sidekick in the outcast forest in one rare occasion, the healer hears of Xia's resolve to combat the Demons and joins in on the journey.



#### Demon subplot:

Long long ago, before the creation of the empire, the Demon was once human. It once too, had a family, felt love, brotherhood, friendship, etc. However, the lost of his love and the mistaken betrayal of his best friend and whom he considered family turned him to participate in dark arts. Mortality's weakness and feelings was something he needed to get rid of. Thousands of years later, he is now back, and here to take over the empire.



## DEMONITE

































Knows two players  
(Demon and Sidekick, but not who is who)



### Demonite subplot:

The demonite is born of the dark arts mix with a human. Does not know his family, was abandoned at birth. Was found and the spared by the Demon. Since then have been a loyal supporter, subordinate to the Demon. To the Demonite, Demon is the only family he has. He willingly thrashes through the villages and kills, hoping to please the demon and become the highest favored subordinate under the Demon.

### Time Board Design:

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Developing the time board and its rules went through a couple iterations. Through test run, an additional row was added, expanding the time board to 30 because it was very easy to reach 30 with a combination of basic number cards and time manipulation magic cards. After boosting time manipulation to +/-5, and increasing the number of basic number cards to 60, the time board expanded to 30. The design was also inspired to include 30 different martial art forms to animate the battle process until someone dies reaching 30.

Future development goals:

Later development model hopes to build Time Board in cardboard or even wooden panel. In combination of the assassin's silhouette to provide a 3D pop out view, enhancing player's visual experience. Future aim also to add color or more landscaping background to the time board.

### **World Design:**

Set in the fantasy world of JiangHu

Key Locations:

- Capital city of empire: The Ruby City,
  - the ultimate place where the Demon wishes to rule and the starting place of where he was betrayed
- Village of Bei
  - Where the Assassin is from
- Village of Yusu
  - Where Xia and sidekick grew up in
- The Outcast Forest
  - Not a place for inhabitants with lots of superstitious tales
  - Where the healer lives

### **Values/Themes:**

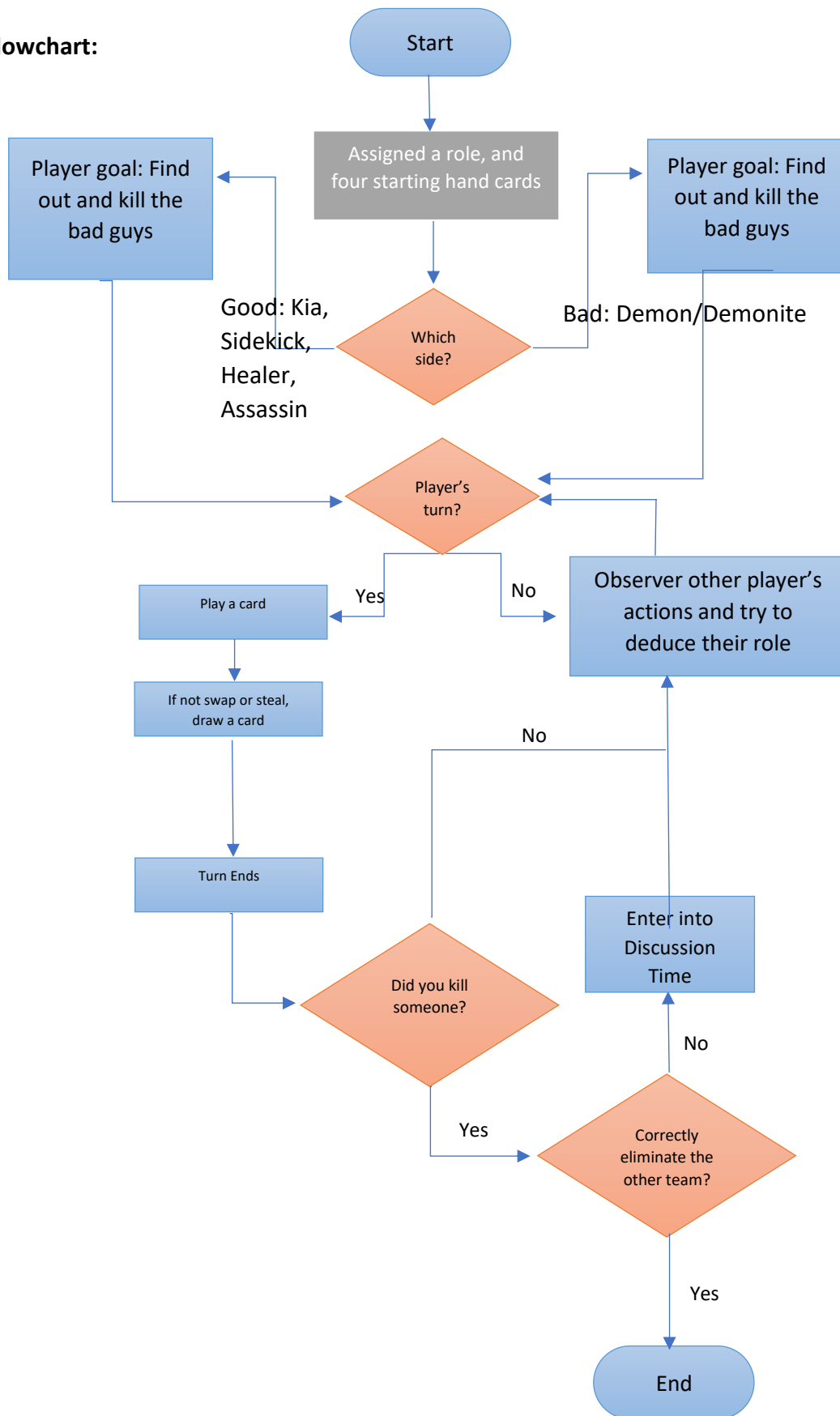
Xia's Revenge game and backstory has a strong Eastern World influence where betrayal, trust, and family are of the utmost importance. Combined with the cultural background of Martial Arts, Xia's Revenge hopes to expand on these themes through gameplay.

While it's a story of revenge, of protection of homeland, or a destructive outlet for hatred, the subplot of each character tells a personal story of how the character become the way they are today, how the gang came together, how they are each accepted, why the Demonite is such a loyal sidekick, and how the Demon was once-upon-a-time, not on a path for destruction.

While aiming for players to build their deductive skills through keen observation and logical reasoning, Xia's Revenge also hops for players to read into the back story and find personal relevance. All the while, having fun while playing the game and building team cooperative skills.



## Game Flowchart:



**Pictures (game box visualization):**



[Game Box Graphic Visualization]



[Martial Art Silhouettes used for Time Board]



[Graphic used and edited for Magic Cards]

**Edited and Used Icons for card design:**



### Art References:

[https://game.xiaomi.com/viewpoint/1101455804\\_1562227839902\\_14](https://game.xiaomi.com/viewpoint/1101455804_1562227839902_14)

<https://www.pinterest.com/pin/428193877043290399/>

<https://www.pinterest.com/pin/309129961906882550/>

stock.adobe.com (All licensed icons and templates used to build prototype)