

Playtest Notes

Most of the comments arising from the playtest were focused on inconsistency between the conversations with the three different characters. In particular, inconsistencies of style and presentation were the most significant. This feedback was addressed by unifying the game's presentation. For example, we had initially written in a few different styles, some being more direct with just character name and dialogue, and others focusing more on traditional prose mixing character actions and dialogue together into a single paragraph. As a response to the playtest, however, we decided to all use the same 'name and dialogue' presentation format, similar to how lines were delivered in the Overboard example.

In addition, playtesters also said that, at spots where they switched from content written by one of us to content written by another, it felt like they were playing a different game all of a sudden. This is not unexpected, given the way that we wrote different sections of the game separately. Playtesters alleged that it was not a big deal, because it was funny. We're reassured by that, though we imagine that low expectations also played a part. For this particular issue, we think that it would be very difficult to address without changing the content of the game itself. We hope that by making the changes to presentation outlined in the previous paragraph, this sensation should be minimized, and given player feedback on this point, we think that regardless it would not be ruinous to the quality of the experience.

There was a comment about being unsure about how whether a certain choice would end a scene or not, so a flag was added to choices where we felt it was ambiguous to address this. Following this theme of ambiguity, some lines were adjusted here and there to be more clear in their intended meaning. We also discovered some bugs during this experience. For example, when the player is saying goodbye to MR S after the initial conversation, they are supposed to respond differently to MR S if their suspicion is over a certain threshold. When the check was preceded by a dash, it wasn't triggered correctly, so we fixed it.

Playtesters specifically had a lot of comments about Max's character. Playtesters loved the absurdity of the story but felt Max did not match the same level of absurdity. We took this as meaning we should make Max even more exaggerated for comedic impact. For example, in our first description of Max we said: "Looking at his face you cannot tell if he is 20 or 25, and with the protruding gut and overfilled muscles it seems to be no secret he is on a steroid cycle " to ""his face is that of a man somewhere between 20 and 45, preserved by wealth, stress, and an unholy amount of protein powder. His biceps twitch involuntarily, the side effect of a cocktail of steroids and desperation." These changes made the character fit into the story more, and I feel like it adds to the comedy and absurdity of our story. Playtesters also added that they wanted to have the option to play into the absurdity of the player by giving more options rather than just accusations. This led us to developing the silk robe side story. This side story is completely absurd and seems unrelated to the main story, but we feel like it offers more freedom and absurdity to the player and offers a nice side story to break away from the main story. Happily, the playtesters also laughed and seemed to be enjoying the game. Some even went so far as to say 'it was fun.' We found this very gratifying.