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Comm 105G Progress Report

Crystal's notes: We decided to play a couple rounds as team. The concept of this game is very similar to mafia, where everyone in the town has a role and there is a doctor, sheriff, and of course, the mafia. At the start of the game, all the roles are randomized. Round one we all started to play but we were having difficulties and round one was incomplete, I died immediately. Round two was more successful, I was the Sheriff but was killed. Mafia had won that round. Round three, I was assigned serial killer and placed 6 but the mafia still won. I messed up because I practically gave away my role when I left the "death note". My inspiration was from Patrick Bateman from *American Psycho*, It read as followed:

I like to dissect girls. Did you know I'm utterly insane?

There is an idea of a Dr. Nincompoop; some kind of abstraction. But there is no real me: only an entity, something illusory. And though I can hide my cold gaze, and you can shake my hand and feel flesh gripping yours and maybe you can even sense our lifestyles are probably comparable... I simply am not there.

Brendon's notes: This week, our group played for about 1-2 hours together. Identity in this game is different from other games because protecting your identity while finding the identities of other players is what will lead to victory. Names are interesting within this game because players get to pick a new name every round, so choosing the same name could be disadvantageous in protecting your identity if you play with the same players in subsequent rounds. Communication is interesting because because the players must work together to find the killers, but because of different roles (e.g. the jester must get themselves killed, the executor must get an innocent person killed), there is often deception and manipulation. Communication is also complicated if you get placed to be a killer. You might deceive people intentionally, or you may be quiet as to avoid drawing attention to yourself.

Tommy's notes: As the others have mentioned we played (Town of Salem) as a team this week. It was interesting, but I'm still really just learning the ropes. As Brendon mentioned, there's an advantage to picking a new name each round, but it may not be *that* important because your

“role” is obscured. Because each role has different ways of playing, and because you are not likely to be the same role twice in a row, the other players won’t necessarily know what your goals or methods are. The interface of the game is a little tricky because, as mentioned previously (in last week’s report), my keyboard works intermittently, depending on the browser I’m using.

The game itself is sort of like playing poker, or any game where deception is a key to winning. If your opponents don’t know what you “have” or what your goals are, then you stand a better chance. It definitely brings out some less than desirable traits in some of the players. Some players take it as an opportunity to be obnoxious or even hurtful to other players. Again, the game is designed to set players against each other, and a major mechanic of playing is texting to other players to lead them on down one road or another to have them act in a way that will benefit you. For example, if you are the “Jester”, your goal is to get the community to lynch you. If they lynch you, you win the game, but if you are almost any other type of player, being lynched means you lose the game automatically. So at times you may be on trial to be lynched and you’ll be claiming “It’s not me!”. In some cases that’ll be true, you may not be the killer and you’re hoping the crowd believes you. Other times you’ll be the Jester, and you’ll be hoping they don’t believe you and continue voting to have you lynched so that you’ll win the game.

The game is designed to keep profanity out of the main chat area, but there are types of notes that can be sent in the game as part of normal gameplay. Leaving a “last will” for example, in case you die that will be shown to the community, or a “death note” that the community will find at the bodies of your victims. In those types of notes, profanity seemed to be okay.

Overall, I’m excited to see what happens the next time we play and as we get better at playing.

German's notes: This week we played a few rounds on Town of Salem as a party. Most of us were learning the rules and how to essentially “win” a match. This is dependent on whether your role is a villager, Mafia member, or serial killer. Communication and deception is key to survival, as the villains must lie to the rest of the to stay alive. The villagers must figure out how to find all of the killers to win through interrogation and detective work. Most mention that names are an important part of the game. I decided to choose a name based on something random, so as to stay completely anonymous. I perhaps came to this conclusion because when I see a player with a peculiar name I see them as a troll with no identity.

I was able to make it to the last 2 people in the first round we played. I lost because the other player was someone with the ability to kill, while I was a regular villager. The second round we played I died soon, again playing as a villager. As mentioned above, the roles are assigned randomly. The third round I managed to get the serial killer lynched (I was an investigator and a

team member was the serial killer). Playing as a team felt like a fun learning experience where we were able to help each other out and in my opinion helped me figure roles out better.

Karla's notes: Our team played Town of Salem together for a while, trying to figure out how the game worked with all of us in it. We played a few rounds together, and each time I got a different role. Once I was an escort, another time I was the Mafioso, and I was also a sheriff. The escort can distract any of the other players to prevent them from killing someone else, but it can also stop the sheriff from investigating, the jailor from putting people in jail, and the doctor from healing others. So while it can help prevent the serial killer or members of the mafia from killing innocent people, it can also harm the innocent members of the town. When I was the Mafioso, I was supposed to kill people but I wasn't sure what my role was and how I was supposed to accomplish it so I didn't get very far in that level. When I was the sheriff, I was investigating the different members of the town but every time, it told me the person was innocent even though one of them was a member of the mafia.

After playing a few rounds, I understood more on how to play the game. On the side, it says how you play the role that you were assigned. When I was playing the role of the sheriff, I was allowed to interrogate members of the village to figure out their role, but I'm not sure that I did this correctly. For every person I interrogated, it says they were innocent and just a villager. In this round, I got all the way to the end with just another player, and it turns out they were in the mafia but each time I interrogated them, it said they were innocent. I ended up losing because I couldn't kill the other member, and since they were in the mafia, they killed me.

The communication within the game is definitely interesting. Some people are trolls and tell you to kill them immediately. When they do end up dying, you find out their role was doctor or vigilante so they're just saying to kill them to be a troll. Once one person says another member is suspicious, most people tend to agree and vote them off. Most people are good at covering for themselves and making themselves not look suspicious so that they do not get killed off. People tend to ask what other people's roles are in the discussion portion of the game, and put in their death notes who they think is suspicious so that when they die, the rest of us know of their suspicions. I think communication in this game is key in winning the game.