Jack The Ripper, Modified Scotland Yard game(code name: scoty)

Scotland Yard

Scotland Yard is a game of skill and strategy, in which detectives coordinate and chase the criminal Mr. X through the streets of London. The game involves players teaming up as detectives, (whose locations are known) against one chosen player who plays the role of Mr. X (whose location is unknown) in an attempt to uncover Mr. X's hidden location. The game is played on an altered map of london that features three different transport systems (Taxi, Bus, Underground) that connect different numbered locations.

Mechanics:

Each Player begins by selecting a starting location and places their pawn on the respective location, except Mr. X, who keeps their location concealed.

Players receive 10x Taxi Tokens, 8x Bus Tokens and 4x Underground Tokens to navigate the board. A player may only spend one token on each turn and each token transports them from their current location to the next "stop" depending on the mode of transport, provided that the player is already at a location with a "stop" for the respective mode of transport as well as a line connecting that location to their next intended location. Mr. X on their turn makes their move and notes their current location onto a piece of paper, concealing it with a token for the mode of transport used. Mr. X receives all the other player's tokens, essentially allowing them to make unlimited use of any preferred mode of transport. Periodically, Mr. X must reveal their location to the other players. Mr. X can also make use of 2x (allowing them to make two moves in one turn) and black tickets (that allow them to use the ferry and also conceal their mode of transport.) The game ends when Mr. X is caught by one of the players arriving at the same location as them or when the police officers run out of tokens.

Dynamics:

Players attempt to deduce Mr. X's location based on their last known location, modes of transport, as well as a fair amount of psychological analysis. Players must try to get into Mr. X's mind to predict their next move in order to corner them. Players may try to spread out in order to surround Mr. X. They converse with another in order to decipher Mr. X's movements and decide upon the most effective strategy, such as surrounding the metro stations while sending in one player to arrive on the specific location.

Mr. X may employ 2X and Black Tickets in creative ways to escape the Police officers, such as making two moves and concealing their mode of transport on the same turn, to render maximum number of permutations of possible locations. Players may avoid spending Taxi Tokens to deplete Mr. X's stock, seeing as how Taxi is the most versatile mode of transportation with every location featured as a stop. The number of emergent patterns of play are endless and vary from situation to situation.

Jack The Ripper

Overview

We decided to modify Scotland Yard into a Murder Mystery, wherein there are 3 sets of players, the police, the victims and Mr. X. The triangular chase takes place in which the police chases the murderer, the murderer chases the victim and the victim chases the police.
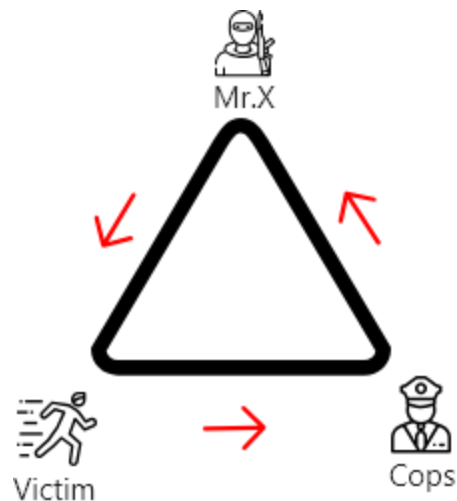
Core Mechanics

Changes include
- 2 cops, 2 victims, 1 Mr. X
- Role decided based on card picking
- 2 set of cards {one to select the character, One to select the start point}

The transport mechanism using tickets and the map remain the same.

Gameplay

At the start of the game, each player is to pick a badge that will determine if the player is either of the two cops, the two victims or the sole murderer. The cops locations will be known at all times, the victims and the murderers, however will be hidden initially.

If both cops and victim meet together victim, will be revealed permanently and he cannot hideout anymore. Every 3rd move players has to reveal their location {multiples of 3}. Both the victims and Mr.X will be having a "**Reveal Card**" which they can use at any point of the game to reveal the identity of other players. Cops are given a limited set of tickets which they can use to commute. Once they exhaust the tickets, they remain anchored to last position. At the same time Mr.X gets unlimited tickets which he can use to kill the victims eventually winning the game.

If cops catch Mr.X without exhausting the tickets, they not only save the victims and also win the game.

If the Cops lose(run out of tickets to win), the murderer can win the game buy killing anyone victim but with only limited number of tickets.

The Victims can win if they can escape the murderer by making him run out of tickets

The team underwent multiple iterations of game play testing to make appropriate changes in the game mechanics to remove game breaking flaws and make the game fun and interesting.

FIRST ITERATION V.1

Modified Mechanics:

We decided to introduce a new type of player character: Victim. Victims escape from murderer Mr. X in order to avoid being killed. Mr. X must kill the victims as well as escape from the Detectives. Mr. X and Victims both have unlimited tokens and the game ends only when either Detectives capture Mr. X or Mr. X has murdered both the Victims.

Emergent Dynamics:

Detectives have more information to predict Mr. X's movements. They can attempt to deduce the possible path Mr. X will take in order to kill their victim. Mr. X must strategize in order to avoid the Detectives while managing to kill the victims.

Detectives and Victims collaborate in order to corner Mr. X. Detectives tend to protect Victims and follow them across the board and surrounding them while using them as bait for Mr. X. Since Mr. X has a main objective, the game does not end with Detectives running out of tokens, leaving Mr. X and Victims on the board.

Gameplay issues:

During playtesting a few issues with regard to mechanics as well as game balancing surfaced. Game becomes too difficult for Mr. X even with unlimited tokens, seeing as how they need to infiltrate Victim locations surrounded by Detectives patrolling. Periodic reveal means Mr. X must either escape or go for the kill and risk getting caught early. When Detectives lose, however, the game dramatically shifts in the favor of Mr. X. This means Mr. X tends to wait for the Detectives to run out of tokens before attempting a kill, which in turn makes the game too difficult for the Detectives. An alternate mechanic involved Detectives also having unlimited tokens, which made the game drag on endlessly, as Mr. X tried to save himself from capture and Detectives tried to protect the victims from being murdered.

SECOND ITERATION V.2

Modified Mechanics:

We decided to introduce a new mechanic of anonymity, in which the identity of Mr. X is unknown. Mr. X is chosen by shuffling cards that assign roles of Detectives, Mr. X and Victims. Detectives reveal their identities, while Victims and Mr. X do not. Mr. X and Victims both move across the board with their locations concealed, periodically revealing it every 3 turns. Victims must attempt to encounter a Detective in order for their location as well as "innocence" to be revealed permanently. The game ends with Detectives capturing Mr. X or Mr. X killing the remaining two victims. If the Detectives run out of tokens, Mr. X must now kill only any one victim on the board. However, their tokens become limited. In this scenario, Mr. X wins by making one kill, and loses when they run out of tokens and the Victims successfully escape murder.

Emergent Dynamics:

Detectives must not only decipher Mr. X's location but also their identity. They must therefore strategize which player to follow, either by splitting up or concentrating on cornering one possible suspect. They can analyze player movement in order to notice patterns to uncover Mr. X's identity. For Ex- if the general trend reveals a player moving towards to detectives, they might chose to rule out the suspect. This however, may also be a strategy of Mr. X to evade capture. Victims must decide whether to allow their location to be revealed permanently, risking an easier kill for Mr. X while also helping the cops in identifying and catching Mr. X. The new anonymity mechanic adds a new "social" layer of gameplay where players psychoanalyze each other in order to figure out their true identity.

Gameplay Issues:

Through playtesting, we discovered that if Mr. X and Victims both conceal their identities, situations where Mr. X lands on a Victim may occur without either realizing this. The Victims still do not have much gameplay, relatively powerless to Detectives who can capture Mr. X. Victim's only job is to escape murder and assist Detectives by acting as bait.

THIRD ITERATION V.3

Modified Mechanics:

We decided to add the mechanic of reveal card. This mechanic allows victims and Mr. X to use this card once during the game before they play their turn, forcing the other two players in the pool of Victim/Mr. X to reveal their hidden location apart from the periodic reveal. This allows Victims to escape Mr. X easily, or in the case of Mr. X to determine the Victim location before going in for the kill.

Emergent Dynamics:

Mr. X zones in one of the victims, then uses their reveal card to make the kill. Victims may be convinced by detectives to serve as bait after permanently revealing their location, and then using their own reveal card to force the other players to reveal their location. This allows more room for strategy and collaboration between detectives and Victim after permanent reveal, due to the power of the reveal card.

Gameplay Issues:

The new mechanics allow for an emergent dynamic where Mr. X might wait for Detectives to run out of tokens. While this does render Mr. X's own supply to be limited, players may chose this strategy if they think they will find it easier to kill Victims in this phase. This is however somewhat balanced by the fact that Victims might employ a counter-strategy of avoiding permanent reveal to prevent Mr. X from forcing such a game state to occur.

FINAL GAME PLAY

Set-Up:

1. Distribute the character cards among all the players to assign roles of Detective, Victim or Mr. X
2. Detectives reveal their identities while Mr. X and Victims must keep them concealed for now.
3. All players select a random location tile from the blue numbered tiles.
4. Detectives place their pawns on their assigned locations while Victims/Mr. X mentally note their location.
5. Detectives are provided with 10 Taxi Tokens (yellow), 8 Bus Tokens (Green) and 4 Underground Tokens (Pink).
6. Mr. X and Victims are provided with 4 Taxi, 3 Bus, and 3 Underground Tokens each that contribute to a common pool, depending on the number of players.

Gameplay:

1. Either of the detectives start and the other plays after the first. Victims/Mr. X play their turns after Detectives.
2. Detectives, Victims and Mr. X must spend one transport token in order to move from one numbered station to another, provided:
   a) the station provides the mode of transport (identified by the colours on the station) and
   b) The line of the corresponding colour connects the two stations.
3. Each player can only spend one token per turn.
4. Detectives move their pawn on the board while Victims/Mr. X note down their locations on a piece of paper, also keeping a log of their modes of transport which is known to all players.
5. Mr. X and Victims play with a common pool of tokens that are replenished by the Detectives' spent tokens.
6. Detectives must attempt to land on the same location as Mr. X while Mr. X must attempt to kill the victims and Victims must attempt to evade Mr. X.
7. Victims/Mr. X reveal their locations every three turns.
8. When a Victim encounters a Detective, their location is revealed permanently and they place their pawn on the board.
9. The game ends when Mr. X is caught or both Victims have been killed.
10. In the situation when Detectives run out of tokens, Mr. X's tokens become limited (10 Taxi, 8 Bus and 4 Underground Tokens). They must now kill ONE of the Victims to win. In this scenario, if Mr. X runs out of tokens, the Victims win.
11. Finally, Victims/Mr. X all receive one Reveal card that they may play at any point in the game before they make their move, forcing the other Victims/Mr. X to reveal their location.

This Figure above is the Original Scotland Yard Board that is also used for Jack The Ripper.

This Figure represents the Detective Character Card

The figure on the left is the Victim Character Card.

VICTIM

The figure on the right is the Mr. X Character Card.

MR. X

Credits

Game Designers(to be, in alphabetical order)

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