

The Secret Lives of Serial Killers

By Willow Palecek

The Secret Lives of Serial Killers was written for the February 2011 Ronnies, based on the ingredients of “Murder” and “Morning.” It is a horrible, brutal game, that no one should ever play, based on the concepts of “abusive game design.”

THE GAME

In *The Secret Lives of Serial Killers*, two players deceive a third player into thinking they are playing a game called “Sunshine Boulevard,” a feel-good structured freeform game about quirky recluses in love. In fact, they are setting up the third player as the serial killer's victim, to be killed in play.

The players are referred to in this text as the FACILITATOR, the KILLER, and the VICTIM. For the purposes of “Sunshine Boulevard,” the players are called the FACILITATOR, RECLUSE, and the SUNSHINE.

The Facilitator and Killer should both have read the rules and be familiar with them. It is essential that the Victim is ignorant. Have a copy of the rules to the fake game, Sunshine Boulevard available.

THE SCENES

Scene One: Introduction of the Killer (Recluse)

Scene Two: Introduction of the Victim (Sunshine)

Scene Three: First Meeting

Scene Four: An Unexpected Reunion

Scene Five: Pursuit and Murder

SCENE ONE: INTRODUCTION OF THE KILLER (RECLUSE)

In which the Recluse is established as a quirky, strange, introverted, but lovable character, and we get a peek into his secret life.

For the Facilitator:

Announce the Scene as the Introduction of the Recluse

Set the scene as a mundane morning.

Ask the Killer questions about the setting/what he does.

Introduce details about the setting.

Occasionally ask the Victim for his opinion on the setting, but do not take the answer as concrete facts.

Decide when to wrap up the scene.

For the Killer:

State what your character does.

Answer the Facilitator's questions.

Portray your character as a reclusive, introverted person with strange, but understandable habits.

For the Victim:

Think about what is missing from the Recluse's life.

Answer questions when prompted by the Facilitator.

SCENE TWO: INTRODUCTION OF THE VICTIM (SUNSHINE)

In which the Sunshine is introduced, a complimentary character to the Recluse, a bright, positive influence.

For the Facilitator:

Announce the Scene as the Introduction of the Sunshine.

Ask the Victim for a venue to set the scene.

Ask the Victim questions about the setting, but do not take the answers as concrete facts.

Ask the Killer questions about the setting. Take the answers as concrete facts.

Ask the Victim questions about his character.

Introduce details about the setting.

Play characters other than the Killer and Victim, as needed.

Decide when to wrap up the scene.

For the Killer:

Think about what the Victim loves, values, and fears.

Answer questions when prompted by the Facilitator.

Occasionally ask the Victim what their character is feeling or thinking.

For the Victim:

State what your character does.

Answer questions when prompted by the Facilitator or Recluse.

Portray your character as a positive, upbeat influence who could compliment the Recluse.

SCENE THREE: FIRST MEETING

In which a chance encounter changes our characters' lives, forever.

For the Facilitator:

Announce the Scene.

Ask the Killer and Victim to collaboratively set the scene.

Ask the Victim questions about the setting, but do not take the answers as concrete facts.

Ask the Killer questions about the setting. Take the answers as concrete facts.

Ask the Victim and Killer what their characters are doing.

Introduce details about the setting.

Play characters other than the Killer and Victim, as needed.

Decide when to wrap up the scene.

For the Killer:

Collaborate with the Victim to set the scene.

State what your character does.

Answer the Facilitator's questions.

Portray your character consistently.

Have your character express interest in the Victim. Try to find out as much about them as you can.

For the Victim:

Collaborate with the Recluse to set the scene.

State what your character does.

Answer the Facilitator's questions.

Continue to portray your character.

Have your character express interest in the Recluse. What aspects of him are endearing?

SCENE FOUR: AN UNEXPECTED REUNION

In which our characters' meet again, under humorous circumstances.

For the Facilitator:

Announce the scene.

Ask the Victim to help you set the scene in a location/situation that is embarrassing for the Sunshine. Aim towards venues that would tend towards solitude, and especially locations where the Killer really has no place being.

Ask the Victim and Killer questions about the setting.

Ask the Victim and Killer what their characters are doing.

Introduce details about the setting.

Play characters other than the Killer and Victim, as needed.

Decide when to wrap up the scene.

For the Killer:

State what your character does.

Answer the Facilitator's questions.

Gradually and subtly darken your portrayal of your character.

Have your character express inappropriate interest the Victim.

For the Victim:

Collaborate with the Facilitator to set the scene.

State what your character does.

Answer the Facilitator's questions.

Continue to portray your character, and consider the stresses of the situation.

SCENE FOUR: PURSUIT AND MURDER

For the Facilitator:

Do not announce the scene.

Tell the Victim where they are and that they are alone.

Ask the Killer how they are secretly watching the Victim.

Alternate asking the Victim and Killer what and how they do.

Introduce details about the setting.

Allow the Killer to introduce setting details, as needed.

Do not allow the Victim narrative input into the setting.

Isolate the Victim. Play characters other than the Killer and Victim sparingly and briefly.

Continue until the Killer kills the Victim.

For the Killer:

State what your character does.

Answer the Facilitator's questions.

Portray your character as a homicidal sociopath, but include callbacks to earlier personality quirks.

Draw out your pursuit as long as you think you can.

Violently, and in graphic detail, describe how you murder the Victim.

DENOUMENT

Let the player of the Victim in on the deception. Apologize. Talk about your experiences playing the game.

SUNSHINE BOULEVARD

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SUNSHINE BOULEVARD is a lighthearted game of romantic interest and entanglement. One player takes the role of a RECLUSE, a smart, talented, but socially inept individual. Another player takes the role of the SUNSHINE, an outgoing, energetic, fun-loving individual, who brings a little bit of change into the recluse's life. The third player is the FACILITATOR, who keeps the game moving and oversees the structure of the game.

Scene One: Introduction of the Recluse
Scene Two: Introduction of the Sunshine
Scene Three: First Meeting
Scene Four: An Unexpected Reunion
Scene Five: Fun and Games
Epilogue

SCENE ONE: INTRODUCTION OF THE RECLUSE

In which the Recluse is established as a quirky, strange, introverted, but lovable character, and we get a peek into his secret life.

For the Facilitator:
Announce the Scene.
Set the scene as a mundane morning.
Ask the Recluse questions about the setting/what he does.
Introduce details about the setting.
Occasionally ask the Sunshine for his opinion.
Decide when to wrap up the scene.

For the Recluse:
State what your character does.
Answer the Facilitator's questions.
Portray your character as a reclusive, introverted person with strange, but understandable habits.

For the Sunshine:
Think about what is missing from the Recluse's life.
Answer questions when prompted by the Facilitator.

SCENE TWO: INTRODUCTION OF THE SUNSHINE

In which the Sunshine is introduced, a complimentary character to the Recluse, a bright, positive influence.

For the Facilitator:
Announce the Scene.
Ask the Sunshine for a venue to set the scene.
Ask the Recluse and Sunshine questions about the setting.
Ask the Sunshine questions about his character.
Introduce details about the setting.
Play characters other than the Recluse and Sunshine, as needed.
Decide when to wrap up the scene.

For the Recluse:
Answer questions when prompted by the Facilitator.

Occasionally ask the Sunshine what their character is feeling or thinking.

For the Sunshine

State what your character does.

Answer questions when prompted by the Facilitator or Recluse.

Portray your character as a positive, upbeat influence who could compliment the Recluse.

SCENE THREE: FIRST MEETING

In which a chance encounter changes our characters' lives, forever.

For the Facilitator:

Announce the Scene.

Ask the Recluse and Sunshine to collaboratively set the scene.

Ask the Recluse and Sunshine questions about the setting.

Ask the Recluse and Sunshine what their characters are doing.

Introduce details about the setting.

Play characters other than the Recluse and Sunshine, as needed.

Decide when to wrap up the scene.

For the Recluse:

Collaborate with the Sunshine to set the scene.

State what your character does.

Answer the Facilitator's questions.

Continue to portray your character.

Have your character show interest in the Sunshine, but do not explicitly express it. What do you have in common?

For the Sunshine:

Collaborate with the Recluse to set the scene.

State what your character does.

Answer the Facilitator's questions.

Continue to portray your character.

Have your character express interest in the Recluse. What aspects of him are endearing?

SCENE FOUR: AN UNEXPECTED REUNION

In which our characters' meet again, under humorous circumstances.

For the Facilitator:

Announce the scene.

Ask the Sunshine to help you set the scene in a location/situation that is embarrassing for the Sunshine.

Ask the Recluse and Sunshine questions about the setting.

Ask the Recluse and Sunshine what their characters are doing.

Introduce details about the setting.

Play characters other than the Recluse and Sunshine, as needed.

Decide when to wrap up the scene.

For the Recluse:

State what your character does.

Answer the Facilitator's questions.

Continue to portray your character.

Have the Recluse openly express interest in the Sunshine.

For the Sunshine:

Collaborate with the Facilitator to set the scene. Aim towards the humorous and embarrassing.

State what your character does.

Answer the Facilitator's questions.

Continue to portray your character, and consider the stresses of the situation.

SCENE FIVE: FUN AND GAMES

In which our characters find themselves in a difficult, but enjoyable situation that brings them closer together.

For the Facilitator:

Announce the scene.

Collaborate on the Recluse and Sunshine to set the scene. Choose a situation where the Recluse is out of his element but the Sunshine is at home.

Ask the Recluse and Sunshine questions about the setting.

Ask the Recluse and Sunshine what their characters are doing.

Introduce details about the setting.

Play characters other than the Recluse and Sunshine, as needed.

Draw the Recluse and Sunshine closer together.

Decide when to wrap up the scene.

For the Recluse:

Collaborate with the Facilitator and Sunshine to set the scene. What makes your character uncomfortable?

State what your character does.

Answer the Facilitator's questions.

Continue to portray your character.

For the Sunshine:

Collaborate with the Facilitator and Recluse to set the scene.

State what your character does.

Answer the Facilitator's questions.

Continue to portray your character. Comfort the Recluse.

EPILOGUE

For the Facilitator:

Ask the Recluse and Sunshine questions about what they think happens next.

Offer suggestions and opinions about what you think might happen next.

Discuss the game.

For the Recluse and Sunshine:

Answer questions asked by the Facilitator.

Ask the other player questions about what they think happens next.

Answer questions asked by the other player.

Discuss the game.