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SCRP 290 Final Paper

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Warehouse 12

Background:

My game, “Warehouse 12” is set in the Universe of the 2009 SyFy show *Warehouse 13*. In the universe of *Warehouse 13* magical objects, called “Artifacts”, are stored in a secret Warehouse located in London. The Warehouse is overseen by a secretive council known as the Regents, and is staffed by Agents, one of which functions as the caretaker of the warehouse.

Overview:

In Warehouse 12 you play as Crawford, a new Agent of the Warehouse. On Crawford’s first day of work Warehouse 12 is attacked by Jack the Ripper. Chaos ensues and Crawford is the only Agent left that can defeat the Ripper and save Warehouse 12. Crawford will venture through the warehouse searching for a way to stop the Ripper. On his journey, Crawford will be faced with hostile enemies, artifacts, and bosses; but confronting them all head on would be unwise. Crawford must make use of both stealth and combat to survive the warehouse. During the game, Crawford will learn the secrets of the warehouse, it’s agents, and himself. The game

will make use of a 3rd person, over the shoulder, camera. Crawford is very ill equipped for his job, and so is the player; the game will have no HUD. Crawford must make use of the tools he carries. A Tesla gun, Hoban's magical notebook, and neutralizer grenades. As Crawford ventures deeper into the Warehouse, he will find upgrades to enhance his equipment. These upgrades will be essential for progressing through future areas.

Characters:

Crawford is the player, and main character of the game. He is a newly recruited agent, hand picked by a senior agent Hoban of Warehouse 12 for reasons unknown. Crawford has no special skills, education, or experience that would qualify him for a job in the Warehouse. For all intents and purposes, he's is an average Joe. Crawford is actually a unique artifact with a high level of autonomy. He was originally a necklace of the the infant christ that hung on the neck of a nurse who sacrificed herself during a Scarlet fever outbreak to care for patients.

Hoban is the most senior agent at Warehouse 12, and the only one to hold the Special Agent title. She reports directly to the Regents, often carrying out clandestine operations for them. It is implied, although never explicitly stated that Hoban is ageless, a fragile form of immortality, and somehow bonded to the warehouse. Hoban was once the teacher of Jack the Ripper. She recruits Crawford instead of bronzing (Han Solo freezing) him for the Regents.

Jack the Ripper was once a Warehouse 12 agent and apprentice to Hoban. Jack angered the regents by performing experiments on altering artifacts. He was slated to be bronzed by the regents, but managed to escape with one of his experimental artifacts, his lantern. He became

resentful, and possibly insane, and started his murder spree to learn more about negative energy's effect of artifacts.

The Story:

In 1891 Warehouse 12 is on its last legs. British supremacy is waning, and the Regents are beginning to discuss relocation of the warehouse. Meanwhile, Special Agent Hoban is tasked with capturing a particularly dangerous artifact. The trail leads her to Crawford, a naive young man. She finds him being mugged in an alleyway. Hoban extends Crawford an invitation to join her at the Warehouse, he accepts. Crawford arrives on his first day to find the warehouse in shambles. He encounters Hoban on the floor, bleeding out. She explains the circumstances surrounding the warehouse, and the attack. Hoban tells him he needs to save the Warehouse. Jack the Ripper enters, Hoban discreetly hits Crawford with some neutralizer disguised as perfume and hides him. Stunned, Crawford watches Hoban get murdered. He regains mobility and goes to save the warehouse. Crawford battles through the warehouse following the instructions in Hoban's notebook. Finally, he makes it to the end of Hoban's tasks, but they fail to work. Crawford is left without any hope. He turns to Hoban's notebook. The notebook reveals his origins as an artifact and strengthen Crawford's resolve. Crawford uses his abilities as an artifact to win the final fight with Jack. After the battle, Crawford sacrifices himself to repair the warehouse and stop the spread of negative energy. Far in the future, the agents of *Warehouse 13* muse about a picture of Crawford on the wall. They can't recall who he was, but have heard he was an important member of the Warehouse.

The Gameplay:

There are three types of enemies in the game. Artifacts, bosses and ghosts. Ghosts are reanimated warehouse agents created by Jack to defeat the warehouse personnel. The function as the most common enemy of the game. They are best avoided using the stun gun. While it is possible to kill them using many neutralizer grenades, it is not advised due to the rarity of ammo.

Artifacts refer to the traps found on the warehouse floor. These traps are built around the artifact that they once were. An example, that would not occur in the game considering the timeline, would be Chuck Yeager's favorite record. The record emits sonic booms when played. The player would have to move cover to cover avoiding being blown to pieces by the booms. For an illustration of how this might work, see the Bridge section of *Inside* (Playdead, 2016).

There are three bosses in the game, the Looking Glass, reanimated Hoban, and Jack the Ripper. The game switches tone when you enter a boss fight. Here the traditional stealth is no longer an option. The boss must be defeated, and can't be snuck around. All three boss fights are built around a unique thematic mechanic. For example, in the Looking Glass fight, Crawford will have to smash mirrors while evading Alice to escape the alternate dimension he's been thrown into. The concept of breaking mirrors isn't spoon-fed to the player. They will have their usual melee ability, and be presented with image of a shattering mirror as the fight begins, but there is no hand-holding in these fights. The journey through a demented, magical, warehouse is near impossible for Crawford, and it will be equally as challenging for the player. The other two fights will also have unique mechanics. In the Jack fight, the player has to give in and take all the hits from Jack. The blows are then reflected causing Jack to unintentionally kill himself in his rage. Zombie Hoban's fight will center around removing the artifacts Jack has used to reanimate

her. The goal is to have each fight be an integral part of the story rather than just a place to flex combat mechanics. An example of a game that achieves this is the cemetery battle in *Vampyr* (Dontnod, 2018), massive spoilers if you plan to play it.

Stealth is the primary mechanic of the game. The idea is to have a similar stealth system to *The Last of Us* (Naughty Dog, 2013) but without the “listen” mechanic. Crawford *should* feel useless and frustrating, because he is. The barebones HUD is meant to add to the hardcore feel of the game. The game will include purple safe-zones where the artifacts and enemies can't follow Crawford. These rooms will have a negative effect on Crawford, limiting his time there. There will often be situations where the player must expose themselves to move through an area. This will transition the slow paced stealth gameplay into a heart-racing chase scene. In these chase scenes the player will have to be able to use their weapons to evade enemies and artifact -traps. These points will be placed close to saferooms, and indicate the end of a section.

Looking Glass Fight:

Finally, here is an example of how the Looking Glass fight might play out in the game. Crawford enters a large concrete room with raised platforms on either side. Each platform has two cement pillars on it. The room is completely empty aside from a large mirror in the center. The mirror is huge, at least twice Crawford's height, and is bordered by an ornate gold frame. Crawford pulls out his notebook and flips through the redacted pages as he approaches the mirror. He stops on a page that slowly begins to reveal itself. The name becomes visible first, “The Looking Glass”. Crawford reaches out and touches the mirror, the glass ripples like a pool of water. He looks back down to the notebook as the description becomes visible. “A portal to

another world use extre-”, Crawford hears a noise and looks up at the mirror to find Alice, a little girl with grey skin and solid black eyes, standing behind him. Before Crawford can react she pushes him into the mirror. Crawford falls horizontally as reality melts around him. The camera repositions to show him falling vertically. He falls straight through the glass of another mirror and is launched out into a similar concrete room. This new room is darker, and dripping with black slime. In front of him. Alice steps out of the mirror holding a oversized cleaver in her hand. The mirror shimmers, then duplicates all around the room. In the glass different angles of the room can be seen, all of them centering on Crawford. Alice grins, then steps back through the mirror it cracks, obscuring the view of where she went. Crawford looks around, then sees one of the reflections. It’s a profile view of him, with Alice standing behind directly him. Crawford dives away as Alice swings her cleaver and turns to face Alice.

At this point the fight will begin. The player must use their stun gun to slow Alice down as she smashes mirrors. After all the mirrors are broken, they reform into one and the portal to the next room becomes available. When the portal opens, Alice will go into a frenzied mode, forcing the player to either jump into the mirror or be torn to shreds. The next rooms will have different environmental changes, each becoming more mixed with Wonderland. The gravity will change, the room will become distorted, and each iteration will start to look more and more like a chess board. After the third room, the mirrors will reform and show a portal back to reality. Alice will become enraged and race Crawford to the portal. If Crawford is beat, Alice will wave and smash the mirror trapping him in Wonderland. If he manages to beat Alice, Crawford will make it through the mirror and smash it just before Alice reaches it, trapping her for eternity.

Conclusion:

In conclusion, I wanted Warehouse 12 to be more than an average horror game. It was imagined in a way that took the best aspects of games I love and fit them into a compelling story. The inclusion of bosses that are more than just bullet sponges or meaningless mechanic test is what I hoped would separate Warehouse 12 from the rest of the horror genre. My goal was to try and weave as much of the story as possible into the gameplay to emphasize narrative without abandoning mechanics, thereby creating a walking simulator.