Savages

Constraints: Bidding, Revenge

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Process Statement

The main focus of Savages that we struggled with was that of balance. We thought, erroneously, that it wouldn't be terribly difficult to paint fun onto themes of bidding and revenge -- who doesn't like gathering in a group and backstabbing their friends in a safe setting? -- but what started as a very simple and entertaining four-card game about buying ridiculous favors transformed into a very difficult and not compelling game about buying favors and bidding for weapons off the market. The core of bidding on acts of violence against fellow players remained, but was completely obfuscated by the lack of a compelling narrative combined with a lot of unbalanced cards of varying power types and no real reason for a player to buy into the game in the first place. It turns out "make your friends all kill each other in this fictional game world" isn't enough to make people want to start playing. There were too many actions per turn, but not enough items that worked well together, and a very low hand limit of one card each.



We were thus stymied. But upon asking Hannah for advice, we got another burst of inspiration; whereas we had originally been playing in one particular turn order, we instead flipped it to its current iteration. Instead of having to bid, at the start, on insanely expensive and powerful weapons, with a lot of money, we started everyone off with a basic card and gave players the ability to buy better cards later in the game (and reduced the amount of money each player could bid with). We also added in a Lucky deck, which each player draws from each turn, to add randomness as well as power-ups, that perhaps a player would be able to draw a counterattack card and keep it in their hand rather than having to buy it

at a ridiculous cost from the market knowing that they might only have one turn to do so.[1] With this fixing some of the problems, we could focus more on refining weapon cost and damage and painting fun and story onto the game's core. Lastly, we changed some terms to paint on a cohesive narrative; rather than gambling for money, you're instead gambling for respect.



[1] Though this is not necessarily untrue to how the market works in real life, you don't always want games to reflect cruel reality.

Savages

Savages is a four-player survival game. Your town has gone crazy, everyone's trying to kill each other, and you need to stay alive! Make alliances, double-cross, stab, shoot, heal and do whatever it takes to outlive everyone else. Good luck!

Items

Weapon Deck: Weapons can be used to hurt other players. However, to use a weapon a player must lose the specified value of respect and pay it to the victim.
Lucky Deck: The Lucky Deck consists of various action cards which help you heal, gain respect, and avoid terrifying situations.
Respect Tokens (50)
Health Tokens (20)

Setup

1. Each player must get the following items at the beginning of the game:
    - 1 Knife: Place face up in front of you. **ALL** weapons owned (throughout the game) by a player **MUST** be put face up in front of them. Secret weapons don't exist in such a brutal environment.
    - 10 Respect: Respect is social, so it **MUST** be kept visible to all players
    - 5 Health: Health is personal and **MAY** be kept hidden, but this is not mandatory
2. **Weapon Market**: Flip two cards face-up from the weapon deck in the center of the table (or whatever play space is being used) and place the remaining deck next to it. This is the Weapon Market. It must always have two face up cards until the weapon deck runs out.
3. **Lucky Deck**: Place face down in the center of the table. This is a draw deck**.**
4. Remaining Respect tokens become the **Respect Bank**.

Gameplay

During a turn, a player must follow this order:

1. **MUST** draw 1 card from the Lucky Deck
2. **MAY** bid on a weapon from the market (see **bidding**)

3. MAY take **one and only one** of the following actions:
    a. Play an Action card,
    b. Use a Weapon, or
    c. Hire an Assassin, to use their weapon on someone. *(see "Hire Assassin")*

Turn Rotation:

The game begins with the youngest player and rotates clockwise. There is no set turn or round limit; play is continuous until all players are dead (though if one wants to think of a "round," it is, very simply, when player rotation has completed once).

Using a Weapon:

A player loses Respect when they use a weapon. To use a weapon, a player must pay the specified amount of Respect (bottom-left of card, "R") to the victim. This applies in all situations, including when a player is hired to be an Assassin. All weapons stay with players throughout the game, unless the weapon is single-use only, in which case it is permanently removed after use.

Weapon Bidding:

A player can start bidding on a weapon during their turn by placing AT LEAST the base amount of Respect tokens on the weapon they are bidding for (bottom-left of the card, "R"). All other players are now allowed to bid, but *only* on the weapon on which the initial bid was placed (you can't decide to bid on another object on stage at auction, after all).

To get a weapon, players must out-bid everyone. The Respect tokens of the winning bid go into a central pool and the losing bid values are returned to their respective bidders. No pun intended.

Hiring Assassins:

An Assassin is, quite simply, any player who is being asked to use their weapon by another player.

To hire an Assassin, a player can MUST specify the weapon and the victim **first** and **then** negotiate an amount for the task. It is upto the Assassin to accept or reject a bid and/or negotiate for a higher amount. An Assassin MUST perform the requested task once they accept a task.

Note: If the hiring process fails -- the potential Assassin rejects the bid -- the hiring player still has the option to take other possible actions during their turn.

Health, Death and Endgame:

All players start with 5 Health. Players can regain health, but cannot go over the max initial amount of 5.

A player dies when they're out of Health. All weapons and items of the dead player go out of the game and with them to their grave (buried with their guns on, if you will).

The game ends when there is a lone survivor. If two players die in the same action, then the player with more Respect wins. It's your legacy.