

ALIENS HAVE SECRETLY LANDED IN LAKE TERROR! THEY ARE SNATCHING YOUR NEIGHBORS, TAKING OVER THEIR MINDS ONE AT A TIME IN A BID FOR WORLD CONQUEST. AS IF COMMUNISM AND THE LOOMING THREAT OF NUCLEAR ANNIHILATION WEREN'T ENOUGH TO WORRY ABOUT!

EACH NIGHT, THESE POD PEOPLE SEEK A NEW VICTIM AND IMPLANT THEIR OWN LARVAE IN HIS HEAD. BY SUNRISE, THIS ALIEN-IN-DISGUISE WILL START LIVING HER VICTIM'S LIFE, HIS FAMILY BLISSFULLY UNAWARE THAT UNDER THAT OLD, FAMILIAR SMILE, LURKS A DEVIIOUS ALIEN MIND.

BY DAY, IT IS UP TO THE GOOD CITIZENS OF LAKE TERROR TO ROOT OUT THE ALIEN MENACE AND STOP THE INVASION BEFORE IT CAN SPREAD. SOME CALL IT MARTIAL LAW OR EVEN MURDER, BUT IT'S OUR PATRIOTIC DUTY TO END THIS ATTACK ONE WAY OR ANOTHER.

## SET UP

One player will be the Announcer. It's the Announcer's job to tell the story of this alien invasion in Lake Terror, direct the flow of the game and keep the players in line. The Announcer must never voice his own opinions during a game nor help players remember each other's past actions—he should only ever clarify game rules or give factual information that should be public knowledge. Remove the role cards with numbers higher than the number of players, randomize the remaining cards and deal one card face-down to each player. The players look at their own role and must never show it to another player unless killed (except the Cheerleader).

The game will be played in a series of Night & Day cycles until either the Pod People or the Citizens have won. Before play starts, if there is a Cheerleader, she reveals her role card to everyone. Ask the Lunatic and then separately the Dumb Kid to reveal themselves to you, the Announcer, at the beginning of the first Night.

## NIGHT

During the Night phase, have all the players close their eyes. Players must not speak during the night. It is imperative that they all keep their eyes closed during the entire Night phase except when you instruct them otherwise. The Dumb Kid is the only exception: she may peek during the Body Snatching phase. Go through each step one at a time and note the choices made. If you are playing a variant in which roles are not made public when a player dies, then even if the players with those roles who would normally make choices during a step are dead, have been turned into Pod People, or were never assigned to a player, act as though there is still a player making a choice during that step because the players would know that something has happened to the player with that role.

1. **HUNT**: Identify the Vigilante. If it's not the first round, give her the opportunity to shoot another player. Pod People don't use shotguns.
2. **MEDICINE**: Identify the Doctor. If it's not the first round, give her the opportunity to heal a player. Pod People don't administer medicine.
3. **BODY SNATCHING**: All of the Pod People agree on one player to be their next victim. If the Dumb Kid is playing, she may peek (but can't pretend to be one of them).
4. **PATROL**: Each member of the Town Watch—Pod Person or not—patrols one player of her choice (including another Town Watch or even herself).

5. **MIDNIGHT**: If the vigilante's target wasn't patrolled or healed, he is dead.  
If the Scientist used her cure on a Pod Person, he is cured.  
If any of those players were the only living Pod People, the game ends immediately.  
If the Pod People's target is the Lunatic or was healed by the Doctor, nothing happens to him.  
Otherwise, if the Town Watch patrolled him, he is dead (they put him down),  
but if they didn't patrol him, he becomes a Pod Person.
6. **MORTAL CRY**: If a Citizen (or Cheerleader) was put down by the Town Watch, she makes one investigation (like the Psychic) and gurgles out a very short, dying phrase.
7. **INVESTIGATION**: The Psychic chooses three players in a row. Silently tell her the total number of Pod People (and Lunatics) among them.

## DAY

Start a timer for 10 minutes. Players discuss until one is accused and seconded at which point he makes his final defense and a simultaneous vote is taken by all living players. Play proceeds to Night immediately after a player is lynched. It also ends when the timer runs out unless a lynching is still in progress—finish that first.

During the Day phase, the living players may say whatever they like so long as they do not pass information in a non-public way and so long as they never physically reveal their role card. If a player accuses another of being a Pod Person, that accusation can be seconded by another player. If it is, give the accusers a final chance to state their reasons and then give the accused a final chance to state his defense. Direct all the living players to put their fists out and to vote on the count of three: Thumbs up to spare the life of the accused or thumbs down to lynch him. If there is a majority of thumbs down, the accused is killed, reveals his role card and may not speak for the rest of the game. The Day phase ends immediately—no players may comment—and the next Night phase begins. Otherwise, he is spared and the Day phase continues unless the timer has stopped.

## POD PEOPLE

The only way to become a Pod Person is to start that way or to be attacked by the Pod People during the Body Snatching phase of the Night. If a player is attacked by the Pod People at this time and nothing else happens to him, the Announcer will go around the room during the Midnight phase and tap him twice to let him know he is now a Pod Person. He will not learn the identities of his fellow Pod People until the Body Snatching phase of the next night.

If a player is attacked by the Pod People, but the Town Watch patrols him, they find his body with the alien larvae growing inside it and destroy it. When day comes, inform that player he has been killed (but not how).

A Pod Person with another role may still open his eyes during that role's phase of the night, but he will not be able to use his role's ability as long as he is a Pod Person.

If a Pod Person or their victim is cured by the Scientist, the Announcer will go around the room during the Midnight phase and tap him twice to let him know he is no longer a Pod Person.

## DEATH

When a player is killed, whether by lynching during the Day, by Vigilante, or by combination of Pod People + Town Watch during the night, his role card is revealed and whether he was a Pod Person or not is announced. If he was killed by lynching, reveal that information immediately and then proceed directly to Night. If he was

killed during the Night, reveal that information at the start of the next Day at the same time the player's death is announced.

If a player is killed by the Vigilante, nothing can save him except being patrolled by the Town Watch or being healed by the Doctor in the same night. This includes Pod People, their victims, Lunatics and everyone.

It is important that dead players do not speak to the group again until the game is over so that they do not unintentionally give away vital game information.

## END

The game ends when there are no Pod People left—in which case all of the players who are not Pod People win—or when all remaining players are Pod People (and possibly the Lunatic)—in which case the Pod People win. Being dead does not prevent a player from winning.

## VARIANT RULES

Players familiar with the obvious ancestors of this game—*Werewolf* and *Mafia*—will not be surprised to learn that there are myriad tweaks that can be applied to the game to keep things fresh or to appeal to a particular crowd's preferences. Below you will find a brief description of the more common variants.

**Unknown Roles** – Instead of using exactly the roles specified for the number of players playing, you can publicly switch in some other roles if you like them or switch out one of the roles you don't care for. For added uncertainty, you can put in one more role than the number of players so that one will be missing and no one will know which (but make sure it's not the only Pod Person). This could result in more than one Pod Person: Beware having too many in a small game.

**Scientist** – Instead of the Doctor, you can play with the Scientist. The Scientist also acts during the Medicine phase, but has the ability to turn a pre-existing Pod Person back into a human. This has no effect on victims of Pod People or the Vigilante during the rest of the night. She only has enough medicine for a single cure attempt.

**Mysterious Death** – When a player dies, the group only learns his role; or they only learn whether he was a Pod Person or not; or they learn nothing at all. Remember that reducing public information makes the game harder (you decide if that's a good or a bad thing) for everyone—but particularly for the Citizens.

**Autopsy** – If the Scientist or Doctor might be in the game, you can play that the group only learns whether a dead player was a Pod Person if the Scientist or Doctor are still alive—or that only players with those roles are given that information (during the Medicine phase at Night).

**Dutiless Pod People** – Pod People with roles don't open their eyes during *any* phase of the night apart from Body Snatching ...which means the other Town Watch *know* when they've lost one of their own.

**No Pod People** – While it may seem like an interesting social experiment to play with no Pod People and let the Citizens slowly kill each other off in paranoia, *don't do it*. It's not fun; it's long and brutal and ruins your trust.

## THANKS

Thanks are due to the original inventors of *Mafia* and *Werewolf* and to the myriad players who have spread and expanded upon them. Thanks are due to the members of the Penn Gamers club and to the rest of my friends and family who have spent hours playing *Invasion of the Body Snatchers* and its ancestors. Special thanks go to Anthony Rubbo for introducing me to *Werewolf* and to Marf for remembering everything I forget.