COVERT CUES

TABLETOPIA EDITION

CONTEXT

- A hacker, an underpaid employee of an e-platform company is in cahoots with a higher up individual – an Admin – in order to blackmail the company to get the money they deserve.
- However, while they have been planning the crime together, they have to meet and identify each other face to face before proceeding with the plan.
- So, they share a codeword with each other and plan to meet up at the company's monthly business meeting.

GAME OVERVIEW

Amongst a group of regular users, there is a "Hacker" and an "Admin" who are trying to discover who each other are by using their hidden code word.

The "Hacker" and the "Admin" must discover who each other are in order to win the game, whereas the regular users must vote one of them out before they can do so.

CONTENTS

- 30 Topic Cards, 12 Role Cards, 1 die and this rulebook.

FOOD

1. BURGER	4. NOODLES
2. PIZZA	5. RICE
3. PASTA	6. STEAK

SETUP

There is one topic card placed on the centre of the table, "public" side face up. This topic card will be used for the entirety of the match.

Each player receives a role card from the shuffled role deck (consisting of both the Hacker and the Admin roles – with the rest being User role cards), indicating whether they are a regular user, the Hacker or Admin. The Hacker and the Admin do not know the identity of each other and must discover who their teammate is in order to win the game. Then, one person becomes the narrator for the (only) night phase for the game. The narrator will first ask everyone to "close their eyes" by clicking the ? button on the bottom left of the screen.

Once everyone has their "eyes closed" (including the narrator), the narrator will ask for the Hacker specifically to "open their eyes" (by clicking the ? mark again to close the summary screen).
The Hacker will then flip the topic card to expose the "confidential" face of the topic card and will roll the die determining the number for the code word in order to discover the hidden code word for the round.
After a countdown from 10, the narrator will ask for the Hacker to "close their eyes" and will then ask for only the Admin to "open their eyes". During the narrator's countdown from 10, the Admin will read the codeword as presented by the card and the die value. Once this countdown ends and the Admin closes their eyes, the narrator will start another countdown from 10 and will then ask the Hacker to open their eyes and flip the card back to the "public" side and roll the die to hide its original value. Once the countdown ends, the narrator will ask for the Hacker to close their eyes and will then ask for everyone to open their eyes, ending the night phase for the game.
Required Variant For 3-4 players: *Before distributing the roles, remove the Hacker card from the deck and add 1 User card to the deck. Afterwards, randomly shuffle and remove 1 card from this deck face down and add the Hacker card back into this deck. Then, Shuffle and distribute the rest to everyone. This way, the Hacker/Admin will have to consider the possibility that they are alone.*

The game can now start. Each match can consist of multiple rounds.

Each round of the match will consist of three phases;
       1. The Hint Phase,   **2. The Voting Phase,**   **3. The Discovery Phase.**

1. THE HINT PHASE

In this phase, the die is rolled to determine the "public" word for the round, which will be shared with everyone. Then, each player says a one-word hint or phrase about this "public" word, starting from whoever can come up with a hint first and then going clockwise.
The Hacker and the Admin will attempt to come up with a hint that not only references the "public" word, but also the hidden code word that they have in common as an attempt to discover who each other are.
However, during the match, the Admin and Hacker cannot say the actual codeword as their hint.
For example, if the public word is "Librarian" and the code word is "Tutor", one hint the Hacker/Admin could provide is "Textbook". This phase ends once each player has said one hint about the current "public" word.
Important Tip: Regular users should avoid giving too obvious hints, since this only helps the Hacker and Admin identify each other more easily.

2. THE VOTING PHASE

In this phase, everyone discusses who they believe might be the Hacker or the Admin.
Then, once everyone is ready, a countdown from 3 is done and everyone uses the chat to state who they want to vote at the same time. They can also skip voting. The votes are then counted and the person with the highest votes has their role revealed. If this player was the Hacker or the Admin, the game is over and the users win. However, if this player was just a regular user, the game continues. This player can still discuss and vote, however they do not give a hint during the hint phase from now on to the rest of the game.
If the majority of players skipped, no one is voted out and no role is revealed.
If the majority is a tie vote, no role is revealed and the game continues.

3. THE DISCOVERY PHASE

The discovery phase within each round will alternate between giving the Hacker an attempt to guess the identity of their teammate and giving the Admin an attempt to guess the identity of their teammate.
(1st round – Hacker, 2nd Round – Admin, 3rd Round – Hacker, and so on)
In this phase, one person acts as a narrator and asks if the Hacker/Admin would want to reveal themselves and attempt to guess the identity of their teammate. The Hacker/Admin can decide to remain silent if they do not feel ready to guess.
If they do reveal themselves and guess who their teammate is correctly, both the Hacker and the Admin win the game. However, if the Hacker/Admin reveals themselves and guesses incorrectly, the users win the game and both the Hacker and the Admin lose. While the Hacker/Admin is making their guess, the others are not allowed to say anything which would indicate who their teammate is. If after a countdown from 10 no one has come forth as the Hacker/Admin, then they have decided to not reveal themselves, hence marking the end of this phase. The match will then continue and another round will start. The secret code word stays the same for the entire match.

For 3-4 players, there is a chance that the Hacker/Admin has no teammate. If this is the case, the Hacker/Admin must correctly identify that they are alone during this phase in order to win the game.

Scoring (Recommended):

If the Hacker or Admin gets voted out, every user who voted for them receives a point. If the Hacker/Admin win, they both get 2 points each. If the Hacker/Admin guesses incorrectly, every user gets one point and the person who was guessed receives 2 points for tricking the Hacker/Admin.

INQUISITION EXPANSION

- The Inquisition Expansion consists of the Debugger and the Accomplice roles, which are recommended for 6+ players.
- The details and rules for these explanations can be found on the Expansion Rules card in the deck.
- During the night phase, after the Hacker/Admin, the narrator asks for the Accomplice to open their eyes and for the Hacker and Admin to move their mouse around the screen while having their "eyes closed" for the Accomplice to learn who they are. The Debugger goes before the Admin, and will simply be asked to observe the code during a countdown of 10.