

# Grey Area

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**A susceptible, naive goody-two-shoes uncovers the dark secrets hidden deep within the world he thought he knew.**

## Overview

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An interactive graphic narrative set in the apocalyptic future of 3417. Significant strides in technological and medical advancements have been made, stretching the average human lifespan to be a few hundred years. The player goes through the story mainly as Luke, the younger twin brother of Mark, known for his sense of responsibility and loyalty. For the past almost 18 years, he has comfortably gone through his entire life, living according to the rules of the society he calls home and aligning with its values. But as he gains the trust of those he initially respected, “home” no longer seems like the safe paradise he once thought it was. The player will be faced with challenges regarding trust, morality, ethics, and humanity’s hunger for perfection.

## Technology

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This is a video game for PC and Mac. Standard peripherals are single monitor, mouse, and keyboard. The game is also playable using an Xbox or PlayStation controller.

Associated technologies: computers and laptops.

Interactive elements: multiple choice plot decisions, multiple choice conversation wheel, quick time events, walking, switching characters, collecting information (stealth).

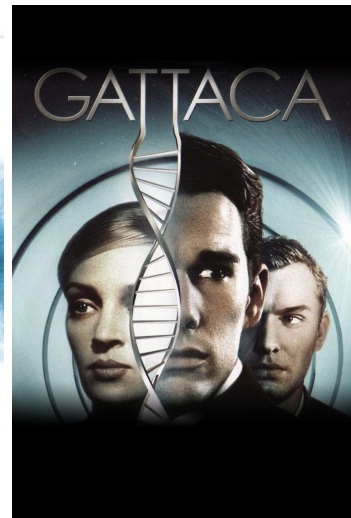
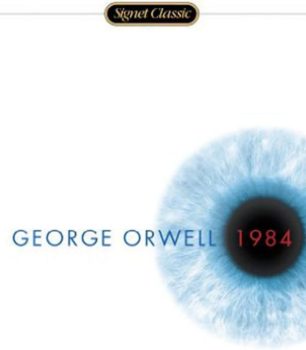
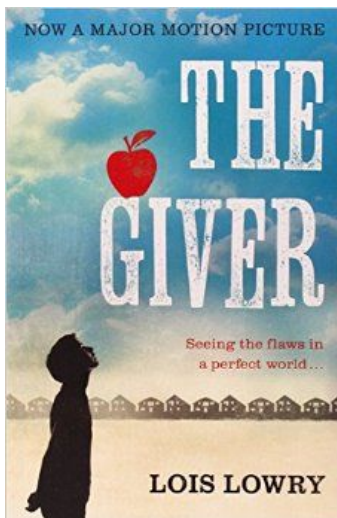
## Summary

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Genre: Dystopian.

Target demographic: 16 to 34 year olds.

Comparables: Narratively similar to The Giver, 1984, Brave New World, and Gattaca. Order and neutralizing threats to this order. Knowledge of what is truly happening kept only within individuals at the very top of the hierarchy.



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Mood and flavor similar to Fallout 4. Has elements of tragedy but also light-hearted. Darkness is less visual and more thematic.

Games that play similarly are any Telltale Games and Life is Strange. Players are encouraged to explore the world and interact with its inhabitants. Each scene is rich with small details, catering to both players who actively try to interact with any objects they see and those who like to take moments to simply appreciate the visual world.



[Link](#)

*World contains interactable objects like in Life is Strange (above) and conversation wheels like in The Walking Dead (below).*



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Telltale's *The Wolf Among Us* and *Attack on Titan* are good examples for aesthetics, as well, with almost a comic/graphic novel feel (visuals with bold lines, hard contrast, illustrative quality). A graphic novel that has come to life.



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*Samples of graphic style from The Wolf Among Us.*



## Characters

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**Luke** – The main player avatar.

He slicks his brown mid-length hair back neatly, so that it's not in his face. He likes to zip his jacket up just below his neck.

He is a rule follower, respects authority, and likes things organized and well-planned. He loves his brother Mark, so he looks out for him and tries to keep him out of trouble as much as he possibly can.

Luke is well-liked among the leaders of the society, all of whom appreciate how hard he works in his classes and how loyal and trustworthy he is as an individual. He is more book-smart, a quick learner who can absorb knowledge through reading, watching, and doing, but can become rather anxious when asked to think on his toes.



**Mark** – The secondary player avatar.

He is Luke's identical twin brother, older by 4 minutes. He normally wears his brown mid-length hair rather messy, like he just rolled out of bed and started his day. His jacket is never zipped up.

He is the rebellious one, who's a little rough around the edges. The only thing that keeps him from breaking every single rule and walking out, possibly to his death, is Luke.

Mark's not particularly happy with the society he lives in and is skeptical about everything they are told--and those running the society knows it and aren't happy with him. Although he frequently acts before thinking thoroughly about the consequences of his actions, Mark is quite clever and quick-witted, which is the main concern of the higher-ups: an intelligent troublemaker.

**Emma** – She is the Head, essentially the leader and overseer of the society.



She is a tall, slender woman who looks to be in her mid-30s. Her sleek black hair is tied back tightly into a ponytail. Her uniform is different from the rest of the colony in that it consists of a slim collared shirt (no buttons) tucked into a pair of more formal-looking pants (but still has a similar cut to the track pants) with a long coat.

Her pointed shoes have a slight heel, making her seem even taller. All of her clothes seem to be tailored especially for her.

She firmly believes that in whatever she does, she does it for the good of the society.

Emma is very tied to traditions and the past, not wanting to disappoint, so she works hard to keep order with an iron fist, refusing to be seen as an incompetent Head or be associated with any possible mutiny that may happen.



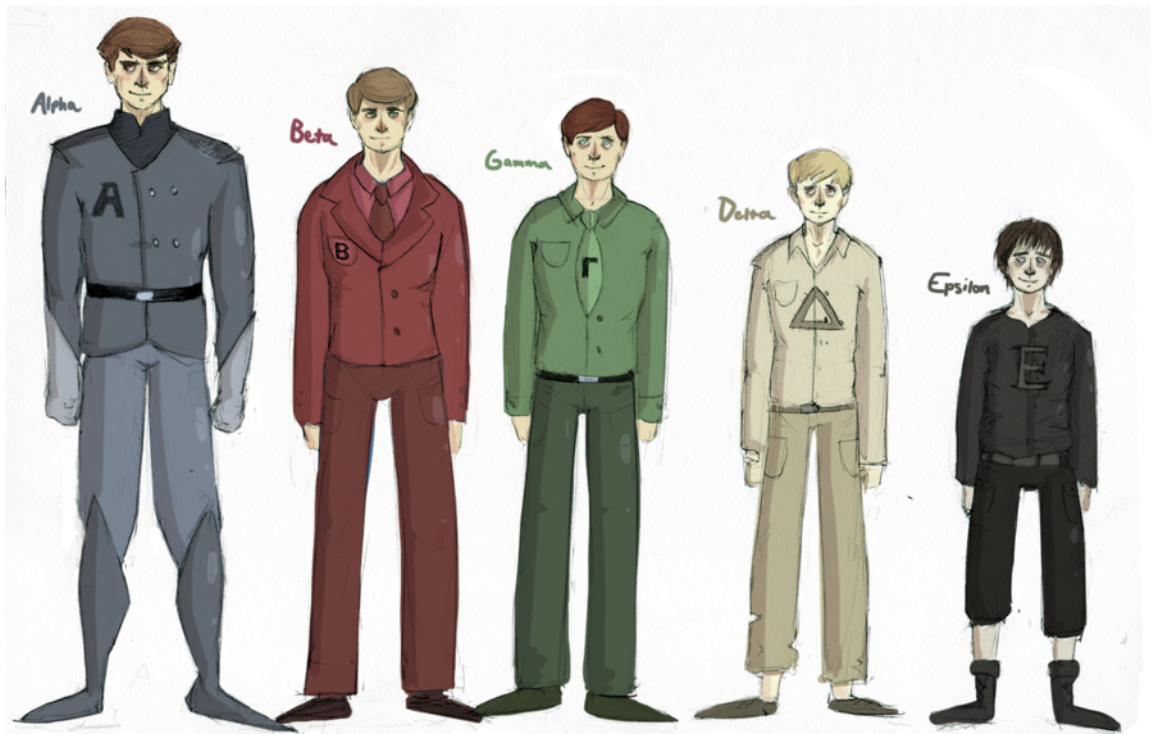
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*Sample of graphic style from Attack on Titan.*

## Setting

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The year is 3417. Centuries of war, natural disasters, and general neglect of the environment have changed the way humans inhabit planet earth. People now live in colonies, seeking refuge in huge contained structures built to protect fragile human lives against the toxic air, unpredictable climate, and whatever beasts or monstrosities that may live in the Outside. Inside these structures, tens of thousands of people, dressed in uniform, live to be a part of a thriving system that focuses on the longevity of humanity.

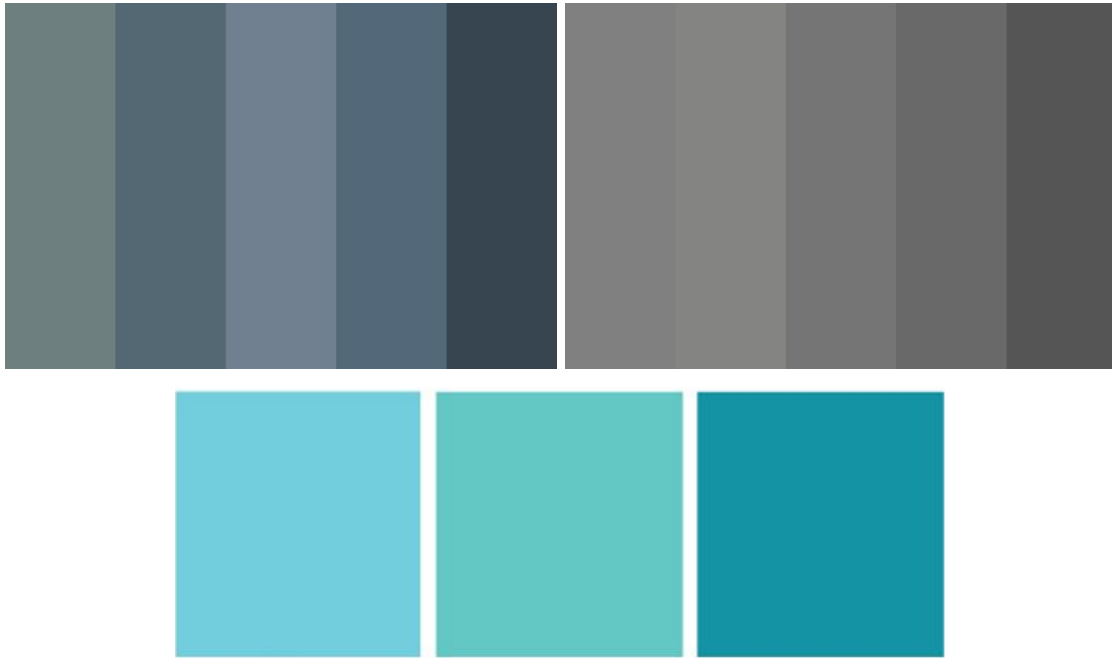


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*Similar to Brave New World, this society functions because everyone knows their roles and respects the rules.*

This society exists because it heavily values maintaining order. There is an understanding among the community that there are rules and that these rules are meant to be followed at all times. Teachers are to report any individuals who could be potential threats to this order, in the hopes that reforming them while they are still young will be much more effective than correcting them when they have grown up to be adults. The higher-ups go to great lengths to ensure that these threats are taken care of, whether that would involve changing an individual's brain chemistry in order for them to become more docile and compliant or threatening them into submission. They wholeheartedly believe that what they are doing is the right thing for the greater good in order to build the best life possible for those living here.

Grey Area/Chan



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*Sample of color palette.*

The interior of the structure, as well as any furniture and decor, is mainly various shades of grey with blue accents. The blue accents serve almost like an indication of class. An individual's Residence Room would have more blue accented furniture if they exist higher up the hierarchy. For example, Head Emma's office has a muted blue rug covering most of the floor, making her office significantly more colorful than any other room within the structure.





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*Sample of uniform from Black Mirror.*

Black Mirror's "Fifteen Million Merits" episode serves as a reference for the uniforms: charcoal track suits, which consist of a t-shirt, jacket, and pants. The t-shirt is a typical crew neck tee. The jacket has a full-length zipper that can cover the neck when fully zipped and no hood. The pants are cuffed and tapered so the legs do not hang past the ankles. Everything is made of synthetic fabric, designed to be breathable and allow for easy movement. Their socks and shoes are of the same color. Shoes are very simple slip-ons, with no laces or straps. Any pieces of clothing can have accents, which should be blue.

People of certain professions, such as higher-ups, doctors, and members of the security team, may wear a different uniform while working (except higher-ups, who can choose to dress in their work uniform outside of work). Higher-ups tend to dress similarly to Head Emma, something dressier and more formal. Doctors have on a medical coat instead of the track jacket. Everything is still in the same color scheme.



[Link](#)

*Sample of structure layout from Fallout Shelter.*

The layout of these contained structures are similar to those in Fallout Shelter. They're mainly underground, with many levels and various rooms designated for specific purposes. There is one room that allows for entry and exit to and from The Outside, which is heavily guarded and secured and the only room that is above ground.

Because technological and medical advancements have significantly increased the average human lifespan, the population growth occurs rather quickly. Those trained in architecture and urban planning work with the construction crews to constantly expand the structure deeper underground. As new Residence Rooms are completed, people move and change rooms, which occurs quite frequently, reinforcing the idea that nothing truly belongs to you in this world and that everything that you do is for the greater good.



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*Sample of The Outside atmosphere.*

The Outside is essentially a barren wasteland. Piles of debris line the ground, completely covered with a thick layer of dirt and dust. Metals have rusted, wood splintered. Any hint of buildings or urban cities from the past are mere specks on the horizon. As big as the bunker has to be in order to house a growing population of tens of thousands of people, The Outside feels much bigger. It is a place of unknown. It feels scary, lonely, lost, hopeless.

The society is taught that The Outside is extremely dangerous. Most of the population will never go out. Only the security team who has undergone highly rigorous and lengthy training will venture to The Outside, and, even so, will don on specialized protective uniform and gear beforehand. These purpose of these journeys is to scour the lands for any potentially useful materials and learn the layout of their surroundings better. As the years progress, the security team's missions to The Outside become longer, sometimes even as long as an entire week at this point in time. They grow more accustomed to the foreign environment and also need to explore areas further away as they make their rounds. The security team consists of individuals who are held in high-esteem and very respected. They work closely with the Head and higher-ups.



## Story

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Luke and Mark await Injection Day, a coming-of-age tradition where those turning 18 get their injections, which slow down the process of aging, for the first time in their lives. Mark, widely known to be the troublemaker, poses as a problem to those running the society, making him a target. Luke, on the other hand, has proven his loyalty time and time again, serving as an exemplary example to his peers and gaining the trust of the Head and those who run the society. But after being asked to give Mark a strange replacement pill, Luke is convinced that Mark may be right: something is not right and the higher-ups have kept it hidden for god knows how long.

The brothers join forces, complementing Mark's stealth abilities with Luke's espionage potential, to reveal the society for what it truly is. They go on missions to uncover the truth behind the mystery of Serum B, speak in private confidence with Bruce, one of the forefathers and longest-living member of the society, and explore the Outside firsthand.



[Link](#)

*Sample of graphic style from Attack on Titan.*



## Walkthrough

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It's Injection Day. Your character, Luke, is inside their Residence Room. He is sitting at his desk with three tiny blue pills in front of him. He is resting his elbows on the desk, with his forearms folded across, half of his face covered with mainly his eyes visible, fixated on the pills. The hiss of the door opening disrupts his fixation.

**Quick Time Event:** 2 seconds to press E.

You **succeed**.

Luke hurriedly shoves the middle pill into his pocket as Mark steps into the room. He stands up with the two remaining pills, one in each hand. He looks nervous.

**Luke:** I got our meal pills.

Mark is clearly grateful that his brother is the responsible one

**Mark:** Awesome, you're the best.

As he reaches to grab the pill in Luke's left hand, he notices Luke's anxious demeanor.

**Mark:** You okay? You don't look so good.

Your options:

**Tell him about the plan.**

**Don't tell him about the plan.**

You choose **Tell him about the plan**.

Beads of sweat cover Luke's forehead. His breaths feel short, as if no matter how hard his lungs tried, the oxygen simply slipped out of its grasps. The beating in his chest is so loud and intense that he wanted so badly to stick his hand straight through and squeeze his heart until it stopped.

**Mark** (screaming): LUKE.

Mark has been shaking him and repeating his name over and over again, each repetition growing in volume and concern.

**Mark:** Dude, what's wrong with you? I thought you were about to have a stroke.

Mark tries to keep the usual light-hearted tone in his voice to alleviate his discomfort in the seemingly serious situation.

**Luke:** Mark.

He takes a deep breath to try to calm his nerves, and, then, proceeds to word vomit, ignoring his typical habit of filtering each and every thought.

**Luke:** I got called into Head Emma's office a few days ago and she told me she was worried about you and how you might act on Injection Day and she gave me a pill to replace your meal pill and said you would just get kinda sleepy but I don't actually know what it does and she asked me if I would do anything for you and I said yes and she made it sound like we were on the same page but I have this weird feeling in my stomach and I don't know.

Luke is yelling by the end of his spiel, panting after saying it all in one breath.

Mark is standing in front of his brother, unfazed. His expression remains unchanged, save for a subtle curl at the ends of his mouth, forming the slightest hint of a smile. He lets out a small chuckle under his breath.

Luke is absolutely confused, angry even, by his brother's unexpected reaction.

**Luke:** Why are you laughing?! This is not a joke. Can you be serious for a moment?

**Mark:** Oh, Luke. Sweet, innocent Luke.

**Luke:** Maybe if you would stop patronizing me for a second--

**Mark:** You think I didn't already know about Head Emma's plan?

Luke is now frozen, dumbfounded, trying to process the words that just came out of Mark's mouth.

**Luke:** ... wait. What?

**Mark:** Yeah. I knew... I was waiting for you to tell me.

[Text: Mark trusts you and will remember your honesty.]

At this point, Luke realizes Mark would've taken the pill regardless of whether or not he chose to share the details of the plan. He is glad that he decided to be honest.

**Luke:** Wh--... but how?

**Mark:** Being super sneaky and stealthy is my specialty, Luke. I'm kinda offended that you don't seem to recognize that.

Your options:

**Chastise him.**

**Humor him.**

You choose **Chastise him.**

**Luke:** Mark! That sounds reckless and dangerous.

**Mark:** Calm down. I'm still in one piece, aren't I? Now do you want to hear my plan or what?

**Luke:** Plan?? For what?

Mark is wearing his usual smug expression.

**Mark:** To bring down the system.

**Luke:** What do you think this is? A game?!

**Mark:** Just let me finish and then you can yell at me. So I think the first step is to get more dirt on the Head and the higher-ups. As much as I love sneaking around and stuff, it probably is a little risky if we only relied on that as our sole method for information.

**Luke:** ... "we"??

Mark ignores his comment and continues explaining.

**Mark:** Andddd that's where you come in. Everyone trusts you, especially Head Emma. Why else would she have given you the honor of poisoning me with a pill? I mean, she also knows that I trust you and that there was no way in hell that I would've taken anything from her or her mindless, brainwashed subjects.

**Luke:** Okay wait. What is it that you think I'm going to do...?

**Mark:** Luke, you don't understand the power that you have. With you, we can bring the system down from the inside.

Luke is once again frozen, overwhelmed with shock, fear, and confusion. He wants to believe that this is all a part of an elaborate prank.

**Luke:** Do you have any idea how dramatic and crazy you sound right now?

**Mark:** Yeah, but it's a brilliant plan right?

**Luke:** It's not even a plan! It's "I don't really know anything, so let's risk our lives and probably find nothing and then maybe figure out what to do later."

**Mark:** We're not going to find nothing. In fact, I bet you this place is riddled with dirt waiting to be uncovered.

**Luke:** And how do you know that?

**Mark:** This whole place is broken! The fact that they tried to get you to drug me is proof that this system is screwed up and trying to contain its own mess.

Luke suddenly jolts up, as if snapping out of a trance.

**Luke:** Wait! We have to be at the infirmary in 8 minutes. And they're going to know I didn't give you the pill if you just waltz in there, all conscious and whatnot.

**Mark:** Well, I could just pretend to be unconscious. I've spent years perfecting the art.

**Quick Time Event:** 1 second to press E.

You **fail**.

Mark begins to slowly lean towards Luke. His body gains momentum and Luke realizes too late that he's decided to perform a trust fall exercise unannounced. Luke brings his arms up to try to catch him but Mark's body doesn't even come close to landing inside his slow grasp and hits the floor with a muffled thump.

Mark pushes himself up off the floor and stands back up to face Luke, rubbing where his hip made initial contact with the floor.

**Mark:** Someone needs to work on their reflexes, don't they? Maybe we'll try that again, but this time I'll land on my head so I'll actually be unconscious.

**Luke:** Ha. Ha. You're so funny. But seriously, Mark. What if they see through the act? They've kept this place running for like 500 years now. They're not exactly dumb.

**Mark:** You're not going to like this idea, but I mean if you're worried that they won't believe my award-winning performance, I could just take the pill.

Your options:

**Let Mark pretend to be unconscious.**

**Let Mark take the replacement pill.**

You choose **Let Mark take the replacement pill.**

Luke takes the third pill out of his pocket. He gives it one last long, hard look before hesitantly handing it to Mark. Mark reaches out to grab it, but just as he's about to pinch the pill between his thumb and index finger, Luke pulls it away.

**Luke:** Before you actually go through with this, I just want you to know that I really don't want to do this.

**Mark:** Oh, you mean you don't always look like you're about to shit your pants?



**Luke:** Mark! I'm serious. I really don't like this idea. But I feel like the consequences are going to be way worse if they find out you're faking it. And they'll probably know because we don't even know what this pill does. And then, they'll be suspicious of me, too, and I won't be of much use for your plan.

**Mark** (smugly): So I've won you over? Who would've seen it coming? Luke the mutineer!

**Luke:** Did you hear anything I just said?

**Mark:** Yeah. Don't worry. I trust your judgment. Glad to have you on board.

Mark lightly pats Luke on the shoulder.

With that, Mark takes the replacement pill, without any hint of hesitation. Luke quickly follows suit and swallows his meal pill.

After a brief moment, the effects of the replacement pill become apparent. Mark has both of his hands on his face, gripping at his temples, eyes shut and teeth gritted. He is struggling to keep his balance, reaching out his arms hoping to find something to steady himself.

**Quick Time Event:** 1 second to press E.

You **succeed**.

Luke positions himself next to Mark and slings his arm over his shoulder, trying to carry most of his weight.

*You use WASD to follow the line on the floor guiding you to the infirmary, while shifting the mouse in different directions to keep Luke's balance.*

Luke's steps are staggered as he fights to rush the ragdoll body that used to be his charismatic brother to the infirmary. He finally enters the doorway of the infirmary, where the doctor and Head Emma are waiting, their expressions calm, collected, hard to read.

Luke is panting, out of breath from the physical exertion of carrying his brother here and the mental distress of question his decision of giving him the pill.

**Luke:** I don't know... He just collapsed... and... Is he going to be okay?

The doctor helps Luke walk Mark towards one of the beds and lift his body onto it.

**Emma:** There's nothing to worry about, Luke. I told you Mark would get a little sleepy. He'll be fine.

**Luke:** Are you sure?? It sounded really bad--

The doctor cuts him off.

**Doctor:** Now, if I could have you lie down over here.

He gestures to the bed next to the one holding Mark's motionless body.

Luke obediently follows the doctor's instructions and climbs onto the bed. He gently rests his head on the pillow and adjusts himself a bit to get comfortable. Head Emma gives him a warm smile.

**Doctor:** Very good. I'm going to have to fasten these straps over your arms and legs.

Don't be alarmed. It's all part of protocol. You'll be perfectly fine.

He buckles the cold leather straps over his limbs.

*You use the mouse to look around, your vision limited to Luke's immediate surroundings. To the right, Mark is lying on the bed, also strapped down by his arms and legs, still unconscious, occasionally letting out a weak groan. To the left, Head Emma is standing with perfect posture, arms crossed, supervising the process to make sure nothing goes awry.*

Soon after, the doctor walks back with a metal tray holding some sterilizing tools and two large syringes with translucent blue liquid inside.

Luke is fixated on the syringes. His mind screams for him to look away, that it'd be better to close his eyes and let his body be consumed by the anticipation, but he can't take his eyes off that mesmerizing blue liquid. It feels as if his entire body is pulsating to the quickening rhythm of his heartbeat. His head is throbbing.

Suddenly, his anxiety is interrupted by a cold touch on his hand. The doctor's hand feels unnaturally icy on his.

**Doctor:** Luke, would you like to go first or second?

Your options:

**First.**

**Second.**

You choose **First.**

**Luke:** I'll go first. I don't think my nerves can handle waiting any longer.

Luke lets out a nervous laugh.

**Luke:** Plus, I trust the Mark is in good hands.

He smiles genuinely.

[Text: Head Emma trusts you and will remember this.]

**Doctor:** All right. First it is.

*You can look around with the mouse, still limited to the extent of which Luke can turn his head. The doctor, standing on Luke's right side, snaps on a pair of snug latex gloves that seems to have been specifically made for his hands. He cleans the area on Luke's arm, and then, grabs one of the syringes off the tray. A sharp piercing sensation shoots through his right arm as jagged black lines bleed in from the edges of the screen. He watches the doctor's fingers, pushing every inch of the long metal needle deeper and deeper into his skin. A low rumble lingers as the doctor slowly empties the rest of the content in the syringe, gradually growing in volume and creating a crushing pressure in the player's head. The needle pulls at his skin on its exit. If you are uncomfortable with needles, you can force Luke to look away.*

After a couple seconds, Luke's vision, thoughts, and awareness gradually begins to blur and feel heavy.

**Distorted Voice:** You'll start... fe... Little sleep... eh... thing... okay...

Luke can't seem to distinguish whether it's the doctor or Head Emma who is speaking to him. He can barely make out any of the words. Each utterance sounds extremely far away, echoing and trailing off into the distance.

**Event:** Repeatedly press E.

Luke is fighting against the sleep that wants to take over his body. Everything still looks like one giant blur, a mixture of countless different shades of grey that seem to be swirling into itself. His eyes are drawn to a faint hue of blue where the doctor had placed the metal tray.

*You use the mouse to trace the prompt in order to spend the last of Luke's energy in trying to focus his vision. Once all the patterns are traced, Luke sees that it is a small glass bottle holding a few drops of the blue liquid the syringes didn't collect. On the label, the words "Serum A" are printed in bold, all caps type. Luke then falls unconscious, the effects of the serum having taken over his body completely. Fade to black.*

There are muffled sounds of sparse footsteps and conversation, along with a quiet hum of machinery. Or perhaps it's a generator. Luke slowly wakes up, still lying on the bed in the infirmary, but no longer strapped down.

A moment of panic strikes him but quickly passes when he looks over to his right to see Mark, not yet awake. The regular rise and fall of his chest, along with the no longer pained expression on his face, let Luke breathe out a sigh of relief.

After a few seconds of peaceful silence, Mark slowly comes to, as well, looking around the room to try to assess where he is and figure out what had happened. The doctor walks in from his office in the back before either of them can say a single word.

**Doctor:** I see the both of you are awake. I will check a few things to confirm that your bodies are not reacting poorly to the injection.

He walks over to Luke first and begins to perform a series of short tests. He shines a small flashlight into each of Luke's eyes for a few seconds, listens to his heartbeat using a stethoscope, feels the areas around his face and neck, and examines the skin around the injection site on his arm. When the doctor is done with Luke, he moves towards Mark, repeating the ritual.

**Doctor:** All right. The both of you have survived your first Injection Day. Congratulations and happy birthday. You are free to go.

The doctor gives them a final nod. Luke and Mark crawl out of the beds and make their way to the door, with Mark walking half a step ahead of Luke. Before turning into the hall, Luke turns around and sees the doctor still in the same spot, staring and smiling at him. He returns a smile, hoping his feelings of unease and discomfort don't surface and betray him.

*You use WASD to walk around, having Mark lead you back to the Residence Room. Luke begins to talk, but Mark shushes him and shakes his head. Luke understands his gesture to indicate that it's safer to talk back in their room. They remain silent for the remainder of the walk.*

They return to their Residence Room and wait for the door to hiss to a close.

**Mark:** Do you feel any different??

He is looking at his right arm, lifting up the gauze covering the injection site.

**Luke:** No.. do you?



**Mark:** No. Which I guess we can take as a good sign. For now. So what happened after I took the pill? I just remember my head hurting really bad and the room started spinning. Everything sorta went black after that...

**Luke:** Yeah, I basically carried you to the infirmary. When we got there, Head Emma was already there with the doctor. He helped me carry you to the bed. And then they strapped down our arms and legs. The doctor got the injection ready and everything and asked if I wanted to go first or second. I said first and--

**Mark:** You went first?? What if they were going to cut open my head and take my brain or something?!

**Luke:** Okay they clearly didn't do that. And you were the one who said that I can help because people trust me. So I need to make sure that they continue to trust me by showing them that I trust them.

Mark pretends to wipe a fake tear from his eyes.

**Mark:** They grow up so fast. It's like I don't have to hold your hand and walk you through everything anymore.

Luke pauses for a moment, takes a deep breath, but decides to simply ignore his brother's mockery.

**Luke:** So I went first. And things started getting a little hazy here, but I tried to fight it for as long as I could to see if I could make sure you would be okay. But like I said, it was really hard to see or hear anything. Everything just looked like a giant grey blob. The only thing I saw was this blue dot which turned out to just be the bottle holding injection "Serum A" (*air quotes*) and that's pretty much it.

**Mark:** Wait. What do you mean "Serum A" (*air quotes*)?

**Luke:** I don't know. That's what the label on the bottle said.

Mark looks to be extremely deep in thought and starts pacing the room. Luke isn't sure if he's talking to him or just mumbling to himself.

**Mark:** "Serum A." Why would they label something Serum A?... Unless, they need to distinguish between different serums? Is there really more than one? Of course, they wouldn't tell us...

Mark abruptly stops pacing and turns to face Luke, staring intensely at him but remaining silent. Luke is confused and starts to get uncomfortable.

**Luke:** ... what?

**Mark** (excitedly): You ready to go see what Serum B is?

**Luke:** What are you talking about? We don't even know if that's a thing...

**Mark:** Well, let's go find out then.

Mark turns towards the door, energized by the prospect of discovering new information, about to bolt into the hallway.

**Luke:** Mark!

**Mark** (impatiently): What???

**Luke:** You really need to stop running off on your missions without thinking. If you want me to help you, we're going to need an actual plan.

**Mark:** God, you're so boringgg.

Luke looks unamused.

**Mark:** Okay, okay. So, we'll split up. I know. Before you complain about how stupid that sounds, let me finish. It'll be more efficient that way. I'm good at snooping and being where I'm not supposed to be without getting caught. You're better when people actually see you cause you can get them to tell you things. You have no idea how easy you have it. So, we'll split up and do our own thing and then reconvene. And if at any point it feels too risky for you, don't push it. Sound good?

Luke pretends to wipe a fake tear from his eyes.

**Luke:** "They grow up so fast. It's like I don't have to hold your hand and walk you through everything anymore."

**Mark:** Shut up.

Your options:

**Play as Luke.**

**Play as Mark.**

You choose **Play as Mark.**

**Mark:** I'm going to head over to the infirmary and see what I can find.

*You use WASD to jog out of the Residence Room as Mark. Holding the Shift key while using WASD causes him to walk slowly and quietly, so his footsteps can't be heard. Ctrl causes Mark to crouch, allowing him to hide behind objects.*

Mark returns to the infirmary. The doctor is inside his office, with his back to the window facing the infirmary entry. He seems to be occupied, typing data into what looks like a spreadsheet on his computer monitor with folders spread across his desk. From time to time, he rolls his chair to the desk facing the window to comb through more folders.

Mark sneaks into the room, walking towards the side opposite from the office. He hides behind a bed, looking at the straps, tugging at them to test their strength.

**Mark** (thought): Seems like overkill for some measly injection.

He gets up and continues to make his way further into the room, this time ending up next to a tall metal trash can with a lid. He carefully lifts the lid and peers inside, revealing used syringes, gauze, bandages, and tiny empty glass bottles. Some of the bottles are turned so that it reads “Serum A” on the label.

**Mark** (thought): Serum A is definitely a thing, but I don’t see anything else. And I’m not about to go sticking my hand into a trash can full of needles that’s been in people’s arms.

As he walks towards the cabinets in the back of the infirmary, he hears the rolling of plastic wheels across the tile floor and freezes. The doctor has a clear view out of his office window. Mark carefully sneaks back, using another bed as a hiding spot, waiting for the doctor to turn his attention back to his computer.

The seconds feel like years, but the doctor finally returns to his machine. Mark makes a beeline for the cabinets, opening them just enough for him to peek inside. Inside are shelves of medical equipment (syringes, scalpels, needles, forceps, bandages, etc) sealed away in sterilized packaging, metal trays of various sizes, and rows and rows of tiny glass bottles.

**Mark** (thought): Serum A, Serum A, Serum A... Of course they wouldn’t just store Serum B here for just anyone to find. What was I thinking?

Suddenly, Mark hears the click of a pair of heeled shoes growing louder from the hallway and immediately becomes even more aware of his surroundings.

**Mark** (thought): Head Emma! I don’t know if she’s coming in here, but I better hide just in case she does.



[Link](#)

*Mood and feel of story is similar to 1984.*

## Narrative Branches

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If you choose **Don't tell him about the plan.**

Luke blames his visible anxiety on Injection Day nerves.

Mark holds his pill out to his brother. Luke reciprocates the gesture, clinking their pills together as if they were wine glasses before taking their meal together.

Right before they take the pill, Mark looks straight into Luke's eyes, as if waiting for him to say or do something. After a few seconds, he speaks in a low but clear voice.

**Mark:** I know about you and Head Emma's plan.

Then, without hesitation, he takes the pill.

*In this branch, Luke starts off with a lower Trust stat with Mark. It will affect some dialogue lines (less playful bickering) and cause Mark to suspect Luke's allegiance until Luke gains his trust back.*



If you choose **Let Mark pretend to be unconscious.**

Luke and Mark run to the infirmary together (player uses WASD and mouse controls).

Mark holds out his arm to stop Luke midstep right as they arrive at the doorway.

**Luke:** What are you doing? We're late alr--

Mark turns around and quietly but firmly shushes him, then, quickly returns his attention to the doctor and Head Emma who are waiting impatiently in the room.

*In this branch, we overhear a conversation between the doctor and Head Emma talking about Serum B. Mark and Luke have no idea what Serum B is or what it does, but hurriedly enter the infirmary (with Mark slumped over Luke) so they don't have to find out firsthand. This branch allows players the confirmation that Serum B exists earlier on in the overall story.*

If you choose **Second.**

Luke receives the injection after Mark. He watches the doctor as he carefully and precisely sticks the needle into Mark's arm and pushes the blue, slightly thick and resilient liquid into his body.

*In this branch, Luke has the assurance that Mark's Injection Day process is nothing out of the ordinary but doesn't receive a boost in Trust stat with Head Emma. She won't be as willing to give up information that the players might be looking for and will be more likely to find some of their actions or conversation responses suspicious.*

## Concluding Thoughts

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Grey Area is a story about friendship, trust, honesty, morality, and humanity. The narrative focuses on playing with the player's expectations, sprinkling in plot twists and high-stakes decisions throughout the game. Although complex and set in a futuristic, fictional, foreign world, it still maintains its relatability. Making sacrifices for people you care about. Carefully choosing whom you can really trust. Balancing the need to be honest with the need to survive. As the story progresses, emotional investment becomes a stronger and stronger driving force to continue deeper, making each new plot decision even more difficult and heart-wrenching than the previous.

The extremely compelling stylized visuals of the world attract players who are especially appreciative of graphic novels and comic books. Bold lines, high contrast, and intense saturation dramatize the emotionality of each scene. This world is different, but real. The characters are easy to identify, but hard to let go. Emotions are deep and complex. In this world, decisions are never black and white.