

'Mafia' revives old-style gangsters



INTERNET PHOTO

You are part of the family now, so get ready for a nonstop shotgun frenzy in 'Mafia.' Just don't forget to reload now and again, or you may end up sleeping with the fishes.

Jadon Triplett

THE CLACKAMAS PRINT

"Mafia," just released for PlayStation 2 on Jan. 29, is the

game for anybody who has ever yearned for a shot at being a part of the legendary mob during its golden years in the 1930s.

Set in the depression era,

"Mafia" is a video game about one man, Tommy Angelo, and his rise through the ranks of Don Salieri's crime family. In the beginning of the game, players drive clunky

vehicles similar to Model T's to get from one place to another. The city in which the game takes place, Lost Heaven, is very similar to a '30s metropolis, with streets that wind through both slums and skyscrapers.

The attention to realism and detail is so good, it almost becomes annoying. If players run a red light or go just a little over the speed limit, they can get a ticket, sometimes from a police officer walking down the street with nothing but a whistle that he blows repeatedly until the player pulls over (or pulls evasive action).

Game play is similar to "Grand Theft Auto 3," but the story is much more real and less over-the-top than the almost cartoon-like violence portrayed by "Grand Theft Auto."

Yes, players can steal cars from hapless commuters, and yes, they drive to get from one place to the next, but the cars in "Mafia" are more of a means to get players from one scenario to another rather than being a part of the scenario itself.

This isn't important, because it is definitely a big part of the game. At one point, the player gets to drive authentic racecars around a track after the man who was supposed to race gets beaten up by thugs who bet against him.

Once a player actually gets to the non-driving part of the jobs, the real fun begins. The third-per-

son style of this game is reminiscent of Max Payne, but with better graphics and a richer story.

There are various duties to perform, such as smuggling Canadian whiskey in for U.S. citizens left thirsty by prohibition, beating up thugs who are terrorizing neighborhoods under Don Salieri's "protection," or walking a lovely young lady home from Salieri's restaurant (which may or may not lead to a steamy sex scene). This is but a sampling of the fun, as there are many more places to inflict destruction, including but not limited to: a border farm, a whorehouse and a Catholic Church.

While the voice-over acting isn't perfect, and at times even cheesy, it is authentic and easy to imagine as emulating old gangsters.

The writers had a good sense of humor as well. For example, there is a scene where players go to get weapons for one of the first jobs and the weapons man hands over a baseball bat with a warning to be careful because it belongs to his little nephew.

Over all, I was surprised at how much fun I had playing this game. I was skeptical that it would be just a "Grand Theft Auto" clone, but I was surprised at how deeply involving the game play was.

This gets 3 1/2 out of 4 stars and I recommend it to anyone who has a PlayStation 2 and is itching to be a real gangster.

'The Bronze Horseman' captivates readers

Jessica LeClaire

THE CLACKAMAS PRINT

Many books have been written about World War II, but one of the few novels to go into detail about the famine, separation, heartache and death that occurred around 1941 in Russia, is "The Bronze Horseman" by Paullina Simons.

It is one book that I found I could not put down until it was finished.

The story starts out in Leningrad at the beginning of the war. Simons is able to immediately hold a reader's attention by her graphic descriptions about the conditions of the city before the war started. Leningrad was a peaceful city that was soon to be interrupted by a war that seemed to be so far away.

The story focuses around main character Tatiana Metanova. She lives in an apartment with her twin brother, her parents and her sister Dasha. Dasha and Tatiana are not only sisters, but best friends as well. In the tiny apartment, they share a room and tell each other the deepest of secrets. Tatiana learns that Dasha has fallen deeply in love but fails to tell with whom.

Tatiana is ordered to run an errand but is sidetracked by ice cream. While sitting on the bench eating her ice cream cone and waiting for the bus, she encounters a handsome soldier. She finds herself to be quite enchanted by Alexander.

It is only a short time before she discovers that he is the one her sister has fallen in love with.

Tatiana and Alexander feel an

immense connection to one another. While the family is in poverty because of the war, Alexander is able to bring them some of his rations for being a soldier. He knowingly visits when he knows that Dasha will not be there so he can see Tatiana.

Alexander and Tatiana fall in love, but this passion could end up not only destroying her family, but reveal his secret, a secret that is almost as deadly as the war.

Tatiana finds that the secret is hard to keep from her sister, but she has to keep her mouth shut because of everything that is happening around her. The war had created a major famine and food is extremely hard to come by. People become greedy and only look out for themselves. Even the family turns on one

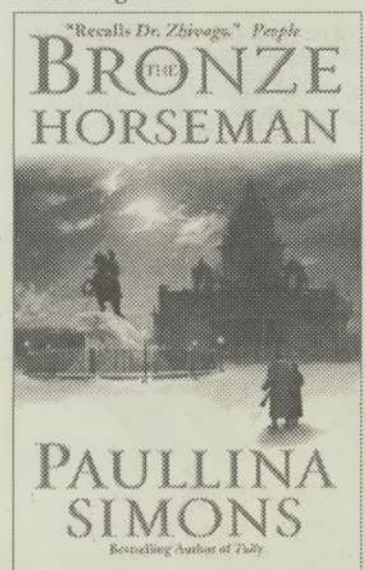
another.

The only person in the house that keeps everyone in line was Tatiana. She sacrifices her food for her sister and her parents, all because she has an open and loving heart. She starves herself to save them in this drastic time of need. Their family begins to fall apart. Her brother goes off to the war; her mother and father die.

In a struggle that seems endless, Tatiana is able to beat the odds with her passion, her honesty, her risks and, most of all, her love for Alexander.

"The Bronze Horseman" took me through all of the emotions that make for a good book. I cried, I laughed and the best part was that I was able to identify with the main character. This book is not only excellent, but is also historically accurate.

It has a surprise ending that one can only discover by reading this enchanting novel.





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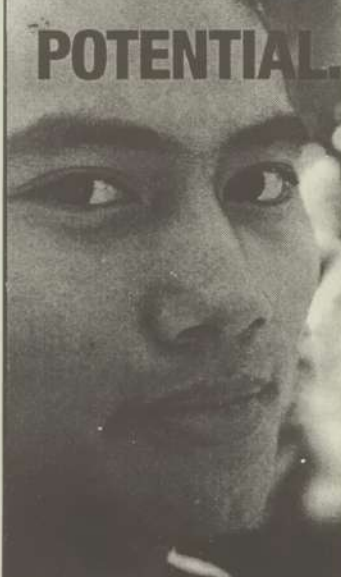


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