Cho Sang Woo (The Failed Genius)

This doc will explain everything that was done by Cho Sang Woo (218) in *Squid Game*

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White : General Explanation
Red - Strategy, Planning, Tactics.
Green - EQ, FSIQ, AC, Intelligence, Cognition and Knowledge
Light Blue - SQ
Yellow - Deception
Orange - Manipulation
Blue - Foresight
Pink - Reasoning and Thinking
Light Purple - Perception, Observation, Cold Reading, Adaptability



Season 1

S1 Ep 1

- The first time we see Sang Woo is when the guards are welcoming the players to the games. People keep asking questions to the guards like “Why do you wear masks?” etc. and the guards make up excuses like “It's a measure we take to ensure fair games and confidentiality.” While everybody around is either just confused or trusting the guards, Sang Woo immediately notices something off. He says to the guard “Well, I don't believe you one bit. You got that? You tricked us. We were kidnapped. You can make as many excuses as you want to make sure nobody knows you broke the law here.” Sang Woo easily saw through the guards’ lies and he understood the real motive behind their actions.
(EP, EU, Observation)

- Right after this, the guard opens the TV and it shows the salesman playing ddakji with Sang Woo. It gets stated that Sang Woo was a Team Leader at Joy Investments company.
(Social Skills, Leadership)

- The next scene shows us players signing the consent form. While we do not see Sang Woo here, it is logical for us to assume that he signed the contract in 10 seconds at most, otherwise he might have picked up a fight because he kept players waiting. And the average time the players spent signing is just about a few seconds so Sang Woo shouldn’t be too far away from that. If you already watched the series, you would know that Sang Woo uses one of the clauses stated here. Even if you didn’t watch it already, you just need to know that Sang Woo memorises what’s written on the form. Now, let’s see how long the form is:

제 1항, 참가자는 임의로 게임을 중단할 수 없다. (*Clause 1: A player is not allowed to stop playing*)

제 2항, 게임을 거부하는 참가자는 탈락으로 처리한다. (*Clause 2: A player who refuses to play will be eliminated*)

제 3항, 참가자의 과반수가 동의할 경우 게임을 중단할 수 있다. (*Clause 3: Games may be terminated if the majority agrees*)

Here, Sang Woo memorises 94 letters, or 25 words in 10 seconds.
(CPI [PSI+WMI])

- Before the start of the first game Gi Hun, Sang Woo's childhood friend, approaches Sang Woo to talk with him. Gi Hun says "Uh, your mother and I were talking the other day. She told me you were out of the country on a business trip." Sang Woo lied to his mother about going abroad and instead he joined the games. If Sang Woo were to say that he was in Korea and join the games that way, then his mother would have wanted to look for him and might have gotten suspicious because he disappeared all of a sudden so Sang Woo said that he was going abroad to avoid this. Gi Hun then says "You are the same Sang Woo who attends SNU, the pride of Ssangmun-dong right?" For your information, SNU aka. Seoul National University is the best university in South Korea, and Sang Woo attended there. He is also called "the pride of Ssangmun-dong".
(FRI, VCI, Crystallized Intelligence, Academics, Bluffing, Concealment, Fabrication, Critical Thinking, Convergent Thinking, Tactics, Charisma)

- The game "Red Light, Green Light" starts. It's a simple game. You have to reach the finish line in 5 minutes. You can move when it's "Green Light" but you have to stop when it's "Red Light". If you move during "Red Light" you get eliminated. When the game starts, Player 324 instantly starts running but he soon gets eliminated because he loses his balance and moves. The player behind him was confused because Player 324 dropped to the ground when he got eliminated, and when he got closer, he saw that Player 324 was killed. Before this, the players didn't know getting eliminated would be their death so when they saw someone dead they instantly started to run around to escape but the players who moved were quickly killed. While everybody was panicking and running around, Sang Woo was perfectly calm and he stayed still. When the game starts again, Sang Woo walks up to Gi Hun and says "I think that doll senses when you move around." To reach this conclusion, Sang Woo must have thought of a few things:
Premise 1 - Even people who do just micro movements die
Premise 2 - It would be very hard to keep track of 456 players' movements by human eyes
Premise 3 - Only thing that stands out in the environment is the doll
Conclusion - There must be a motion sensor in the doll
(FRI, EM, Stress Tolerance, Observation, Perception, Systematic Thinking, Associative Thinking, Linear Thinking, Convergent Thinking, Deductive Reasoning)

- Sang Woo suggests that they should hide behind players. The reason for this is that in case they unexpectedly move or get in a very bad position, because the motion sensor just sees them from the front that means that if they hide behind

someone the doll would not detect their movements because its vision would be blocked. Sang Woo also adapted to the situation instantly and thought of a way to survive. The episode ends with him passing the game.
(FRI, Tactics, Abstract Thinking, Holistic Thinking, Convergent Thinking, Deductive Reasoning, Adaptability)

S1 Ep 2

- After the death of more than 200 people in the first game, people start to shake and tremble in fear in the waiting area. They beg the guards to stop the games and they bow down to the ground. However, the guards just ignore them and fire a shot in the air which makes the players shut up. Sang Woo doesn't get affected by the gun shot, instead he observes the people around him and sees that they are really in a bad situation. He quickly thinks of a way to solve this problem. Sang Woo stands out from the crowd and says "Consent form clause 3. If all the players agree to stop playing, the games are allowed to end." By recalling the consent form at this moment, Sang Woo forces the guards to call a vote for whether to end the games or not.
(FRI, EM, Stress Tolerance, Memory, Observation, Social Awareness, Holistic Thinking, Abstract Thinking, Convergent Thinking, Tactics)

- Once the vote finishes and players have to go home, there is a clear disappointment in Sang Woo's face. This is an important detail to remember later.

- Sang Woo and Gi Hun meet up after they return from the games. Gi Hun sees Sang Woo sad because of his debts and says "Hey, come on, you're still Ssangmun-dong's own pride and joy. You're still the genius who got accepted to SNU Business School as a valedictorian. So don't worry. You'll make money again." First, let's analyze all the aspects of the statements here. Sang Woo is called his hometown's pride and he is called a genius. He was accepted into Seoul National University, which is the best university in South Korea (source) and the 38th best university in the world (source). He was also a valedictorian, meaning the best student in his school. We also know that he graduated from Business School. The SNU requires their Business School students to take classes in English with an IELTS level of at least 6.0 (source). This translates into B2 level of English, meaning that Sang Woo can speak English fluently. Gi Hun also sees Sang Woo as his superior and he is certain that Sang Woo can easily close his debt. In the next scene Sang Woo says that he can't "just make" 6 billion won. This surprises Gi Hun because Sang Woo had lied to his family and friends about his debt being only 600

million won. Gi Hun suggests Sang Woo to file for bankruptcy to avoid paying his debts. But Sang Woo says that he can't do that because he used her mother's assets as financial collateral, and if he had filed bankruptcy it would mean that they get taken away, this shows Sang Woo's attachment to his mother.
(FRI, VCI, EE, Knowledge, Academics, Charisma, Bluffing, Concealment)

- A while after meeting Gi Hun, Sang Woo calls his mother to ensure that he is doing okay. By the way, I should state that he tried to commit suicide right after this call, meaning that the call to his mother was planned to make sure she doesn't suspect anything and get relieved a bit. The scene opens with his mother saying "So, have you been eating all right over there?" which Sang Woo responds with yes. Then his mother says "I doubt that greasy American food is doing all that much for you." which Sang Woo instantly responds with "It's okay, Mom. There are lots of Korean restaurants." His instant response suggests that he anticipated that his mother would ask about this topic and he prepared an answer beforehand. He would also need to know about his mother's personality to know that she would say American food is bad for him. He assures his mom by bluffing. When his mother asks him when he is coming back, he says that the trip is taking longer than he expected so it might take a while. You should keep in mind that the reason Sang Woo is doing all these is because he is 6 billion won in debt and he has an arrest warrant, both of which he perfectly hides from his family and friends. He succeeds in his goal and they end the call. Throughout the call, Sang Woo gave her mother logical answers and acted as if he is doing perfectly fine in America to manipulate his mother into thinking that everything is fine.
(FRI, EP, Anticipation, Planning, Short Term Planning, Planning Coverage, Preparation Process, Bluffing, Concealment, Fabrication, Acting Skills, Misdirection, Direct Manipulation, Logical Manipulation, Critical Thinking, Holistic Thinking, Convergent Thinking, Lateral Thinking, Creative Thinking)

- After the call, the police visit Sang Woo's mother. They tell her that "I'm afraid that Mr. Cho Sang-woo has a warrant out for his arrest. He's charged with forgery, embezzlement, crimes that are all some form of financial fraud." We have to understand that the reason Sang Woo got 6 billion won in debt is because he stole that much money. And the way he stole that much money is explained here. Let's look at the crimes he committed. Embezzlement is a type of financial fraud where someone takes money or assets that were entrusted to them and uses them for a different purpose than for what they were intended. The person or party that is stealing the assets is aware that what they are doing is illegal, but they do it anyway with the intention being to acquire more assets without the company's knowledge.

Forgery is creating fake documents or items, like signatures or checks, to deceive. Forgeries rely on skillful replication. Techniques include copying signatures or producing counterfeit currency. This requires precision to avoid detection and achieve the desired deception. Now that I have explained these, let's look at how Sang Woo stole 6 billion won. To better understand the process, keep in mind the crimes he committed and remember his occupation. Firstly as a Business Administration graduate and a Team Leader at an investment company, Sang Woo used his knowledge and social position to manipulate people into ensuring their assets to him. After he gathers the assets from his investors, he commits whatever financial fraud he wants with them while concealing the fact that he is doing this from his investors which would also require really good bluffing and fabrication skills. While he uses the assets for unknown criminal activities to gain money, he also does forgery in the background. He fakes documents to gain more money and assets, which would require him to perfectly replicate signatures or perfectly modify already made deals or checks in a way that would gain him money. This process takes insane precision as even one mistake would expose him so he must be very precise and careful while doing these stuff. He also perfectly makes use of his knowledge and experience to succeed in his strategy. By the end, he manages to steal 6 billion won and by the time the police get aware of his actions, he had already disappeared from sight. To evade police: he doesn't stay at one place for too long and instead he stays at places like hotels, he uses cash instead of credit cards to not be tracked (This is seen when they are eating ramen with Ali). Combining all of these, Sang Woo perfectly created a strategy to steal 6 billion won and he also anticipated that the police would come looking for him so he made plans to avoid them as he was already gone by the time the police came looking for him.
(FRI, VCI, Crystallized Intelligence, EM, Social Skills, Charisma, Anticipation, Trap Evasion, Planning, Planning Coverage, Preparation Process, Planning Intricacies, Planning Versatility, Planning Aim, Risk Calculation, Strategy Fortification, Strategy Logistics, Strategy Orchestration, Strategy Efficiency, Strategy Effectiveness, Strategy Shielding, Bluffing, Concealment, Fabrication, Acting Skills, Information Control, Direct Manipulation, Logical Manipulation, Critical Thinking, Holistic Thinking, Convergent Thinking, Lateral Thinking, Creative Thinking)

- Episode 2 ends with Sang Woo rejoining the games after he gets an invitation.

S1 Ep 3

- In the first night after rejoining the games, the second game hasn't started yet, Sang Woo overhears Player 67 and Player 212 talking. Player 212 says "Hey, what did

you see? Huh? You must have seen something. You were up there for so long. Come on." and Player 67 says that she will tell her tomorrow. Sang Woo realizes that this might be important information so he keeps this in his mind.
(Observation)

- The day of the game, players get their breakfasts. Sang Woo gives his breakfast to Ali because he doesn't eat breakfast generally. Seeing this, Gi Hun praises Sang Woo again and says "The smart ones don't eat much, you know?"
(Charisma)

- While going to the game arena of the second game, Sang Woo stops Player 067 to ask her questions. This shows that Sang Woo remembered their conversation at night. First, I got to say that Player 067 is a person who literally doesn't trust anybody as she says "I don't trust people, especially the ones who ended up here." so that you understand the greatness of what Sang Woo does here. Sang Woo first asks her to tell him what she saw but she says "Why would I?" Here, Sang Woo perfectly manipulates and gains her trust by saying "All the games they made us play in here are games I have known since I was a young boy. The next game will be too, I'm willing to bet. You tell me what you saw, I might guess what it is." Sang Woo's usage of using the information he has in hand to manipulate her to give the answer is literally perfect here. First, he must have guessed that what she saw was something to do with games (Because 067 said that she will tell 212 what she saw on the game day, so what she saw must be something about the games). Then, on the first day of the games while 067 having a fight with 101, Player 101 said that 067 was North Korean so Sang Woo must have been observing the fight and listening to what they were saying to know the players better. And the fact that he remembers this and uses it here also gives him a great memory. He easily deduces that Player 067 won't know what to do with the information alone because she is North Korean and the games are South Korean. To make this deduction, Sang Woo also must have deduced that since the ddakji game they were playing with the salesman is a South Korean children's game and the first game here (Red Light, Green Light) is also a South Korean child game, then the next game must be like that too. This requires great pattern recognition and observation skills. Sang Woo perfectly gains her trust by saying that she won't know what to do with the information and that he could help her. Player 067 tells Sang Woo that they were melting sugar. When Sang Woo enters the game arena, he sees 4 symbols on the walls: Triangle, Circle, Star, Umbrella. Sang Woo connects the dots between the fact that the guards were melting sugars and the symbols on the walls. Sang Woo here remembers a time when he was a young boy that they were buying a cookie from a guy, and the cookie

was made by melting the sugar first and pasting a symbol on top of it. This cookie's name is dalgona and it was popular in the 1960s-1980s. Since all of the previous games were about the childhood of South Korean kids, then the next game must be about dalgona because it fits all the criteria. Firstly, it's a childhood thing and the previous games were childhood games; Secondly, connecting the dots between the guards melting sugar and the symbols on the walls only leads Sang Woo to dalgona. You might ask here "Yeah the game has dalgona in it, but what is the actual game?" Well, let me explain what the thinking and reasoning process of Sang Woo is like here. If the players get to choose which symbol they want, that would mean that the game is actually about the symbols on the dalgona. If you look at the environment you see nothing, just a normal playground, so the game is all about the dalgona you receive. If that's the case, then the only logical conclusion you would reach here is that the players will get tasked to carve out the symbol they chose from their dalgona, because there is nothing else to do. This section has also great foresight by the way because Sang Woo anticipates what the game would be and he chooses the easiest shape to take out from the dalgona, which is the triangle. (FRI, Memory, Knowledge, Crystallized Intelligence, Observation, Social Awareness, Deductive Reasoning, Inductive Reasoning, Abductive Reasoning, Critical Thinking, Abstract Thinking, Holistic Thinking, Systematic Thinking, Linear Thinking, Lateral Thinking, Creative Thinking, Convergent Thinking, Associative Thinking, Direct Manipulation, Logical Manipulation, Anticipation, Trap Evasion, Tactics)

- The next part is where Sang Woo's grand strategy starts. By this moment, Sang Woo had already realized the nature of the game and he must have understood that the game in its core is an individual game, as all of the previous games have been individual games and the teams are just the things players formed between them so they are not actually relevant to the games. Realizing this, Sang Woo understands that only one person is going to get out of the games alive with the money. Because of this he knows that everyone around him is just an opponent to him, so he will do whatever he can to take them out. You will understand in the later episodes that Sang Woo didn't care about any person from his group or in the games all together and he only hung out with them to protect himself in things like lights out etc. but I will explain all of that later. Before the game starts Gi Hun asks "Should we play this together?" and Sang Woo lies by answering with "That could be dangerous. At this point, we don't know anything." as he already knows what the game will be about. Then Sang Woo says "I think it would put us at a disadvantage if we just choose one. There's this saying in investing: Try not to keep your eggs in the same basket." Gi Hun responds to this with "Listen to him. He was first in his class in SNU Business School. And in my hometown, he was a genius. A prodigy." You can already

understand that Sang Woo knows Gi Hun will trust him with whatever he says because Gi Hun sees him so highly, so Sang Woo abuses Gi Hun's trust. In his answer, Sang Woo said that they should all choose different shapes. The reason for this is that Sang Woo would get the easy one and all of the others would get harder shapes than his one, so they will have a higher chance of getting eliminated. Sang Woo also adds a proverb to his answer and the reason for this is that he already knows that Gi Hun praises him for being a genius and going to Business School so he makes a perfect excuse to his answer by saying that it's a general knowledge in investing to not put everything in the same place. Sang Woo is also the leader of the group because of his charisma so the group does whatever he says. The game starts by Sang Woo choosing the triangle and others choosing all harder shapes. This scene also shows how much Sang Woo will do to win the games, as he literally doesn't even care if his childhood friend dies here.
(FRI, VCI, EE, Mental Fortitude, Inductive Reasoning, Abductive Reasoning, Critical Thinking, Systematic Thinking, Linear Thinking, Convergent Thinking, Holistic Thinking, Bluffing, Misdirection, Concealment, Direct Manipulation, Logical Manipulation, Charisma, Leadership, Setting Traps, Tactics, Planning Process, Strategy Fortification, Strategy Building, Strategy Efficiency)

- Episode 3 ends with all of them passing the game.

S1 Ep 4

- When Gi Hun and Player 001 return from the games, Player 199 and Sang Woo welcome them in the waiting area. Sang Woo knows that because they survived, they could have thought that Sang Woo intentionally sent them to death (Gi Hun actually did), so Sang Woo apologises by saying "I'm sorry. I was wrong to suggest separating." Gi Hun, who had doubts about Sang Woo after the game, instantly clears his doubts and says "Ah, don't say that. How could you know what it was?". Even though Gi Hun was doubting Sang Woo, just one apology from him instantly cleared his suspicion as he already saw Sang Woo so highly.
(FRI, EP, Tactics, Strategy Fortification, Strategy Shielding, Direct Manipulation, Emotional Manipulation, Critical Thinking, Convergent Thinking)

- A fight happens while players are getting lunch. Player 101 beats up a man and walks away. Seeing this, Sang Woo rushes there and understands that the man died from checking his pulse. Even though a fight like this happened earlier, Sang Woo didn't try to do anything there but on this occasion he immediately ran up to the man and shook him a bit only to see he wasn't reacting and when he checked his

pulse he saw that the man died. Sang Woo must have intuitively sensed something wrong and that's why he decided to check on the beaten up person unlike the other time.
(Observation, Perception, Intuition)

- In the lights out event, Sang Woo encourages his team to arm up and they stick together as a team to minimize damage.
(Leadership)

- After the event, the group decides to get to know each other better. When Player 199, Ali says he is from Pakistan, Gi Hun gets confused and asks where that is. Sang Woo instantly responds by saying it's right above India. Gi Hun praises Sang Woo's intelligence once again.
(VCI, Knowledge, Charisma)

- In the third game, players are required to get into groups of ten people each. When Gi Hun asks Sang Woo what they will do, Sang Woo says "Our team already has a girl and an older guy. I'm thinking we better get more men first" Then Gi Hun asks the question "What if they make us play Gonggi or Elastics? Then, what do we do? Girls are usually the good ones at that." which Sang Woo responds with "That's true, but probability wise, men are better at most games. It's our lives we're betting on right now." In just a few seconds, Sang Woo must have thought of as many games as he could and he must have decided which gender would be generally better at which game to calculate that men are better at most games which is why they should hire more men because statistically they would have more luck winning. Sang Woo says they are already 5 people so they should split up and bring one person each to complete it to 10 people. While they are getting split up Sang Woo stops Ali and says "Hide your finger, it will make you look weak." The reason for this is that Sang Woo noticed Ali is missing 2 fingers on his left hand and in order to get in front of anything bad Sang Woo suggests that he hides it because if people think he is weak then they won't team up with him.
(FRI, CPI [PSI+WMI], Holistic Thinking, Systematic Thinking, Critical Thinking, Faster Thinking, Deductive Reasoning, Convergent Thinking, Leadership, Tactics, Strategy Fortification, Observation)

- While Sang Woo is wandering around he stumbles upon a man. He quickly makes him agree to joining his team. But when the guy says that he has to take his wife with him, Sang Woo says that he is sorry and he walks away. The reason for this is that Sang Woo can't recruit women as they are statistically worse than men in

games overall. This again shows how Sang Woo does everything in the best possible way to survive.
(Critical Thinking, Social Skills, Strategy Fortification)

- The game starts when all groups are set. Sang Woo's team has 3 women, 1 elderly man and only 6 average guys so they are physically weaker than most teams. The game is just a normal tug of war, a contest in which two teams pull at opposite ends of a rope until one drags the other over a central line. Sang Woo's team gets paired up with an all men's team. As the round starts, Sang Woo's team holds up for a bit but they quickly get overpowered and they keep getting closer to the center, everybody starts panicking. Sang Woo manages to keep his composure in that moment and he comes up with a brilliant tactic in just a few seconds. Sang Woo suggests everyone to take three steps forward and they do in a coordinated manner thanks to his leadership. After that, they start to win the game and after a while they easily win. But how did a seemingly insanely bad move win the game? Well, it all relies on physics. By stepping forward, they reduce tension in the rope momentarily. Human reaction time (~0.2s) means the opponents can't adjust fast enough to the sudden change. The opposing team, pulling hard, loses resistance and may overextend (like pulling against a suddenly slack rope). This disrupts their balance and coordination (reducing their effective pulling force). After stepping forward, Sang Woo's team stops and starts to go backwards. The sudden stop converts their forward momentum into a backward jerk on the rope (due to impulse, $F\Delta t=m\Delta v$). The opposing team now faces a dynamic load (sudden tension increase) that destabilizes them and a loss of footing as their own pull has no immediate resistance, causing them to stumble. Once the opponents are off-balance, Sang-woo's team exploits their momentary weakness. They pull backward with full force while the opponents are still recovering, maximizing the net force in their favor. This is how they won the game. The key concepts (forces, friction, impulse, momentum) are first-year university physics, but the application (timing, coordination, psychological effects) makes it feel more advanced. This is a brilliant example of how Sang Woo's strategy adapted to a really bad position by him coming up with a genius idea in a few seconds and also applying his knowledge while doing so.
(FRI, VCI, EM, Stress Tolerance, Mental Fortitude, Cognitive Discipline, Crystallized Intelligence, Knowledge, Critical Thinking, Convergent Thinking, Application Thinking, Faster Thinking, Creative Thinking, Lateral Thinking, Strategy Fortification, Strategy Efficiency, Strategy Effectiveness, Strategy Orchestration, Strategy Adaptability, Formulation Speed, Tactics, Planning Versatility, Planning Intricacies, Leadership)

S1 Ep 5

- After the game, Sang Woo and his team were sitting in the waiting area. A newly joined member said that she wasn't kicked out of her previous team and that she left herself. But Sang Woo knows that this isn't true and says "They only got rid of you, then they only wound up with male players. Right before the game at that. You know, it's almost like they knew about the game ahead of time." Sang Woo has observed that Player 101's team kicked out a woman from their team right before the tug of war game started and they recruited men. Sang Woo thinks that the most possible motive behind this is that they knew what game would be played beforehand (There was really someone on Player 101's team who got information from the guards and knew the game beforehand).
(Observation, Emotional Understanding)

- It gets announced that the lights will be out in 30 minutes and players should get to sleep. However, Sang Woo predicts that another fight might happen tonight so he says that they should prepare. They put up barricades. Sang Woo's understanding of Player 101's team helps him to predict what's going to happen. Gi Hun says that someone should keep watch. Sang Woo says that at least two people should keep watch as a preventive measure in case someone falls asleep or betrays the team for another team. They pass the night without casualties.
(Anticipation, Trap Evasion, Tactics, Strategy Fortification, Strategy Logistics, Strategy Shielding, Planning Contingencies, Leadership, Social Awareness, Holistic Thinking, Divergent Thinking, Lateral Thinking)

S1 Ep 6

- Players get to the next game area. It gets said that the game would be played in pairs. One of the women from the team who was amazed by Sang Woo's intelligence comes up to him and says "Hey, let me play with you. Then I'll be your dream girl all night long. I'll do anything you tell me. I'm not a regular girl." Sang Woo however doesn't care about her seduction attempt and ignores her. Sang Woo goes up to Ali and says "Ali, let's join forces. Most of these games here, you need to be strong or smart to win. And I think if we're a team, we'll beat a lot of the others out there." Let's look at how Sang Woo figured that Ali is the best teammate for him. If it's a team game where they are on the same side, and it's a game about strategy then they would be advantageous because Sang Woo is a genius. If it's a team game where they are on the same side, and it's a game about strength then they would be

advantageous because Ali is strong (Sang Woo remembers that Ali held up Gi Hun with one arm). If it's an individual game where they go up against each other, and it's a game about strategy then Sang Woo would be advantageous because he is a genius. If it's an individual game where they go up against each other, and it's a game about strength then Ali would be advantageous. So as you can see, in three out of the four possibilities it's good for Sang Woo and that's why he chose Ali. There is one more possibility that it's neither a strategy or a strength game but their chances of survival would be equal in that possibility without knowing what the game actually is.
(FRI, EM, Memory, Mental Fortitude, Impulse Management, Critical Thinking, Systematic Thinking, Holistic Thinking, Convergent Thinking, Deductive Reasoning, Tactics, Strategy Fortification, Strategy Shielding, Planning Process)

- When players learn that they would be playing against each other, they get devastated. Ali gets sad and doesn't want to play. Sang Woo's mood doesn't change and he says that they should play a game otherwise they would die. The game is played with 10 marbles on each side and it's about guessing whether the marbles in someone's hand are odd or even. As they keep playing, Sang Woo gets down to his last marble. If he loses that, he will die. Knowing this, he thinks that he must find a way out of this. He grabs Ali by his coat and says "You asshole. You gotta be cheating. How are you winning like this every round? You keep beating me. How's that? The odds should be 50-50. That means you're cheating! You jerk! You pretended not to know how this works! You said you haven't done this before!" This is the part where Sang Woo's strategy to win this game starts. He uses a technique called guilt-tripping to manipulate Ali here. Guilt tripping is a form of emotional blackmail that is often designed to manipulate other people by preying on their emotions and feelings of guilt or responsibility. He constantly calls him a cheater which results in Ali feeling guilt. Sang Woo will use this to make him do whatever he wants. Then, Sang Woo instantly starts to cry and kneel down and says "God, I'm so sorry, Ali. I know you won't cheat." Sang Woo here loads the guilt onto himself and waits for Ali to give in, which Ali does by saying "I'm so sorry." while also crying. When Ali gives in, Sang Woo says "You only got this far 'cause I was there. Like when I gave the bus fare to you and I'm the one who got the team through Tug-of-War, we kept watch at night together." By saying these, Sang Woo makes Ali think that he betrayed Sang Woo when Sang Woo did everything for him. Sang Woo completely manipulated Ali into a position where he can make him do whatever he wants. Sang Woo then says "Trust me, help me and I'll make sure we get out of here." which Ali agrees to help. Sang Woo then explains his "plan" to Ali. He says "I think there are gonna be teams out there who can't decide the winner either. Think

about how you win. Remember the rules. Thirty minutes to determine who will win or lose. So think about it. Some teams aren't gonna have a winner when time is finally up, right? You win and you lose, and things just keep going on like that. That means not every team will have a winner. What will they do? Eliminate all those teams? Makes no sense. They have to decide who won. Don't they? We'll play again. We'll be working together. We're teammates. So we'll just add up everything. Our team will go play other teams with all 20. You and I can play as a team just like we planned to from the start." Here, Sang Woo acts as if he found a hole in the game's rules and he fabricates stories to convince Ali. Sang Woo also used the game's rules perfectly as a part of his manipulation by saying that "the person with the most marbles win but if they got an equal number of them that would mean that there is no winner". Sang Woo also logically manipulates Ali into thinking that "teams that have no winners" will be paired up against other teams and play like that in the second round. Then, Ali asks Sang Woo what's the plan. Sang Woo says "Well, it will depend on who we're going against. We need to know which teams will be here after the round ends. We better split up to get an idea how all the other teams are doing to be prepared. Let's look for one that seems too young or old and check only teams that are still playing games at this point. Age is the important part. Like someone who looks your same age or someone who seems like they're older than 50. You go up a few blocks from here, then meet back up with me later, okay?" Here, Sang Woo explains his fake plan to Ali and says that they should split and look for the other groups. The reason why he says that Ali should look out for their age is that Ali would be wasting more time if he had to stop every time and determine their age. Before they split up, Sang Woo says that it is too dangerous to carry around the bag like that so he says that he will make the bag safe for Ali, which Ali agrees to and he gives it to Sang Woo. Sang Woo gets the bag with all the 20 marbles in it. He then starts to rip his shirt to make the bag into a necklace. It is revealed here that Sang Woo had filled stones in his own bag to make it seem like marbles. While making the necklace, Ali gets scared by a gunshot and turns away for a moment. Sang Woo, who was waiting for this moment, quickly switches the bag filled with stones and the bag filled with marbles. He hides the bag filled with marbles and he gives the bag filled with stones to Ali. Ali shakes the bag and he thinks that it is the sound of marbles that's coming from the bag. Sang Woo tells Ali to split now and come back to the same place three minutes left. After they split up, Sang Woo gives the marbles to the guards and wins the game while Ali dies. (FRI, Critical Thinking, Convergent Thinking, Faster Thinking, Tactics, Strategy Fortification, Strategy Shielding, Strategy Building, Strategy Orchestration, Strategy Logistics, Strategy Efficiency, Strategy Effectiveness, Strategy Adaptability, Planning Process, Planning Coverage, Planning Intricacies, Planning Invincibility,

Bluffing, Acting Skills, Fabrication, Misdirection, Information Control, Direct Manipulation, Emotional Manipulation)

S1 Ep 7

- In the next game, players choose which order they play in. There are numbers 1 through 16. Sang Woo chooses 14 because he wouldn't want to go first without knowing what to play and he wouldn't want to go last because of time troubles. (Tactics, Strategy Fortification, Critical Thinking, Convergent Thinking)

- The game is played on a glass bridge. The game involved contestants attempting to cross two parallel bridges by jumping across tempered glass panels while avoiding weaker panels of regular glass. Those who landed on a regular glass panel broke through the panel and fell to their deaths from a high place, resulting in their elimination from the game. The game went on for a while until 4 people, Player 017, Sang Woo, Gi Hun and Player 067 remained. They were only a few tiles away from victory. Player 017 was examining each glass to know which is the right one to jump on. When they got to the last tile, the lights got closed. Sang Woo here realized that Player 017 had become useless and there was only a minute remaining. Without a second thought, Sang Woo pushed Player 017 into one of the glasses which resulted in his death but also showed which was the right glass. This also shows how Sang Woo is able to do anything to win. The remaining three players pass the game, each of them with injuries.
(Tactics, Strategy Fortification, EM)

S1 Ep 8

- Gi Hun and Sang Woo get into a fight because of Sang Woo's pushing of that guy. After the fight, Gi Hun stops seeing Sang Woo as a friend and he treats him like an enemy. Right then, players get awarded with suits and a dinner. After they finish the dinner, they get given knives. While Gi Hun and Player 067 stay at one side, Sang Woo stays on their opposite side. Before they split up, Sang Woo had seen that Player 067 was injured deadly. Now that he was an enemy to Gi Hun, Sang Woo understands that they will make a plan against him. From his psychological profile of Gi Hun, Sang Woo understands that Gi Hun will terminate the games with Player 067 to save her. If you remember, if the majority of the players agree then the games could be stopped. And it's Sang Woo versus Gi Hun and Player 067 here so they could terminate the games if they want to and split the money. They are on

the opposite sides of the waiting area and the lights are closed but they can barely make out what's on the other side. While Sang Woo was sitting, he notices that Gi Hun is approaching to kill him, so he fakes being asleep by dropping the knife from his hand so that he could surprise attack Gi Hun. While Gi Hun was going up to Sang Woo, Player 067's condition gets worse at that exact time so Gi Hun rushes to the doors to call for help. Sang Woo perfectly uses this moment to his advantage and he goes and kills Player 067. Now, Gi Hun can't call for a vote to split the money.
(EP, Observation, Acting Skills, Misdirection, Tactics, Strategy Fortification, Trap Evasion, Anticipation)

S1 Ep 9

- In the last game, Sang Woo loses a fight to Gi Hun which causes him to nearly lose the game and die. Gi Hun offers Sang Woo to get out of here together. But Sang Woo knows that if they do that, then they won't get any money and all of the people that died would be dead for nothing. So Sang Woo tells Gi Hun to look out for his mother and commits suicide. While Sang Woo dies he made sure that Gi Hun left with the money, instead of them leaving together but without any money.
(EE)

And... this marks the end of "The Failed Genius" Cho Sang Woo's journey.
Thanks for reading.

- umontrose

