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# J I D

## **Journal of Interactive Drama**

**A Multi-Discipline Peer-Reviewed Journal of  
Scenario-Based Theatre-Style Interactive Drama  
Freeform Live Action Roleplaying Games**

**Volume One, Issue One  
July 2006**

**Interactive Drama Archive**



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Journal of Interactive Drama	



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The Journal of Interactive Drama is an international journal dedicated to the publication of critical discussion and scenarios related to Scenario-Based Theatre-Style Interactive Drama Freeform Live Action Roleplaying Games and welcomes contributions in all areas of the study, design, and creation of stand-alone scenario-based LARPS as well as Scenario-Based Learning related to interactive dramas of this type. Review articles of books related to interactive drama and informal book announcements are also welcome. Critical pieces on scenarios or convention events are welcome. Stand-alone scenarios are encouraged for submission with designer notes and running commentary. Submissions are peer-reviewed. Contributions may be submitted from all countries and are accepted all year round. The language of publication is English. There are no restrictions on regular submission; however, manuscripts simultaneously submitted to other publications

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## **POINTS OF VIEW IN THE “JUSTICE DILEMMA”: A LEARNING SCENARIO IN LAW AND JUSTICE STUDIES**

Scott Beattie

Victoria University Law School

### **SCENARIO BASED LEARNING**

While scenarios have been used as teaching tools for a very long time and may in fact be one of the earliest of pedagogical techniques, there has been comparatively little educational theory developed around their use, particularly in a tertiary education setting. Books like Errington's edited collection of essays 'Developing Scenario Based Learning' (2003) have gone some way to remedy this shortfall, but we are still far from getting a clear picture of how many educators use scenarios as a formal learning tool or of the manner of deployment or of the ways in which their success is evaluated.

Presented here is one simple learning scenario which was developed with the intention of exploring the notion of 'point of view' as it relates to theory, specifically theories of law and justice. The idea was to take some fairly dry and abstract theoretical models and put them into action to explore the areas of overlap and conflict. This article explores the scenario, its educational context and learning outcomes and engages in evaluation of its success as a teaching tool.

Hypothetical scenarios are frequently used in the more professionally oriented disciplines such as law, yet these scenarios are seldom evaluated as a teaching method apart from a perception that they are somehow more 'practical' than essay-style questions. Little analysis

*Scott Beattie*

has been done of the pedagogical issues involved in scenario construction.

In law, tutorial work, examination questions and moots (mock trials) often take the form of hypothetical fact situations where students are asked to advise on the legal situation arising from the facts. The facts of these scenarios are closely modelled on caselaw facts and students are asked to compare the scenario to the authorities and examine the rationale for the judge's decision in the original case. There are weaknesses in this approach in that there is little room for variation (there is usually one 'right' path of analysis and one answer even in the moots where someone will be on the losing side from the start) and that there is no opportunity for exploration of the students' own role in the scenario as a professional within an ethical and social context.

Scenario based learning has clear ideological (and linguistic) connections to problem based learning and both arise out of the constructivist approach which emphasises learning by doing and positions the location of learning on the student rather than the instructor. The concept of problem based learning shifts the learning emphasis to skills rather than content and can often involve scenarios – real or hypothetical. The two approaches overlap substantially, but if scenario based learning is maintain relevance as a separate pedagogical approach, it is important to emphasis its difference from problem based learning.

One important difference lies in the point of view (POV) concept, borrowed from cinema studies. Scenario based learning is implicitly concerned with variety in roles and these roles can influence the manner in which facts are interpreted and the success of outcomes are measured. Similar to the construction of character roles in LARPs, each role in a scenario may bring to it entirely different preconceptions and approaches and it is possible to write learning scenarios where each role receives a different version of the statement of facts and objectives. Roles in a learning scenario can be character based (that is learners are given a specific identity and persona to work from) and they can also involve a variety of different professional or ideological positions which need not take a conventional character form (for example lawyer, environmentalist, government regulator). One strength of scenario based learning is the exploration of the different 'truths' and perspectives

of different roles.

Another important aspect, which is heavily linked to problem-based learning, is that multiple paths and outcomes are encouraged (Lamos & Parrish 1999). In scenario based learning these multiple paths can be overtly connected to the different POVs that different roles bring to the scenario. The ideological or theoretical variety with the POVs, the manner in which learners interpret these positions, can shape the process as much as the facts.

It is these aspects of POV and multiple paths that drove the development 'Justice Dilemma' scenario and the choice of scenario-based learning as a method instead of a more didactic teaching approach.

## **CONTEXT FOR THE JUSTICE DILEMMA**

This scenario was designed to be used by law students and those in the justice studies area, that is, arts students who aspire to become paralegals, police officers or who simply have an interest in matters of law and justice. It works as part of a basic introduction to legal theory, primarily to encourage students to explore different definitions of law and justice and to contextualise their own opinions in light of historical theoretical material. This can be a very dry activity and runs the danger of being overly theoretical and quite dull.

As a result, this scenario was written in order to give students a chance to apply some of the theory and explore some of the contradictions between theorists before they have to confront the theory itself. While the scenario was originally used in small classes of 30 or so students it has successfully been used in lecture halls of two hundred – the key is in being organised in advance and letting students organise themselves as much as possible. The most successful approach for large groups has been to print up the handouts in sets, ask the class to organise themselves into groups of 4 or 5 and send a representative forward to collect a bundle of handouts.

As a side note, one of the things that has to be acknowledged in using SBL methods is that different groups learn in different ways and that you cannot force anyone to participate and learn. Some groups will engage in lively debate, others will just sit quietly and read the all

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handouts (even if you have asked them not to) and talk among themselves. Some groups will sit and chat about TV or gripe about the course and to some extent this is their choice. The lecturer can be encouraging and try to transfer some of their enthusiasm to the students in the lecture hall (who are often tired, stressed and disengaged).

The Justice Dilemma scenario materials have been pared down and simplified a great deal over the years that they have been in use. The premise of the scenario is a student household conflict where each of the members of the household represents one of the five main theories of law and justice (although students do not know this in advance). It seemed easier to discuss abstract theory by personifying, even anthropomorphising the theory. The lecture material covered subsequent to the scenario chooses one main theorist to represent each of the five main schools of thought (Margaret Davies' *Asking the Law Question* (2000) was a great help here), to give a sketch of the overall theoretical approaches. In some ways this exercise asks 'what if' these five theorists shared a contemporary household (but doesn't ask 'who ends up cleaning the toilet?').

Appendix 1 contains the problem as it is presented to students. Appendix 2 contains the overheads which relate to the ongoing discussion. I usually choose not to draw overt comparisons between the scenario characters and the theorists, usually this dawns on students once they see the names of the theorists. That the characters are stereotypes (caricatures really), helps the scenario get started quickly and helps to build conflict between the participants out of which, hopefully, fruitful discussion will emerge.

A serious life issue was deliberately chosen (the potential drug addiction of a sixth housemate, not a party to the debate) in order to raise the stakes somewhat and give reason for the debate. Frequently, it is the person playing Matt (the law student) who takes the lead in the debate being overly mindful of reputation and status. The main dynamics of the debate usually involve Matt and Kate (the feminist sociology student) at polarised ends of the debate with the others fluctuating somewhere in between, although very different combinations have emerged over the years.

Another deliberate choice was the decision not to describe what was actually in the package. A decision to open the package is a result in

itself and I did not want to overshadow the later discussion with any assumptions about who is right or wrong. This is crucial in scenario based learning, particularly if the instructor wants preserve an objective distance between different theoretical perspectives. Like any constructivist classroom activity, it is necessary to engage in a debate with multiple perspectives and outcomes, not simply to use the illusion of freedom to try and force students into one result.

## **LEARNING OUTCOMES**

When the first version of the scenario was written, the emphasis was firmly on delivery of content, that week's lecture covered basic legal theory and the dilemma was developed to find a palatable method of delivering some dry theoretical material and introduce students to the five major approaches.

Over the years, the emphasis has been shifted away from the content and toward more metacognitive outcomes. Where multiple perspectives are presented, particularly as part of a process of historical development, it is difficult to avoid a conclusion where the last theory covered appears to be the result of evolutionary progress. By first situating the theories out of sequential context, by emphasising the validity of each as a point of view, it is hoped that students can avoid a simple historical approach and may even get to explore some of the issues of dialectical development as a process (which is emphasised in the subsequent lecture material).

Another outcome which has been integrated over the years is an emphasis on de Certeau's (1984) notion of everyday life as a place of understanding and theoretical activity. Rather than using a conventional 'High Court' style scenario which is prevalent in legal education, it was hoped that an everyday (but nevertheless serious) life issue would be easier for students to engage with and apply theoretical constructs to a concrete issue. However, this scenario was written ten years ago and over that time the student household has become a concept less and less familiar to the students.

## **ANALYSIS**

Changes in the student population have meant that far from being a commonplace and everyday situation, the 'student household' is an environment largely alien to contemporary students, at least outside of re-runs of 'The Young Ones'. The massification of education (Nouwens & Marsh, 2002) as well changes to patterns of student engagement and employment (McInnis, 2001 & James, 2001) have meant that students increasingly live with their parents during the period of tertiary study. Where once student households became a matter of economic necessity for those living far from a campus, today's students choose to commute and be on-campus as infrequently as possible and to engage socially with other students less frequently.

In this environment, economic, social and ethical independence are less frequently demanded and the scenario may suffer not just in factual relevance but also because students are less likely to be forced to take responsibility for these kinds of issues. These concerns have yet to undermine the validity of the Dilemma as a teaching tool but do raise the issue of whether its factual contents need to be modified. Perhaps the impact of 'virtual households' through reality TV shows like Big Brother may provide a context for re-positioning this scenario.

Otherwise, the scenario seems to have been useful, judged from student feedback. One partly-unexpected benefit has been its use in challenging the gender of the legal theory. When the characters are handed out, groups often criticise the lack of female roles in the scenario. As the connection between the personas and the theorists become clearer, so to does the gendered nature of the field.

The use of POV seems to be a strength of the scenario and students have given feedback that personifying the theory makes it easier to remember, even in later years when they return to the area in subjects such as Jurisprudence. There have been occasionally concerns about the stereotyping involved in the roles, particularly when the subject is taught to a mixed coterie of students but none have yet reported feeling actively offended by these stereotypes.

By providing multiple paths and choices as to outcome, however limited, students are mostly successful in producing and debating options. Even though they are playing roles, some students do feel pressured to

produce an appropriate ethical and responsible outcome and remain concerned that they are being judged (by peers and academic staff) on their final decision. One exception to this seems to be those playing the character of Matt, many seem to relish the chance to play to the hilt the role of an opportunistic and self-centred law student. Whether this is a critique of lawyers as a profession or an ironic commentary on their own career aspirations (for law students at least) is a moot point.

Overall, this scenario has served well over the years and if nothing else gives students a break from the didactic lecture format and an opportunity to apply course theory to a hypothetical situation, even if it is one which is not faithful to their own situation as learners. The use of POV as an organising principle in the scenario seems to be a successful way to encourage debate and to engage with theory as a factor which shapes the experience of everyday life.

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*Scott Beattie*

## **APPENDICES**

### **Appendix 1: Justice Dilemma**

The five of you share a student household with Angelika, an economics student. In the past, you have all gotten on very well with her. Recently she has been preoccupied, not her usual carefree self. Angelika has been keeping odd hours, barely speaking to anyone, seldom even eating. She looks sick and haggard, but refuses to discuss her problems with anyone, insisting that nothing is wrong.

Last week, one of you discovered a used hypodermic needle in the bin.

There is a knock at the door. It is a guy known as “Mike the Dealer” around the campus. He is delivering a small package for Angelika. She is out (as usual) so he leaves it here for her.

What do you do?

Some options:

- Do you open the package?
- Do you call the police?
- Do you confront Angelika?
- Do you get legal advice (e.g. Matt’s father or a community legal centre)?
- Do you leave the issue alone?

### **Jerry**

(political science major)

Jerry is cynical and does not believe in any deep underlying truth or order. Things are as they appear to be. He is very tolerant of others, so long as they do not harm anyone else. Jerry is always trying to make house politics more democratic, to stop others from dominating

What is Law?

*Points of View in the "Justice Dilemma"*

The law is simply what is written in the law reports and the statutes books. There is no great secret or truth to law. Members of society delegate the power to make decisions regarding the welfare of society as a whole to the law-makers. Thus legislation, which is written by elected representatives, is more important than the decisions of non-elected judges. If laws are unfair or unjust they should be changed through the political process. A law is never wrong in itself - it is just a rule. If we don't like it, we should do something about getting it changed.

**Matt**

(law student)

Matt is very conservative and hopes to one day practice in his father's law firm. He comes from a sheltered, middle-class background and is uncomfortable around radicals, weirdos and deviants.

What is law?

Matt believes that the law represents the compiled knowledge of the greatest legal minds. One person cannot hope to compete with the wisdom of hundreds of years of judges and legislators.

Matt believes that social change will occur in small increments and only when the whole of society demands it. If a law is there, it must exist for a good reason. This is why we need lawyers to decipher the purpose of laws, to interpret the technical information for the benefit of lay-people.

**Hans**

(science student)

Hans is a methodical and sensible person. He is clean, tidy, and infuriated by the mess which the other students leave around the house. Hans is also very arrogant and believes that if he does not know something, he can soon figure it out through the exercise of a keen and logical mind. Hans loves Star Trek.

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What is law?

Objective people, exercising reason, can determine the justice or injustice of any particular circumstance by weighing up the issues before them. Justice is a question of rationality rather than morality. Law is about the discovery of fact, it is not moral, ideological or political. A law is either logical and good or illogical and therefore a bad law.

**Kate**

(sociology student)

Kate comes from a middle class background against which she has rebelled. Her parents wanted her to be a professional and earn lots of money. Briefly Kate was a Marxist until she realised that it, like most other ideologies, had no place for women. She volunteers at a community health centre as a counsellor. Kate feels somewhat alienated by a male-dominated student household and sometimes acts confrontationally just so she can make her voice heard.

What is law?

Law is politics and domination. The legal institutions hold power by pretending to be fair, objective and impartial. In reality this is just a ruse to conceal the fact that they protect the interests of the powerful above all else. This is done at the expense of the disenfranchised, the marginalised and the powerless. In particular, law is constructed by men to control women through health laws and the criminalisation of abortion and street prostitution.

**Tom**

(theology student)

Tom is very religious and believes that everything happens for a reason - even the bad things in life. The only perfection in the universe is divine, the best human beings can do is to create institutions which embody or resemble the moral principles of God. Tom is shy and fairly introspective.

What is law?

Law is created by human beings and is therefore fallible. There is a higher law, God's law, which shapes our world. This sets the principles of morality and conduct which people must try to follow. Law and the legal profession can try to create the most moral and correct law, but ultimately this is a matter for individual morality and conscience. A law which is unjust in principle or execution is not a law at all, justice should always prevail.

## **Appendix B: Lecture Overheads on Theories of Justice**

### **Natural Law**

- Law is an ideal which exists independent of any person or society.
- Law is justice - a concept which is an integral part of a just universe. An unjust law is not a law at all.
- Justice is moral truth

### ***Thomas Aquinas***

13th century theologian, a Christian saint

Wrote "Summa Theologica"

Types of Law	Eternal Law	God's plan for the universe
	Natural Law	Eternal law, as discovered by the application of reason
	Human Law	Law created by secular lawmakers such as a king or parliament
	Divine Law	Law of the church

- A Human Law which contradicts natural law, is not a law at all.

### **Common Law**

- Law is the sum total of the wisdom of the law-makers, and the interpretations of judges
- Legal change is incremental

*Scott Beattie*

- Law derives its validity from use and the certainty which follows widespread use.
- Justice is certainty.

***Matthew Hale***

- 18th century judge
- wrote “The History of the Common Law of England”
- The Common Law embodies traditions, stemming from the consolidation of all customary law sources.
- Hale was writing at a time when the invention of printing had allowed law reports to become more widely available, at least among judges.
- In seven years, a body will have changed all physical material and yet seem the same, legal change occurs in a similar manner.
- Law is artificial reason, someone has to be trained properly to exercise this kind of thought.

**Positivism**

- Law is law because the law-makers have the authority to make it so.
- So long as the formal requirements are complied with, there is no such thing as an inherently bad law.
- Justice is only relevant if the law-makers use it as a reason to change laws, legal validity comes from power, not recourse to ideals of justice.

***Jeremy Bentham***

- 18th century philosopher and political reformer
- Wrote “Introduction to the principles of morals and legislation”
- The common law is obscure, illogical and inaccessible - “a shapeless heap of odds and ends”
- Law should be codified by parliament to make it rational and consistent
- Law stems from the power of the sovereign, parliament in the Westminster System of parliamentary sovereignty.

*Points of View in the "Justice Dilemma"*

**Legal Science**

- Law is truth or fact obtained by rational, objective inquiry.
- Law as forensic investigation.
- Law is not concerned with morality or politics, but with fairly deciding disputes.
- A bad law is an irrational law.
- Justice is the process of piecing together clues to discover the truth.

***Hans Kelsen***

- 1930's legal philosopher.
- Wrote "The Pure Theory of Law".
- Science of law used to understand ordering of the legal system.
- Nature is a unified system (chaos is ordered into cosmos)
- Law is therefore the same.
- Kelsen asserts the purity of intellectual discipline.

**Critical Legal Studies and its Successors**

- Law is not value-neutral, objective or rational
- Law embodies, reflects and is subservient to the interests of the law makers (almost universally white men of privileged upbringing).
- Law is power, law is discipline, law is control.
- Law cannot be understood outside its social, historical, cultural and political context.
- The school of CLS has diversified into feminism, Marxism, postmodernism, critical race studies, post-colonial studies, and so on...

***Catharine MacKinnon***

- Contemporary writer
- Wrote "Towards a Feminist Theory of the State"
- Law is constructed in a gendered way, reflecting the male world view of the law-makers
- Law also uses its power to construct gender in a certain way, seeing maleness as neutral and adjudicated 'good' and 'bad' female sexuality.

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- The power of law is to make one viewpoint seem to be the norm, excluding all others.

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## **WHAT'S THE RUSH?**

Steve Meaney  
Karolinska Institutet, Sweden

It's often said that a con scenario that railroads the PCs is a poor scenario, and that an approach that gives them more freedom is a better one. This is because the scenarios are being viewed by campaign standards.

Railroading in con scenarios is inevitable. The practicality of having a limited duration to complete the scenario imposes a pacing concern before the game has even begun, as does the use of pre-generated characters. Still, while this type of railroading may exist the players want it to be well hidden, so that they have at least the appearance of control. A few different approaches are taken to try and convince the players that they are in control.

There's the start so quickly that the players don't realise what's going on approach, the let the players do whatever they want as long as its fun approach and the one where the GM - through luck or skill reads the players and tweaks the scenario during play.

There are a lot of external pressures on a con game and time is usually what's in short supply. So there's a tendency to start as soon as possible after the players assemble and the constructive use of the first half-hour is wasted. You're in at the deep end, with barely a moment to consider why your character is doing what they're doing, relying on good old suspension of disbelief in order to get you through. A decent character background helps, but usually you're left with a plot hook that's a blatant cliché, maybe trying to come to grips with a new setting or system, all the while trying to have fun.

Why should you have to struggle like this? And even if you have to isn't there a way to start the scenario more naturally? So the obvious plot

*Steve Meaney*

device doesn't seem like that everyone knows it is? I'd argue that there is, and it revolves around the point of the game that is considered the start of the scenario.

The usual situation is that the scenario starts as soon as the game does, i.e. when everyone sits down together. This is true for the game, but the scenario doesn't really start until the first plot hook/dramatic scene, typically within the first few minutes of a game after the players have finished the introductions. It's poorly placed though, as only a few minutes are given over to absorption of all the backstory used to help achieve immersion.

An entire section of the preparative work simply thrown away. The few minutes between sit down and initial plot hook isn't enough to convey any information about the tone of the game. I'm not claiming that the introduction is always neglected, but it really depends on the GM.

Doesn't it make more sense to deliberately use the first few minutes to set the scene, tone, shared background etc. and not to rely on the whims of the GM?

There is a basic reason to actively convey information - in a con scenario you have to keep the players on a relatively short leash, often just to stay within the allotted time slot. It's not the ideal roleplaying environment, but in a way that's the point. A convention scenario is a very specific type of roleplaying experience, and there's no point in trying to make it what it's not.

As a scenario writer you do want some level of control over the players. This is achieved with by using elements like setting, system, rules and GM browbeating. But the best way to get the players to fit into the overall ideal of the scenario (as it's written at least) is to provide them with some direction via their character sheets - background, roleplaying tips and the like.

This is the field of the writer. Yes, the GM is a powerful influence but he or she is just executing the scenario the writer created. The backstory of the scenario, something that can be controlled, is read by the players as written. This allows you to present the same incident to several players from the perspective of each character, thereby subtly introducing a little characterisation into the very act of reading the backstory. A simple example is writing in first person, both to hint at a PC's accent and mannerisms while conveying the setting specific

information that the scenario needs. A more complicated idea is to 'hide' some unusual references in the text. As the decision to integrate or ignore that element of the backstory into the PC is entirely up to the player the character is more open to different interpretation.

To provide the backstory in the most appropriate way the game should start anything from 10 to 30 minutes before the actual scenario does.

This time is used to camouflage the inevitable railroading it by hiding it in the background. The GM has the most control here, and the ability to direct the scenario until the inevitable plot hook really kicks things off. It's via the backstory that you can immerse the PCs in a setting and plot before the actual scenario starts. After all what's the point of roleplaying an encounter that would better served by sticking it into the backgrounds of the PCs? Let the players get on with the actual fun stuff.

There are some practical considerations too - if a player joins a game ten minutes late they haven't really missed anything, as the scenario hasn't started yet so their late entry doesn't disrupt things too much. Its also provides a convenient and organic way of removing PCs that there isn't a player for.

So to reiterate - ditch the unnecessary events in a scenario by hiding them in the background, and make deliberate use of the backstory, especially in the first few minutes of the game.

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## REVISITING INTERACTIVE DRAMA, SEX, AND ISSUES OF CONSENT AND HARRASSMENT

Brian David Phillips  
National Chengchi University

I have discussed this topic elsewhere, most notably as an essay published in *The LARPer*, but as it is getting some new airplay in recent news stories about sex cults and roleplay and the overlap, it's worth another venture or few, particularly in the *Journal of Interactive Drama* is intended as an open forum for discussion on a wide variety of issues related to interactive drama, LARP, freeforming, and the like.

Well, it had to happen sometime or another . . . groups of longtime roleplayers fascinated with the idea of living alternate lives (if only for an afternoon) start getting the itch to taste a little bit more of those alternate lives . . . perhaps the gritty realities of the urban crime zone or even the behind-the-green-doors of the corporate boardroom . . . or, perhaps a bunch of consenting adults decide to spice up their roleplaying lives with a little sex (or vice versa). The number of scenarios with adult-oriented subject matter has been increasing in recent years almost, but not quite, as quickly as the number of how-to books on enhancing sex lives for couples or more have begun including roleplay scenarios in their helpful tips.

Most interactive drama or live roleplay troupes have no problem with the issues surrounding vampire slaying, the depravations of an insane military leader, or even "Bob" the nice quiet cannibalistic serial killer who lives down the block. Mature topics of sadism, violence, murder, and mayhem have been part of roleplaying for years -- even the tame mass market scenarios of the *How to Host a Murder* or *Murder*

*Mystery Party* variety address violent acts as if they were commonplace. It's when we start incorporating sexual themes or action into our scenarios that we start getting into trouble.

## **DARKER AND MORE COMMON THAN MANY REALIZE**

Suggestions for harmless roleplay in a sexual context are becoming more common in mass market sexuality books intended to help couples spice up their jaded relationships. Authors such as Laura Corn, Joan Elizabeth Lloyd, Gerald Schoenewolf, Iris and Steven Finz, Barbara Keesling, Walter Shelburne, Rolf Molinas, Andrew Stanway, and the ubiquitous Anne Hooper have begun writing tomes dedicated to the joys of erotic roleplay for consenting adults with scenario suggestions ranging from simple concepts to fully realized scenarios. Things have certainly come a long way from John Norman's original *Imaginative Sex* which first appeared in 1974, predating some of the same scenario descriptions which have almost become commonplace in the Twenty-First Century.

In addition to this rather more *vanilla* fare, alternative sexualities have begun to filter into the mainstream so that light variations of the more aggressive fantasies related to bondage, discipline, power exchange, and more have become commonplace in the how-to relationship books as well as fodder for the folks looking to liven up their sexual lives with more enticing or exciting games. Carol Queen, Ryam Nearing, John Warren, Lady Green, Jay Wiseman, Philip Miller, and Molly Devon have introduced roleplay and game concepts of the non-vanilla kind in books intended to introduce various alternative sexualities to the more adventurous vanilla world.

As gamers become adults, so do their scenarios and their own fantasies begin seeping into their games – both in and outside their mainstay consenting relationships. More than a few adult scenario authors begin delving into the realm of fantasy and their own erotic imaginations. Not a few interactive drama roleplay scenario authors have books by Robert Stoller, Phyllis and Eberhard Kronhausen, and the like on their bookshelves.

Of course, when we start addressing the darker sides of society and

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sexuality in our scenarios, it's best to tread softly . . . particularly when dealing with issues such as rape or sexual harassment (in realistic or fantasy settings, doesn't matter). Sure women were treated like chattel as the legions marched through and rape was to be expected as a part of war, but playing those roles for some folks can be awfully traumatic. This is especially true when we consider how common harassment and rape really are. More women than not have had at least some contact with this sort of thing in some form or another and you can never tell when you're going to stir up something rather unpleasant beforehand -- even if you know the persons involved, you may not know everything there is to know (most rapes, harassments, or "unfriendly fondling" are NOT reported to authorities or even a woman's closest friends).

If you push the wrong buttons, it's too easy to have some poor soul relive a very terrifying and traumatic experience which others may not have been previously aware of (not even her best friends). Sexual harassment and rape are just way too common in real life to allow them to appear in game to ruin someone's fun.

I once gave a lecture on role playing in the English classroom and talked the audience through an example scenario in which the character found herself alone in a dark alley while a strange menacing figure came walking slowly towards her with the moon shining overhead as they watched this man's features change into those of a horrific creature (basically, a werewolf). When I asked various members of the audience what their characters would do, one of the panelists began crying as she found my description too close to a reality she'd suffered only a few weeks before in a dark Taipei alley where she only avoided rape because some guy drove his car down the alley by mistake and the car lights frightened her assailant off. Of course, that's an extreme example.

You never know what's going to go on inside someone's head and having a character rape another character just because he could do it or because some testosterone case wants some vicarious sexual jollies is too close to why idiots commit real rape in the first place. If the "victim" consents to roleplaying then great, but it should never be thrown into a scenario or setup by a player in-game as an afterthought . . . that is neither good practice as a human or as a roleplayer.

## **INFORMED CONSENT**

If characters want to have sex in game then they should go to the in-game brothel. If your game doesn't have an in-game brothel then obviously it's not that sort of game so keep your character's penis in his loincloths. If enough players do express an interest in adult themes, then start an adult themes group . . . but it still needs to be based upon "informed consent" and closed to minors.

Now don't get me wrong, I like to read adult theme LARPs as well as the next guy, well probably more unless the next guy is Bob Guccione or Hugh Hefner . . . see <http://www.interactivedramas.info/scenario.html#Mature> for a few examples of what some, including myself, have written in the genre . . . but actually playing in such scenarios should be based completely upon "informed consent" -- a term I prefer to just "consent" as sometimes folks who are too young or ill-informed don't have all the information they need to give full consent, in other respects it is also used to cover situations where there is a third person involved (for instance, if two people become lovers and one of them is married then that piece of information should be made clear and all three members of the triad should know and consent to exactly what's going on before anything actually happens).

Folks who are legally not of age should not be exposed to the stuff since they are unable to fully give consent as they are not privy to the knowledge, life experiences, common sense, or just plain ol' legal recognition as the rest of us. If any **Journal of Interactive Drama** readers are actually considering any sort of "adult-theme" content in any of their games, they are well advised to exclude minors -- the legal hassles alone are enormous and there are other factors.

## **RAPE IN ROLEPLAYING IS REALLY STICKY**

I've never been a fan of the rape fantasy game . . . either as a roleplayer or as a sexually active adult. Sure, John Norman included quite a few of them in his entertaining classic, *Imaginative Sex*, and they can be fun for the right people, but for me consent is so much more fun.

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The more contemporary book on fantasy roleplays for couples, *Safe, Sane, and Consensual*, provides specific advice for playing out these sort of two-person scenarios in the bedroom but guided by safety and consent markers.

If you want to roleplay making the beast with three or four backs with some folks, then get their consent in and out of character and go for it, the amount of actual physical contact based upon the maturity, intimacy, and consent of the participants. I am against having sexual harassment or rape situations in-character, period. However, if you want them in your game, then make certain that it's agreed upon at every level. Since I tend to run theatre style games, I don't usually have to worry about character-initiated rape situations . . . I put different goals into the pieces which normally imply consent (both in and out of game). I suppose a character could have a rape in their background but that would normally be there only as an impetus for some sort of plot activity (revenge, shame, whatever) but we've never used it so far and I really doubt we would (in that respect, it's more fun to have sybarites and the like looking for consenting partners).

A simple rule you can follow is that "no" is always "out of character" and that no touching is ever allowed without very explicit OOC consent. Also, non-consensual acts or verbiage should never be allowed. If anyone crosses the line, then boot them, hard. If anyone ever touches or more then you boot them and in extreme cases you hold them for the police to pick up (I've never heard of that happening anywhere though, but I would think knowing the organizers of a game are serious about the comfort of all participants would be a deterrent to the morons).

One reason I was asked to pen this little essay is because of some comments I made in an internet newsgroup discussion of rape in games wherein a correspondent asked about other troupe's policies toward in-game rape and harassment. My question to the original poster who stated his group had a meeting in which they discussed ways to minimize or reduce sexual harassment is "how prevalent have you found this problem to be?"

If you have to go out of your way to make special rules against rape, then I'm wondering what the hell kind of game you're running. If you have specific folks who are a problem, then boot them. If you're running games or a system which seem to encourage this sort of

behaviour then you might consider rehashing your rules and rethinking your scenarios so they're less macho and brawn and more brains and intrigue.

## **GAME WORLDS AREN'T REAL WORLDS**

Some folks object to excluding certain IC (in character) behaviour on the grounds that it's part of the real world way certain bastards operate. If your game world has other forms of violence, then it's hard to justify IC why the villainous orks who've just split the guts of innocent villagers and pissed on an altar haven't thought of rape before as a way of terrifying and harassing enemies. They would say that if you're dropping one specific form of violence in game then you need to drop them all to be consistent. No, you don't. You just keep it out game and say we won't tolerate this behavior whether the character is capable of it or not. Simple, easy, to the point. It's just a game anyway. Really, it's that simple.

Everyone at the game should be mature enough to know it's a game for everyone else's enjoyment too. If one person gets his jollies screwing up others' fun -- either through IC rape or whatever -- then he's a menace to the game and a danger to the other players. An excuse of "my character's really evil so I would do that" is just bullshit justification. Boot the offender -- nicely, if you like, or just hard. Remember, it's your game world and you want it played in a way that satisfies you and which pleases the largest number of participants. The game can be run arbitrarily if need be . . . as long as you make these sorts of decisions of the best of all concerned, then get rid of the offender.

## **RAPE AND THE LIKE AS PLOT DEVICE**

Some folks use rape in their games as a plot device. Well, okay, sure, there could be a plot where the threat of rape is important . . . not unlike the princess being forced to marry the big bad evil dude wizard against her will. This spurs our heroes into action. Robin has to rescue Marion by such and such a time. The virgin sacrifice to Kali is

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the same sort of thing. Those who defend this plot element in and of itself rightfully point out that this is a common and recurring theme in the fantasy literature so many of us base our scenarios upon.

This is a very good point. However, in this storyline it is the "threat of rape" or whatever as used as an impetus for furthering the plot. I would assume that for many live combat games these two roles (Wizard and Princess) would be taken on by NPCs who know their functions in the game (to provide impetus for PC action so players can have a good time being all heroic and such). If it's a PC thing such as in theatre style interactive dramas, then it still works best as a motivator for other PCs or the prisoner to take action to avoid it. It's a *McGuffin* that helps propel the plot forward -- in the same way that "the rightful prince will be executed at dawn and then my evil plans to rule the kingdom will be realized" does. Once the "rape" or "execution" occurs you're dealing with a very different sort of story (either gritty realism with depression and loss or Spanish drama with revenge to the end, it stops being the "high fantasy" most LARPs pride themselves on emulating).

If you wish to use this plot-device, fine. Just follow the informed consent and warning disclaimer policies I've outlined above. If you don't want to bother with warnings, keeping minors away, or getting explicit informed consent from all the participants, then use a different plot-device. They're a dime a dozen and a substitute that works for your group shouldn't be too hard to find.

Even if you do use this as a plot device, it is still very different from the orks who've paralyzed a PC thief and have tied her up and taken her stuff and then decided to rape her for good measure or for an extra bit of vicarious fun. Such acts don't really contribute to the furthering of the plot, they're just random acts of stupidity. We have enough stupidity in our games without leaving that sort of option open.

## **SAFEGWORDS: LEARNING FROM OUR COUSINS IN THE BDSM AND D/S COMMUNITIES**

Perhaps you should learn a bit from the adults only activity folks. Many groups with formal "munches" or party rules do everything based upon consent (the BDSM motto of "Safe, Sane, and Consensual" is a

common enough catch phrase that needs to be used by more roleplayers as well). Hell, even the folks who play sexual dominance and submission games still have SAFEWORDS. Some poor girl may consent to being tied down on a bed and have hot wax dripped over her nipples and other nice parts, or even put on a chain as a public toilet or oral facility, but if she uses her SAFEWORD, then the "game" ends. Now, I wouldn't suggest setting up those sorts of events in anyone's LARP, but the safeword can be used for less extreme activities as well. If your game has the potential to become violent or out of control (live combat arena or battles often become rather chaotic with some warriors becoming a bit more over-zealous than they should in the heat of the moment) or with folks with different tastes, maybe you need to start giving folks a SAFEWORD to use in game which means the story doesn't go in that direction. Of course, "NO" is the best SAFEWORD of all.

Of course, most *Journal of Interactive Drama* readers aren't looking for an intense sexual addition in theirLARPs, more likely they're just adding an adult theme here or there to make the scenario more "realistic." Some games do have explicit sexual content though. A few years ago, I stumbled across a rather fascinating webpage run by a group of Japanese gamers in Tokyo who combined their interests in sexual Female Domination, Male Submission, Science Fiction, Fantasy, Costumes, and Roleplaying. Their "play parties" were actually elaborate scenarios based upon plots and themes that would have put the Marquis de Sade to shame with male players often caged or chained naked in character and used and abused in all sorts of ways . . . all with consent. Most of us "regular" roleplayers are too self-conscious about our bodies or relationships or propriety to show up to a game in costume, let alone with painted nipples or clitoris rings. However, we can still learn from those in that special hybrid swinger/roleplayer community in that everything is permissible as long as it is based upon informed consent.

## **IF YOU BUILD IT, THEY WILL COME**

Build your game experience the way you want to build it. If you're

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organizing the game then you need to be sensitive to the needs and expectations of your players (and give them reasonable expectations when providing publicity - any mature subjects games need to be signposted as such and they should limit membership to folks of legal age just to be safe). That's not running from fascist morals thumpers, that's protecting your rights as well.

If folks don't like the game world you're running, then they are certainly welcome to not play in it and to even go further and create their own original world and/or system. However, they should know what they're getting into if you intend to open up mature topics in the scenario.

If you suspect someone might have a problem with the gay-basher character or the twink, then warn that person that certain "issues" will be raised. If you want that player in your game, then write the game so that the suspect issues don't come up. If the issues are more important to you then that specific player, then don't invite that player to participate.

Any organizer should try to match the players to the game and the game to the players. If it's a public game, then make certain all the disclaimers have been placed in all of the publicity and that you're not allowing underage participants (some folks allow minors with parental consent but I would suggest that you not do so even if the parents are playing). You never know. Error on the side of being paranoid and you'll make out better in the long run.

Naturally, you shouldn't sacrifice all of your "artistic integrity" just to play it safe. Be as wild and weird and wonderful as you like. However, just make certain that you're presenting this wild, weird, and wonderful world to folks who will appreciate it. Advertise for players where like-minded roleplayers are likely to hang out. If you are planning on running a game about a cabal of drug addicted pedophile Satanists set on resurrecting Adolph Hitler while travelling back in time to rape, torture, and mutilate a teenage Virgin Mary, then it's probably not a good idea to recruit potential players at the local seminary with the blurb notice, "addresses religious themes" (please note: this is a really stupid idea for a game scenario, please don't use it).

Build the game for an appropriate audience and you should do fine.

## **PSYCHODRAMA AIN'T FOR GAMES, IT'S FOR THERAPY**

For a while in Australia quite a few freeform scenarios were being written that were attempts at combining psychodrama and roleplay. This form of New Wave gaming eventually settled into the experimental **Short, Sharp, Shocks** which are still being run down under. The SSS approach has become an attempt at trying something new and exciting to shake up the players and the writers. They are better controlled and much more mature than their precursors. Psychodrama in and of itself is best left to therapists and the social service folks who use it with good effect and with purpose. Screwing around with someone's mind just to see if you can do it, isn't the best idea . . . for gaming, or for your fellow humans.

Hell, even the folks who advocate mature themes should know better than to play psychodrama on folks who don't want psychodrama . . . if your piece would appeal to a specific audience, then you need to make certain that's who plays your game. That's not just to protect oneself from law suits either (and they do happen), it's to make certain the players get what they want out of the piece and everyone has a good time. If you like *Gor* and really want to run a realistic *Gor* game with half-naked slave girls and brutish warriors who teach them how to be real subservient women or if you'd like to give *Leather Goddesses of Phobus* a run with whips, chains, half-naked dominatrix goddesses wielding rather large phallic shaped objects for insertion into exposed bodily orifices of weak mostly-nude slaveboys, then, fine, more power to you. Go find a group of like-minded souls who'd enjoy roleplaying that fantasy world . . . don't put it into an environment where folks not interested (or even offended) by it will be playing.

## **HAVE RULES AND FOLLOW THEM**

Every game, every venue, every group of players has to have ground rules where it is clear what is allowed and what is not acceptable. If not, then you just have a bunch of folks running around in funny clothes forcing others to react to their idea of fun . . . and in such a setting, it's

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the big oafish rude and loud who tend to have the good time. The others soon quit and leave the game.

Of course, I have it easier than many of our readers, the troupe I play with is fairly permanent and definitely private. Since we meet in a private home on a regular basis and we don't treat our sessions as a business venture of any sort . . . just a bunch of friends having fun together . . . we can build our scenarios to the taste of the participants and drop themes or topics we know the players aren't interested in. We can also add material or topics that we know various players enjoy. If someone is disruptive, they don't get invited back. After all, "It's our house and we'll invite who we want to."

If you are running a game in an area with a lot of conservative Christians you can either run the system and the world to fit their tastes or you need to make certain they understand that the world contains some things they may not like so they won't play. That's not bowing to censorship, it's making certain you have the right players for your game.

If you know your game may contain issues that might be pushing the envelope, then make certain you have safeguarded yourself legally, ethically, and in any other way so you don't offend your players or leave yourself open to suit (you can still run the game, but make certain everyone understands the issues to be covered and that they consent to participating . . . "informed consent" meaning players over a certain age only . . . for roleplayed adult subjects that usually means 18 . . . for nudity issues, you're safer with 21 . . . for talky issues about mature stuff you might go with 16 for players as well as a signed consent form from a parent or guardian. Any game that admits folks under 16 should (1) always have signed parental consent forms AND (2) should NEVER deal with these issues anyway.

## **CONCLUSION**

If you want to have sex or sexually charged issues in your game, great, go for it. However, base everything on informed consent and safewords. Respect other players and make certain "no" is always out-of-character. If you're including anything that might be construed as adult -- theme, topic, costume, or behavior -- do yourself, your players,

and your community a favor and exclude minors from participating.  
Most of all, have fun and make sure your players are having fun too.

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**MUCH ADO ABOUT SOMETHING**  
**An Interactive Drama**  
**Live-Action Roleplaying Event**

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Alas, poor Shakespeare here lies done to death  
By hands unknown his life away was borne  
His stopped heart echoes his silent breath  
His characters alone remain to mourn  
Though the artist is slain, his works extend  
Bright heroes whose lives his art attested  
Now gather they to learn from Will's own pen  
In whose name title to the plays vested  
Lover, fighter, lady and thane, rare sprite  
Each hope to receive the playwright's gift  
Each seek to diminish the other's right  
Or learn which other set Will's life adrift  
Come, open-hearted and open-handed  
Depart enriched, or a killer branded

Hear ye, hear ye! By order of Theseus, Duke of Athens, ye are hereby summoned to the reading of ye Last Wille of William Shakespeare, poet and playwright, recently discovered slain by unknown causes. Shakespeare's Legacy includes the title to his complete works, which some believe may one day have value.

*Much Ado About Something*

Ye events of ye reading shall begin on date, at time, at address  
\_\_\_\_\_. A memorial service shall be held, followed by a wake, and ye  
reading shall commence precisely at time.

Claimants receiving this summons are below listed in order of rank.  
Any who fail to appear at ye reading shall forfeit all claim to  
Shakespeare's works henceforth.

Theseus, Duke of Athens  
Hippolyta, Duchess of Athens, Queen of the Amazons  
Macbeth, Thane of Glamis  
Lady Macbeth of Glamis  
Lady Capulet, a gentlewoman of Verona  
Tybalt Capulet, a swordsman of Verona  
Romeo Montague, a young gentleman of Verona  
Juliet Capulet, a young gentlewoman of Verona  
Lysander, a young gentleman of Athens  
Demetrius, a young gentleman of Athens  
Helena, a young gentlewoman of Athens  
Hermia, a young gentlewoman of Athens  
Rosaline, a young woman of Verona  
Friar Laurence, a friar of Verona  
Serafina, a nurse  
Verula, an old woman

Note well that all weapons are forbidden at the reading of the wille, and  
any who brings such will be immediately disinherited.

## **HOW IT ALL WORKS**

Live Action Role-Playing Games (LARPs) are like improvisational  
theatre. You are a Player. The person you are pretending to be is your  
Character – and until the game is over, you should try to stay in character.  
In this game, your character is one of Shakespeare's characters, who

seem to have lives beyond the plays (and whose lives may not be accurately reflected in what Shakespeare wrote).

You have a Character Sheet which tells who your Character is, and what your Character wants (your Goals). You achieve your Goals by talking to the other Characters - sharing secrets, telling lies, making alliances, betraying your friends, etc. The bulk of what you'll do during a LARP can be achieved just by talking to people (and sometimes by eavesdropping on someone else's conversation). There are other things you can do fairly easily as well. For instance, hiding behind a tent is accomplished by, well, hiding behind a tent. Some things you may want to do, however, are a little more complicated. If you want to steal somebody's pants, or start a fire, or something else you shouldn't actually do, then you have to talk to the Game Masters.

**The Game Masters:** The Game Masters, or "GMs," runs the game. They are your hosts and referees. Their word is law. If a GM whispers in your ear "You have just fallen unconscious," then lie down on the floor with your eyes shut. If a GM shouts "you hear a shriek coming from the plaza!" then everyone should act as if they hear a shriek (and perhaps run to the plaza to investigate). If a GM holds up a sign reading "You don't see anything" then act as if nothing is happening.

**GMs With Players:** Ignore a player who is talking to a GM. Don't bother them, and don't eavesdrop! If a GM and a player are going somewhere, ignore that as well. The GM is moving the Character (e.g. the Character wanted to leap from the roof. It isn't a good idea to actually do this, so the player walks with the GM to a spot where we imagine the Character would land.)

**Keep the GM Informed:** If you are planning something sneaky (such as an ambush) try to tell a GM in advance. There are things you don't know (and the GM does) that may affect the outcome of your action.

**Items and Costumes:** Your character sheet may mention certain items that you carry around. We will provide you with props or index cards to represent these items when you arrive, so don't worry about bringing them.

Naturally, you should dress for your role if possible. You can make your own Elizabethan costume or wear mostly ordinary clothes with a few accessories to suggest your character.

**Combat:** Even among the best of friends there is an occasional falling out, and duels are not uncommon in matters of honor or to settle questions of truth. Because weapons are prohibited at the reading of the will, you must take out your anger in alternative ways. As literary characters, you may fight a “War of Words” by visiting a GM, who will give you further instructions (if you challenged to a War of Words, you must follow your challenger to the GM).

**Prizes:** As usual, there will be prizes for: (a) best costuming, (b) best roleplaying of character, and (c) most accurate solution to “Who killed Shakespeare?”

**Be prepared to have a great time!**

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## **A SYNOPSIS OF RELEVANT PLAYS**

(from <http://www.bardweb.net/plays/>)

### **A MIDSUMMER NIGHT’S DREAM**

Lysander loves Hermia, and Hermia loves Lysander. Helena loves Demetrius; Demetrius used to love Helena but now loves Hermia. Egeus, Hermia's father, prefers Demetrius as a suitor, and enlists the aid of Theseus, the Duke of Athens, to enforce his wishes upon his daughter. According to Athenian law, Hermia is given four days to choose between Demetrius, life in a nunnery, or a death sentence. Hermia, ever defiant, chooses to escape with Lysander into the surrounding forest.

Complications arise in the forest. Oberon and Titania, King and Queen of Fairies, are locked in a dispute over a boy whom Titania has adopted. Oberon instructs his servant Puck to bring him magic love drops, which Oberon will sprinkle in the Queen's eyes as she sleeps, whereupon Titania will fall in love with the first creature she sees upon awakening. Meanwhile, Helena and Demetrius have also fled into the

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woods after Lysander and Hermia. Oberon, overhearing Demetrius's denouncement of Helena, takes pity upon her and tells Puck to place the magic drops on the eyes of Demetrius as well, so that Demetrius may fall in love with Helena. Puck, however, makes the mistake of putting the drops in the eyes of Lysander instead. Helena stumbles over Lysander in the forest, and the spell is cast; Lysander now desires Helena and renounces a stunned Hermia.

In the midst of this chaos, a group of craftsmen are rehearsing for a production of "Pyramus and Thisbe," to be played for the Duke at his wedding. Puck impishly casts a spell on Bottom to give him the head of a donkey. Bottom, as luck would have it, is the first thing Titania sees when she awakens; hence, Bottom ends up being lavishly kept by the Queen. Oberon enjoys this sport, but is less amused when it becomes apparent that Puck has botched up the attempt to unite Demetrius and Helena. Oberon himself anoints Demetrius with the love potion and ensures that Helena is the first person he sees; however, Helena understandably feels that she is now being mocked by both Demetrius *and* Lysander (who is still magically enamored of her).

Finally, Oberon decides that all good sports must come to an end. He puts the four lovers to sleep and gives Lysander the antidote for the love potion so that he will love Hermia again when they all wake up. Next, Oberon gives Titania the antidote, and the King and Queen reconcile. Theseus and Hippolyta then discover Lysander, Hermia, Helena, and Demetrius asleep in the forest. All return to Athens to make sense of what they think is a strange dream. Likewise, Bottom returns to his players, and they perform "Pyramus and Thisbe" at the wedding feast (which has since become a wedding of three couples). As everyone retires, fairies perform their blessings and Puck delivers a tender epilogue soliloquy.

## **MACBETH**

Macbeth, Thane of Glamis, is one of King Duncan's greatest war captains. Upon returning from a battle with the rebellious Thane of Cawdor, Macbeth and Banquo encounter three witches. A prophecy is given to them: Macbeth is hailed as Thane of Glamis, Thane of Cawdor,

and King; Banquo is hailed as the father of kings to come. With that, the witches evaporate into the mists. Both men nervously laugh off the prophecies until Duncan informs Macbeth that he is to assume Cawdor's title as a reward for his service to the king. When Lady Macbeth is informed of the events, she determines to push her husband's resolve in the matter—she wants him to take his fate into his own hands and make himself king. If Duncan happens to be inconveniently in the way....

Macbeth at first is reluctant to do harm to Duncan. However, when Duncan makes arrangements to visit the castle, the opportunity presents itself too boldly to ignore. Pressed on by his wife, they plot Duncan's death. Lady Macbeth gets Duncan's attendants drunk; Macbeth will slip in with his dagger, kill the king, and plant the dagger on the drunken guards. Macbeth, in a quiet moment alone, imagines he sees a bloody dagger appear in the air; upon hearing the tolling bells, he sets to work. Immediately Macbeth feels the guilt and shame of his act, as does Lady Macbeth, who nonetheless finds the inner strength to return to Duncan's chamber to plant the dagger on the attendants when Macbeth refuses to go back in there. When the body is discovered, Macbeth immediately slays the attendants—he says out of rage and grief—in order to silence them. Malcolm and Donalbain, Duncan's sons, both flee Scotland (fearful for their own lives). To everyone else, it appears that the sons have been the chief conspirators, and Macbeth is crowned King of Scotland, thus fulfilling the witches' prophecy. Banquo, however, has suspicions of his own based on their encounter with the witches.

Macbeth knows of Banquo's suspicions and the reasons for them; he is also wary of the second prophecy concerning Banquo's offspring. As he prepares for a celebratory banquet on his coronation, Macbeth hires assassins to get rid of Banquo and Fleance, his son. Banquo is murdered that night, but Fleance escapes into the darkness. As Macbeth sits down to the feast, the bloody ghost of Banquo silently torments him, which causes him great despair. Meanwhile, Macduff has fled to England because he too suspects Macbeth of foul play. Macbeth, once a man of greatness, transforms into a man whose conscience has fled him. Upon learning of Macduff's flight, Macbeth exacts revenge by having Macduff's entire household butchered. Macduff grieves, but joins up with Malcolm in England to raise an army against Macbeth.

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Macbeth is given another prophecy by the witches as he prepares for Malcolm's assault. His throne is safe until Birnam Wood comes to Dunsinane, and he will not die by the hand of any man born of a woman. Macbeth feels confident in his chances for victory at this pronouncement. Lady Macbeth, on the other hand, has been slowly driven mad by her dreams in the wake of killing Duncan. She sleepwalks, wringing her hands together, and inadvertently reveals her part in the murder. As the English armies approach, Macbeth learns that many of his lords are deserting him, and that Lady Macbeth has died. On top of this, a messenger brings news that Malcolm's army is approaching under the cover of boughs, which they have cut from the trees of Birnam Wood. Resigned now to his fate, Macbeth grimly sets to battle.

None, however, can bring Macbeth down. Finally, Macduff meets him on the field of battle. Macbeth laughs hollowly, telling him of the witches' prophecy: no man born of a woman may slay him. As Macduff retorts, he was "from my mother's womb untimely ripp'd," meaning he was delivered by a Caesarian section (and hence, not technically born of a woman). Grimly, Macbeth presses on. The play ends with the death of Macbeth; Macduff greets the others bearing Macbeth's head. Malcolm is crowned King of Scotland, restoring his father's bloodline to the throne.

## **ROMEO AND JULIET**

Verona is home to two feuding noble houses, the Montagues and the Capulets. In response to the constant brawling between members of these families, the Prince of Verona has issued an edict that will impose a death sentence on anyone caught dueling. Against this backdrop, young Romeo of the house of Montague has been infatuated with Rosaline, a niece of Capulet. In order to catch some time with her, Romeo and his friends slip into a masque ball at Capulet's house; as a masque affair, they can easily disguise themselves. There, Romeo catches his first glimpse of Juliet, Capulet's daughter. In one of Shakespeare's most memorable scenes, Romeo steals into the garden and professes his love to Juliet, who stands above on her balcony. With the aid of Friar Laurence, Romeo makes plans with Juliet to be married in secret.

Tybalt, Juliet's cousin, discovers that Romeo has attended the ball, and he sets out to teach the young Montague a lesson at the point of his sword. Romeo, when challenged by Tybalt, tries to avoid a duel between them as he is now married to Juliet (and hence a relation to Tybalt by this marriage). Mercutio, Romeo's best friend, takes up Tybalt's challenge and is slain in the ensuing fight. Enraged, Romeo slays Tybalt in turn. As a result of the bloodshed—and Romeo's act of vengeance, however provoked—the Prince of Verona proclaims that Romeo is to be banished for his actions. Romeo has time to consummate the marriage and bid farewell to Juliet, though he hopes to be reunited with her soon once the Capulets are aware that Juliet has married him.

The elder Capulets, meanwhile, are pressing for Juliet to marry Paris, a cousin to the Prince. Juliet, again with Friar Laurence's help, takes up a desperate plan to avoid her parent's wishes. She obtains a drug that will make her seem dead for forty-two hours; while she is in this state, Friar Laurence will send word to Romeo of the situation so that he can meet and rescue her in her tomb. Unfortunately, fate will not be so kind; the letter from Friar Laurence is severely delayed. Romeo instead hears news second-hand that Juliet has died. A grief-stricken Romeo purchases poison and hastens to Juliet's tomb to commit suicide at her side. Meanwhile, Friar Laurence has discovered to his horror that his letter did not arrive, and the friar hastens to Juliet's tomb as well to take Juliet away until he can set things aright.

At Juliet's tomb, Romeo encounters Paris, who is mourning for his lost fiancée-to-be. Romeo slays Paris, then enters the tomb and downs the poison. As Friar Laurence comes upon the scene, Juliet awakens only to find the body of her beloved Romeo laying beside her. Juliet takes the dagger from Romeo's belt and plunges it into her heart. The Prince arrives at this point—along with the Montague and Capulet parents—demanding to know what has happened. Friar Laurence relates the tragic tale of Romeo and Juliet's secret marriage; the Montagues and Capulets, when faced with the terrible price that their feud has exacted, vow to put an end to the enmity between the two houses.

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## ROMEO MONTAGUE, A YOUNG MAN OF VERONA

*“See, how she leans her cheek upon her hand!  
O that I were a glove upon that hand,  
That I might touch that cheek!”*

You are the epitome of love’s purity, the ultimate star-crossed lover, and perhaps the best known of all of Shakespeare’s leading men. You are...Romeo!

Of course, you are also fickle (“Rosaline? Who’s Rosaline?”) and perhaps too easily swayed by circumstances (“What, Juliet’s dead? Guess I’d better poison myself.”) But you’ve managed to convince yourself that those can be charming qualities too.

The only thing worse than dying by mistake is finding that as a literary character, you really are immortal, and get to see your plight illustrated by theatre companies and high schools over and over again. You’d think you could be forever reunited with Juliet, but she seems to have decided – you know not why – to shun you. She probably blames you for her own endless existence, as it was your brilliant soliloquy (“But, soft! What light through yonder window breaks?...”) that undoubtedly earned the play its renown.

You hate Shakespeare for what he did to you and Juliet. You’d dearly love to see him pay, and you hope that means ducats for you and Juliet in the will. In fact, you’re prepared to ensure that you’ll inherit old Will’s wealth. Working with an underground scribe (who was once an apothecary, but was forced to abandon the trade after his drugs were implicated in the deaths of too many young lovers), you’ve produced a fake will in which the title to Shakespeare’s comedies is inherited by Juliet, and the title to the tragedies (far more lucrative, even once you bury Romeo and Juliet forever) to you. You haven’t filled in the blanks yet to decide who gets the histories and the sonnets, so you’ll have to choose at the wake and add them in (it would be too suspicious to give them to yourself – you’ll choose two characters who will draw attention away from you.)

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It would also be nice to find out why Juliet's not talking to you, but if you meet a better woman, well, that's show business.

Goals: Inherit the rights to Will's plays, Find out why Juliet shuns you, Fall in love again

RP Hint: You're given to wild mood swings – from swaggering conceit to abject depression – and at the hint of any attention from a woman, you immediately drop all prior feelings for others and pledge your eternal love to your newly-destined partner. Your actions, whenever possible, should be dramatic.

*Alan Schwartz*

Last Wille and Testament

I, William Shakespeare, fit in mind and body, do hereby bequeath the title and future revenues of my folio of work as follows:

The Sonnets, consisting of 154 poems, to

The Histories, consisting of 17 plays, to

The Comedies, consisting of 17 plays, to

The Tragedies, consisting of 10 plays, to

## **JULIET CAPULET, A YOUNG WOMAN OF VERONA**

*“Younger than she are happy mothers made”*

You are the epitome of love’s purity, the ultimate star-crossed lover, and perhaps the best known of all of Shakespeare’s leading ladies. You are also pregnant.

It’s Romeo’s, of course. You haven’t told him – in fact, you never want to speak to him again. And you’re really angry at your nurse, Serafina, who should have been a little more forthcoming about herbs; some pennyroyal would have gone a long way. But no, she never treated you like an adult.

The only thing worse than dying by mistake is finding that as a literary character, you can’t die, and have to deal with this pregnancy thing. Of course, Shakespeare certainly deserves most of the blame, as he wrote your ill-begotten life story in the first place.

But you got the last laugh. Through your contact with a former apothecary (forced to abandon the trade after his drugs were implicated in the deaths of too many young lovers), you obtained a deadly poison and ensured that it found its way into Shakespeare’s wine. Hearing that he was dead was sweet; in fact, it whet your appetite for a little more revenge, and you’ve brought another dose of the poison with you to try to administer to Serafina if you get the chance.

The only thing that worries you is Shakespeare’s Will (no pun intended). If Shakespeare named you to inherit any of his works – and why wouldn’t he, you being his most influential heroine? – others could see that as giving you a motive for his murder. If that happens, you’ll have to think fast; perhaps you can pin it on someone else.

Goals: Kill Serafina, Pin the murders on someone else, Hide your pregnancy

RP Hint: You’re early in your pregnancy, so it doesn’t show, but you have morning sickness – anyone who sees you eat will also have the pleasure of seeing you throw up. You should probably maintain your “good little girl” act and hope it gets you through any accusations that might be leveled at you.

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## THESEUS, DUKE OF ATHENS

*“No epilogue, I pray you, for your play needs no excuse. Never excuse, for when the players are all dead, there need none to be blamed.”*

As the Duke of Athens, you are the highest ranking personage at the reading of Shakespeare’s will; indeed, you serve as the executor of that will and called the others to join you. You are known to be a man of good humor and honor, and you would like to see Shakespeare’s killer brought to justice (which, of course, is yours to mete.)

Whoever killed Shakespeare didn’t take chances - according to the secret autopsy by your private physician, he was drugged, poisoned, and stabbed through the heart. From what you’ve read in the introductory letter with Shakespeare’s will, they’ll all have plenty of motives. And, of course, whoever are named in the will itself are primary suspects. Hopefully you can present opportunities for the guilty to reveal himself while shielding the innocent.

You haven’t read the will yet. You were instructed not to, and you follow the rules. You will keep it sealed until you are supposed to read it, which is 90 minutes after you read the introductory letter. Of course, as soon as you read the will, the beneficiaries will want to leave, so you probably should find ways to delay the actual reading as long as possible, but you must eventually read it.

You are a bit confused about the part of the introductory letter that talks about the “greatest prize” to be divided between those who can reveal the killer. You assume that the will itself will settle that.

You are also a stickler for marital fidelity, and expect every man and wife to treat each other civilly. This goes for you and your Duchess Hippolyta, and for any other couple at the reading.

Goals: see that justice is done, execute Shakespeare’s will, punish adultery or marital incivility

RP Hint: You’re a stickler for the letter of the law, and can be officious. You know it, too and can use it to your advantage. You’re also the only person with access to the will, and you’re not above using that to your advantage either, in private, although you would never allow yourself to be bribed or coerced out of your duty.

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If you feel the need to enforce your law, you can incarcerate another character if you have the backing of the majority of male characters present (not including yourself and the scurvy dog you're opposing).

*Alan Schwartz*

Last Wille and Testament  
Of William Shakespeare

From your creator to all of my illustrious characters, greetings.

Truly it is said that creations take on a life of their own, and none more truly than you. Your qualities span the gamut from inanity to foolishness, with not a little snobbery, cowardice, and incivility to temper the mix. If you hadn't proved so popular and lucrative, I surely would have consigned you all to my hearth fire and the ignominy of fading memory.

And yet, despite my better judgment, I staged your plays, and thanks to the poorer judgment of the public, you have become not only famous, but immortal. Romeo, the fickle fop. Juliet, the over-hasty. Theseus, ever-legalistic. Hippolyta, eternal singer of the praises of the weaker sex. Helena, Lysander, Demetrius, and Hermia, a matched set of bland adde-pates. Macbeth, the indecisive, and his Lady, the overly-decisive. Tybalt, so quick to anger at imagined slights. And the rest. Your flaws and failings, which are legion, have been established for all time in the canon of English literature. How much the worse for all of us.

If you are reading this, I have no doubt that one of you has contrived a means to end my life. Know that your triumph will be your undoing. For while I have already chosen the inheritors of my known works, whose names will be revealed in the reading of my wille itself, I have reserved the greatest prize of all to be divided between those of you who can reveal my killer and bring me justice. You have 90 minutes.

I have the honor of remains, most affectionately yours,

William Shakespeare

Last Wille and Testament

I, William Shakespeare, fit in mind and body, do hereby bequeath the title and future revenues of my folio of work as follows:

The Sonnets, consisting of 154 poems, to

The Histories, consisting of 17 plays, to

The Comedies, consisting of 17 plays, to

The Tragedies, consisting of 10 plays, to

And the rights to my new play, a Midautumn Morning's Reverie, to

Alan Schwartz

## HIPPOLYTA, DUCHESS OF ATHENS, QUEEN OF THE AMAZONS

*“This is the silliest stuff that ever I heard”*

You killed Shakespeare (the jerk!) and you’d do it again in a heartbeat.

Once upon a time, you were happy. As Queen of the Amazons, you ruled a proud people. Women were real women, and men were real quiet, and you liked it that way. Then Shakespeare (idiot!) had to go and write *Midsummer Night’s Dream*.

All of a sudden, Theseus gets to conquer the Amazons, you’re slated to be his wife, and, worst of all, you’re *happy* about it in the play – deliriously in love. With Theseus? That officious pig spent most of his time chasing younger women and splitting legal hairs to consolidate his rule of Athens. But how Shakespeare (schmuck!) wrote it is how everyone thinks it went.

You take it back, that’s not worst of all. Worst of all, Shakespeare had just written a new play, a sequel to *Midsummer Night’s Dream* (the dullard was going to call it “*A Mid-autumn Morning’s Reverie*” to try to cash in), and in it, you’re not only happily married to Theseus but you become comic relief as you dote on him through scene after scene in which Theseus is seduced by fairies and you’re left looking like a fool.

So, you took care of the problem. You poisoned Shakespeare’s wine (the sot! – he was barely waking from another drunk when you arrived and you had to force it down his throat) and carefully avoided leaving any trace of yourself. Unfortunately, you also forgot to take the new play with you to destroy, and when you snuck back in later to tie up that loose end, it was gone. Getting it back is your main concern now, and you’ll stop at nothing to see it safely destroyed, along with anyone who’s read it.

Goals: Retrieve or destroy the new play, stop anyone who gets in your way, avoid being caught as Shakespeare’s killer

RP Hint: You are physically quite strong enough to handle yourself when required, but prefer to use guile. You must maintain the hateful

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semblance of love for Theseus, even though you think he's worthless. With others, you can be either haughty or gentle as it suits you. You really dislike fairies however (oh yes, they exist, and you're one of the few who knows that for sure), and if you encounter any, you should work to expose them and foil their designs.

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## HELENA, A YOUNG WOMAN OF ATHENS

*“Use me but as your spaniel, spurn me, strike me,  
Neglect me, lose me; only give me leave,  
Unworthy as I am, to follow you.”*

Your life in Athens has been rather difficult, but you’ve always been consistent. You were in love with Demetrius, and Demetrius alone, and you still are, even though Demetrius once loved Hermia and Lysander once loved you. It was all very confusing, but now everything’s fine.

Well, almost fine. Demetrius has been strangely distant since you both heard about Shakespeare’s death (poor Will! He was always so kind to you.) You wonder what’s troubling him, but you’ve always believed the best way to keep a man is to be meek and submissive, so you haven’t really pressed the matter.

And while you’re here waiting to hear Will’s will, you might as well try to figure out how he died; foul play is suspected.

You have agreed to perform a memorial service for Shakespeare prior to the luncheon that precedes the reading of the will. Prepare something to say, perhaps a memorial poem, followed by silence (or a musical dirge if a musician is present). You may wish to call on other characters to speak – perhaps you’ll learn something about how people really felt about Will.

Goals: Find out what’s wrong with Demetrius, keep Demetrius’s love, help find out who killed Shakespeare.

RP hint: You are really a very nice young lady, though your self-esteem isn’t as strong as perhaps it should be. You dote on Demetrius, and are still quite close to Hermia and Lysander. You are easily cowed by royalty.

## **DEMETRIUS, A YOUNG MAN OF ATHENS**

Actually Robin Goodfellow (“Puck”), a fairy.

*“Lord, what fools these mortals be!”*

To all outward eyes, you are Demetrius, the beloved husband of Helena, and a generally good guy. In fact, you are Robin Goodfellow, a knavish sprite in the employ of King Oberon. You kidnapped Demetrius and took on his appearance when you sensed Shakespeare’s death.

Visiting the bard’s remains, you couldn’t figure out who was responsible for doing him in, but you did spy a very interesting-looking sheaf of papers that you pocketed on your way out. It appears to be a new play, entitled “A Mid-autumn Morning’s Reverie”, and Shakespeare was clearly trying to cash in on his success with a minimum of effort – this dog has fleas. In it, Theseus and Hippolyta are happily married (although Titania’s fairies seem to be seducing Theseus in every other scene), and Demetrius, Lysander, Helena, and Hermia seem to be starting the first swinger’s group of the Elizabethan Age, with special guest appearances of characters from other plays, including Romeo and Juliet (from the eponymous play) and Beatrice and Benedick (from *Much Ado about Nothing*). It’s a hoot. Even in the seventeenth century, sex sells.

You can only imagine the amount of mischief you can get into in the reading of the will and the events leading up to it. Even without springing a new play on the participants, the opportunities are unlimited, and with this piece of trash, sure to be lauded and canonized if it reaches the mortal readership, well, you just can’t wait.

You have no especial goals other than to cause trouble. To help you out with that, you’ve also brought along two doses of the nectar of love. When applied to a mortal’s eyelids, the nectar causes them to fall hopelessly in love with the next person they meet.

Goals: Have fun, cause trouble.

RP Hint: Demetrius tends to fade into the woodwork, but you can’t avoid a prank. ☺

*Alan Schwartz*

A Mid-Autumn Morning's Reverie  
By William Shakespeare

SCENE: Athens, and a wood near it.

ACT I

SCENE 1

Athens. The palace of THESEUS.

[Enter Theseus, Hippolyta, and Swallowtail (a faerie)]

THESEUS :

Now, fair Hippolyta, our nuptial hour  
Long ago completed, leaves us still in love  
And you dote on me as a goodwife should  
And in doting your doteful heart does prove

HIPPOLYTA:

Oh Theseus, my heart's desire, my lordly love, my beloved lord  
Oh Theseus, in thy manly way, ply thy righteous sword  
SWALLOWTAIL (hidden behind Theseus, stage-whispers in his ear):  
Keep thy wife, contented cow, but come away with me,  
Ye can have her bovine charms, and get the milk for free!

THESEUS (leering):

Hippolyta, I go;

(whispered) To Swallowtail, I come!

[Enter Demetrius, Lysander, Helena, Hermia, Romeo, Juliet, Beatrice,  
and Benedick]

DEMETRIUS (to Juliet):

Come ye here often?

HELENA (to Benedick):

Is that a gherkin in thy jerkin?

ROMEO (to Hermia):

This must be heaven, for thou art an angel!

BEATRICE (to Lysander)

Believest thou in love at first view?

Or should I walk by anew?

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LYSANDER (to Romeo)  
Do ye want to see something swell?

[ Exeunt all behind the palace bushes. ]

## LADY MACBETH

*“Look like the innocent flower But be the serpent under’t”*

Why won't they just leave you alone?

All right, you did suggest that your husband kill the King of Scotland, but you really didn't think he'd go through with it – it was just one of those off-hand, off-the-wall thoughts. He's in bed bragging about battle victories, and you sarcastically tell him, “Well, all that's left is killing the King, then.” How were you to know he was already nearly insane and hearing voices? And when he tried, who could believe that he would succeed?

The only thing worse than killing yourself is finding that as a literary character, you can't die. And now you're known world-wide as a murderous bitch, when your only real crime was an ill-fated word. Shakespeare certainly deserves most of the blame, as he wrote your ill-begotten life story in the first place.

Of course, you didn't kill Shakespeare. You didn't even suggest that Macbeth do it, though you fear that one of his voices might have. You haven't had anything to do with that psychotic killer and his ghosts since you both came to life in literature; indeed, it's only lately that you've become close to any man at all, a young firebrand named Tybalt Capulet. But you're still haunted by what Macbeth did, guilty about your role, and angry with Shakespeare for consigning you to this fate.

You don't expect anything from Shakespeare's will, and, frankly, you don't care. As long as Macbeth gets nothing, you'll be happy. You'd like to set the record straight, but it's probably too late now. Maybe you could convince Tybalt to steal the will and destroy it.

Goals: Make sure that Macbeth doesn't inherit anything. Prevent other girls from falling blindly in love like you did. Rain on everyone's parade (except Tybalt, that sweetie.)

RP hint: You are bitter, not least because everyone reviles you. Little gives you pleasure, except the misery of others and, lately, the company of Tybalt. You firmly do NOT believe in ghosts,

*Much Ado About Something*

witches, magic, or anything supernatural; they're just excuses for  
addle-pates like your ex-husband.

Alan Schwartz

## MACBETH

Thane of Glamis, Thane of Cawdor, King of Scotland forever!

*“Present fears are less than horrible imaginings”*

Finally, your chance has come again! Just as the weird sisters promised, and as the ghost of Duncan has been whispering to you since you killed him.

Shakespeare made you what you are: Scottish battle-lord, Thane of Glamis and Cawdor, and finally, thanks to a suggestion from your wife, King of Scotland (actually, Lady Macbeth didn't really want you to kill Duncan, but you never go against anything Shakespeare wrote – his genius brought you to the pinnacle you deserved!) You are virile, regal, honorable, gifted with second sight, and the greatest of Shakespeare's heroes.

Only you can hear the voices of the ghosts – ghosts of battle, ghosts of vanquished lords, even strange ghosts of minor characters in other plays who didn't survive to the fifth act (that Rosencranz and Guildenstern pair keep showing up, as well as some fellow named Mercutio). They talk to you constantly, reminding you of your duties as King of Scotland. You must form a new army to defend Shakespeare's works from critics who seek to ascribe them to another or diminish their importance (and with them, your royal status.) You must again woo and win your wife, who left you as soon as you both discovered you were immortal literary characters, so that you will have a fitting Queen. You must find a new play of Shakespeare's (!) that the ghosts whisper about. And, of course, you must have your Kingship recognized by all the other characters you encounter.

Inheriting the plays would help on all counts, but if Shakespeare in his wisdom chose to deed them to another, you will do your best to protect their new owner and ensure that the plays remain pristine. Of course, if the new owner has previously taken allegiance with you, what's theirs is yours by feudal law.

Goals: Command obedience, gather an army, woo back your wife, and defend Shakespeare against anyone who would defame him or rewrite the plays.

*Much Ado About Something*

RP hints: You see dead people, and they help you (if you encounter a corpse during the game, you can try to speak with it – contact a GM). When anything conflicts with your worldview, ghosts intervene and reality loses (in your mind, at least). You revere yourself above everyone, except Shakespeare.

**Oath of Allegiance**

I hereby pledge my loyalty and fealty to Macbeth, Thane of Glamis, Thane of Cawdor, and rightful King of Scotland. As his vassal, I swear to serve him with all that is mine, and to accept his judgments in return for his protection and justice. Attested by my signature below:

\_\_\_\_\_

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\_\_\_\_\_

SERAFINA, A NURSE

*“Did you ne'er hear say, Two may keep counsel, putting one away?”*

You have been the nurse for the Capulet family for years, most lately to young Juliet. You feel no little guilt for what happened to her – in fact, you feel no guilt at all. She was far too secretive for her own good, anyway. If she'd confided in you more, you're sure you could have helped her.

That's pretty much how you feel about everyone. They should all confide in you. Sure, you've been known to blab a bit. If truth be told, you live for spreading gossip. But only in the pursuit of good, of course. Until now.

You've just realized that you could be doing more with the gossip you collect than just passing it on. The people you learn secrets about are often willing to pay cold hard ducats to stop them from being passed on. You think you may have found a new career, and this will reading is a perfect chance for you to kick it off right. Someone's going to inherit rights worth a fortune – maybe someone who's got something to hide.

Goals: Learn secrets, practice blackmail, (or, when you can't) gossip

RP hints: You're not well-educated, and you're not subtle. On the whole, people tend to think of you as furniture, which is advantageous – the divan has ears.

Latest rumors:

- Shakespeare was poisoned.
- Demetrius has been unusual lately, and may be showing the signs of a nervous breakdown.
- Macbeth and Lady Macbeth no longer sleep in the same bed.
- Romeo is seeing Helena on the side; Juliet doesn't know.
- Hippolyta's marriage to Theseus is a farce. She's actually in love with a fairy named Goodfellow.
- Someone has brought a weapon to the wille, in defiance of the law. If they are found out, they will be disinherited.
- Shakespeare had been working on a new tragedy, worth more than the whole rest of the folio combined.

Alan Schwartz

## **LYSANDER, A YOUNG MAN OF ATHENS**

Actually Oberon, King of the Fairies  
*“Ill met by moonlight”*

To all outward eyes, you are Lysander, the beloved husband of Hermia, and a generally good guy. In fact, you are Oberon, the King of the Fairies, to whom all other male fairies owe their allegiance. You kidnapped Lysander and took on his appearance when you sensed Shakespeare’s death.

You have little interest in the will, but hope to once again look on the face of Hippolyta, the Duchess of Athens, with whom you have always been in love (much to the chagrin of your wife, Queen Titania). However, as King of the Fairies, you feel some responsibility for the happiness of mortal men, and generally do your best to see that all turns out well in the end – that each man finds a love and is married before the end of the day. If you can match Duke Theseus with another woman, and give Hermia to another man, so much the better.

Goals: Find each man a wife, leaving Hippolyta free to find you.

RP Hint: As Lysander, you are unprepossessing, and a general good fellow, if a bit of a stuffed shirt.

## **HERMIA, A YOUNG WOMAN OF ATHENS**

Actually Titania, Queen of the Fairies  
*“Come, now a roundel and a fairy song”*

To all outward eyes, you are Hermia, the beloved wife of Lysander, and a generally fine woman. In fact, you are Titania, the Queen of the Fairies, to whom all other female fairies owe their allegiance. You kidnapped Hermia and took on her appearance when you sensed Shakespeare’s death.

You have little interest in the will, but hope to once again look on the face of Theseus, the Duke of Athens, with whom you have always been in love (much to the chagrin of your husband, King Oberon). However, as Queen of the Fairies, you feel some responsibility for the happiness of mortal women, and generally do your best to see that all turns out well in the end – that each woman finds a love and is married before the end of the day. If you can match Duchess Hippolyta with another man, and give Lysander to another woman, so much the better.

Goals: Find each woman a husband, leaving Theseus free to find you.

RP Hint: As Hermia, you are unprepossessing, and a generally gentle soul, although a bit reckless.

## **TYBALT CAPULET, A SWORDSMAN OF VERONA**

*“He is the courageous captain of compliments. He fights as you sing prick-song, keeps time, distance, and proportion; rests me his minim rest, one, two, and the third in your bosom”*

You are the Prince of Cats, the pre-eminent swordsman in all of Shakespeare’s work, and yet – how are you remembered? Killed by Romeo! As if that pipsqueak could lay his blade on you. Shakespeare invented that duel as he invented nearly everything in that preposterous story - except perhaps your exquisite temper and your love of revenge!

The only thing worse than dying erroneously is finding that as a literary character, you really are immortal, and get to see your plight illustrated by theatre companies and high schools over and over again. You hate Shakespeare for that, and you expected to get some payback. Visiting him late one night, you took him napping and slipped your rapier neatly between his ribs. It was only after withdrawing it that you noticed that his body was already cold; someone got there before you. And you couldn’t find his will.

Of course, you’ve told no one, not even your new secret lover, Lady Macbeth. And neither of you are anxious to advertise your tryst, as Duke Theseus is in charge of reading the will, and is a stickler for marital fidelity.

No matter, you’ve come prepared with a fake will that you’ll try to swap with the real one. Your version names you as the inheritor of the tragedies, the most lucrative portion of Shakespeare’s folio. You’ve ceded the comedies to your paramour Lady Macbeth (she could use a laugh), and you’ve chosen Theseus for the histories and your cousin Juliet to receive the sonnets.

Goals: Inherit the rights to Will’s plays, consider finding a way to discredit or dispose of Macbeth

RP Hint: You are unfailingly arrogant, usually in a gracious way. If angered, however, you have a fiery temper and do not hesitate to challenge your victim to a duel. Of course, weapons are forbidden at this event, but you’ve managed to smuggle in an epee nonetheless, and if an

*Much Ado About Something*

insult is important enough, you'll give up your right to participate in the will in order to avenge it (use your special power card in this event).

*Alan Schwartz*

Last Wille and Testament

I, William Shakespeare, fit in mind and body, do hereby bequeath the title and future revenues of my folio of work as follows:

The Sonnets, consisting of 154 poems, to

The Histories, consisting of 17 plays, to

The Comedies, consisting of 17 plays, to

The Tragedies, consisting of 10 plays, to

## **ROSALINE, A YOUNG WOMAN OF VERONA**

*“I conjure thee by Rosaline's bright eyes,  
By her high forehead and her scarlet lip,  
By her fine foot, straight leg and quivering thigh  
And the demesnes that there adjacent lie...”*

You're a bombshell, and naturally Romeo was smitten with you. No man can resist your charms (and you're pretty free with them). How that cow Juliet managed to woo away one of the most eligible bachelors in Verona is beyond you, but you haven't forgotten – or forgiven – and now's your chance to square things.

Drawn by the invitation, you've brought along a fake will that only inherits you and Romeo, and only if you agree to marry. Romeo's such a gold digger that you're assured of winning him in the end, as long as you can switch the real will for the fake one.

While you're at it, you might as well try to pin Shakespeare's murder on Juliet. She knows all about poisons and daggers and such after all, and if she's out of the picture, Romeo will have another reason to return to you.

Goals: Get Romeo to fall in love with you again, marry him, switch the wills, frame Juliet.

RP Hint: Think Jayne Mansfield or Marilyn Monroe.

*Alan Schwartz*

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## **VERULA, A WEIRD SISTER**

*“Fair is foul, and foul is fair / Hover through the fog and filthy air.”*

Ye come from ye sisters three,  
Here to hear and here to see  
Gifted with true second sight  
For to put the wrongs aright  
(But also with a slipp’ry tongue  
For to put the rights awrong)

For Shakespeare ye’ve no love or hate  
Ye stand apart from mortal fate  
To ye is given prophetic truth  
And spirit guidance to speak sooth  
For who a witch’s mind can know,  
Except they who dwell in earth below?

To prophesy ye need no tools,  
Nor to sicken mortal fools,  
But to summon spirits of the dead,  
Take ye a hair from fairy’s head,  
A prince’s shirt, a lady’s shoe,  
A secret told to none but you  
Stir the pot with iron blade,  
And the potion true is made.

RP Hint: You are really weird, both in speech and motivations. Speak in rhymed couplets when possible. Cackle. Hint at hidden knowledge. Play Verula over-the-top. Check in with the GM at least every hour or so to see if you’ve received any prophecies of note.

Special abilities:

- Nauseate: You can make anyone throw up by pulling something vile out of your clothes. Show them your card to make this happen. It only works on a single victim.

*Alan Schwartz*

- Invulnerable: You can not be killed.
- Second sight: Even if someone or something says it's invisible or hidden, you can see it.

## **FRIAR LAURENCE, A FRANCISCAN FRIAR OF VERONA**

*“O, mickle is the powerful grace that lies  
In herbs, plants, stones, and their true qualities”*

You can't help but regret what happened to young Romeo and dear Juliet. Although you tried your best to help them, you have always felt guilty about their untimely demise. If only you had foreseen what would happen! You spent the rest of your life developing your faculties of observation and deduction, the better to avoid future mistakes in counseling young couples – and you expected to take your guilt with you to your own grave.

As it turns out, however, literary characters really *are* immortal. To your immense relief, Romeo and Juliet live on, along with the several other characters from Will's plays who are invited to this reading of the will.

Characters are immortal, but their writer was not. And from what you've heard and deduced, Shakespeare's death was anything but natural. You've come to the reading because you have reason to believe that one of the other characters – or maybe more than one – was responsible for Shakespeare's tragic end. You hope to learn who. Once you discover him, her, or them, and learn their motives, you can decide what to do. If it was Romeo or Juliet, you're inclined to protect them in order to make amends. If it's anyone else, you're not sure what you'll do – it'll depend on why they did it. You might turn them over to the Duke or the Duchess; then again, you might offer them absolution (as long as they promise not to do it again.)

Goals: Learn who killed Shakespeare; try to do something nice for Romeo and Juliet

Special abilities:

- Identify: You can identify the true nature and qualities of any liquid, plant, or stone. Ask a GM.

*Alan Schwartz*

- Deduction: You can tell a GM a conclusion you've drawn from a set of facts you've discovered and the GM will tell you if the conclusion is correct or not. You can do this once per hour.

RP Hint: If it were Arthur Conan Doyle's funeral, you'd be Sherlock Holmes. Offer your services as an educated friar to anyone who seems to need help reading, writing, or drawing useful conclusions, and offer your blessings to anyone who seems to need them as well.

## **MUSTARDSEED, A FAIRY**

*“If we spirits have offended...”*

You are Mustardseed, a fairy in the employ of Queen Titania, often serving as one of her handmaidens. Today, however, you're on your own, and have joined the funeral to see what kind of mischief you can sow. Imagine your surprise when you discovered that Titania herself was already in attendance! She's disguised as Hermia, a young Athenian woman, but you recognized her, of course.

You're not in disguise, so she'll know that you're there (as will everyone else, which might be interesting for the mortals). And you owe her your loyalty, so if she asks you to do anything, you'll have to comply. On the other hand, that doesn't mean you can't give away her disguise if she doesn't order you not to.

But meanwhile, you've got your own ideas in mind. You've always had a bit of a soft spot for male mortals, and you wouldn't mind seeing if you could get any of them to agree to meet you in the woods tomorrow night. You're well versed in disappearing with small objects and moving them elsewhere. And wouldn't it be funny if you could get Theseus to read a fake will, one that lists you and other fairies as the inheritors of Shakespeare's plays?

Goals: Be fairylike, cause trouble, get your will read, obey Titania

Special abilities (see your cards):

- Distraction
- Invisibility
- Invulnerable

*Alan Schwartz*

Last Wille and Testament

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## **SIMON CATLING, A MUSICIAN**

*“What a pestilent knave is this same!”*

In *Romeo and Juliet*, you are mentioned once by name, but are otherwise simply “1 Musician”, and you’re content with that. As a musician, you can get away with saying most anything if it’s couched as a song. You take advantage of this to tease, cajole, taunt, or insult pretty much everyone. (To be fair, you also praise noble acts now and then.)

You have a great deal of information about the others here; musicians gossip a lot. You wouldn’t reveal any of this on demand, of course, but you’ll probably let a lot slip musically.

**Romeo:** Thinks he’s god’s gift to women, but is incredibly fickle and easy rocked by circumstances. He’s probably looking to fall in love.

**Juliet:** Mad at Romeo for some reason, and also at Serafina. You’ve heard she’s a picky eater.

**Serafina:** Juliet’s nurse, and not very bright. A busybody, always in everyone’s business. Actually, you might be able to pick up some useful gossip from her.

**Tybalt:** The Prince of Cats, the greatest swordsman here, and the one with the foulest temper. Incredibly arrogant and unfortunately quite capable of backing it up. If you insult him, do it carefully.

**Rosaline:** Some woman Romeo threw over for Juliet, and probably sensitive about it.

**Friar Laurence:** A monk who tried to help Romeo and Juliet, and didn’t do such a good job about it. You have a soft spot for him, though, and don’t tease him. You prefer to sing his praises, especially over those who would find it a slight to be compared to a simple friar.

**Theseus:** A stuffed shirt, tediously focused on the law. He’s said to have a roving eye although in public he extols the virtues of faithfulness in marriage. Specifically, he’s believed to be in love with Titania, the Queen of the Fairies (who isn’t invited). Physically, he’s a wuss.

**Hippolyta:** Former Queen of the Amazons, now Theseus’s wife, and probably too much woman for him. She supposedly suspects him of infidelity, and doesn’t think much of men in general. She’s a snob.

*Alan Schwartz*

**Helena:** You don't know much about her, except that she's a pushover, and in love with **Demetrius:** Again, you don't know much. He's supposed to be in love with Helena, although you know he once loved Hermia. Rumor has it that Theseus found those three and Lysander all in the nude together once.

**Lysander** and **Hermia:** Another pretty ordinary couple other than those rumors. They're pretty highly regarded by Theseus and Hippolyta.

**Lady Macbeth:** Probably insane, or else a stone-cold killer. She's the woman behind Macbeth, and probably responsible for everything he did. You've heard she's cast her eyes on Tybalt Capulet – that would be a dangerous pair to cross.

**Macbeth:** Still harbors fantasies of being King of Scotland. He's said to hear voices, and to dote on his wife. He may be gathering an army to retake Scotland.

**Verula:** One of three weird sisters, witches who are said to have advised Macbeth and led to both his rise and fall. Supposedly she has otherworldly sight – she definitely has an otherworldly smell.

Goals: Have fun, make fun. Try not to get killed in a duel, though.

RP Hint: Start out with rather subtle japes and pieces of information. As the night goes on, you can get freer with anything that hasn't already been discovered.

## MAKING SHAKESPEREAN INSULTS

Just choose one word each from columns A, B, and C, and put them together!

A	B	C
artless	base-court	apple-john
bawdy	bat-fowling	baggage
beslubbering	beef-witted	barnacle
bootless	beetle-headed	bladder
churlish	boil-brained	boar-pig
cockered	clapper-clawed	bugbear
clouted	clay-brained	bum-bailey
craven	common-kissing	canker-blossom
currish	crook-pated	clack-dish
dankish	dismal-dreaming	clotpole
dissembling	dizzy-eyed	coxcomb
droning	doghearted	codpiece
errant	dread-bolted	death-token
fawning	earth-vexing	dewberry
fobbing	elf-skinned	flap-dragon
froward	fat-kidneyed	flax-wench
frothy	fen-sucked	flirt-gill
gleeking	flap-mouthed	foot-licker
goatish	fly-bitten	fustilarian
gorbellied	folly-fallen	giglet
impertinent	fool-born	gudgeon
infectious	full-gorged	haggard
jarring	guts-gripping	harpy
loggerheadedlumpish	half-faced	hedge-pig
mammering	hasty-witted	horn-beast
mangled	hedge-born	hugger-mugger
mewling	hell-hated	joithead
paunchy	idle-headed	lewdster
pribbling	ill-breeding	lout

Alan Schwartz

puking puny qualling rank reeky roguish ruttish saucy spleeny spongy surlly tottering unmuzzled vain venomed villainous warped wayward weedy yeasty cullionly fusty caluminous wimpled burly-boned misbegotten odiferous poisonous fishified Wart-necked	ill-nurtured knotty-pated milk-livered motley-minded onion-eyed plume-plucked pottle-deep pox-marked reeling-ripe rough-hewn rude-growing rump-fed shard-borne sheep-biting spur-galled swag-bellied tardy-gaited tickle-brained toad-spotted unchin-snouted weather-bitten whoreson malmsey-nosed rampallian lily-livered scurvy-valiant brazen-faced unwash'd bunch-back'd leaden-footed muddy-mettled pigeon-liver'd scale-sided	maggot-pie malt-worm mammet measle minnow miscreant moldwarp mumble-news nut-hook pigeon-egg pignut puttock pumpion ratsbane scut skainsmate strumpet varlot vassal whey-face wagtail knave blind-worm popinjay scullian jolt-head malcontent devil-monk toad rascal Basket-Cockle
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## **DIRECTOR NOTES**

### **A quick synopsis of stuff that happened before our game starts:**

Will Shakespeare wrote a new play, a Mid-Autumn Morning's Reverie. This spectacularly bad comedy casts Theseus as a philanderer, Hippolyta as a doting fool, and lots of other characters as swingers.

Juliet wants to kill Shakespeare for leaving her immortal (and pregnant). She takes what she thinks is poison (but is really just a sleeping draught) and administers it in his wine. He goes unconscious and she leaves, satisfied that he's dead.

Hippolyta wants to kill Shakespeare for putting her together with Theseus. She visits him, reads the new play, and really wants him dead. He's just groggily waking up from Juliet's draught when she poisons him, forcing the wine down his throat with *her* poison, which really works. Shakespeare dies. Hippolyta forgets to take the new play with her when she flees the scene.

Puck visits Shakespeare, finds him dead and takes the new play, figuring it'll be good for some mischief one day.

Tybalt visits Shakespeare, angry at being remembered as Romeo's victim, and stabs him through the heart. He then discovers Shakespeare was already dead, and goes looking for his will, but doesn't find it. He leaves.

Hippolyta returns, to look for the new play, but can't find it anymore. She knows someone must have taken it. She leaves.

And so the scene is set.

Alan Schwartz

**Key props:**

First, name tags are useful. Next, ensure a goodly supply of mead, ale, or mulled wine.

There are few required props beyond the special cards and some papers that are included with each character, such as the wills (see below) and the new play. When run in 2004, we also set up Shakespeare's body, lying in state (which makes a nice place to do the memorial service), and Shakespeare's writing desk, on which we put a journal with a single entry, reading "The play's the thing – W.S." Some of the special cards could be replaced or augmented by props (the epee, the poison, the love spell). The invisibility special card was mounted in a clip-on name badge that could be worn when Mustardseed was invisible and removed when she wasn't.

If Juliet administers the poison to another character, they should roleplay their death (dramatically of course), and then, 10 minutes later, roleplay their re-awakening (even more dramatically).

The special cards are formatted to print on 3"x5" index cards (in landscape orientation), and should be distributed as follows:

Juliet	Vomit (or maybe best if she roleplays this without the card?) Poison
Demetrius	Love spell (x2) Escape Persuasion Invulnerable
Tybalt	Epee
Verula	Nauseate Second Sight Invulnerable
Hermia	Counterspell Invulnerable
Lysander	Counterspell Invulnerable
Mustardseed	Distraction Invisible

	Invulnerable
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**The wills:**

There are up to five wills in play. Each character sheet includes their will, but is left blank so that the GM can fill in the names where applicable so that they'll all appear (partly) handwritten. Here's the list of wills and how to fill them out:

Who's got it	What it should say
Theseus (this is the real will)	Who gets what is totally up to you. In our run, we gave stuff to Titania, Helena, Serafina, Rosalyne, and the new play to Verula. But you can come up with your own ideas of who Shakespeare would have favored.
Romeo	Comedies: Juliet Tragedies: Romeo The sonnets and histories should be left blank, for Romeo to fill out as he decides
Tybalt	Sonnets: Juliet Histories: Theseus Comedies: Lady Macbeth Tragedies: Tybalt
Rosalyne	Sonnets: Romeo and Rosalyne Histories: Romeo and Rosalyne Comedies: Romeo and Rosalyne Tragedies: Romeo and Rosalyne (and write in, at the bottom, "on the condition that they should marry; otherwise, my works are to be destroyed.")
Mustardseed	Sonnets: Mustardseed Histories: Puck Comedies: Oberon Tragedies: Titania

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### Timeline Overview

Game start (G)	Guests arrive, meet & greet
G+0:30	Helena's memorial service
G+0:45	Wake begins
G+1:15	Reading of introductory letter by Theseus
G+2:45	Reading of the Wille, which will probably lead to arguments over which will, and the revelation of the new play, if it hasn't been found.
G+3:00	Wrap-up, guess who did it.

### Marriage

If any characters want to marry, Friar Laurence can perform the ceremony. If you like, Theseus can do so as well. You can decide if you want to allow marriages to be annulled by the Friar or dissolved by Theseus.

### Speaking with the Dead

Macbeth thinks he hears ghosts, but he doesn't – it's all in his mind. If he asks to speak to Shakespeare or another corpse (or someone he *thinks* is dead, like someone knocked out by Juliet's poison card), just make up things to answer him that will confirm anything he already believes.

Verula, on the other hand, can actually channel the spirits of the dead. She needs to combine the ingredients of her potion (a fairy's hair, a prince's shirt – Theseus, Macbeth, or Tybalt qualify, a lady's shoe – this must be from a mortal) in a pot, whisper a secret to it that only she knows, and stir it with an iron blade. Then she puts half the potion in the corpse's mouth and drinks half herself and the spirit can speak through her and answer three questions (cryptically, of course). Note that Shakespeare's last memory will be of Juliet, not Hippolyta or Tybalt.

**What to send**

Every character should receive:

- The invitation
- The synopsis of relevant plays
- Their character sheet
- Any associated papers (wills, plays, etc.)
- Their special cards

The “Making Shakespearean Insults” sheets can either be sent to Simon Catling alone or to everyone.

**Character and casting notes**

There are 4-6 male and 4-8 female parts. Cast roughly in order:

Romeo	An easy and fun character to play, good for a new player. Other characters will tend to drag Romeo around into all kinds of trouble.
Juliet	Relatively easy character for a beginner. She thinks she’s killed Will, but hasn’t, and she’s got a job to do (killing Serafina). If you get her pregnancy revealed, it may help implicate her.
Theseus	Theseus is the “MC” of the wake – he calls people together, reads letters and wills. Give this character to an experienced player, along with a copy of the time schedule, and ask him to help you keep to it. Or, if you’re intending to play along as an in-character GM, consider playing Theseus.
Hippolyta	She’s the killer, but she’s also relatively easy to play, and suitable for any level.
Helena	Because she’s responsible for running the memorial service, give this to a player who you can trust to get the others together, say some pretty words, and encourage them to speak.
Demetrius	Demetrius (Puck) has easy goals – make trouble – but some responsibility for handling his many

	powers and the new play reasonably. Anyone but a powergamer should be fine, but avoid a true beginner, who may not be willing to cause enough trouble.
Macbeth	A wacko, with fairly hard goals. Cast someone who likes a challenge.
Lady Macbeth	A great role for someone who likes to act bitter. Better for an experienced player.
Tybalt	Experienced is better, as Tybalt faces some difficult gambles.
Serafina	A good character for an beginner – lots of knowledge, a chance to use it, and likely to get apparently killed
Lysander	Ideally, you want an experienced and outgoing player, because fulfilling Oberon’s goals requires a lot of social maneuvering, but a novice can have fun with this one too.
Hermia	See Lysander – the same applies. If you have a pair of players who are a couple in real life and can be trusted not to tell each other about their roles, it can be fun to cast them as Lysander/Hermia
Rosalyne	Ok for a beginner.
Verula	Best for a player who just likes to be expressive, rather than to actively solve things. She is a major asset to the other players, but only if they can figure out how to interact with her. Can be given to a player who you think might not show up.
Friar Laurence	Ideal for a beginner. In fact, this character was written for our game specifically for the 14-year-old son of an experienced couple who had never played. Fun things to do and no real “adult” situations. Can also be given to a player who you think won’t show up.
Mustardseed	In our game, this role was played by the GM’s wife, who was mostly in the know, so it worked as a kind of NPC or staff character. Could very easily be given to any player, however, who doesn’t want a lot of

	plot-critical goals (or a player who you think might fail to show up).
Simon Catling	An extra role for color, ideally for someone who actually plays a musical instrument (guitar, in our game). No real plot goals, just hang around, trade gossip, and sing insulting songs! A collection of songs for this game, written by Philip Bertulfo, are included in another file, or your musician can write their own.

### **War of Words**

If a player challenges another to a duel, it's fought as a "war of words" (unless Tybalt decides to use his epee, which is dealt with in the epee card). The winner of the war should be allowed to demand the loser to answer any question truthfully, or to knock the loser unconscious for a short period (and, if the winner comes up with the idea, to ransack the loser's body, and take or plant or exchange an object).

You can pick any theatersports game for the contest. In generally, the challenger should begin. Here are some we had on hand:

#### *Only Questions*

A scene is played by the combatants, alternating lines, in which every sentence must be a question. First to fail to use a question or to hesitate too long loses.

#### *Verses*

Players exchange rhyming taunts (e.g. couplets). Each exchange is scored in favor of one player or another, and the one with the most points after three exchanges wins.

#### *Rhymes*

Challenger issues a one-sentence taunt to defender, defender responds with a counter-taunt or defense that rhymes with the challenger's taunt. Then roles reverse. First player to fail to complete a rhyme that can be completed by the other (this presents people from ending line with "orange") loses.

#### *Alphabet*

This exchanges consists of 26 lines of taunting. The first line starts with a given letter (say 'R'). The reply to that line must start with a 'S', and

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so on, until the whole alphabet has been covered. After 'Z' comes 'A'.  
Players that hesitate, or use the wrong letter lose.

*Declaim*

Each player must declaim a sonnet. Best version wins. You can find  
random Shakespearean sonnets on the web or in a book of sonnets.

## **SONGS FOR SIMON CATLING**

The collection of songs that follow (including lyrics and chords for  
guitar) can be used effectively by Simon Catling. They were written by  
Philip Bertulfo, and may be freely used in conjunction with the Much  
Ado About Something game.

*Much Ado About Something*

**Romeo**

C  
O Romeo, Romeo!  
F C  
wherefore art thou Romeo?  
G F  
Are you praying for dear shakespeare's  
C  
soul up above?  
C  
Or did some poor little fool  
F C  
bat some eyelashes at you  
G F  
causing your heart to melt  
C  
like you've found a new love?  
G  
o romeooooooooo  
C  
not everyone likes you  
G  
o romeooooooooo  
C  
some downright despise you  
F C  
I warn everyone here  
F C  
to mind what they say  
F C  
if you compliment him  
F C  
he might go all the way.  
F C  
So I'd think that I'm quite  
F C  
at liberty to say:

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G  
Romeooooo  
          C  
is a male haaaarlot!

*Much Ado About Something*

**Juliet**

Am E7 Am  
Juliet what's the matter?  
Dm C G  
You must be angry with someone  
Em E F Dm G  
Is it Ro me o dear frieeeeeeend?  
C Am  
Are you lonely tonight?  
Dm G  
Is your love-life alright?  
Am F  
Are you no longer friends with that Serafina?  
Dm G  
I hear she's not that bright!  
C Am  
You look tired, worn, and wilted  
Dm G  
like a lover not star-crossed but jilted  
Am F  
And the way you've been looking at Romeo  
Dm G  
I'd think that you'd like to have killed him  
C F G  
You should have been as picky with your friends  
C F G  
as you've been with our arsenal of edible  
accoutrements  
F G  
because it's cleeeeeeeeeeeeeear  
C  
that you screwed up!

*Alan Schwartz*

### **Serafina**

F C G F  
If anyone doesn't want to keep a secret  
G C  
look for Serafina  
F C G F  
If anybody wants to have their doors blown wide open  
G C  
ask for Serafina  
F C G  
If anyone here is the beef-witted type  
F C G  
then look for the girl whom we know's not that bright  
F C G  
But I get sick to my stomach and annoyed at her sight  
F C G  
so I'll keep clear  
C  
of Serafina

*Much Ado About Something*

**Tybalt**

Am  
tybalt, tybalt, tybaaaaaaaaaaaaaaaaaalt  
E  
why must you be so aaaaaaaaaaaaaangry?  
Dm  
you might wake the babies  
Am E  
if you haven't already killed them, my friend.  
F  
all of us here know....  
C  
who not to cross!  
F  
as far as swordsmen go  
C  
he comes out on top!  
G F  
he'd rather beat you down  
C  
than sit and talk  
G  
he's quite accomplished  
F C  
with his fisticuffs!  
G  
so we should never ever  
F Am  
ever ever ever ever  
F G  
ever ever ever ever  
F C  
ever piss him off!

*Alan Schwartz*

### **Rosaline**

start with D, Em A

D  
o Rosaline!  
Em A D  
no, Romeo doesn't like you!  
Em A D  
and I can't really blame him  
Em A Bm  
'cause you are passed your prime  
F# Bm  
o-oh, Girl, what were you thinking  
F#  
coming here dressed like that?  
Bm F#  
Did you think that you would find another man?  
A F#  
because if you diiiiiiiiid  
Bm Em F# Bm  
I'd be surprised

*Much Ado About Something*

**Friar Laurence**

C  
Is there anybody better  
G  
than Friar Laurence?  
C  
Is there anybody purer  
G  
than Friar Laurence?  
Am Em  
If anybody has a candidate  
Am Em  
Let old Simon Catling know post haste  
F  
Because I doubt  
G  
anyone in this room  
C A# Am G F G  
could help another fellow human out  
C G C G  
like Friar Laurence (spoken: He's a good man,  
and if you say you don't like him  
I'm sure what you really mean is:  
You don't like yrself.  
Sure he's made some mistakes in his life  
but who among us haven't?  
and at least he made them while trying to help others.  
Ever think of that you pompous brats?  
hmmm?)  
F  
Because I doubt  
G  
anyone in this room  
C A# Am G F G  
could help another fellow human out  
C  
like Friar Laurence.



*Much Ado About Something*

what he's called?  
C  
he's an asshole!  
(repeat if necessary)

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### **Lady Macbeth**

F                    C  
It appears to me that  
G  
Lady MacBeth  
F                    C  
Would like a name change  
                  G  
to Lady Capulet  
  
I fear for us all  
  
I fear for us all  
Am  
    we all know  
E  
    what she did  
F  
    to that poor  
C  
    old MacBeth  
Am  
    just think what  
E  
    she could make  
          F C A# F G  
old Tybalt do to you  
                                  C  
I don't even want to think about it!

*Much Ado About Something*

**Midsummer Freaks**

C C/B Am Am/G  
North, South, East, West  
C C/B Am Am/G  
Helena, Demetrius  
G  
ride on  
C C/B Am Am/G  
hen, rooster, goose, gander  
C C/B Am Am/G  
Hermia, Lysander  
G  
ride on  
Am  
ride on!  
F C F C F C G  
you're all in a big, disgusting mess!  
F C F C F C  
G  
can't you keep your stories straight at least in front  
of us! 'cause it's  
C C/B Am Am/G  
North, rooster, East, Gander  
C C/B Am Am/G  
Helena, Lysander  
G  
what's going on?  
C C/B Am Am/G  
hen, South, goose, West  
C C/B Am Am/G  
Hermia, Demetrius  
G  
what's going on?  
Am  
what's going on?  
F G C F C  
what the hell is going on?

*Alan Schwartz*

### **MacBeth**

Am  
I see you speaking  
E  
to poor old MacBeth  
E7  
That crazy old loon here  
Am  
beside you.  
F  
He might be listening to  
C  
voices in his head  
G  
and not necessarily  
Am  
to you  
A#  
but if you are sure that you've got his attention  
Am  
don't you get drafted in his twisted little army  
A#  
or the voices in the head of MacBeth  
Am E E7 Am F C G Am  
will get the MacBest of you

*Much Ado About Something*

**Verula**

C            G                    F            C  
I didn't write an insulting song about Verula  
C            G                    F            C  
I think it's time that others started to treat her  
well  
          C                    G                    F  
C  
But if someone wanted to write an insulting song about  
Verula  
          C                    G                    F            G            C  
A good place to start would be her incredibly awful  
smell



### Vomit

The person who shows you this card has just vomited. React accordingly.

This card is to be kept by its owner.



### Poison

If you are given this card, your drink has been poisoned. You may or may not know who was responsible.

Please see the GM and bring this card.



### Love spell

The owner of this card must touch your face to use it and then show you the card. You should bring the card to the GM.

You get a strange euphoric feeling and you will fall hopelessly in love with the next character of the other gender that you meet, as if by magic.

Love spell



The owner of this card must touch your face to use it and then show you the card. You should bring the card to the GM.

You get a strange euphoric feeling and you will fall hopelessly in love with the next character of the other gender that you meet, as if by magic.

Epee



This card represents an epee.

If drawn in public, the drawer loses all rights to Shakespeare's plays. If also used to attack, any unarmed victim will be killed.

Please see a GM before attacking with this card.

Nauseate



As if by magic, you feel nauseous and must throw up. Act accordingly.



### Escape

If captured, show this card to your captor, and you escape as if by magic.

Keep the card.



### Persuasion

As if by magic, you are persuaded to agree with whatever the owner of this card wishes.

The owner keeps this card.



### Counterspell

You can counter any spell cast by witch, fairy, sorcerer, or other user of magic. Show this card to counter the spell. You may counter both old spells and newly cast spells. Spells are cards that say “as if by magic”. You may also counter a counterspell, which restores the original spell. If you counter a counterspell, give this card back to the GM; otherwise, keep this card.

Counterspell



You can counter any spell cast by witch, fairy, sorcerer, or other user of magic. Show this card to counter the spell. You may counter both old spells and newly cast spells. Spells are cards that say “as if by magic”.

You may also counter a counterspell, which restores the original spell. If you counter a counterspell, give this card back to the GM; otherwise, keep this card.

Invulnerable



You can not be killed. If something would result in your death, show this card.

Invulnerable



You can not be killed. If something would result in your death, show this card.



**Invulnerable**

You can not be killed. If something would result in your death, show this card.



**Invulnerable**

You can not be killed. If something would result in your death, show this card.



**Distraction**

If you are shown this card, you are distracted by a strange noise, light, or scent, and lose track of whatever you were doing or talking about.



**Invulnerable**

You can not be killed. If something would result in your death, show this card.



**Invisible**

*You can't see this being, and you can't see anything she's holding either, as if by magic.*



**Second sight**

You can see things that are hidden or invisible. This overrides any other card.

*Alan Schwartz*

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# **Journal of Interactive Drama**

**A Multi-Discipline Peer-Reviewed Journal of  
Scenario-Based Theatre-Style Interactive Drama  
Freeform Live Action Roleplaying Games**

## **Call for Papers**

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The *Journal of Interactive Drama* is an online peer-reviewed journal on scenario-based interactive drama freeform live action roleplaying games which provides a forum for serious discussion of live roleplaying game theory, design, and practice. The journal is published regularly. The journal provides a forum for the discussion of any of the various scenario-based theatre-style live action roleplaying games, freeforms, and interactive dramas and invites contributions in all areas of literature, theory, design, and practice for educational, entertainment, and recreational roleplay. Formal and informal essays, articles, papers, and critical reviews are also welcome.

This is a peer-reviewed journal that may include formal papers and informal essays for and by the roleplaying community from a wide variety of disciplines. The focus is general enough so that authors should feel comfortable submitting material of either a formal or informal nature, albeit all submissions are peer-reviewed and should be appropriate to a serious and thoughtful discussion of that type -- we encourage articles, essays, and formal papers on all manner of live roleplaying, freeform, and interactive drama-related topics. Discussions of related ludology, techniques, and good solid critical book and roleplay scenario or event reviews are quite welcome as well. As this is a multi-disciplinary journal, material related to a wide range of scenario-based learning, social psychology, critical theory, performance studies, popular culture, design, and

more as they intersect with the interactive drama are also welcome. Pure design pieces related to scenario construction and review are also encouraged. Each issue will showcase one to three longform or four to six shortform interactive drama freeform live action roleplaying scenarios; creative scenario submissions of this type are very sought after. Scenarios for submission should include a section of self-reflective critical thought and formal designer's notes that discuss issues related to the creation of the piece as well as a formal section which reviews the author's performance experiences with the scenario.

As an international journal, the language of publication is English. Submissions are accepted throughout the year.

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## **Journal of Interactive Drama**

### **A Multi-Discipline Peer-Reviewed Journal of Scenario-Based Theatre-Style Interactive Drama Freeform Live Action Roleplaying Games**

#### **Notes for Contributors**

The *Journal of Interactive Drama* is a peer-reviewed journal which publishes one volume per year in an ongoing rollout schedule based upon acceptable submissions. Both *Microsoft Word* (6.0 or above) and txt files are acceptable. Once received, manuscripts will be sent to reviewers immediately.

1. Manuscripts submitted to *Journal of Interactive Drama* should follow the style sheet of the current *MLA Handbook* as appropriate. Scenario submissions may use informal formatting conventions as long as they stay within the guidelines here.
2. If your submission has notes, please use footnotes, not endnotes.
3. The font used is *Times New Roman* (11pt) – creative pieces, such as scenarios, may use other font sizes but should stay within the same font type. If you use a special font that is non-system, you must include a copy of the font file with your submission. Please do not use columns in your piece.

4. Use a separate sheet to include your name, title, affiliated institution, and contact information (email) as well as a brief author's biography of 150-250 words to be included in the contributor's notes.
5. Include a brief summary or abstract of the submission.
6. If you use illustrations or photographs, you must include all pertinent information as well as statements of permissions and copyrights to demonstrate you have the rights to include the images and that they may be published within the Journal of Interactive Drama under the same online and print rights as the accompanying paper. In the event of rights disputes, the author is responsible and liable for any material included in that author's submission.

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Submissions may be sent by regular mail to:

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Please include hardcopy and disk for regular mail submissions. You may also send submissions in electronic format to Brian David Phillips, Editor, *Journal of Interactive Drama* at [phillips@nccu.edu.tw](mailto:phillips@nccu.edu.tw) via email.

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