

Vasen Road

A freeform scenario by Mikkel Bækgaard

Prelude

Vasen no. 30, Jammerbugt county, near the Limfjord, Denmark.

Zenia is dead, but nobody knows that - maybe she doesn't even really know it herself. She is only 13 years old. The unspeakable has happened out here. Day after day goes by, and nobody intervenes.

She wants help. She screams, but nobody hears her. Nobody except for a retired social worker who for the first time in her life makes contact with that which lies beyond.

We're in the reclaimed land surrounding the fjord. On the vase, as the old dam is called. Out here one can find the cheapest houses in the area, where the properties are filled with car wrecks, broken-down dinghies, and eel traps entangled in orange fishing buoys.

Vasen Road is a realistic ghost story for four players and one Game Master. It plays out in short individual scenes, with the threads connecting each scene being up to the players. The players will play a number of roles inside of, and relating to, a family where the most horrible events have taken place. These occurrences will never actually be described in detail.

Vasen Road is inspired by real-life horrors in Tønder, Mou, Amstetten and other rural locales where unspeakable acts are committed behind closed curtains, far from the attention of the authorities.

Text, idea, characters and layout

Mikkel Bækgaard

Danish proof reading

Line Hvid

Danish text editing

Kristoffer Apollo

English translation

Mikael Andersson

Mikkel Bækgaard

English proof reading and editing

Mikael Andersson

Kristin Firth

James Stuart

Playtesters

Luisa Carbonelli

Morten Hougaard

Nina Runa Essendrop

Tobias Demediuk Bindslæt

Anders Frost Bertelsen

Andreas Lieberoth Wadum

Marie Wolfsberg Oscilowski

Simon Steen Hansen

Foreword

Vasen Road is a special scenario to me. When it premiered on Fastaval 2010 I knew I've made something special writing this scenario. But I was very much in doubt whether it was good or not. Would the special design work and would the players like to play a game so dark, set in a special environment and not being allowed to speak of the horrible events?

Luckily the game worked and became very successful. The players liked it, talked about it and the game got its own life. The Otto Jury awarded the game Best Scenario and Best Story. That I was very happy about.

Now, almost five years later the game is still something people talk about in the roleplaying community. It has been translated to Finnish a couple of years ago and after visiting Dreamation in New Jersey earlier this year Mikael Andersson offered to translate it to English. Being a Swede living in Canada for many, many years he was able to do the job. And he really was. So many, many thanks to him and the rest of the team, who helped making this available in English. You did an amazing job.

From here just wish you good luck on reading and running the game.

Mikkel Bækgaard, October 2014

Table of content

| | |
|----------------------|----|
| Prelude | 2 |
| Introduction | 3 |
| Inhabitants of Vasen | 5 |
| Playing the scenario | 6 |
| Chapter One | 8 |
| Chapter Two | 11 |
| Chapter Three | 14 |
| Chapter Four | 17 |
| Chapter Five | 21 |

Introduction

Vasen Road is a sociorealist ghost story for four players and one Game Master. The scenario unfolds over five chapters and the common threads connecting the chapters are subject to the players' individual interpretation.

Zenia, a 13-year-old girl, has died. She wakes up in a limbo, a state between life and death. Something terrible has happened to her, but she doesn't know what. She feels only pain and angst, and her existence is otherwise filled with nothing but black emptiness. She is now just a restless ghost who needs to know what has happened to her. She wants help. She wants peace.

But no one knows who Zenia is, and the authorities know nothing of her. She does not exist officially, and no one talks about her. She knows she belongs in Vasen, the name of the area in front of the Limfjord in northern Jylland, Denmark. She knows that she is somehow connected to an appliance repairman and his family.

Zenia's death is the common thread linking the scenario's parts together. The questions regarding her identity and what has happened to her are the driving forces in the game - even though these two concerns are never fully answered.

The scenario starts when Britta, the retired social worker and amateur occultist, for the first time in her life makes contact with the spirit world. This encounter frees Zenia's spirit from its bondage, and through her eyes and the scenario's five chapters, players glimpse a hint of the secrets of the appliance repairman's family.

Something is very wrong with the family - even though there only are a few tiny ripples in the family's public façade: 9-year-old Sonny has had conversations with the school psychologist, and his older sister Tenna is sent to a boarding school at age 16. Yet Children's Aid has not realized what is really happening. They know nothing of Zenia and the guests who come to enjoy the repairman's hospitality.

The five chapters

The scenario unfolds in five chapters, in which varying but pre-defined roles take centre stage in each. The scenario is set in February.

Each chapter is composed of a number of relatively well-defined steps, and the scenario has a rather firm structure. Playing *Vasen Road* is not so much about improvising a progressing story. Rather, it is about filling in the many blank spots in the timeline. Players have the freedom to colour the situations that arise along the way, and try to figure out the connections between the many unexplained elements.

The first chapter serves as an introduction to the theme, Zenia, and the family who lives on Vasen. In it, Britta makes contact with Zenia's spirit. At the same time Britta's daughter, Lone, turns in her washing machine for repair by the appliance repairman.

The second chapter introduces the repairman's family, and the first hints of the story's sinister events are revealed. In this chapter, the repairman, along with his wife, Kate, and his son, Sonny, eat dinner together in an uneasy silence. Later, the family gets a visit from a couple bringing pizza, as they always do when they come to visit. The man walks with Jørgen to his workshop, but returns empty-handed. What he used to come there for is no longer available to him.

The third chapter focuses on Sonny and his outlook on life. Sonny is the only one who talks about Zenia. He immerses himself into fairy tales about a princess named Zenia. On a fishing trip, Sonny meets two boys who have heard rumors that Sonny has a sister who is "more than willing". Later on, Sonny meets the 4-year-old Elena, a runaway from a nearby costume party.

In the **fourth chapter**, Jørgen picks up his daughter Tenna at the boarding school to spend the winter break at home. She comes home to Vasen Road and experiences the silence in the house and the routines she's been away from.

The fifth chapter builds on past events and is relatively open-ended. Britta reconnects with Zenia's spirit, but it disappears suddenly. Britta must take action if she wants to prevent further tragedies. The couple from the second chapter returns to the repairman's home. They have heard of Tenna's return home and have once again brought pizza. This time they will not return empty-handed.

The scenario ends with a dead body emerging from the canal.

Theme and mood

Vasen Road is about sexual abuse, about secrecy and fear of touch. It's also about the consequences for those who live with it, and how hard it is to discover and address it.

The unspoken word is a key element in *Vasen Road*. The scenario revolves around the deeds that never gets played out or described, but which are hinted at and thereby inspire the participants' imaginations.

Setting

The scenario takes place in and around an area called Vasen, situated on the flat, reclaimed land by the Limfjord, south of the small town of Brovst in Jammerbugt County in northern Jutland, Denmark. Vasen Road originates at a roundabout just outside Brovst and traverses flat land to the village Torslev on a hill two miles away. The road is straight and lined with scattered houses, a bridge over a canal, and a view of the land extending a few miles out to the Limfjord.

Approximately midway between Brovst and Torlev at Vasen Road 30, next to a dirt road behind some trees, is an old smallholding farmhouse with a gravelled courtyard and a few other ramshackle buildings. A sign marks this as the home of "Vasen Appliance Service", and is where home appliance repairman and husband, Jørgen, lives with his family.

The land now known as Vasen used to be submerged in shallow water, before it was reclaimed by an old dam. Further out, by the fjord, lies a newer dam with a pumping station, and an old observation tower where one can watch the many wading birds. The tower is about six feet tall and ends in a room where the walls are covered with pictures of birds and small poetic observations are written with felt ink pens.

The many channels and streams that lead to the pumping station are treacherous and deep, and their dark waters provide no hints as to what could be hidden in their depths. They are about 10 feet wide, with reeds growing at the edge and a rich fish life. All canals meet near the inlet, which it is said to be the swimming grounds of the Old Zoe Pike.

Two special places: the workshop and the bird tower

Jørgen's workshop and the bird observation tower out near the Limfjord are subject to special rules in this scenario. Zenia's spirit can not enter these two places - something is keeping her out.

You must not play any scenes that take place in Jørgen's workshop. If any characters go in there, cut the scene and resume when they leave.

You are allowed to play out scenes taking place in the bird tower. However, should anyone enter the bird tower, Zenia's spirit must remain outside.

Inhabitants of Vasen

Zenia

It is unclear who Zenia really is. Maybe she's Jørgen's secret daughter, who he's kept hidden all his life. Maybe she's an abductee. Maybe she's a product of Sonny's imagination and a projection of things he or his older sister have been exposed to.

Jørgen, the appliance repairman

Jørgen is a mechanic and salesman of major home appliances who does business out of his home. He moved to Vasen four years ago with his wife, Kate. Tenna is his daughter from a previous relationship and he's since had Sonny with Kate. Jørgen maintains his workshop in an outhouse on the abandoned farm. He doesn't let clients or family members into the workshop - it's his place of solitude and peace. Yet sometimes he invites guests there, especially if they bring pizza.

Kate, the repairman's wife

Jørgen and Kate have been married for 10 years. Kate previously worked as a church organist, but since she moved to Vasen with Jørgen, she's been unemployed. There are no jobs nearby and Jørgen doesn't want her to commute. How much Kate actually knows about what has taken place in her home behind closed curtains is an open question.

Sonny

Jørgen and Kate's son, Sonny, is nine years old. He is a very lonely boy with many problems in school. He spends most of his spare time fishing in the canals, losing himself in day-dreamed stories about Princess Zenia being chased by The Old Pike. Sonny has had a number of conversations with the school psychologist who has advised him to stop talking about Zenia.

Tenna

Tenna is Jørgen's 16-year-old daughter from before he met Kate. Like Sonny, she struggles in school, and with support from the school board was placed in a boarding school to get a change of air. Tenna really wants to spend the winter holidays at school, but doesn't make a fuss when her father picks her up.

Britta

Britta is an early-retired social worker with multiple sclerosis, which makes it impossible for her to find a job. But while Britta's physical competence is lacking, she has another ability: she has always been able to sense the supernatural. When she connects with Zenia's spirit, it is her first opportunity to speak directly with a ghost.

Lone

Britta's daughter, Lone, is a school nurse who often helps her mother. Lone is skeptical of her mother's spiritual abilities.

Bjarne and Bodil

Bjarne and Bodil are two so-called special guests who sometimes visits the repairman. Occasionally they bring pizza.

Simon and Malthe

Two 12-13 year old boys who have heard rumours that Tenna's a horny chick who's more than willing. They've discovered a stack of pornographic magazines belonging to Simon's grandfather, Verner.

Verner

Simon's grandfather, who runs a mink farm out on Vasen. He's often found sitting in an old train car drinking beer. He also visits Jørgen on occasion, and enjoys his company and hospitality.

Elena

A 4-year-old girl who Sonny encounters in a princess costume outside of a gas station. She has run away from a costume party.

Playing the scenario

Vasen Road is a scenario where the experience and interpretation of the players is the driving force. The players perform the story through changing roles and relatively fixed scenes. The point of playing *Vasen Road* is for the players to each experience their own perceptions and interpretations of the story, not to discuss or discover a shared understanding of the plot.

As the Game Master you will create the framework, set the scenes, and ensure the game flows smoothly. When it's necessary to improvise new scenes, you're responsible for taking the lead. Allow the players to relax and give them time to play their actual scenes without having to plan ahead.

Distribution of roles in each chapter

At the beginning of each chapter, players are handed sheets describing the characters featuring in that chapter. Although some roles feature in several chapters, a unique sheet is provided for each chapter. The fifth chapter is an exception, in that players do not get handed new character descriptions. Instead you may play any of the roles that have been introduced, and you'll choose by yourselves who gets to play whom.

Some minor character descriptions are passed out in the middle of a chapter, and a few minor characters do not have a written handout. In these cases you simply tell the player about the role - it doesn't matter that the other players hear your description.

Zenia's role

Zenia's role is special. Her angst is the scenario's driving force, and during the game she starts being able to communicate more and more with the living.

In the first chapter Zenia interacts with the outside world only through her contact with Britta.

In the second chapter Zenia is present in the house at *Vasen Road*, but cannot communicate with anyone. Her player may speak, but none of the characters are able to hear her. Eventually, however, she manages to communicate faintly with Sonny.

In the third chapter, Zenia may communicate with Sonny's subconscious. He thinks it's the princess from his stories that speak to him.

In the fourth chapter Zenia and Sonny is played by the same player, so they can use Sonny as a spokesperson for Zenia's wishes. At the same time Zenia starts to affect the physical world.

No one plays Zenia in the fifth chapter.

Advice and rules to remember

For the scenario to work as well as possible, there are a number of suggestions and rules to be aware of. Review these points with the players before the game begins.

There is no unequivocal truth

No one knows exactly what happened to Zenia. Also, nobody knows exactly what events took place in the repairman's house. The purpose of this scenario is not to reach an objective understanding of what actually took place.

Do not talk about what's going on

To the extent that it is possible, do not talk about what is going on behind the scenes. Let the players have their own ideas. This is also true in the fiction: most scenes should be played without characters discussing their actions.

Zenia is able to say certain things aloud that the other roles cannot. However, since she is a terrified 13-year-old girl, she will probably have her own way of expressing herself.

No secrets - but surprises along the way

The individual character descriptions do not contain secrets that players need to keep hidden. Though, most secrets may remain unspoken and answers may never be discovered. Players should be aware that each scene might reveal secrets and surprises emerging from the course of the game, without necessarily being stated in the character descriptions.

Nobody owns characters

Characters shift between players as the game progresses, and nobody 'owns' any of the roles. A character's outlook on reality can change from one chapter to another. The next player must of course accept what's been going on in the past - but with their own angle on the role.

The scenario takes place only in concrete scenes

The core of Vasen Road consists of the individual scenes. Do not discuss what may have happened in the duration between two scenes. It is often the case that the connection and context between two scenes isn't objectively obvious to everyone, but is subjectively interpreted by each player.

The Game Master frames the scenes and improvises

You, as Game Master, are overwhelmingly responsible for initiating and setting up the individual scenes. Your other primary responsibility is to improvise. Players have freedom to act within the context of the individual scenes you've framed, but the big picture is your responsibility. This doesn't mean that players can't provide good scene ideas, though.

Warmup

Before the game it might be a good idea to do some warm-up exercises. Below are a few exercise suggestions:

- » Let the players jump, shout, and hug each other.
- » Play Pass-On-the-Gift, where you give a fictitious gift to another player who responds aloud "thank you, it's just what I've always wanted". The giving player defines the gift with their body language when they pass it on, while the receiving player verbalizes.
- » Ask the players to tell everyone about a time in their lives when they were really afraid.
- » Players take turns describing parts of a crime scene - what will the police find?
- » Let the players play a couple of friends who meet after a long time apart. Something from their shared past bothers them, but the players don't know what, and they may not state it directly out into the open.
- » Ask the players to talk about a personal experience with an emotion that is considered to be taboo.

Chapter

One

Overview

Zenia awakes terrified, stuck in the darkness between life and death. She can hear someone calling for her.

Britta, an early retiree, is making preparations to contact the spirit world. She is about to initiate true contact for the first time in her life.

Meanwhile, her daughter, Lone, is dropping her washing machine off for repair at the “Vasen Appliance Service” locales. While they’re there, Sonny wants to play with Lone’s son, Karl.

When Lone later goes to visit Britta, she finds her mother in a delirious state, and Zenia’s spirit breaks loose.

Zenia’s role

Zenia’s player has a clear task in chapter one: she should present herself as the scenario’s main conflict, and direct Britta’s attention to the appliance repairman and his family.

The chapter begins with a prologue in which Zenia talks about how scared she is. When the chapter begins in earnest, Zenia can only communicate with Britta through Britta’s ouija board. This means in practice that Zenia can only express herself in short, simple words and short sentences. After Zenia’s spirit breaks loose, she is no longer able to control the glass on the ouija board, but can instead affect the house’s interior in small ways. For example, she might draw on a foggy window or make things fall down in the kitchen.

Role distribution

Player 1: Zenia, Karl (no role sheet)

Player 2: Lone

Player 3: Britta

Player 4: Jørgen, Sonny

Scenes in chapter one

Description of Vasen, Sonny's fishing, Zenia is afraid

Start the scenario with a description of Vasen and the reclaimed land. Talk about the flat fields, about Vasen, and the river channels. Talk about the dam, the pumping station and the bird tower. Close to the bird tower we meet Sonny, fishing in the deep channel alongside of it. Let Sonny's player describe him briefly. How does he look? What is he doing?

Cut to Zenia, trapped between life and death. Ask her questions: Where are you? How are you? Who are you? Let her drop hints of water, horror, and darkness.

Start with Britta, who's sitting ready at her table. After Britta, cut to Lone, who's on her way to the appliance repairman. After that cut back and forth as it suits the flow.

Britta makes contact

Britta's sitting at a table in the living room. She is alone, and has a set of cards spread across the table along with a ouija board. There is also an old glass that she's about to breathe into. Something strange is going on, and Britta knows that tonight she will make contact - for the first time in her life.

Ask her about her feelings and expectations before she starts the invocations. What does she expect will happen? What steps does she have to take to make contact? Is she afraid? The ritual starts with breathing into the glass.

Build the scene and the mood slowly. It is difficult for a spirit to make contact with the human world, and Zenia's responses should preferably be limited to cryptic hints.

Lone delivers her washing machine

Lone drives up the small dirt road leading off the paved road and onto the appliance repairman's courtyard. She struggles with getting the washing machine out of her car, but nobody comes to help her right away. Lone's 6-year-old son, Karl, sits in the back seat impatiently. Sonny hides behind the many broken appliances that lie scattered across the yard. He would like to get close to Karl so he can play with him.

After a while Jørgen comes out of his workshop to help Lone. Once the washing machine is dropped off for repair, Lone can drive off again. She is going to see her mother, Britta, who lives nearby. Maybe Karl could be allowed to stay and play for a while during Lone's visit with her mother.

This scene is primarily intended to present the locale and suggest that there's something lurking behind the façade. The scene also sets up the third chapter, centred around Sonny's fantasy world.

Where does Britta live?

Britta lives out in Vasen - about half a mile further along the road from the appliance repairman's place.

Important information from Zenia

It is important that Zenia's player is providing three pieces of information to the other players: that Zenia is 13 years old, that something terrible has happened to her, and that she's somehow involved with the appliance repairman.

How does one summon a spirit?

Britta has put out a special ouija board. It is a wooden board painted with fields containing letters and a handful of words like "yes" and "no". The summoner starts by closing their eyes and breathing into a glass, which they then put upside down on the board. Then they ask: "Are there any spirits present?" If so, the spirit will be trapped in the glass and can move it across the board, thus answering the summoner's questions.

Karl - Supporting Actor

Let Zenia's player play Karl in this scene. Karl is a six years old little boy who's impatiently sitting in the back seat. He wants to get out, especially when he sees Sonny hiding behind the old washing machines.

Vasen #30

The appliance repairman's home and workshop is located at the end of a small dirt road that leads in from Vasen up to an old farm. On one side is Jørgen's workshop, which is rarely accessed by anyone other than him.

Lone visiting Britta

Britta's contact with Zenia's spirit is interrupted when Lone arrives. The mother and daughter can have a talk about Britta's mystical experience. Lone also learns that she has just arrived from the very man the spirit referred to. When Britta returns her attention to her table, she discovers that the glass has been turned over. The spirit has been released.

Will Britta find out who Zenia is? What does Lone think about it all? They won't get any opportunity to explore the issue now; that will have to wait until chapter five.

Lone fetches Karl

If Karl stayed with Sonny to play, Lone will have to pick him up afterwards. Play a short scene where she drives back to the appliance repairman. Play on her fear of what her mother just told her the spirit said.

Let Sonny's player play Karl in this scene. This player can use his knowledge of Sonny to answer a few questions about their playtime. Including, perhaps, a brief mention of Princess Zenia.

Zenia's disappeared

Britta can still sense the presence of the spirit and her pain, but it cannot be trapped in the glass. If the player has not managed to provide all the information yet, she can tell them in other ways. Perhaps something is written on a foggy glass window, or things start to fall off of the shelves.

Chapter

Two

Overview

Zenia is in the living room with the repairman. She can see everything that is going on, and she can speak - but no one can hear her.

The family eats dinner in near absolute silence. A social worker from the municipality calls to discuss whether Jørgen's daughter Tenna may remain at boarding school during the winter holidays.

Later on, a few so-called house guests arrive for a visit. They've brought pizza, but this time something is different; it's becoming evident that Jørgen can't offer what the guests are usually after.

A while later, Sonny notices Zenia's presence in his room.

Zenia's role

Zenia's spirit has been released and is capable of roaming the land of the living. She's present in all the scenes but can't interact with the other characters. Instead, she can talk to the other players, asking questions out into the room and make comments on what's transpiring. Remember, though, that Zenia's purpose is to be quietly ever-present and ominous, and her monologues shouldn't take up too much of the playtime.

Zenia experiences increasing levels of anxiety as she approaches Jørgen's workshop. She can't enter, if she tries - something is holding her back.

Role distribution

Player 1: Jørgen

Player 2: Zenia, Bjarne (role sheet received at the chapter's mid point)

Player 3: Sonny, Bodil (role sheet received at the chapter's mid point)

Player 4: Kate

No scenes in the workshop

Remember that no scenes are allowed in the workshop. If anyone does enter, we do not play out or comment on what's happening in there.

Scenes in Chapter Two

Zenia inside the house

The second chapter opens with Zenia's presence in the repairman's home. Let her talk about what she sees there.

She starts off in the living room, and sees the family sitting at the table. Allow her to move around the house. Let her visit a few of the rooms. How does the house feel? What about the yard? What sensations does she experience around the workshop?

Dinner and a phone call

Jørgen, Kate and Sonny are sitting down to dinner. Salisbury steak, potatoes, and brown gravy is being served. Give players some time and space to feel out the atmosphere, and slowly allow them to start conversing.

After a moment, the phone rings. It is Birgitte Jensen from the Jammerbugt Municipality. She's calling because Tenna - Jørgen's 16-year-old daughter - called and asked if she could remain at school during the winter holidays in the upcoming week.

Birgitte can't make this decision since Tenna is not forcibly committed to the school, so the decision has to be Jørgen's.

Birgitte Jensen - Game Master-controlled Supporting Actor

Birgitte is a social worker and case worker for Tenna, who has been sent to boarding school at the municipality's expense. Tenna didn't thrive at the school in Brovst and needed a change of environments. Birgitte is concise, friendly and professional. She takes Jørgen's opinions and decisions into consideration.

Tenna - Supporting Actor

If Jørgen chooses to call Tenna, let one of the other players play her.

A visit from some special guests

In this scene, two special guests - a man and a woman - arrive for an unexpected visit. They're here to visit Jørgen and Kate, but they're also clearly expecting to see someone else as well while they're here. In exchange, they've brought a pizza for Jørgen.

This is a key situation in the scenario. It is where it truly becomes evident that something isn't right with Jørgen and his family. It is a difficult scene to pull off, because it balances the need to hint at, but not ever clearly reveal, what has been happening.

The scene can develop in different directions, depending on whether the guests just leave again or if Jørgen offers them other things.

Take the time to set the stage. Provide room for greetings and pleasantries, talk about the pizza they brought, and other smalltalk. But there must also be a subtext that there's something more going on than just a pleasant visit.

At one point Jørgen and the male guest go out to the workshop, while the woman is drinking coffee with Kate. Play out the womens' conversation and keep the talk between the men unspoken in the game. Resume the scene with the men as they leave the workshop, and we realize the man has been told he can't get what he's after.

Also consider cutting to Sonny, sitting by the window up in his room, watching the entrance to the workshop.

Kate and Jørgen in bed

After the special guests leave, frame a scene where Kate and Jørgen are going to bed. What are they talking about? How is their mood and rapport with each other?

Zenia makes contact with Sonny

The second chapter ends with a scene where Sonny is in his room. Ask what he's thinking about. Ask what he's daydreaming about. Ask about Princess Zenia, and if Sonny misses Tenna.

Zenia is present in the room. Let her speak with Sonny, but without him being able to hear her. But suddenly something happens, when he's speaking of the princess. Suddenly she can touch his hair and face. Suddenly he feels a light sensation. Allow this to linger for a moment before cutting the scene.

The special guests - supporting actors

Zenia's player and Sonny's player play the two guests. Distribute their role

Sonny and Zenia

Zenia and Sonny are off stage during this scene, but it is set up to allow for cutting to them every now and then. Sonny loves pizza and hopes the visitors will share the one they brought. But aside from the pizza, what does Sonny think of the guests? And what about Zenia - what words does she soundlessly utter?

What's going on with the women?

How much the two women really know about what is happening back in the workshop is open for exploration. Maybe Kate is fully aware - maybe she even participates from time to time. She might also be completely unaware. The same goes for the visiting woman.

Chapter Three

Overview

Sonny's gone for a fishing trip among the canals near the pumping station and the bird observation tower, where he meets Malthe and Simon. The two boys have heard rumors about Sonny's sister Tenna. In an effort to get closer to her, they let Sonny glance at the magazine they've brought.

Later on Sonny meets little Elena, who's run away from a costume party. She's dressed as a princess and wants Sonny's help to get home. But how will Sonny react to meeting a little girl who reminds him of the princess in his stories?

At the same time Zenia makes contact with Sonny again. She's discovered that she can communicate with him through his fantasy world. She's going to attempt to get Sonny to help her find answers to her questions.

Zenia's role

Zenia's role in this chapter is to talk to Sonny and affect his interaction with the real world. She's discovered that she can communicate with Sonny, but only through his fantasy world. Everything she says must be part of the imaginary adventure he's playing out. In this chapter Zenia appears as a narrator voice in Sonny's fairy tale world, attempting to create bonds between the fairytale and the real world. But Zenia is also frightened of Sonny's stories.

Role distribution

Player 1: Simon

Player 2: Sonny

Player 3: Zenia

Player 4: Malthe, Elena (no role sheet)

The Fantasy World and the Real World

Sonny's fairy tale is about the Lost Princess Zenia, who was trapped in the tower, but who has now vanished. Sonny is trying to capture the Old Pike, who makes his home in the canals and wants nothing more but to eat the princess. Sonny thinks he has to find a new princess who can lure the pike out. But the fantasy is also about sexual stuff - what one does with princesses in towers, and what the Old Pike wants to do to her.

It is not important to determine exactly how Sonny's fantasy world works. The adventure is just a filter he overlays on top of his experiences. Focus instead on how Sonny interacts with the people he meets and what he intends to do with them.

Scenes in the chapter

Sonny's fishing by the edge of the canal

Sonny's gone fishing by the wide canal behind the pump station and the bird observation tower. He's caught a fish and is speaking to it. Zenia's also talking to him. Sonny doesn't know that two boys are watching him.

Start the scene off with Zenia. She's gotten in touch with Sonny and is the princess in his adventures. Let her talk about the adventure. Let her talk about the princess and maybe also about the Old Pike in the canals. Then cut to Sonny. Let him talk about the princess and the pike. Now switch perspective to reality. Sonny has captured a large, slimy fish and has tossed it into the grass. It's twisting and turning in desperation.

Play out the scene for as long as it serves its purpose. Encourage Sonny's player to alter his adventure story to allow for the unpleasant sexual subtext. One way to do this is to suggest some previous experiences he's had. Also encourage Zenia to ask questions. Suggest that she is simultaneously frightened and searching. Cut to Malthe and Simon, who are hiding behind a pair of old oil drums near the bird observation tower.

Sonny meets Malthe and Simon

Simon and Malthe are hiding in the bird observation tower to look at an old porno magazine they found at Simon's grandfather's place. They'd borrowed the grandfather's Puch Maxi moped and ridden it out to the tower, but they were interrupted when Sonny showed up and started talking to himself while fishing. They've spied on him for a while and have heard everything he's said. They'd like to talk to Sonny, because they've heard that his sister is quite a horny chick, and the two pubescent teens wouldn't mind a round with a girl like her.

Ensure the three boys spur each other on. Sonny will probably be happy for the attention and to share his fantasy world with two boys. The boys' conversation should preferably switch between Sonny's sister Tenna, and Sonny's quest for the princess and Old Pike. If Sonny doesn't want to talk to the boys, you can get Zenia to apply pressure. She clearly senses that there's something about the boys that could be useful.

The scene could easily devolve into Sonny being bullied. That's fine, but make sure this builds and escalates to that point - so don't let the boys bully Sonny at first. It's important that the boys show genuine interest in Sonny at first, so he gets comfortable with them and opens up about his worldview. If a conflict arises later, that's okay. If the conflict is about to escalate further than teasing and bullying, you can let Simon's grandfather Verner interrupt them. He's driven there in his car to look for the boys and his moped.

Sonny's worldview

If the player doesn't get it, it's important that you help them understand: Sonny's world is unlike that of other children. He truly believes that fairy tales contain odd sexual under- and overtones. He believes that the things happening in his home is normal. He does not understand the limits of normal.

Zenia and the bird observation tower

Zenia can't enter the bird observation tower. Something is holding her back. If Sonny goes up there, she won't be able to talk to

The boys are interrupted

The interaction between Sonny and the two boys are interrupted when Verner appears. He's angry with the boys and wants his moped back, now. The boys will have to drive back with the moped or run away. Sonny remains. The porno mag is still there.

Elena in the princess costume

Some time after the two bigger kids have left, Sonny meets a 4-year-old girl. She's freezing and wants to go home. But how does Sonny react when he meets a little girl dressed as a princess? Does he think it's Zenia? Will he protect and help her? Or would he do things to her that he thinks is what you do with little girls? And how does Zenia's spirit respond to the appearance of the girl?

The scene starts with Sonny hearing her whimpering in a ditch. There he discovers a little girl sitting in the grass, freezing. She is dressed in a the kind of princess outfit commonly sold for costume parties. Elena, as the girl is called, is scared, exhausted, and weak.

Maybe Sonny takes her up to the tower. Maybe he's talking about Princess Zenia. Maybe he shows her the porno mag. Maybe he'll even give her to the Old Pike. You can bring the scene to an end with Sonny helping the girl to her family, who doesn't live far away. Or maybe they meet a helpful adult. It might be the girl's mother, or alternately, Lone.

This scene stands in contrast to the previous scene where Sonny was the underdog. In this scene, he's the big kid.

Verner - Game Master-controlled Supporting Actor

Verner is Simon's grandfather. He maintains a mink farm out on Vasen. On the farm are a couple of old railway cars, in which he can sit in peace and smoke cigarettes, drink beer, and do whatever he wants. He's allowed Simon and his friend to borrow his old Puch Maxi moped, but doesn't know they've found his porno mags. Sonny recognizes Verner, who occasionally comes to visit his dad back home.

Elena - Supporting Actor, no role sheet

Elena is a 4-year-old girl who was at a costume party, dressed as a princess. She ran away from the party and is considered missing. Now she's freezing and wants to go home, but she's also curious and excited to play with Sonny. Her family doesn't live far away, but she's lost and can't find her way home. Let the player who played Malthe play Elena.

Can I see your belly button - example of play

In one game, Sonny asked at one point if he could see the girl's belly button. This was no problem, and she pulled up her dress. But she quickly got confused because Sonny wasn't looking at her belly button - or rather, Sonny looked at what he thought was the girl's belly button, but was further down.

Chapter

Four

Chapter four focuses on Tenna, Jørgen's 16-year-old daughter. Jørgen has fetched her from boarding school against her wishes. Now Tenna is forced to spend her winter holidays on Vasen, even while matters are becoming more and more strange and oppressive out there. In addition, the family gets a visit from Verner, who arrives with smoked eel and a sidelong glance at Tenna - and later the social worker Birgitte comes by. Finally, Zenia is yearning to know what is really out in the workshop.

The fourth chapter should build the tension in preparation for the final tragedy. Tenna is afraid of being home, and this anxiety should permeate the chapter. Tenna is the main character in this chapter and most scenes revolve around her.

The chapter consists of a few pre-defined scenes and a few other open scenes that can be played when it seems suitable. You may make up other relevant scenes depending on how the narrative develops - just make sure the scenario doesn't stall.

Zenia's role

Zenia's anxiety is increasing as she realizes something terrible is approaching. At the same time her desire to understand what is happening with her grows more desperate. In this chapter she will attempt to influence Sonny to act as her instrument in the physical world. But her own physical capacity is increasing, to the point where she can now, for example, push objects over and blow out candles.

Zenia's player also plays Sonny in this chapter. Sonny is the only one that Zenia can talk to, through the allegory of his fantasy world. Sonny can talk about his fantasy world and in this manner deliver hints and warnings, for example, to Tenna. In addition, Zenia may use Sonny to try to get into the workshop, among other activities.

The player can also use Zenia to comment on the events in the same way as in the second chapter.

Role allocation

Player 1: Tenna

Player 2: Jørgen

Player 3: Kate

Player 4: Sonny, Zenia

Scenes in the chapter

Jørgen and Tenna at the dam

Jørgen is on his way home with Tenna. But before they make it all the way home, he drives by the fjord dam, coming to a stop close to the bird observation tower and pumping station. The silence is thick in the car. Jørgen and Tenna may be allowed to sit in silence for some time, but ensure that the two eventually start talking. It's not important what they're talking about. Just ensure that Tenna's anxiety is evident, and that there is something unspoken between them.

After a few awkward minutes they hear the sound of a moped, and shortly thereafter Verner shows up on his Puch Maxi. He turns off his moped and makes small talk for a bit with Jørgen. Verner is coming from the fjord where he's emptied his traps and discovered a good catch of eel, currently stored in the fish box on the back of the moped. He greets Tenna and comments that it's good to see her home. Verner offer to come back later with some smoked eel for Jørgen.

Is Zenia present?

Maybe Zenia's sitting quietly in the back seat of the car. She might possibly enter the scene in the same way as she's introduced some of the other chapters: By speaking out into the unhearing void, showing her fright, and displaying real concern for Tenna.

If you think it's already obvious what events Tenna's arrival home will set in motion, do not use Zenia in this scene as it will only complicate matters.

Tenna arrives home

Tenna and Jørgen drives up the driveway. Kate and Sonny greets them. Linger for a moment on Tenna's homecoming. How is she doing as she steps out of the car? Does Kate receive her with coffee and pastries, or cold indifference? And what about Sonny?

If you like, play out a supper scene afterwards. It can be a repetition of the scene from the second chapter, just this time with Tenna at the table.

Verner - Game Master-controlled Supporting Actor

Play Verner straight as an arrow. He's friendly and welcoming, but also a little too happy to see that Tenna's returned home.

Tenna and Sonny - Tenna and Kate

Allow room for a couple of scenes where Tenna can talk alone with her little brother or her stepmother, Kate.

Maybe Sonny comes in to talk to Tenna about Princess Zenia. Maybe it's Tenna who invites herself into Sonny's room. Play on the tenderness and intimacy between the two half-siblings. Maybe Sonny starts asking Tenna about things, with Zenia trying to influence his actions. How would she respond to him? Also allow for a scene between Kate and Tenna. How is their relationship? Tender and loving, or distant and hostile?

Sexual undertones between Tenna and Sonny?

In addition to tenderness, maybe there are also weird sexual undertones between the two siblings. If you'd like to suggest this, you can frame a scene where Sonny enters Tenna's room to talk, in the nude. Or you can frame a scene where they talk naked together under the blanket.

Verner arrives bringing smoked eel

As promised, a few days into the winter holidays Verner comes over with smoked eel. Tenna and Sonny are at home, since it's school break, and Jørgen is in his workshop as Verner drives into the driveway. Kate might offer a cup of coffee.

Verner is polite and friendly, and he's chatting with everyone. He shows a great deal of interest in Tenna and has many questions for her. He's happy that she's back home, and is curious if it's permanent or if she's planning on going back to the boarding school. At some point, Verner takes Jørgen aside - maybe they enter the workshop. Before Verner drives off he makes sure to say goodbye to everyone. Maybe he promises Sonny that he'll bring him pizza some day.

It's up to you how creepy you make Verner appear. If you're happy with subtle hinting and want to encourage players to imagine what's truly transpiring, then Verner doesn't mention pizza. If you need to make it more evident that the house has many regular "special guests", be more explicit.

Visit from the social worker

Birgitte Jensen, Tenna's social worker, drops by. She's worried about Tenna, since she requested to remain at the boarding school. Birgitte is doing a check-in to determine if a more formal investigation to determine Tenna's well-being and her condition at home is necessary.

This scene should show the system's good intentions and ultimately how powerless it is. Meanwhile it should put pressure on Tenna. Does she shut down completely, or does she actually reveal something to the social worker? It also puts pressure on Jørgen - how long will it take for the authorities to understand what's truly going on?

Start the scene with Kate fetching Tenna from her room. Let Tenna and the social worker speak for a while before Jørgen emerges from his workshop to discover the visitor.

The workshop - possible chapter end

One suitable end to chapter four is that Sonny - possibly accompanied by Tenna - examines the workshop. Zenia wants to find out what's in there, but cannot enter herself. Instead, she might persuade Sonny to sneak in as night falls.

Build the suspense and dread of the scene as they slowly creep into the workshop. Ask the other players to help describe what they see. Describe the occasional sounds outside.

Perhaps they find something in the workshop that doesn't belong. Keep it an allusion only for the moment, as someone suddenly arrives, throws the door open and enters. Cut the scene here and let the tension fill the room.

Birgitte Jensen - Game Master-controlled Supporting Actor

Birgitte is friendly and approachable, but insists on speaking with Tenna initially. She wants to hear about her well-being and if there's something she's afraid of. She also wants to talk to Jørgen and Kate to find out if they've noticed anything out of the ordinary. Birgitte's default assumption is that Tenna's problems and anxiety are due to conditions at school.

Zenia and the social worker

Since Zenia is now capable of limited interactions with her physical surroundings, she might attempt to use this ability to direct Birgitte's attention in specific directions.

Rulebreaking

This scene breaks the "no scenes in the workshop" rule. If you'd prefer for the shop to be completely offstage, you can cut the scene at the moment where Sonny opens the door. Allow the tension to build using the techniques above while he sneaks across the courtyard instead.

Other ways to end the chapter

There are other ways to finish the chapter should Sonny choose not to sneak into the workshop. For example, Jørgen might have a serious chat with Tenna about how she should show her best side, especially when they have guests. Or perhaps as Sonny tells stories to Tenna, his tales become so powerful that Zenia's bloated corpse starts to break loose from the seaweed's grip out in the canal.

It's important to bring the chapter to a close with a dramatic finish. Describe how the windows start rattling as Jørgen delivers his dreadful lecture at Tenna. Or the lights start flickering so hard when Sonny speaks of Zenia that Tenna might begin to believe the stories.

The dramatic conclusion to the fourth chapter sets something in motion in the spirit world, and Zenia's body, trapped at the bottom of the large canal, breaks loose and begins to surface (see chapter five).

Chapter Five

Overview

Something is surfacing in the canal. Britta reconnects with Zenia's spirit, but only for a brief moment before the spirit disappears again. But it is now clear to Britta that something terrible is happening over at the appliance repairman's. Jørgen and Kate's special guests return. Britta realizes that there's nothing she can do: the authorities can't act on a hunch, and the police need to have an official charge or accusation to intervene. It's only when someone discovers the body in the canal that the authorities are empowered to do anything - and by that point it's already too late.

Unlike the previous chapters, this one is left fairly open. What happens depends on what has transpired in the game up until this point and which elements have been in focus. This chapter is not laid out as an inflexible sequence of events, but suggestions and ideas for scenes that you can use as you like. The central point is that Zenia's spirit disappears, and the chapter takes place in two parallel tracks: one following Britta, who is trying to make a difference; the second following Jørgen's family, especially Sonny, who is afraid because Zenia is gone.

The chapter should end as dark and dreadful as possible. The tragic end is inevitable, as another violation occurs out on Vasen. At the same time Britta realizes there's nothing she can do to help. The scenario ends when the body in the canal breaks the surface. The question remains who the dead person was and what has happened to her.

Zenia's role

No fixed player portrays Zenia in this chapter. At the start of the chapter her body surfaces in the canal, and in association with this event her spirit disappears. For the remainder of the scenario her spirit is no longer present.

Role allocation

There are no role sheets available for this chapter. Instead, players will choose to play whatever roles they want based on the ones available previously in the game. In the opening scene where Britta briefly makes contact with Zenia, the players are communally tasked with providing input on what Zenia is doing.

Scenes in the chapter

Something is surfacing

A body becomes detached from the depths of the canal and is surfacing slowly. Zenia is out there.

Start the chapter by setting the mood around the wide canal at the pumping station. Let the players take turns describing the cold, dark water. Let them describe what's appearing through the water. Let the players take turns playing Zenia. What is she thinking right now? Where is she? What's about to happen?

Suddenly Zenia hears someone calling from far away. Simultaneously she notices the Old Pike swimming around near the bottom. It wants her for himself.

Return to the canal several times throughout the chapter. Let the body's migration to the surface set the tempo and mood. At the end of the chapter it emerges and floats around the surface.

Britta makes contact again

Britta sits at her living room table with the ouija board. Over the last week she's tried unsuccessfully to make contact with Zenia's spirit. She's noted Zenia's continuous presence, and now she senses that something is very wrong. Her joints are in constant pain and she can barely walk.

Suddenly the presence is back again, and the glass moves. Let the other players take turns playing Zenia. Let them describe what she does to the glass. Remind them that Zenia can do more than just move the glass; maybe she tips the books out of the shelves, maybe she noisily opens and closes the cupboard doors in the kitchen. Ensure that Zenia passes on some useful information before she once again disappears.

The contact lasts only briefly before it suddenly disappears completely - and this time Britta can't sense Zenia's presence anymore. It's obvious that something has happened. Afterwards it's absolutely quiet. The lights have stopped flickering. Exhausted, Britta sits to catch her breath. Her body still hurts, but the oppressive presence of the spirit is gone.

The scene should elaborate on the information Britta was given in the first chapter. It must be made obvious that someone is in danger.

Is Lone present?

It's possible that Lone is also present. She's perhaps skeptical of Britta and her abilities. But how does she respond to what she's seeing with her own eyes? What do the two women do when the contact is so suddenly broken?

Zenia is afraid

It is important that the players clearly convey how scared Zenia is. She is more afraid than she was during her initial contact with Britta. Make sure that Zenia provides specific information about her fears regarding Tenna and Sonny, and that someone needs to help them.

What will Britta do?

The question now is what will Britta do? She has a clear sense that something is very wrong out at the appliance repairman's. But her information comes from beyond the grave - and who would listen to that?

If she tries to contact social services, she won't have much success. They need concrete suspicions and observations in order to act. Furthermore, they must adhere to confidentiality regulations and cannot speak of the situation with a particular family. If she talks to any of her old co-workers, they might tell her that a "Section-50 investigation" of the family has been initiated and that they're waiting to hear back on the results. But if she suggests there's something downright illegal transpiring, they are quick to inform her it's a police matter.

However, the police are also not particularly responsive to Britta and her concerns. The police cannot act without evidence and witnesses. Britta is no witness.

The only way for Britta to take action seems to be to confront the appliance repairman herself.

Lone picks up her washing machine

Lone's washing machine has been repaired and can be picked up. Assume she will bring her mother along.

The scene can take a dramatic turn should Britta decide to take the bull by the horn. How would Jørgen respond to an old lady who shows up bearing accusations? Maybe he throws her out. Maybe he's vehemently denying. Or maybe he goes to extremes. Either way, it's important that Britta doesn't accomplish anything with her visit. She cannot take the children with her, or rescue them in some other way. She must return empty-handed.

Sonny's been abandoned

Zenia has disappeared again and Sonny is once again by himself. He sits in his room, afraid. The princess is gone. What will he do? And what will he say to Tenna? Ask about the last contact Sonny had with Zenia. What did she say to him? Was there any physical manifestation? How did Sonny react?

Also make sure there is a scene or two where Sonny and Tenna are alone. Here Sonny can tell tales about Zenia, who has disappeared again. Tenna can tell Sonny about her anxiety. It's as if she knows that something is about to happen. But will she just passively wait, or will she try to do something about it?

Questions for Britta and Lone

While Britta and Lone discusses what to do, ask them questions. Ask about Britta's past as a social worker. How was it? Did her work make a tangible difference back then? What does she wish she'd done differently? Does Zenia remind her of anyone she's worked with previously?

Ask Lone about her work as a school nurse. Does she make a difference? Does she wish to do anything differently? Does she remember the checkups Sonny had with her? Was there anything noteworthy about his results?

The special guests and Verner returns

The two special guests and Verner pops over again - this time they also bring pizza. They have a clear expectation that now that Tenna's back home, there's no question they'll get what they came for.

The friends' visit may be the scenario's climax. It should now be obvious how serious it is. Perhaps it's dramatic with Tenna screaming while she's dragged out to the workshop - or maybe it's quiet and understated, as Tenna is escorted into the pickup truck and driven out to the bird observation tower. Alternatively, it may be Sonny that the guests are here to visit.

The climax

There are many potential ways the scenario can arrive at its climax. However, it is important that it ends in tragedy. The children can't be saved - and even if they could, they'd still be scarred for life - and Britta has to admit that she can't intervene.

Remember that the climax shouldn't just be devastating, it should also be emotionally dramatic. Jørgen should ideally choose to try to satisfy his guests' wishes. Also allow the children themselves to make choices. They don't necessarily understand the consequences of their actions and may voluntarily agree to accompany the visitors. Maybe one of the children sacrifices themselves for the other. Also remember that you don't necessarily have to introduce all the elements. Maybe it's not necessary that the special guests return. Perhaps Jørgen himself provides the necessary drama.

End the drama before things get too explicit. Let the finale have a sense of anti-climax as we comprehend what's transpiring indirectly. Cut with a car driving out towards the bird observation tower, or as the workshop door closes shut.

The body appears

Zenia's body has emerged up out of the water outside the pump station. Describe how it's on the surface and rolling around. Maybe it's obscured in a black plastic bag - maybe her body is completely naked and water logged.

Finish the scenario with the body in the canal. No one has seen it yet.

Ideas for the climax scenes and endings

- Jørgen tells Sonny that he doesn't have to eat dinner, because they're getting guests in a little while; and Tenna should go get cleaned up and dressed so she looks decent.

- One of the children (or both) sits down in the guests' car that's driving out towards the bird observation tower. Back home Jørgen and Kate sits down to eat pizza.

- The special guests chooses whether Sonny or Tenna should go with them. Or maybe they leave the choice up to Jørgen. Or maybe they ask the children themselves who wants to come.

The finale in the bird observation tower?

If the scenario ends with someone going out to the tower, you can describe how the corpse is bobbing in the canal while describing the tower from the outside. There's a car sitting outside, but no one has seen the body as of yet - the people in the tower are too busy with other things.

Chapter
summaries
and character
descriptions

Before the game begins

Important information before you start the game

- » A tragic socio-realist drama, where what remains unsaid is paramount
- » Takes place in North Jutland, Denmark
- » Contains references to terrible acts, but refrains from naming them

About the characters

Present the appliance repairman's family briefly.

- » Jørgen has lived on Vasen for four years. He has a daughter, Tenna, from a previous relationship. He's been married to Kate for 10 years. They have a 9-year old son together, Sonny.
- » Before the family moved to Vasen, they lived in a town called Saltum, located a bit further north in the municipality of Pandrup.
- » Tenna attends a boarding school at the municipality's expense.
- » Sonny sees the school psychologist.

Suggestions for warm- up exercises

- » Let the players jump around, cry, and hug each other
- » Play pass-the-gift-on, where you give a fictitious gift to another player
- » Let the players tell each other of a moment in their life when they were really scared
- » Let the players portray a portray two couples who used to be friends and now meet each other after a long time.
- » Let the players discuss a personal experience with an emotion considered taboo

Rules to remember

There is no objective truth

No one knows exactly what happened to Zenia. Nobody knows exactly what's going on in the appliance repairman's house, either.

Don't discuss what might be happening

While you're playing the game, to the greatest extent possible do not discuss what's going on behind the scenes. Allow the players to develop their own theories and mental images.

There are no secrets in charac- ter descriptions - but there may be twists during the game

Individual character descriptions do not contain secrets for the players to keep. Most of the secrets lie in the unspoken and in the scenes which are never played out - either in person or written in the scenario text.

No character ownership

During the scenario, players will portray many different roles. No one person 'owns' a given role. One role's version of reality can change from one chapter to another, depending on who's playing it.

The scenario plays out in concrete scenes

The individual scenes make up the scenario of Vasen Road. You do not need to spend any time discussing what happens in between scenes.

The Game Master frames scenes and improvise

In almost all cases the GM will frame the scenes in the scenario. This doesn't mean the players can't make suggestions for scenes if they have a good idea for one.

Chapter 1

Focus on Britta and Lone

Description of Vasen, Sonny's fishing, Zenia is afraid

Start the scenario with a description of Vasen and the reclaimed land. Present Sonny, then cut to Zenia stuck between life and death.

Britta makes contact

Britta gets in touch with Zenia's spirit, and the old social worker discovers that Zenia is a 13-year-old girl. She also finds out that Zenia is afraid, and that she has some relations to the appliance repairman down the road.

Lone delivers her washing machine

Lone's supposed to hand in her washing machine to the appliance guy for repair. While she's struggling with her washing in the driveway, Sonny's hiding behind some junk. He's really supposed to alert his father, but forgets about it as he'd rather play with Lone's son Karl.

Lone visits Britta

Britta's connection to Zenia's spirit is interrupted as Lone comes over. Mother and daughter can now talk about Britta's mystical experience. Lone also learns that she just came from the same man the spirit mentioned.

Lone picks up Sonny

If Karl stayed with Sonny to play, Lone picks him back up.

Role distribution

Player 1: Zenia, Karl (no role sheet)

Player 2: Lone

Player 3: Britta

Player 4: Jørgen, Sonny

Zenia's role

In the first chapter Zenia interacts with the outside world only through her connection with Britta.

Chapter 1

Zenia

It hurts so much.

I scream. But I don't see anything. Don't feel anything. Everything's dark, cold and wet.

It's out here somewhere. Near the canals. Near the dampness, the water, the fields. Somewhere near the fjord. Out here where the land is totally flat. Near the dam. At Vasen Road.

I am Zenia. Or, at least, I think I am. That name means something to me. I'm 13 years old, I think. I belong out here. I don't belong anywhere else.

Washing machines. Refrigerators.

There's something wet in my mouth. It enters me. The cold dark water.

No, I don't want to be left alone. Someone has to listen. Help me. Hold me.

But where am I? I want to go away. I want to go home. I want peace!

If only someone could hear me.

Something's dragging me. Something wants to communicate. Will it hurt me?

...

You are Zenia. 13 years old. You are dead, trapped in a cold darkness full of horror and uncertainty. All you can feel is pain and angst.

You want peace but can't have it. Not until someone bears witness to you. Not until you find out what's happened to you. Not until someone understands your pain. Not until you get out of the darkness and into light.

...

A woman from the world of the living tries to contact you. For a while she drags you back to the living world. You want help but you're also scared. Who can you trust? Does the lady behind the light want to help you or hurt you?

In this chapter you'll play Zenia's ghost, caught between life and death. Your only connection to the world of the living is through the woman who has made contact with you. You can't speak directly to her or manifest yourself in the room. But you can move the glass she's been using as a medium to get in touch with you, around a board printed with 'yes', 'no' and some letters. You can also manipulate objects in the room, for instance by pushing them. You can also smash things in the kitchen or make words or drawings appear in the mist on a window.

It's important for the game that you make it clear your name is Zenia, that you're 13 years old and that you come from the area near Vasen Road. You may also suggest that you're somehow connected to the appliance repairman from out there, but you can't say that directly.

To the player

The first chapter introduces Zenia and some of the other main characters of the game. As Zenia you're responsible of shedding light at some key information: That your name is Zenia and you're dead, that you're 13 years old and horrified, and that you remember something about washing machines or other home appliances.

Chapter 1

Britta

Social worker in early retirement

It's so cold tonight. And Britta is scared. She trembles more than usual, sitting by the table in her small living room, looking at the stuff in front of her. She looks at the black candles and at the piece of cloth with symbols printed on it. At the small glass, which she'll blow into in a minute, assuming she will actually have the strength to do so. Her body hurts so much tonight. More than usual. It's like something's trying to get to her by ripping out her ribs and spine. And she's convinced it's not only her medical condition that's hurting her tonight.

She really doesn't like to do this. She would rather not do it. Doesn't dare to take a look into that world. Doesn't want to know what truths will be told.

But she's obligated to do so. That's the way it has to be.

...

Britta's daughter Lone has always been shaking her head when her mother's trying to get in touch with the spiritual world. But she has always known that her mother has a special gift - that she's able to sort of see inside other people, making her learn things about them she wouldn't normally know. But actually communicating with the world beyond, with ghosts, spirits, souls or whatever you call them? That's just too far out. And Britta has never actually made real contact; not with clear evidence of the after-life. It's only suppositions.

But Britta really is capable of sensing something. And that has become more and more clear as her sclerosis has worsened and slowly disintegrated her body.

And tonight there really is something. She knows this for sure. That's why it's so cold. That's why she's so scared. Someone wants to tell her something. That's why it hurts more tonight than usual.

...

Gut feelings and obligations to act on them have always been a part of Britta's life, not only at the spiritual level, but also in her professional life. When children had to be removed from their parents. When she feared the worst of all would happen to them if she didn't react. Always with a belief that her actions making a difference. Always based on a feeling of something being totally wrong. That's how it always was when she had to make hard decisions in the social system. And it was always based on her moral duty to help others.

But no one listens to suppositions. Decisions have to be rational, based on logic, reason and hard evidence. You cannot act only on superstitions. There is no such thing as moral duty in this system. There's only rules and laws, she was always told.

Britta was a very good person with a big heart, her boss had told her at her early retirement reception. But she's also too naive and too kind, he'd added with a loving smile. Britta always tried to do so much good she almost turned it bad, he'd laughed. And all her old colleagues had laughed as well.

She hadn't laughed. Instead she thought of all the people who didn't get any help. Of all those poor souls who were never found. Of all those who the system wasn't able to help, due to rules, justice and protection from the law. And then she thought she was no longer able to do her duty.

And suddenly she turned into a client of the system. An ill early-senior with home assistance, technical tools to help her and ever-changing social worker contacts. She'd turned into a poor aging woman sitting all alone in her house on Vasen Road, far away from supermarkets and contact with others - only hoping for Lone, her daughter, to come by her house.

How does one summon a spirit?

It's not important what Britta exactly has to do to get in touch with spirits. But she has a special ouija board on her table. It's a board with some fields printed on it containing letters and simple words like 'yes' and 'no'. To use the board you'll close your eyes and blow lightly in a small glass which is then turned upside down and put on the board. Then you ask: 'Are there any spirits here?' If there is a spirit present it will be trapped in the glass and will be able to move it around the board to answer simple questions, either by answering 'yes' or 'no' or by spelling out simple words.

When the séance is over the glass must be broken. If the glass is overturned during the session, or if it's not broken at the end, the spirit will escape and will be able to haunt the house.

To the player

As Britta you have a key role in this first chapter. It's you who will make contact with a spirit - and that contact will open the story. It's therefore important that you play Britta as being curious even though she's very scared as well.

chapter 1

Lone

School nurse

'Vasen Appliance Service', the sign says in big letters. She knows of the people who live out here. Or more precisely: she's heard things about them. She hears so much in her position. For instance, she's heard that Sonny apparently has huge problems - and that the school psychologist has had several sessions with him. She mentioned that during lunch hour the other day.

But today Lone is not at work, so right now it doesn't matter.

She gets to the end of the long gravel road and drives into the courtyard. Out here things have deteriorated, she thinks, while braking the car, making the characteristic sound of gravel against the undercarriage of the car. Spread out everywhere are pieces of range hoods, washing machines and hot plates. Out here they don't really tidy up and think about appearances, she thinks.

But their service is cheap, she also thinks, when soon afterwards she tries to lift out her washing machine from the trunk of the car all by herself. And it's almost next door to her mother who insists on staying out here despite her condition. And with her mother living next door Lone can hand in the washing machine, get it repaired and hopefully pick it up on her way back from one of her daily visits to her mother - depending on when it's ready.

She curses Jens for being on the road somewhere in Italy when the appliances break. It's so good damn typical. She always has to do everything.

In that moment Karl starts to fiddle with the back seat door.

- Mummy, I want to get out. I don't want to sit in here. Mummy!

Lone glares at him, pretty irritated, but he doesn't stop.

- God dammit, she exclaims, when she by accident drops the washing machine and it slides to the ground making a loud noise.

...

It's quite hard to be Lone sometimes. There's so many things she has to do. Karl has to be picked up from after-school-service, has to play with friends and get new clothes. Jens needs to be fed, cared for, and have sex when he's actually home from touring Europe in his truck.

And of course there's Lone's mother, Britta. She's an old high-maintenance social worker who has retired early due to her condition. She's sick with sclerosis which slowly destroys her body. She needs more and more care and almost every day Lone drives from her small townhouse to her mother's house at Vasen Road a couple of miles away.

She really loves her mother. Yet Lone has always been shaking her head when it comes to her strange beliefs. But as her condition worsened, Lone has to admit there actually is something about it and all the things her mother is able to sense just by looking at other people. She must admit that her mother has a special gift. But saying it's a connection to spirits and the world beyond is taking it too far. But no matter what it is, it's quite scary. Even though most of it is total rubbish.

To the player

As Lone you have a special task in this first chapter. By visiting 'Vasen Appliance Service' you and the other players will be introduced to the family which this game is all about. During your visit at the appliance service it's important for you to also take make space for Karl to play out his character.

Later in the chapter you also have a task when you visit your mother. You'll be the one your mother can tell about what she's just experienced.

Chapter 1

Jørgen

Appliance mechanic and dealer

Jørgen is aware that people in town finds him weird, but he doesn't care. Despite their view on him they still come out here to 'Vasen Appliance Service' on Vasen Road with their appliances. To get them fixed, to discard them, or to exchange them. And he offers what they need: good prices and spare parts. What more can they wish for? He just tends to his business, doing what they ask him to do.

When Jørgen is in his workshop dressed in blue overalls he's not always able to hear if someone arrives in the driveway. That's the way it is, and sometimes people have to wait. Or sometimes Sonny comes to get him. Jørgen has told Sonny to get him if there's customers outside.

But Sonny doesn't always do what he's told. Goddamn kid. At least now he has understood that the workshop is none of his business, that he has to stay outside while calling. The same way that customers aren't allowed in there. That's Jørgen's place. No one else's.

Luckily Sonny doesn't mention Zenia anymore. That's at least one thing he's got right. She doesn't exist. Not anymore.

To the player

In this chapter you'll play two different characters: Jørgen and his son Sonny. In this chapter the focus is on these two characters' interaction with the client and her son - not the relation between the two of them, which will be explored in the following chapters.

If there are scenes in the chapter where both your characters are present you just choose who you want to play. Just remember that it's important you introduce both characters and show some of their mysterious sides to the other players.

Sonny

9 years old, schoolboy

A car is pulling up in the driveway. He always has to hide when a car is approaching. Zenia has told him that. You never know who's coming. Don't know what their business is. But Dad says that he has to go get him if there's a car and he's at the workshop. That he has to. Dad also says he's not allowed to talk about Zenia.

The gravel rustles about the bottom of the car. In a minute it will arrive in the courtyard. Sonny is hiding behind some rusty junk - he doesn't really know what it is. He has never really thought about what it could be. It's some stuff from all Dad's washing machines. The machines he repairs so people can have their clothes cleaned. It's important to have clean clothes.

But Sonny's clothes aren't clean. Not even when he's in school and no one wants to play with him. That's why he prefers spend-

ing time by the canals out here. Sonny loves to fish. Out here he can do whatever he wants. Out here he can speak freely about Princess Zenia, about The Old Pike in the canal and the dangerous bird watching tower. Out here he doesn't have to worry about what they all tell him not to talk about.

In the car there's a lady. He's seen her before. It's that nurse-lady from school who all the older boys says touches their penises. He doesn't like her. She asks Sonny strange questions. But there's also a boy in the car. He's a bit younger than Sonny. Maybe he wants to play. Sonny would like to show him his fishing rod and the canals. Maybe he could stay for a while. Sonny completely forgets to go get his father.

Chapter 2

Everyday life at the appliance repairman's home

Prologue - Zenia in the house

Let her talk about what she sees. What is this place? How does it look?

Dinner and a phone call

Jørgen, Kate, and Sonny sits around the table for dinner.

The phone rings. It's a woman from the municipality. Tenna - Jørgen's 16-year-old daughter - would like to remain at boarding school over the winter holidays.

The special guests visit

Two special guests - a man and a woman - come for an unannounced visit. They're here to visit Jørgen and Kate, but also have a clear expectation to also visit someone else. The pizza is a form of payment.

Kate and Jørgen in bed

What are they saying? What's the mood like between them?

Zenia makes contact with Sonny

Sonny is in his room when Zenia get in touch with him - but only fleetingly.

Role distribution

Player 1: Jørgen

Player 2: Zenia, friend of the family (role sheet passed out midway through the chapter)

Player 3: Sonny, friend of the family (role sheet passed out midway through the chapter)

Player 4: Kate

Zenia's role

Zenia is present in all the scenes, but can't interact with the people in them. Instead, she can talk to other players, ask questions aloud into the room, and comment on what is happening.

Chapter 2

Zenia

I'm free but at the same time I feel imprisoned. I'm stuck even though I can move freely. I'm freezing. I'm afraid. Who was that lady who saw me so briefly? Where am I going?

I'm somewhere near Vasen Road now. In the house, in the living room. But I can't enter the workshop. Something keeps me out when I try to enter. I'm not allowed to see what's in there. I have to get in there.

They all sit by a table. Eating. Meat, potatoes, gravy. There's a man and a woman and a boy. They can't see me. They can't hear me. No matter how loud I scream, no matter how much I pace around them, no matter how much I softly breathe on them. They have to hear me. They have to tell me who I am.

...

You are Zenia, 13 years old. You are dead but move around in the world of the living where no one is able to see or hear you. Your ghost was released by that lady who made contact with you. She was interrupted and you slipped out. You have no idea whether this is a good thing or not.

In this second chapter you can move around freely in the world of the living. You can see and hear everything, but you can't make contact with the living. You can say things aloud, but no one hears you. You can try to take action, but no one will notice. The other players can use the input you provide to shape the game, but their characters will not be able to hear or notice you.

Please play out your frustration. Try to interact with the living world. Make noise or whisper depending on the situation. But don't exaggerate. It's better if you interact with small things than if you're trying to make the scene about you. You should consider your interactions supplemental to what the other players do in this chapter.

At the end of the chapter you'll actually be able to interact just a little bit with the boy. You can raise the hairs on his neck a bit. You can breathe gently on his face. Suddenly he'll be able to feel something. Not much - just a little bit.

To the player

In this second chapter it's the family on Vasen Road who is in focus. You'll be playing out an ordinary night in this family's life. As Zenia your role is to show the other players the contrast between everyday family life and Zenia's angst.

Later in the chapter you'll also play a minor character in one scene. During that scene you can still cut to Zenia and play her, so you can show her reaction to what's happening.

Chapter 2

Jørgen

Appliance repairman and dealer

This gravy is bad. It's way too salty. And Jørgen hates bad gravy. He's said so many times. Too many times.

He looks at Kate. She's silent, just eating, staring hard at her plate. She probably thinks the gravy's great. Because that's the way she is. She's incapable of seeing herself in a critical light.

Why the hell did he ever marry her? Ten years of nothing, he thinks.

...

Jørgen is aware that he's a pretty strange guy. But on the inside he's alright, he certain of that. Otherwise Kate wouldn't have married him and stayed with him for ten years. Otherwise she wouldn't have carried and given birth to Sonny. Not to speak of all the women he had before her. If he was a bad guy, he wouldn't have Tenna.

He sometimes acts strange and he's often angry and hostile. But he's okay. As long as he's allowed to mind his own business and do things his own way. Otherwise there wouldn't be so many customers showing up all the way out here. Otherwise people from town wouldn't bring their washing machines, dryers and stoves out here to have all sorts of defects fixed.

Not to speak of the special guests who come by once in a while. They like what he has to offer and demand the best of him. It makes him happy, sometimes even sociable. He gets talkative, and sometimes even speaks fondly of Kate. Paying her compliments and being sweet – behaviors that normally feels so hard for him.

So he really is alright. That's what Kate tells him before they go to sleep, when he's depressed and blames himself for everything that's wrong in the world. Sometimes she even holds him.

...

The house on Vasen Road has become so quiet. Nobody says anything. Kate is just silent staring at her gravy. Sonny eats noisily, just waiting to run off to the canals with his fishing rod and his weird stories. And Jørgen? - he just wants to work. Stay in his workshop, doing what he does best. Or collecting his fish traps out on the fjord.

Something's missing. They all know that. Tenna is away at boarding school, but that's just a part of it. And what the hell is that all about? Who the hell do they think they are, just claiming that's the way it's going to be - that it's best for Tenna to go away for a while? Does the government really have that authority? Soon Jørgen will drive to the school and bring her home. She belongs out here - not with some dope smoking punks and well-meaning pedagogues.

But something else is missing too. Jørgen almost trembles thinking about it. He nearly becomes breathless. His stomach starts hurting.

What the hell is he going to tell the special guests when they show up? When everything's quiet? When they're disappointed and have to leave, because he can't give them what they want? What can he offer them instead?

To the player

Jørgen and his family is in focus during this chapter. You and the other players will play an everyday night in the house on Vasen Road. Even though it's an ordinary night it will evolve in an unseen direction and you will discover things about Jørgen that is only vaguely suggested in this character description.

Chapter 2

Kate

Unemployed church organ player, mother of Sonny (9 years old),
stepmother of Tenna (16 years old)

It's totally quiet in the dining room. Kate looks down at her plate with the Salisbury steak and potatoes. She knows the gravy is bad. She knows what Jørgen is thinking. She knows what he'll say in a minute. That's the way it's been for ten years. Silence and still too many words.

But she really tries. She makes the gravy as is expected of her, raises Sonny the way she thinks it's best. And she is nice to Jørgen. He needs that - even though she often hates him and his closed mind, with all its strange corners and secrets. And she hates him even more when he's not quiet.

Kate glances over at Sonny for a second. Nine years old and he doesn't make a sound. Poor boy, she thinks. If she only knew what he's thinking. If she only knew what goes on inside his weird little head. The only thing she's sure of when it comes to Sonny is that soon he will get up from the table and rush out to the canals to fish. He does that every night - even though she tells him it's too cold out there in the wintertime. But Jørgen says it's okay, and when Jørgen speaks Kate doesn't disagree.

...

Of all things in the world, Kate would want to have her job back. Sitting there in church with the organ pipes squealing its tones. That was her way to cry out, her way to get a bit of space. Now she only has an old piano which hasn't been tuned for years and where three of the black keys don't work anymore. And you can't cry out with a piano in that condition. At most it can be used to secretly whimper when Jørgen is not listening.

Once in awhile Kate goes to the church in the village nearby. Then she just sits in the church pews dreaming of the organ. Once she was allowed to try it herself - it was wonderful. Now - in her darkest moments - she imagines that something will happen to the organ player so Kate will get her job - or she hopes for that old bitch in the church in town to pass away.

If only they had stayed in the town of Saltum instead of moving here. Or if only she had a driver's license and a car so she could drive to work in another town. But she knows that it will never happen. If only it had been Kate that the authorities had forcibly sent away for a while, instead of Jørgen's 16-year-old daughter from his previous marriage. Tenna was sent to boarding school to get a bit of peace and new surroundings - that was how the social worker explained it. If only she'd realized it wasn't Tenna who was the problem, things could have been different.

...

Everything seems a bit better when there are guests in the house. The special guests seem to improve Jørgen's mood. Then he's nice and gives Kate compliments - occasionally a loving slap on the butt, and sometimes even more.

But lately the guests have been few and far between. Everything has changed and it's become so quiet. Jørgen spends more and more time in his workshop and when there are visitors he just rejects them, unless it is customers of his appliance repair service.

Sonny spends more and more time fishing and telling his weird stories of a princess named Zenia. Kate really wants to tell him it's all just stories - that it's only in his head. But she's not able to. He's not capable of understanding it - even the school psychologist has met with little success.

To the player

In this second chapter, the focus is on the family living in the house on Vasen Road. You'll play out a quite ordinary night. During the chapter you will discover new aspects about Jørgen and Kate - and it's up to you to decide how Kate feels about that. It's also up to you to decide how much Kate is actually aware of those things.

Chapter 2

Sonny

9 years old, schoolboy

Gravy, potatoes and Salisbury steak. Sonny really hates it. Why do they always have to eat gravy? Dad doesn't like it either. Sonny would rather eat pizza. He loves pizza. And often when Dad has visitors they bring pizza. And sometimes Sonny is allowed to eat it if Dad isn't hungry.

Sonny looks around. Dad is staring down his gravy. So is Mum. It's been so quiet lately. More quiet than usual. It's been that way since Sonny stopped talking about princess Zenia. Since that school-psychology-lady told him it's just something he makes up. Since Dad got so furious with him always telling lies and stories.

But he misses Zenia. And he misses Tenna. If only she'd come home soon. He wishes the punishment Dad said she got for behaving badly and being sent to the boarding school would be over soon.

Sonny usually goes fishing as often as he gets a chance – even in the evening. But tonight something's holding him back. Maybe because he's cold, maybe because of something else, maybe because he's scared of something.

To the player

In this second chapter the focus is on Sonny's family, and you'll be playing a normal weeknight in the house on Vasen Road. As Sonny you're not a main character in this chapter, but you'll get a chance to be center of attention once in a while by reacting on what's happening in the chapter.

Later in the chapter you'll also play a minor supporting character. In this scene you still have the opportunity to cut back to Sonny, so he can interact in this scene as well.

Chapter 2

Bjarne and Bodil

Special guests

The smell of fresh pizza fills the aging pickup truck. It makes the couple in the truck hungry - but the pizza is not for them. It's meant for the appliance guy out on Vasen Road. The standing deal is to bring pizza when they stop by.

He's not aware they're coming tonight. It's been a while since their last visit. But that's not a problem; the appliance guy always gets happy when they show up.

The appliance guy has something very special to offer - something that no one else has. And he's good at what he does. And in any case, it's always nice to visit him and his wife.

Normally Bodil drinks a cup of coffee with Kate while Bjarne and the appliance guy go into his workshop. They always have something to check out over there. But sometimes all four of them participate.

Sometimes the appliance guy eats the pizza, but other times his nine-year-old kid Sonny gets it. He really loves pizza. Oh, he really does.

To the players

It's very important you don't say literally what your business is with the appliance guy. You've been here before and you both know what he's offering. It isn't obvious if both Bjarne and Bodil are aware of what happens in the workshop or if it's only Bjarne - that's up to you.

Chapter 2

Bjarne and Bodil

Special guests

The smell of fresh pizza fills the aging pickup truck. It makes the couple in the truck hungry - but the pizza is not for them. It's meant for the appliance guy out on Vasen Road. The standing deal is to bring pizza when they stop by.

He's not aware they're coming tonight. It's been a while since their last visit. But that's not a problem; the appliance guy always gets happy when they show up.

The appliance guy has something very special to offer - something that no one else has. And he's good at what he does. And in any case, it's always nice to visit him and his wife.

Normally Bodil drinks a cup of coffee with Kate while Bjarne and the appliance guy go into his workshop. They always have something to check out over there. But sometimes all four of them participate.

Sometimes the appliance guy eats the pizza, but other times his nine-year-old kid Sonny gets it. He really loves pizza. Oh, he really does.

To the players

It's very important you don't say literally what your business is with the appliance guy. You've been here before and you both know what he's offering. It isn't obvious if both Bjarne and Bodil are aware of what happens in the workshop or if it's only Bjarne - that's up to you.

Chapter 3

Sonny's playing and fishing in the canals

Sonny's fishing by the canal bank

Sonny goes fishing in the wide canal out by the pumping station and the bird observation tower. Here he's caught a fish that he's talking to. Zenia's also speaking to him.

Sonny meets Malthe and Simon

Sonny meets the two boys Malthe and Simon, who want to use him to hook up with his older sister.

The boys are interrupted

Sonny and the two boys are interrupted when Simon's grandfather Verner arrives.

Elena in a princess costume

Sonny meets a little four year old girl dressed in a princess costume. She wants Sonny to help her - she's freezing and wants to find her way back home.

Role distribution

Player 1: Simon

Player 2: Sonny

Player 3: Zenia

Player 4: Malthe, Elena (no role sheet)

Zenia's role

Zenia can talk to Sonny through his fairy tale world, and through it can affect his interaction with the real world. She can make him do things he would otherwise not do.

Chapter 3

Zenia

There's someone out here calling for you. Is it her again? Is it the lady who can get me home? No, it's someone else. It's that little boy. He calls for Zenia. For the princess. For the monster in the canal.

It's me. I'm the princess. It's me who's trapped in that tower. I'm the mermaid at the bottom of the canal. I'm the one supposed to be given to Old Pike. I am who's supposed to be eaten, ripped apart and violated by his sharp teeth and piercing eyes.

I'm the one who's part of the boy's tales. I'm the one who's scared.

Is the boy a friend or an enemy?

...

You're Zenia and you're dead. 13 years old. Your soul walks restless near Vasen Road, with no way to contact the world of the living. You have no idea who you were or why you're dead. But something has happened: you've made contact with that little boy. His name is Sonny. He says you're a princess. Or maybe it's the other way around: maybe you have told him that you're a princess. Maybe you told him something when you were alive.

In this third chapter you can talk to Sonny. You can ask him about his fairy tale world and make him tell you about it. In this world you're Princess Zenia who's trapped in the bird observation tower near the pumping station. You're supposed to be sacrificed to Old Pike, who lives out here in the canals that are cutting through the flat land.

But you're also able to manipulate Sonny. You can make him do things in the real world when you speak to him as the princess. He listens to you. He will do anything for you, and maybe he could even tell you more about who you actually are.

But remember: You're also very scared of his stories and all their horrors.

To the player

Sonny is the main character in this third chapter. He's gone fishing and is completely enmeshed within his own fairy tale world where you're the princess. But the chapter doesn't play out in the fairy tale - it plays out in the real world, where Sonny is using his own interpretation as a filter.

As Zenia you're able to manipulate Sonny a fair amount, and you ought to, because his weird fairy tale world can tell you a lot of things you need to know. You should also make him put on display how fucked-up, twisted, and perverted that world is. Sonny's fairy tales are not happy and glamorous.

You should also remember that you're only speaking to Sonny, he can't see you directly. You manifest more like an inner voice speaking in his head. You're not able to communicate with the other characters in this chapter. They can neither see nor hear you.

Chapter 3

Sonny

9 years old, schoolboy

“You have such horny eyes. I’m going to give you to the princess. She’s waiting for you. Waiting for everything you’ll give her. She will do anything you command her to do.”

Sonny looks at the fish jumping up and down on the grass.

“But the princess doesn’t exist, you know that,” says Sonny with a squeaking voice meant to sound like it’s the fish speaking.

“Of course she does. You stupid fish. That’s just what the grown-ups say,” he answers in a baritone voice more like his own.

“She just lives out here now,” he continues, looking around at the canal, at the rush and the flat fields. He grabs his stick and starts to beat up the fish.

...

Sometimes Zenia is a mermaid. Sometimes she’s a little fish trying to escape the Old Pike. And sometimes she’s a real princess who’s being held prisoner in the bird observation tower near the pumping station. When she’s up there she really squirms about and makes a spectacle.

It’s Zenia who’s told Sonny those stories, so of course they’re true. But now that she’s disappeared he has to keep telling them. He also has to make up new ones - otherwise they’ll die, and then she’ll die too. Maybe he has to find a new person who can be the princess.

...

Sonny is so terribly scared of the dark water in the canal. Especially out here by the pumping station. Out here it’s almost black. And out here the Old Pike lives. It’s said to be more than 8 feet long. It’s also said to have eaten so much fishing tackle that it’s too heavy to swim up to the surface. And therefore you’ll need superhuman strength to pull it onto land if it baits your hook.

But Sonny knows he has to catch it. It just waits down there somewhere to suddenly jump out of the water to eat the princess. It has to be caught, to be killed and tortured. And maybe Sonny needs to use the princess as bait. But with Zenia gone, maybe he needs to get a new princess.

To the player

As Sonny you’re the main character in this chapter. Every scene is about you, your fairy tale world and how you interact with people in the real world. Focus is not directly on your fairy tales even though it’s present in the back of your head all the time and alters your view of the real world.

It’s important that you show to other players how screwed-up Sonny is. His fairy tales are not happy and bright. They are full of perversion, and are very dark. And therefore Sonny does twisted and wicked things to others. He does so even though he most of all dreams of having somebody to play with - and despite his dream he always ruins it when he has the chance to make some ‘normal’ interaction with other kids.

Chapter 3

Malthe

12 years old

Malthe crouches down below the window frame in the old bird observation tower. Through squinted eyes he watches the kid with the fishing rod down by the big canal. The boy has thrown a fish on the ground and is now speaking to it. Afterwards he hits it with a stick. Holy Christ, this is creepy. Especially what the boy says:

“Look at your horny eyes. You’re going to be given to the princess. She’ll look forward to you. To everything you gotta give. She will do anything you command her to.”

Malthe looks uneasy at Simon who’s sitting next to Malthe. Simon giggles - but Malthe finds it mostly scary. He really is damn creepy that boy. He’s just a little kid. Nine years old, Malthe thinks. But the boy isn’t just anybody. He’s Sonny, the white-good-guy’s kid. Malthe has heard stories about him at school. They say he always says some really weird things. He’s been seeing the school psychologist, they say. They also say something about his big sister being totally horny. That’s what some of the guys from 9th grade told him. They say she will do it with whoever asks her.

...

Malthe and Simon just had such a great time. They’d found a stack of old dirty magazines in Simon’s grandfather’s old train car where he usually sits to relax and drink beer when he’s not taking care of his mink farm. They didn’t tell him about the magazines when they were allowed to borrow his old moped to drive out to the bird watch tower. Out here they wouldn’t be disturbed, they thought.

But then Sonny showed up. Until then they’ve just been lying in the grass looking in the magazine laughing out loud about what they saw. But when he appeared they rushed to put the magazines away and crawled up to the tower to observe him instead.

...

Malthe would very much like to try a horny girl like those in the magazine. Or maybe like Sonny’s sister. Simon says he’d tried it - not with Sonny’s sister, but with another girl. It was totally cool, he said. And that girl he tried, she was totally wild, he also says.

Malthe would also like to try it. But he really doesn’t know how to do it. But maybe will be self indulgent when he first gets to it, he thinks.

Suddenly Simon pricks Simon. He’s got a roguish smile on his face. Malthe doesn’t like it. Now Simon’s got one of his crazy ideas. Malthe knows that. And then there’s no return. Simon gets up and climbs down from the tower to approach Sonny.

To the player

As Malthe you’re not the main character of this chapter. Sonny is. Your task is to both push and be nice to Sonny - give him something to play up against. It’s quite important that you and the Simon-player aren’t too hard on him. You actually think he’s able to help you get you nearer to his horny big sister, so you don’t have to bully him too hard.

Chapter 3

Simon

13 years old

Simon giggles and flashes his crazy smile at Malthe, who's hiding next to him. This is too weird. Too psycho. And exactly because of that, it's pretty funny.

The two boys are hiding under the window frame of the old bird observation tower out on the dam. Below the tower a third boy is playing. He's got a fishing rod and just dropped a fish on the grass. He's the one Simon and Malthe is hiding from. From their hiding place they're listening to the screwed-up things he says to the fish in the grass.

"You have such horny eyes. I'm going to give you to the princess. She's waiting for you. Waiting for everything you'll give her. She will do anything you command her to do."

That boy is really weird. His name is Sonny and he's nine years old. He's the son of the appliance repair guy. The other guys in school says he's totally messed up. They also say he has to see the school psychologist. They say he talks about princesses and other childish stuff. And now he's speaking to a fish, saying it's horny ...

...

Malthe and Simon had been having a really great time when they suddenly discovered Sonny playing by the canal. They'd found a whole stack of old porno mags at Simon's grandpa's mink farm. It was hidden under the old train car in which Grandpa often sits smoking when he's not attending the minks.

Of course they didn't tell him about the magazines when they asked him to lend them his old moped so they could go for a ride. Even though he's totally cool, it would be too embarrassing to ask about the magazines.

The pornos were old but really cool, and they laughed so hard lying there in the grass by the canal reading them. And then that Sonny-boy showed up.

...

They say Sonny's big sister is totally horny. The older boys in school who Simon sometimes hangs out with says so. She'll do everything, they've told him. And Simon believes it - you can tell for yourself just by looking at her. And all the things he's heard of her... oh, my God... he'd really like to try her as well.

Simon once kissed a girl. That was pretty wild and he became totally dizzy. His body was almost vibrating and he got a big urge to do a lot more with her. But she wouldn't go any further. Simon was so disappointed. But that didn't keep him telling Malthe later on how wild she'd been. Simon has told Malthe a lot about how wild it was. It's cool to see how envious he gets, listening to Simon's stories.

...

Simon glances over at Malthe again. Malthe doesn't seem so confident by what's going on but Simon doesn't care. He nods to his friend before getting up. Now they really have to speak with that Sonny-boy.

To the player

As Simon you're not the main character in this chapter. Sonny is. Your task is to both push and be nice to Sonny at the same time - to give him something to play against. It's quite important that you and Malthe's player aren't too hard on him. You actually think he's able to help you get closer to his horny big sister, so you shouldn't bully him too hard.

Chapter 4

Tenna comes home from boarding school

Jørgen and Tenna out on the dam

Jørgen is on his way home with Tenna, who he's picked up at boarding school. But before he runs all the way home, he's stopped out on the fjord dam, close to the bird observation tower and pumping station. There they meet Verner on his moped, who promises to come back later with smoked eel.

Tenna arrives home

Tenna and Jørgen drives into the yard. Kate and Sonny greets them.

Tenna and Sonny - Tenna and Kate

Leave room for a few scenes where Tenna can talk alone with her little brother, and also with her stepmother, Kate.

Verner comes with smoked eel

A few days into the winter holidays, Verner comes by as promised with smoked eel. He talks both with the kids and with Jørgen before he leaves.

The social worker visit

Birgitte Jensen, a social worker handling Tenna's case, comes by. She's worried about Tenna, who had voiced a preference to remain at the school. Birgitte is here on a preliminary visit to determine if a serious Paragraph-50 investigation should be initiated to ascertain Tenna's well-being and condition of care at her home.

The workshop - possible end of chapter

Zenia tries to convince Sonny to investigate the workshop which she cannot herself enter. He slowly creeps into it by the cover of night.

Other ways to finish the chapter

One suitable conclusion might be to have Jørgen have a serious talk with Tenna about being sweet and pliant, especially when they have guests over. Or by Sonny's stories to Tenna becoming so overt and obvious that Zenia, out in the canal, starts to tear herself loose.

Role distribution

Player 1: Tenna

Player 2: Jørgen

Player 3: Kate

Player 4: Sonny, Zenia

Zenia's role

Zenia's player also plays Sonny in this chapter. Sonny is the only one that Zenia can talk to, and only through his fantasy world. The player can't play out any scenes with interaction between Zenia and Sonny, only scenes where Sonny meets others.

In addition, Zenia can use Sonny to e.g. try to enter the workshop, which she can tell something is very wrong with.

Chapter 4

Zenia

Things are getting worse out here on Vasen Road. Something's going to happen.

Someone is returning. But she's scared. Just as scared as I am. It's not a happy homecoming. Far from it.

Perhaps I can use her anxiety. Maybe she can tell me things. Maybe she can help me understand. But she can't hear me. Only Sonny can hear me.

Should I warn her? Or should I use her to get ahead?

Maybe she can enter places where I can't go.

...

You are Zenia, 13 years old. You're dead, afraid and caught between life and the world beyond.

There's something about the workshop and the bird observation tower. You can't enter those places. The pain is too strong there. Everything blackens as you approach them. Maybe the answers are in there.

Your only contact with the living world is through Sonny, a poor little boy with stories about princess Zenia. But something's happening, you can sense it. You're getting closer to the truth. But at the same time you're getting closer to those indescribable horrors that make your soul scream without anyone being able to hear it.

Sonny

9 years old, schoolboy

Dad's gone on up to the boarding school to get Tenna home. Sonny wanted to join him but that was not an option, Dad said. That's just how it was. And now Sonny is just looking forward to his sister getting home. He misses her. And he's actually allowed to speak about her - not like Zenia who they say isn't real. Tenna is real. She's very much real and alive.

Sonny's also looking forward to tell Tenna all the news. About Zenia and all the other stuff. Also about the not-so-nice things. And he looks forward to seeing his father happy. He's really sure that Dad will be happy when Tenna returns. Then there'll probably be more guests stopping by, if Dad's happy. And maybe they'll bring pizza.

To the player

In this fourth chapter you play both Zenia and Sonny. Sonny is the only one who Zenia can speak to - and that's only through his fairy tale world. You will not be playing scenes where Zenia and Sonny interact with each other - you'll only play scenes where Sonny interacts with others. In these scenes Sonny can speak about his fairy tale world and through them give hints and warnings to Tenna who returns from her boarding school. Maybe you can even use her as a way to dig deeper into the mystery of who Zenia really is.

During the chapter Zenia starts being able to manipulate things in the real world. She'll be able to push doors, blow out candles, and stuff like that. Simple actions which you - together with Sonny's stories - can use to interact and manipulate with the story. Those simple actions can also be used to create a creepy aura around Sonny.

Chapter 4

Tenna

16 years old, daughter of Jørgen, stepdaughter of Kate

She doesn't want to go home. She really doesn't.

But there's nothing she can do. Dad is sitting out in the car, waiting. She has to go home now. Home to Vasen Road.

She gets long, intense hugs from every one of her girlfriends at school. Tenna doesn't cry. She never does. She's strong and hard. She shows nothing. But they all know how scared she is anyway.

Finally she looks at the teacher on duty. Tenna flashes her a brief smile.

"See you soon", the teacher says. Tenna nods her head. That's the teacher she'd confided to that she badly wanted to stay at the school during the winter break. She'd been so understanding. But it hadn't helped.

...

The only family member Tenna really misses is Sonny. She misses his stories and his strange behaviours. She doesn't care about anyone else. Over the last months it's been all about the boarding school and Tenna's new life here. Here she's away from it all, away from the public school and from her family. Away from everybody whispering about her in the corners, from idiotic guys and from all Dad's appliance crap back home. Instead it's been months full of new friends at a place where everything actually works - and where there aren't parts of broken washing machines spread out everywhere.

When the school counselor suggested Tenna go to boarding school she didn't think it was a very good idea. Initially she'd actually opposed it. She knew Dad would never allow her to go - and he could never afford it. His money wouldn't be spend on a stupid school, he would say.

But the authorities paid and made her go away. When she first entered the big hall she was scared. She sat down close to the wall. She didn't want to make eye contact with anyone - especially not with the boys. She was sure they'd come after her straight away. But they were all nice. The teachers too.

...

She sees the car in the parking lot in front of the main entrance. Dad's sitting in there. He's waiting. He hasn't even stepped out. He's smoking, she's sure of that. She can already smell his stinking cigarettes in her nose just by thinking about it.

Tenna slowly opens the passenger seat door. She gets in. Closes the door silently. She looks at Dad; she was right, he's smoking. He doesn't look back at her. He just finishes his cigarette and then starts the engine. None of them speak for a long time.

To the player

In this fourth chapter Tenna is the main character. It's your point of view and your return home that's in focus. Remember that even though you're scared you also care about your home. You love your family; especially Sonny who is close to you. Give Sonny an opportunity to get some attention during the game and make space for scenes illustrating your relationship with the rest of the family.

Chapter 4

Jørgen

Appliance repairman and dealer

'Boarding School' - so says the big sign on the wall of the former retirement home. Jørgen impatiently drums his fingers on the car's dashboard while waiting. He really hates to wait.

If only she could get her things together and be ready. Pathetic hugs to stupid girlfriends. Like it's the end of the world that she's not going to stay at the school for a little while.

Finally he can hear the car door open and Tenna gets in. Jørgen doesn't look at her. He just finishes his cigarette before turning the key to start the engine. He lets it run idle for a while before he puts it in gear and slowly drives off the parking lot.

Tenna is silent too. She's actually alright. She's a nice and pretty girl. She really is.

...

Kate didn't object when Jørgen announced that he would go get Tenna. She just nodded. It wouldn't have made sense to do it the other way around - she's not her daughter after all. Sonny pestered him to come along, but Jørgen gave him a firm no. It wasn't proper for a little boy to pick up a big girl from the boarding school, Jørgen told Sonny. Sonny accepted.

Now Jørgen looks forward to the phone call he's get from the social worker woman. He's certain she'll call. But when she does, he can teach her a lesson about who's in charge. Tenna is Jørgen's daughter, not hers. She really shouldn't come out here sticking her nose in other people's business. She knows just as well as Jørgen that she can't do a goddamn thing if Jørgen says no.

And most of all Jørgen looks forward to get his daughter home. She belongs out there at Vasen Road. It's out there that she's supposed to spread joy and happiness.

...

Jørgen pulls over and stops the engine out on the dam. He didn't take the short way home. He needs a break before they are home. Needs to sit for a while. Needs to speak a bit with Tenna.

He lights one cigarette and looks at his daughter in the other front seat. He fucking loves her, he really does. He's really looking forward to have her home again. Looking forward to the winter break.

They'll just sit here for a minute. She used to like that. Just sitting here watching the ford.

To the player

In this fourth chapter the focus is on Tenna. It's her return home that drives the story.

As Jørgen, your role in this chapter is to oppose Tenna and to confuse her about what goes on in the house on Vasen Road. At the same time you're under pressure from yourself because you want recognition and attention from those few friends who comes by for visits.

During the chapter you'll have to clarify why Jørgen has chosen to bring Tenna home.

By the way, you should remember that Tenna is your daughter - Kate is only her stepmother.

Kapitel 4

Kate

Unemployed church organ player, mother to Sonny, stepmother to Tenna

Jørgen left to pick up Tenna from the boarding school. So that's the way it is. Kate didn't object; that's none of her business. Tenna is not her daughter, after all. Jørgen would surely say so, if she opposed him. And that's true, of course. She isn't her daughter.

Kate looks down in her coffee. She's been drinking many cups today. What the hell else would she be doing? Another week gone by with nothing to do. Another week spent dreaming of wonderful organ music, and how badly she wants to work as an organ player again. Another week filled with the silence of Vasen Road. And yet, this week is slightly different. It's the winter break. Sonny and Tenna will be home. Now is the time to be together as a family. Now is the time for watching videos, playing games and going to the movies. But that's not what you do out here. Out here the families do very different things together.

...

She just wants to be happy. She wants that so much. To see Jørgen happy. And the kids. But they can't all be happy at the same time. That's not how it works out here. But it's most important that Jørgen is happy. That's when it's peaceful out here. Then Kate is also happy, and when he's happy he's nice to her.

To the player

In this chapter Tenna is the main character. She returns from boarding school after Jørgen picks her up. As Kate you'll have to decide what your relationship with Tenna is like and how you'll relate to her being back home - remembering that she isn't your daughter. Will you be the distant stepmother? Or will you be warm and welcoming? And how do you actually feel about Jørgen picking her up from school against her will?

During the chapter it's also important that you drop hints as to how much Kate truly knows of what goes on out here on Vasen road.

Chapter 5

Everything gets tense and Zenia's spirit disappears

Something is coming to the surface

A corpse becomes detached from the bottom of the canal and is approaching the surface. Zenia is out there. She's the one emerging into the light.

Britta makes contact again

Britta once again makes a connection with Zenia. But only for a moment, then she disappears completely, and Britta can no longer feel the spirit's presence.

What will Britta do?

The question now is, what will Britta do? She has a clear sense that something is very wrong out by the appliance repairman's place. But all her evidence is from the world beyond - and who will listen to that?

Lone picks up her washing machine

Lone's washer is repaired and can be picked up. This is set up to allow her to bring her mother along.

Sonny's been abandoned

Zenia has disappeared again, and Sonny's left by himself. He sits in his room, afraid. The princess is gone. What will he do? And what will he say to Tenna?

The special guests and Verner returns

The two special guests and Verner pops back in - and this time they've brought pizza. They're convinced that now that Tenna's come back home, they'll be able to get what they're after.

The conclusion

The scenario can conclude in many possible ways. However, it is important that the scenario ends as a tragedy. The children can't be saved - and if they could, they'll be scarred for life - and Britta will have to admit that she can't intervene.

The corpse emerges

Zenia's body emerges to the surface outside the pumping station. en.

Role distribution

Unlike in the other chapters, no role sheets are available for this chapter. Instead, the players will choose instead which roles they want from the descriptions they've already seen.

In the opening scene where Britta briefly makes contact, the players communally give input into what Zenia does.

Zenia's role

No fixed player portrays Zenia in this chapter. At the beginning of the chapter her corpse floats up towards the surface out in the canal, and in that moment her spirit passes on. Throughout the rest of the scenario her spirit is no longer present.