

# CHANGELING

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Winner of the Otto for Best Presentation

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## Roles



# Changeling

## Pitch

Arve and Gaia are two lonely 14-year-old teenagers, living in a small town next to a big forest. When Gaia is introduced as the new student in Arve's class, both of them experience a devastating, and until now also unfamiliar, attraction to each other – an almost beastly and overwhelming attraction.

As the relationship between these two teenagers grows more and more intense, a range of violent assaults begins to happen in the small town – attacks, which the teenagers are, indirectly though, responsible for. They start to realise that they are connected to the assaults happening in the town and that they both have a special connection to another world.

The scenario is a gloomy, supernatural personal horror story with a set storyline, playing out in set scenes, colored with atmosphere, emotions and inner dialogues from the two main characters. The focus of the game is on the inner story of the roles, not on a plot coming from the outside.

Changeling is a game for four players with two players playing two different perspectives on Arve's personality, while the two other players are playing two different perspectives on Gaia. A huge part of the game plays out as inner dialogues with the two perspectives talking to each other and thereby reacting to the outside world – and often without a lot of action taking place in the physical world. Besides playing the main characters, the players will also be playing some supporting characters.

## SCENARIO FACTS

**Number of participants:** 4 players + 1 game master

**Playing time:** 4-5 hours, including introduction and briefing

**Minimum age:** +16, the game includes violent scenes as well as sexual content

## The Story

Arve and Gaia are two teenagers living in a small Danish provincial town, situated next to a big forest. 14 years ago both of them were, as infants, found left in the wild.

Both teenagers are not aware that they are actually not humans but instead are children of The Underground. They were 'born' into the human world through a hollow tree in the woods, functioning as a gate to The Underground. They were raised believing they were ordinary humans who just happened to be left in the woods by their biological parents.

Arve and Gaia both have a connection to the underground world. When Arve and Gaia meet at age 14, this connection sparkles and bursts as they experience a tremendous attraction to each other. The physical connection between Arve and Gaia pushes the gate to The Underworld to unseal, and as the gate opens up, the world around them starts to change.

Until he meets Gaia, Arve has been an awkward outsider who has no friends and who is loved by no-one – not even by the woman who adopted him, calling him her son.

Gais has lived together with her father, but without any friends. He is aware that Gaia is something unusual and has been trying to protect her from the outside world. After an unsuccessful attempt of sending her to school while she was younger he has been keeping her at home, homeschooling her instead. Now that Gaia has become a teenager he has nevertheless accepted her once again trying to go to a real school – even though it worries him a lot.

When Gaia begins in Arve's class, both of them instantly feel an enormous attraction to each other. For the first time they both meet someone that seems to be just like them. Once before they have briefly seen each other in the woods, but now they meet for real for the first time.

The attraction is extremely intense. In one way it is very sexual, and in another way, it feels like nature and surroundings are changing in front of their eyes. At the same time the special connection both teenagers have to nature seems to be even more intense as they get physically closer to each other.

The surrounding world does not welcome the connection between those two weird young people. Oscar, a boy in their class, gets jealous as he wants Arve for himself. Gaia's father gets scared that Gaia may want to liberate herself and therefore will leave him. And people in town start blaming the kids for a series of horrible attacks – attacks with the boy Oscar and later his mother among the victims.

Even though neither Arve nor Gaia is directly involved in the attacks, they are – without being aware of it – indirectly responsible for them. Their connection to The Underground is manifesting itself as creatures attacking people who stand in the way of Arve and Gaia being together.

Near the end of the game Arve and Gaia begin to realise who and what they are – and what their relationship is doing to the world around them. They also realise that they indirectly are summoning these horrible creatures and where they come from.

In the finale the two teenagers make love by the lake in the forest and their unification summons another creature, which is born into this world. That is a creature that begins to kill all the people who have been mean to Arve and Gaia. In the final scene Arve and Gaia have to choose whether they will let the world burn and to stay together, or if they will close the magical connection to The Underground by pulling away from each other, and stay apart forever.

## Mood and genre

Changeling is a slow burn supernatural horror drama which slowly and atmospherically builds up to an intense climax with Arve and Gaia almost fusing together while violent things are happening around them.

Changeling is a personal horror story focusing on the realisation of not being a human and being something yet more frightening instead. The uncanny aspects of the game is more about realising being non-human than it is about horrors and sudden scares.

The game revels in heavy emotions and big sensuality, and it is supposed to be a bit over the top sometimes. The characters are

## CHANGELINGS

Changeling is – as the title suggests – inspired by old myths about changelings.

When children were especially ugly, stupid, different or retarded, people used to say, that they were changelings. They said that creatures from The Underground had swapped the real children with children from the underground world. It was used as an excuse to treat the children badly, due to the fact that they were not real human children. And if they would happen to disappear, no one would really care, because then they were just delivered back to the underground world.

As Arve and Gaia have not been swapped with real children, they are not changelings as in the classical definition of the word. Instead, they have been born into the human world through a hole in a dead tree, standing next to a forest lake. As infants both of them were found on the shore.

treated very unfairly and nastily by the grownups, and they might only find comfort in each other.

Changeling is a sensual game, mainly playing out inside the main characters' heads, with everything surrounding them seems intense and severe. Big parts of the game play out as inner dialogues, with the two aspects of each character's personality reacting and relating to all the things happening around them. Most of the game is playing out as dialogues and reactions on what is happening. The players take very few actions.

Nature – and the main character's perception of it – is also an important part of the game. By replying to questions asked by the game master, the players take part in describing how nature changes around the two teenagers as their relationship gets more and more intense.

### The two main characters

There are two main characters in the game and the four players play them in pairs – each sharing one of the characters with one of the other players. That means that two players are collaborating on playing Gaia while the two other players collaborate on playing Arve.

Each player has a unique perspective on their character. Together with the other player with the same character – but with a different perspective – they are collaborating on playing that character – for instance by playing out inner dialogues in the head of the character and by deciding which of the two players are responsible for speaking and acting on behalf of the character. Only one player at a time is able to speak and act as the given character. That right can be given to the other player during a scene – by concretely giving 'the right to speak' to the other player, symbolised by a piece of wood or a rock.

### Arve

Arve is a 14-year-old boy who is clumsy and seems immature. He is not aware that he was found as a baby in the woods by the local vicar and later adopted by the woman who he sees as his mother. She does not love Arve. She finds him difficult to handle. Nevertheless, she feels an obligation to take care of him.

Arve is short and sturdy. His connection to The Underground is expressed by earth, soil and everything in relation to these things. The two Arve players are playing Arve's Anger and Arve's Shame respectively.

### Gaia

Gaia is a 14-year-old girl, who grew up alone with the man she calls her father. She is aware that she as an infant was found in the woods. What she doesn't know is that she is actually not a human being – instead she comes from The Underground.

Gaia's father has always taken good care of her, and most of her life Gaia has been alone with him in their house next to the woods. For a short while she went to school, but because she was bullied her father decided to homeschool her instead. But now, Gaia has talked her father into letting her once again go to a real school, starting at the same time as she starts her preparation for confirmation.

Gaia is tall and thin and she is physically quite mature compared to her age. Her connection to The Underground is expressed through plants, trees and everything growing out of the soil. The two Gaia players are playing Gaia's Lust and Gaia's Fear respectively.

## INSPIRATION

Besides being inspired by old myths about changelings, the game is also inspired by a number of films focusing on young people being confronted by the supernatural in an otherwise realistic setting.

Especially the films *Let The Right One In*, about a young boy in 1980s Sweden, who becomes friends with a vampire girl; and *Witch*, about a young girl, who might or might not be a witch, killing her family. Also the film *Border*, about a lonely woman who is able to smell if people are lying and who finds out that she is actually some sort of a troll, inspired this game – especially in its description of the troll-like and its connection to nature.

## Struktur og spillestil

*Changeling* is quite simple in its construction, with a totally preset structure. It has three acts with set scenes playing out in chronological order. All scenes are supposed to be played and no scenes are meant to be able to skip or to be changed.

You as the game master set each scene, all of which are described in detail in the scene catalogue later in the scenario. In each scene it is also clearly stated if a player is responsible for playing a supporting character.

### Types of scenes:

- *One of the main characters with a supporting character.* Almost all these scenes are uncomfortable and confrontational, supporting the fact that no-one likes Arve and Gaia. It gives the different perspectives of the main characters something to react to.
- *The main characters are together, just the two of them.* Calm and exploratory scenes with the characters realising and exploring friendship, love and lust.
- *The main characters are together, just the two of them, with the inner perspectives talking to each other.* Either calm or more dramatic scenes, giving the characters a chance to digest conflicts and their new relationship with the other character.
- *Victim scenes, with a supporting character being attacked by weird creatures created by The Underground.* In these scenes the player are respectively playing the victim and the three creatures attacking. The main characters are not present in these scenes.

The game is more about immersing oneself in the atmosphere and creating the inner life and emotions of the characters than it is about making up the narrative or twisting the story in a new direction. The narrative and story evolves by itself and by the way the game is designed.

Instead the pleasure (and the challenge) for the players is to feel the character's inner life, and react to and experience the story, the atmosphere and the feelings overwhelming the two teenagers. It is all about playing out interesting scenes – inside the heads of the main characters, as well as in meeting each other and the surrounding world opposing them.

## The role of the game master

Your role as the game master is to hold the story tight, set and control scenes, and during the game to brief the players, preparing them to play the specific scenes. In addition, you will in certain scenes be playing support characters. Finally, you set the mood in the environment in each scene and ask the players relevant questions, so that both the inner life of the characters and the changing of the surrounding nature comes to play.

Generally, you are not supposed to improvise scenes and twists in the story – the scenes presented in this scenario text should make the story and drama evolve naturally.

Asking questions to the players is a big part of playing *Changeling*. They are meant as a way to help the players narrate and describe. In some scenes, nevertheless, it is important that the players are allowed to roleplay with each other without constantly being interrupted by questions.



## The scenario - scene for scene

In this chapter you'll find a short walkthrough of the scenes in the game. For a more detailed description of each scene, please go to the scene catalogue.

### Prologue

In **Prologue scene 1** we meet Arve, sitting alone in his room, thinking. His mother enters the room, scolding him, saying he must do what his teacher in school tells him to.

In **Prologue scene 2** Gaia is on her way to school, wondering how her first day of school is going to be. On her way she meets a girl who at first seems friendly, but before running away, the girl suddenly starts calling Gaia names and shouting at her.

### Act 1

In **scene 1** Gaia is presented in class by the teacher. She is asked to say a few words about herself. Immediately, Arve recognises her as the girl he has seen by the forest lake. Gaia also recognises Arve as the boy she has seen in the woods. The both immediately feel an intense attraction to each other – and Oskar, Arve's bully, also notices how they only seem to take notice of each other.

In **scene 2** Oskar becomes nasty towards Gaia, telling her bad things about Arve and to keep away from him.

In **scene 3** Arve confronts Oskar for talking badly to Gaia. They end up in a fight, and Arve is blamed for it by the teacher who ends up slapping his face. Oskar tells Arve that his mother is not his real mother.

In **scene 4** Gaia is walking home from school through town thinking about her first day. From a distance Arve is following. When Gaia gets to the edge of the forest she waits for Arve. In scene 5 Gaia, while walking through the forest, Arve and Gaia speak to each other for

the first time. Their connection out here in the forest wakes up The Underground, and a creature made of whirling leaves manifests itself. Arve and Gaia watch it happen.

**Victim scene 1:** In this scene Oskar, the boy, is attacked on his way home from soccer training by the creature that manifested itself in the forest. He is seriously hurt.

### Act 2

In **scene 1** Gaia talks to her father about her first day at school. He begins questioning her, being more and more controlling, in a mostly unpleasant way.

In **scene 2** Arve asks his mother if it is true that she is not his real mother. Without much hesitation she admits it to be true. It was the town's vicar who found him in the woods, she says.

In **scene 3** Arve and Gaia are questioned by the local policeman who suspects them of having attacked Oskar.

In **scene 4** Gaia is brought to the teacher's office. The teacher gets very unpleasant against her, demanding that she admits that she and Arve attacked Oskar. Outside the window, nature begins to react to Gaia's frustration. A branch suddenly crashes against the window, giving Gaia a possibility to escape.

In **scene 5 and 6** Arve is worriedly waiting for Gaia, fearing that she has disappeared, when Oskar's mother appears in the school yard accusing Arve of the attack of her son. She will have Arve sent to an institution, she warns him.

In **scene 7** Arve and Gaia are comforting each other by the forest lake. They get closer and closer and maybe they kiss or touch each other. As they are caught up in intimacy with

each other, they can see the hollow tree beginning to glow, while a pile of branches and vines is moving from the tree and through the forest floor away from them.

**Victim scene 2:** In this scene Oskar's mother is attacked by a creature made out of vines and thorny branches. She suffers a painful death.

### Act 3

In **scene 1** Arve turns to the vicar to ask about his parents and who they are. The vicar seems friendly at first but ends up suggesting that Arve runs to the forest to drown himself in the forest lake. As he says so, worms and vines try to help Arve to escape and run to the forest.

In **scene 2** Gaia's father tells her that she is grounded and can't see Arve anymore. He tries to hold her back physically, and it's not before plants and trees are trying to help her by pulling her towards the forest, so that she is able to escape from the house.

In **scene 3** Gaia and Arve once again meet by the lake where they comfort each other and get very intimate and physical. They see a creature made of mud and rock being born from the hollow tree, which is almost split by it. While Arve and Gaia are exploring each other's bodies, the scene cuts to a scene with the creature from The Underground killing the vicar. The creature moves on – and while Arve and Gaia are having sex – the otherworldly manifestation ends up killing Gaia's father. Gaia and Arve lay on the forest floor and the game ends.

Perhaps Arve and Gaia stop what they are doing when they realise what the consequence of their affection is. In that case the split hollow tree falls in the water and the gate is closed. Then Arve and Gaia are suddenly normal children without any special attraction towards each other.

# Setting and background

## Background

### WHERE DO GAIA AND ARVE LIVE?

Arve lives in an ordinary and rather boring house in the small town together with the woman who he knows as his mother.

Gaia lives in a small wooden house at the other side of the forest together with the man she knows as her father. The house is situated on the edge of the forest, and to get to her new school Gaia has to walk through the forest.

### A small town in the 1980s

*Changeling* is set in a small Danish provincial town. What the name of the town is and where it's situated is not important. It is a dull, typical town with a couple of thousand inhabitants with a school, an old church with a vicarage next to it, and a couple of supermarkets – and not much more than that.

The town is situated by the edge of a forest which is much more exciting than the town itself. The forest is – in some places at least – impassable and very dense. Ponds and bogs are scattered around in the forest, seeming more muddy and scary than pretty and idyllic.

The game is set sometimes in the 1980s but could just as well take place today. Technology plays no role in the game, but for the players it would be nice to know that it is set in the 1980s if they want some references to improvise from. Adults are more authoritarian than today and children – especially our main characters – are not treated as children would be today.

The game takes place in March in early spring, at the time of year – at least in Denmark – where it can be as dark and cold as it can be spring-like. At the time of year, only a very few indications of spring is showing up, and everything mostly feels grey, dull, and wet – in the very certain way March can be where everything just seems incredibly tired of a boring, grey winter, just longing intensely

for a spring that is still not on its way.

### The Underground

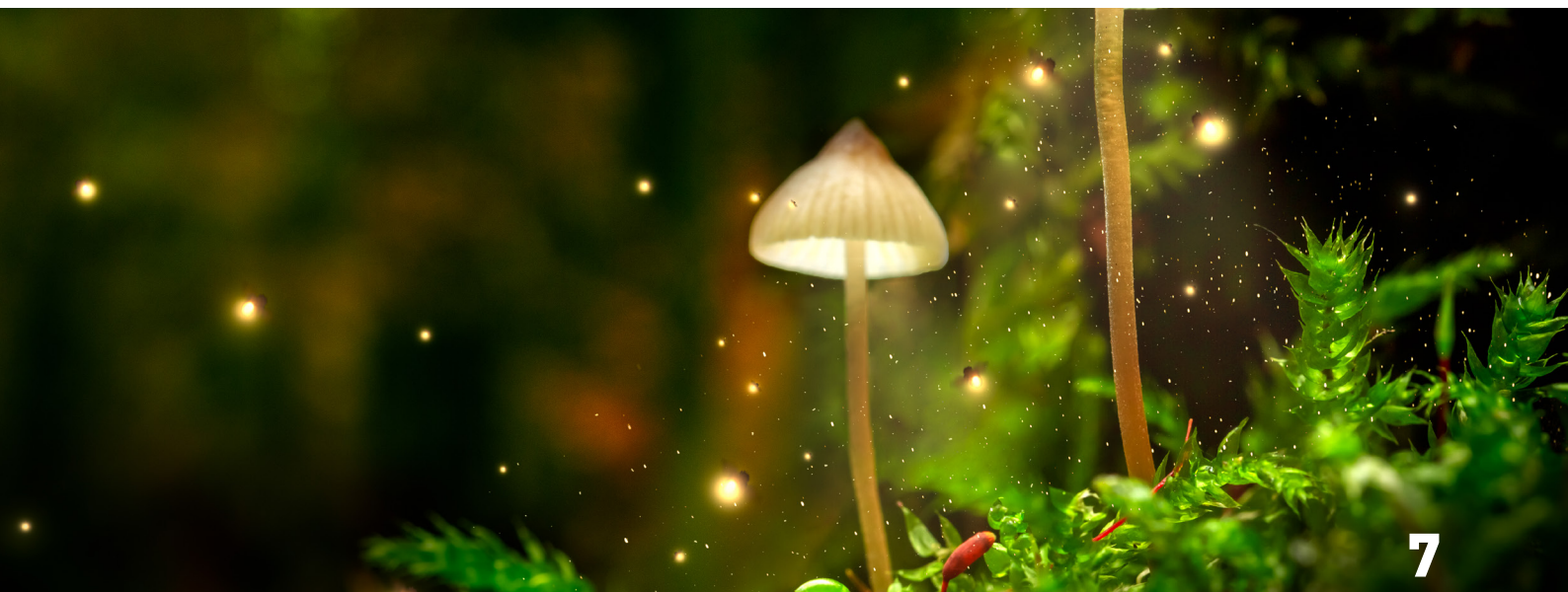
In the woods, by a forest lake, is the gate to The Underground. Down there the soil and the plants reign and everything seems very different than in our familiar world.

The gate to The Underground is a large, old tree by the shore leaning out over the lake. The trunk is split and connects again, thereby forming a hole in the tree which is the actual gate.

The Underground is everything incomprehensible about nature. It is the raw forces of nature, the violent part as well as the gentle and poetic part. And it is very frightening too. The Underground is nature as the opposite of civilization, the opposite of everything that we know so well and thereby feel comfortable about in all its dullness.

Once in a while, The Underground feeds creatures into the human world, creatures that seem similar to humans. They are born from the gate, looking like infant human children. These children are always born in pairs, with their special connection to each other helping the connection between the two worlds to stay partly open. When these children approach adulthood, this special connection will make sure that the gate opens for real.

Those children are Arve and Gaia.



# Setting and background

## HOW MUCH OF THE BACKSTORY IS PRESENTED DURING PLAY?

When the game begins, the two main characters believe themselves to be completely ordinary young people. During the game, they figure out a bit about their background – and perhaps they realise that they are not human.

This information is supposed to be something that the main characters and the players should be looking for or investigating. Changeling is not about investigation. Information is presented during the game – often from a supporting character instructed to present certain information during play. If specific information is supposed to be presented, it will clearly be stated in the scene description

Not all of the backstory is presented to the players and the main characters during play. It is not important for the player's experience that all information is presented.

## Arve and Gaia are not human – and people can sense that

Because Arve and Gaia come from The Underground, they don't really belong in the human world – even though they grew up in our world and it's all that they know.

They experience themselves as odd and different from other kids, and it feels like no-one really likes them – which is true. Instead, Arve and Gaia are experienced as being weird, difficult, and hard to care about and identify with – without people being able to explain why.

## Gaia and Arve have a bond with nature – and nature is changing

Because of their descent from The Underground, both Arve and Gaia have a special bond with nature. They both experience nature in a more intense way than other people and each of them has their own special connection to it. Arve is especially connected to the earth and everything solid and strong coming from it. Gaia has a special connection to plants, trees and everything growing up from the earth.

Even before they meet – and thereby open their shared bond to The Underground – both Arve and Gaia have a tight connection with nature. They both love the forest: and they often come here to be alone, and to do things that people around them don't know about and wouldn't do themselves.

They have both seen each other briefly in the forest, and already back then they felt a special attraction. And when they meet each other in school and their attraction explodes

with so far unknown feelings, nature is also beginning to change around them. Their relationship opens the gate to The Underground, and that makes everything change. They suddenly experience nature as more intense, and it feels like nature becomes more and more present for them.

At the same time nature animates around them. Trees are suddenly able to move, vines can twine, and branches can push against windows. The earth is even able to shake, and everything can get violent and scary – and beautiful too.

## The Underground attacks those who tries to separate Arve and Gaia

When the gate to The Underground starts to open, and Arve and Gaia meet, it will do all in its power to stay open.

It is the attraction between Arve and Gaia that opens the gate. The closer they get, the more the gate will open, and the more The Underground tries to enter the human world.

That is why the Underground – which is best described as an incomprehensible, rough and violent force of nature – manifests itself as creatures attacking those who try to keep the children of The Underground apart. This comes into play when Oskar and later Oskar's mother are attacked by weird, scary monsters made out of for instance leaves, mud and ooze.

During the game the players play these attacks in a couple of violent scenes, playing out as intermezzos between the scenes with Arve and Gaia.





## How to play the game

### ONE SCENE PER PAGE

You will not find a classic flowchart or cheat sheet in Changeling. Instead, the layout of the scene catalogue is made so each scene is presented on a separate page.

As the game is played chronologically, scene for scene, with everything relevant for that scene presented on the specific page, it should be quite easy to command the game.

Both playing and game mastering Changeling should be quite easy. The game consists of set scenes with quite a set story in each of them, and therefore the task of the players is mainly to play the different perspectives of the roles, their inner lives and dialogues.

It is not about making up a story as the game is running. Neither is it about trying to figure out a lot of potential ways the story could unfold.

### Your task as game master

Your task as the game master is quite simple. You will keep and control the game in a tight way by setting the scenes and guiding the players in the right directions during play – for instance by asking the different perspectives questions during play, helping the inner life of the main characters really get into play.

### As the game master you are supposed to:

- Present the game for the players, making them comfortable and ready to play.
- Allocate roles in the different scenes, handing out descriptions for the supporting characters.
- Help the players by asking relevant questions, nudging the players in the right direction during the scenes.
- Set the scenes and instruct the players so that they know what the purpose of the scene is.
- Play supporting characters in scenes where there are no available players to do so (because both main characters are present

in the scene).

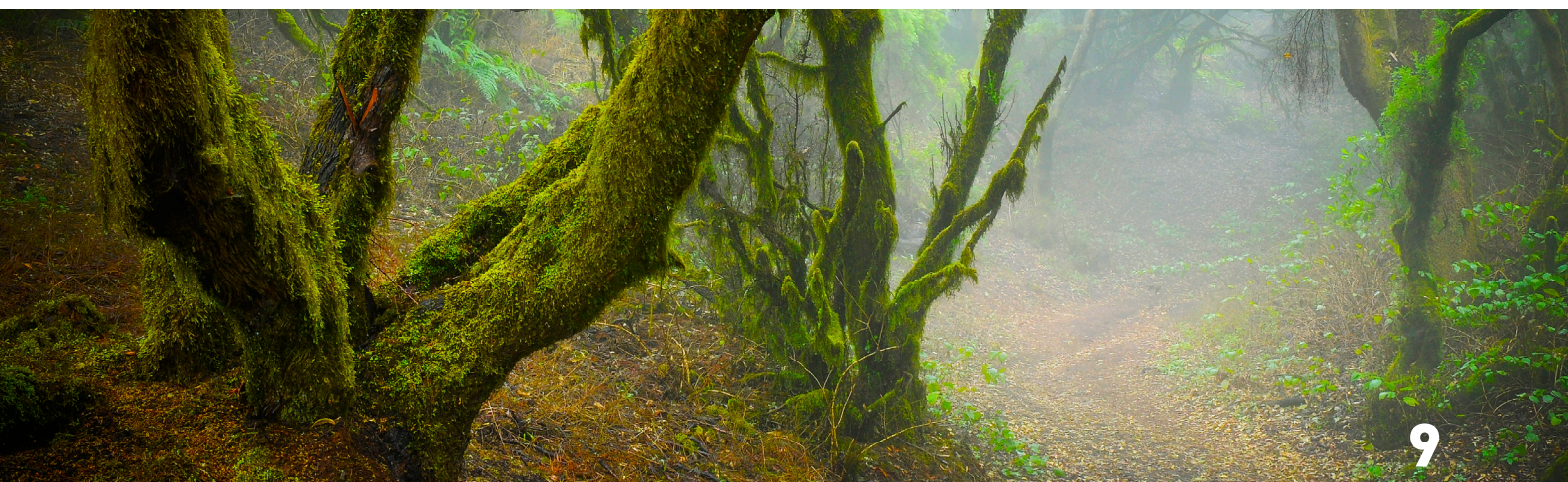
- Set the mood by describing and asking relevant questions to the players, making the players elaborate the mood you have set.

### The different tasks for the players

Depending on which scene they are playing, the players have different tasks. In each scene, each player, nevertheless, always only has one task. In the scene descriptions it is stated which task each player has in a specific scene.

### Spillerne kan have følgende opgaver:

- Play their unique perspective on either Arve or Gaia as described in the player's character description. They do that both by playing an inner dialogue and by describing the world as it is seen from that specific perspective – often as a reply to questions asked by the game master – or by actually playing the main character because the player has 'the right to speak' (which will be described later in in this text).
- Playing a supporting character, presented by the game master who hands out a short text note with a character description to the player at the beginning of the scene.
- Participate in describing and establishing nature around the characters, often by request by the game master asking relevant questions.
- Play the victim or one of the scary manifestations of The Underground, attacking the victim in the special victim scenes.



## The perspectives

### Two players are sharing one main character

A central game mechanic when playing Changeling is that the players, in teams of two, are sharing the same main character. Each player plays a specific perspective on either Gaia or Arve. That means that during the game there will be both inner dialogues between the two perspectives of a character, as well as normal dialogues with the main characters speaking to either each other or to supporting characters.

Each perspective is a different expression of the main character's personality. They represent conflicting emotions and an inner conflict in both Arve and Gaia. The perspectives supplement each other; and, in collaboration, they express that inner life of the characters which is important to get into play during the game.

### The perspectives depend on each other

In many ways the two perspectives overlap and they need each other to make everything work, making sure things don't get out of hand. Each perspective has an inner conflict that on the one hand makes it dependent on the other perspective, and on the other hand makes the perspective tired of the bonds and limitations that the other perspective puts up.

The perspectives are not meant to be absolute opposites, always fighting for attention and control, constantly pulling in their own direction. The task of a perspective is not trying to win over the other perspective.

The emotions and the perspective that a player is responsible for are not thought of as a very pure emotion and are not meant to be played in a very one-dimensional way. The perspective is also in conflict with itself, and it is well aware that it needs to be kept in check. In that way, a player could very well choose to let its perspective be in doubt, trying to limit itself – with or without help

from the other player.

For instance, Arve's Anger is well aware that it is not helpful to be constantly angry – that it will not solve all conflicts. Anger needs Shame to hold itself in check – even though Anger, at the same time, is also tired of being held in check by Shame. In that way it might sometimes be necessary for Anger to hand over control to Shame, making sure everything is not running out of hand – and on the other hand, there will be situations where Anger wants to take over control from Shame, wanting anger and action right now. And likewise, Shame might want to take control, wanting to prevent Anger from creating more problems.

In this way the two perspectives, besides their differences, often want the same and might often work together, agreeing on which perspective should control the main character in a given situation.

The players should always remember that the two perspectives are an expression of the same person and that the players should collaborate to portray a multifaceted character.

### Who has the right to speak in a scene?

When you are playing a scene – both when a main character is alone and when he or she is with other people – both perspectives are present. They can talk to each other, tell about their feelings, and they can both in their own way color the mood of the scene and try to influence the situation playing out. They can tell about the surrounding world, as seen from their specific perspective, and they can discuss feelings and how each of them perceives the given situation.

Nevertheless, only one of the perspectives is in control of the character's actions. In scenes with other characters present, only one of the perspectives has the 'right to speak'. If, for instance, Arve's Anger has the right to speak, only the player playing Arve's

Anger is allowed to speak as Arve and describe and play his actions.

The other perspective can interfere and speak inside the character's head – but only to the other perspective. If any external dialogue is taking place between the character and other people, only the perspective with the right to speak can do so.

The right to speak only changes if the player who has it at the moment hands it over to the other perspective. In that way, if, for instance, a conversation gets hard or uncomfortable, a perspective who has the right to speak can choose to hand over that right to the other perspective. That could also happen if the player wants help from the other perspective to handle the given situation.

Situations can happen where both perspectives want to speak and react as the character – and, likewise, where neither of the perspectives wants to do so. If that happens, and they just keep on pushing the right to speak to each other, it means that the character is doing nothing in the scene – not until one of the perspectives accepts the right to speak. These kinds of situations can make up some interesting scenes inside the character's head.

All that means that what might look like a quite ordinary and short conversation between Arve and, for instance, his mother, takes a while because external dialogue between Arve and the mother takes place while the two perspectives heavily debate what they want to say and do.

It also means that it is possible to play out scenes with neither of the main characters actually speaking but an inner dialogue taking place inside the character. It could be a scene with Arve and Gaia in class with only the teacher actually speaking – but at the same time with all perspectives speaking inside the main characters' heads, for instance, about what the two characters think of each other.

# Playing Changeling

## WHY DOES ONLY ONE PLAYER HAVE THE RIGHT TO SPEAK?

The purpose of the right to speak mechanic is to prevent the players from speaking at the same time when the character speaks to other people. Besides that, it also reflects the inner battle between conflicting emotions going on inside the characters. That is a battle, probably familiar to many people, where you want to react to a certain situation by acting out nice and calm; but at the same time have the urge to cry out, yell, and denounce the situation.

### **Avoid fighting for the right to speak**

The right to speak is not supposed to be something that a player should try to keep for all sakes, not giving the other player room to play as well. If a player does so, please help them understand how it is supposed to be. As mentioned earlier, the perspectives are not supposed to fight for power and control – instead, they are supposed to collaborate on painting an interesting portrait of the character's inner life.

## **Physical mechanic: A stick and a rock represents the right to speak**

To clearly show which perspective has the right to speak it is represented physically by a piece of wood to the Gaia platers and a big stone for the Arve players. The player who has the piece of wood or the stone has the right to speak. Then, when the player wants to hand over the right to speak to the other perspective, they can physically push the token to the other player.

You can, of course, use tokens other than a piece of wood and a stone. Just remember to use quite large objects that are easy to spot during the game and are capable of being pushed from one player to the other.

## **Describing thoughts and surroundings as experienced from the character's perspective**

During the scenes you will, as the game master, often ask questions directly targeted to the different perspectives. You will do so to make the player tell about how their perspective experiences a given situation and to make the player color the surroundings – thereby helping to set the mood of the game.

If one of the perspectives has spent some time on describing, you can change the center of attention to the other perspective

to hear about what they think about the situation. You can also ask conflicting questions to the two perspectives, thereby making them show how the character is split – or to vary the game and get another angle on the same situation.

You can also ask a specific player to describe the surroundings and the mood. You can, for instance, ask what Arve's room looks like, or how Gaia experiences her walk through the forest. Use questions regarding the surroundings to give the players a chance to express the personality of their different perspectives – and don't be afraid to ask the same questions to several perspectives, giving them an opportunity to elaborate their different interpretations of a situation.

Likewise, you can ask questions to make the perspectives cooperate. You might, for instance, ask why one of the perspectives finds the situation hard to handle. By asking your question in this way, you might also indirectly suggest that the other perspective could be helpful – for instance, by taking over the right to speak or by trying to motivate and encourage the perspective which is having a hard time

In the scene descriptions you will find suggestions for questions you can ask. You might also need to make up questions that are relevant for your players and the



## Supporting characters and victim scenes

### THE SUPPORTING CHARACTERS:

- **Arve's mother:** Does not love Arve and scolds him all the time.
- **Gaia's father:** Loves Gaia but is very controlling at the same time.
- **Oskar:** Takes advantage of Arve and is unpleasant towards Gaia.
- **Oskar's mother:** Hates Arve and is disgusted by him.
- **The teacher:** Is very unpleasant towards Gaia.
- **The vicar:** Exposes Gaia in an unpleasant way. Uges Arve to go drown himself.
- **The local policeman:** Asks Gaia and Arve questions about what happened to Oskar.

The supporting characters are described in the scene descriptions. You will also find some overviews with briefings for the supporting characters, easy to cut up and hand out to the players during play. In each briefing it is stated which scene they appear in and which player will play them.

situation in your actual game.

In the majority of the scenes one of the players is playing a supporting character – if one appears in the scene. In a few scenes, though, you as the game master have that task. In the description of each scene it is clearly stated who will be playing each supporting character.

The scenes are designed in that way so a player will never have to play a supporting character and their special perspective at the same time. In scenes with both Arve and Gaia present you, as the game master, will be playing a potential supporting character.

If a supporting character is present in a scene you will find a short briefing which you will hand out to the relevant player before the scene starts. And likewise, if you are supposed to play a supporting character, you will find a briefing meant for you too. A few supporting characters have information that they need to present during the scene. That might, for instance, be in a scene with Arve's Mother who needs to tell Arve that she is not his real mother. If so, it is stated clearly in the briefing.

The main task of the supporting characters is to push the emotions of the main characters and thereby influence the way they are played. A secondary task is to present relevant information.

All supporting characters are unpleasant towards Arve and Gaye. Some players might find that hard to play. In the descriptions of the supporting characters it is explained why they are unpleasant towards them.

### Sacrifices - Victim scenes

In majority of the scenes either Arve or Gaia – or both of them – are present in the scene, interacting with each other or a supporting character. An exception to this are the victim scenes, in which a supporting character is attacked by scary manifestations from The Underground. These are sort of cut-scenes, presenting information and setting the mood for the players.

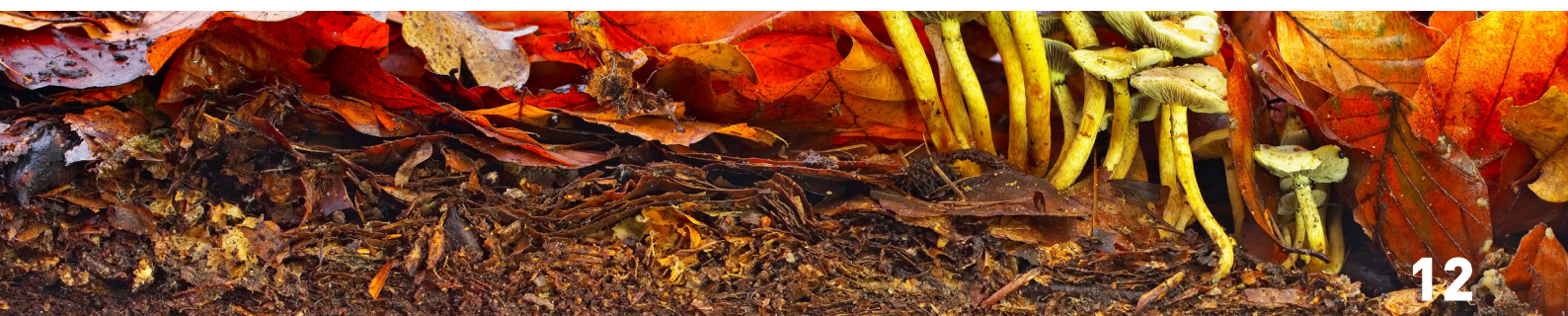
The attacks take place because the people being attacked have tried to prevent Arve and Gaia from being together. The Underground is trying to ensure that the two teenagers will merge together and thereby make the connection between the two worlds as wide as possible.

In the game there will be two victim scenes, plus an additional scene in the climax in which the game cuts between Arve and Gaia in the woods and the monstrousness of the manifestations taking place at the same time.

In each victim scene, one of the players will play the victim while the three remaining players will play the manifestations attacking the victim. Each player is handed a short brief, describing the situation and what is supposed to happen. Who will be playing the victim is decided by you as the game master – or you can ask the players.

Each victim scene begins with the victim setting the scene and introducing what is going on. Who is the victim and what are they doing? You can help the player getting started, if they find it difficult. Now, the other players can begin telling what happens. Perhaps it starts with the victim sensing a cold burst of wind. Afterwards he is knocked off his bicycle by some tweens. From here it just gets worse and worse. Let the players take turns, telling what happens. Make room for the victim trying to react to the situation. Let the scene escalate until it gets to where it is said in the briefings.

End the victim scenes when the victim is either seriously hurt or killed – as stated in the players' brief for the scene.



## Examples of the playing style

To give you as the game master a better idea of how the game is actually played, this chapter presents a couple of examples of how the game works.

### Arve talks to his mother

In this scene Arve is supposed to ask about his past – and whether his mother is actually his real mother.

You begin by handing out the supporting character briefing for Arve’s mother to the player playing Gaia’s Lust, making sure the player has time to read it. Then you set the scene and tell the players that Arve sits at breakfast with his mother – and that he in this scene wants to ask about what Oskar told him earlier on: That his mother is not actually his real mother.

Now, you ask Arve’s Anger to tell what Oskar was saying about Arve’s mother? The player starts to tell and shortly after you ask Arve’s Shame about what kind of emotions it awoke in him – and if it is something he has been thinking a lot about afterwards.

The two perspectives of Arve now begin debating with each other. Which of them should ask the mother the precarious question of whether it’s true that she is not his real mother? If the two perspectives do not decide who has the right to speak, you might ask them directly who has it. They finally decide it’s better if Shame starts. Anger might too easily get upset.

With a wave of your hand you allow the Shame player to speak – as they have got the

right to speak.

Now, the player playing Arve’s Shame asks the player playing the mother if it is true that she is not his real mother. It was what Oskar said, the Shame-player adds, before she gets a chance to reply – but Oskar might be lying, they add too.

Without hesitation she confirms that she is not his real mother. Arve was adopted, she says.

Now, Arve’s Anger starts to speak inside the head – that he fucking knew it! That she has never loved him!

Arve and his mother are having an awkward conversation in which Arve realises that his adoptive mother does not love him. At one point the right to speak changes to Arve’s Anger. The Shame-player – who has had the right until now – realises that it is time to get some anger into play.

Meanwhile, you start asking what Shame feels about what his mother is saying. The questions are upsetting Shame to a point where he feels like crying, they say.

To avoid the embarrassment of crying, the Anger player now gets Arve to run out of the door. That is where you cut the scene.

### Gaia and Arve in the forest

Arve has followed Gaia to the forest and now they have the first scene in the game with the two of them alone together – and where they can talk to each other for the first time.

You start the scene by telling that in this scene Arve and Gaia will walk through the

forest – and that they will hesitatingly try to speak to each other.

One of the players is especially good at describing, you have noticed. That is why you ask that player to describe how the forest floor sounds when Arve and Gaia come walking.

The player now describes in detail how it makes almost no sound when Gaia’s feet touch the forest floor. The player continues by describing Gaia’s long legs, almost moving like insect legs with multiple joints.

You turn your attention to Arve, asking his two perspectives to talk about the situation as seen from their point of view – and you ask which of them has the right to speak.

While Arve’s perspectives discuss that matter, you ask Gaia’s Lust about Arve’s smell – does she like that smell? The player talks about the intense smell of Arve. Meanwhile they discreetly take the right to speak, while the Fear player accepts it by nodding.

“You sometimes roll yourself in the dirt, don’t you?” the Lust player asks Arve.

Arve’s two perspectives become totally silent, pushing the right to speak token between each other a couple of times before Shame finally accepts it.

From here the conversation between Gaia and Arve develops. Once in a while you interrupt them by asking one of the players to tell about or describe something about the other character. Or you ask one of the perspectives to elaborate on something.



## Briefing the players

Before beginning to play it is important to brief the players thoroughly on how to play the game and how to handle the different tasks and roles. You might also practice the base concept of the game by playing a couple of short warm-up scenes.

### Base concept

- The game is a supernatural, sensual horror drama about two teenagers experiencing an intense love unlike anything they have ever tried before.
- The two teenagers Arve and Gaia experience a very intense attraction to each other. It is an important part of the game that the players play out this attraction during the game – and give it full throttle in the climax.
- The players collaborate in pairs on playing Arve and Gaia. Two players are playing the two perspectives on Gaia's personality, the other two are playing Arve's perspectives.
- The perspectives representing Gaia are Lust and Fear.
- The perspectives representing Arve are Anger and Shame.
- In certain scenes the players will be playing supporting characters.

### Setting and mood

- The game takes place in a small, Danish, provincial town sometime in the 1980s. The time period is not important but modern technology has no role. Compared to today, everything seems a bit stiff and old-fashioned. Grownups are more authoritarian.
- The game is slow and sensual, with a supernatural touch slowly creeping in. There will be no jump scares and things like that: instead, a lurking sense of something is different than how it at first seems.
- Nature plays a big part, and the players should help describe it.

### Scenes and narrative

- The game has a set narrative with fixed scenes. The players should not worry about making the story flow or about which direction the game should go.
- The players just have to focus on playing the scenes, as set by the game master. The game master might talk a bit about the scenes before playing it, making sure everyone knows what it is about.
- The game includes quiet, thoughtful, sensual scenes as well as more violent ones.
- You are not in a hurry. Take your time to play the scenes.

### Playing the perspectives

- The two perspectives on each of the main characters are meant as specific aspects of the main character's personality, showing the character from different points of view.
- The perspectives represent conflicting emotions, but they are not meant to be one-dimensional. They should not only pull the character in one direction, but are also supposed to cooperate in interest of the character's well being.
- Each perspective is dependent on the other perspective. For instance, Arve's Anger needs Shame, to make sure that everything doesn't get out of hand.
- The players are not supposed to play a sort of caricature of their

perspective. For instance, Gaia's Fear should not only be afraid all the time. In Fear there is also some lust, and vice versa. Arve's Anger can also limit himself, even if Shame is not active or speaking all the time.

- In that way, playing the perspectives is about showing a complex, three-dimensional character with conflicting emotions.
- It is not about making one's perspective win.

### Inner dialogues – and narrating from one's perspective

- A big part of the game takes place inside the heads of the main characters, with the perspective having an inner dialogue – like someone speaking to themselves.
- The game master might ask a specific perspective to tell and describe something.
- Often, the game master might ask questions to a specific perspective – or to both perspectives at the same time.
- The perspectives can speak to each other, discussing the situation and what they should do. They might disagree – or try to help each other.

### The right to speak, actions and external dialogue

- Only one perspective in each main character can speak or act on behalf of the character at a time. That perspective has 'the right to speak' and is able to talk to or interact with supporting characters.
- The right to speak is represented physically by tokens: a stone for Arve and a stick for Gais. Whoever has the stone or the rock has the right to speak.
- A player is not allowed to take the right to speak from the other player. It can only be handed over voluntarily. A player can, of course, ask to have it.
- Often a player will try to make the other player take the right to speak, due to an awkward situation. A big part of the play inside the character's head will be about who should have the right to speak.

### Playing supporting characters

- Supporting characters are either played by the game master or by one of the players.
- In each scene it is stated clearly who will be playing supporting characters. The game master will inform the players in each scene, and will hand out a short brief to the relevant players.
- If a supporting character MUST do something specific in a scene, it will be stated clearly in the brief.
- The supporting characters are supposed to be unpleasant towards the main characters. They are also supposed to try to make the main characters sad and frustrated.

### Sacrifices in victim scenes

- Victim scenes are special scenes in which a person is being attacked. In these scenes the main characters are not present.
- One player plays the victim while the other three players play the attackers.
- The victim will start the scenes, followed by the other players narrating what happens to the victim. The victim can react to what is happening.

## Three short warm-up scenes

To practice the special playing style and tone of this game, you might play three short warm-up scenes showcasing the playing style.

### **Two young people at a nightclub – practice playing perspectives**

Start with a warm-up scene in which the players can practice playing perspectives and having an inner dialogue.

The characters are two teenagers – a boy and a girl – at a nightclub. The perspectives are: The Girl's Lust, The Girl's Fear, The Boy's Pride, and The Boy's Horniness. The Boy is standing by himself with a beer, watching the dance floor. The Girl is on the floor, dancing, wanting to get The Boy's attention.

Set the scene by shortly describing the nightclub and the situation. Start with The Girl. Let the perspectives talk to each other. Let them describe their perception of The Boy and their attraction to him. What is holding The Girl back? Continue with The Boy. Are his perspectives noticing The Girl? What are they doing? Who has the right to speak?

Play the scene. Make the players practice inner dialogues, describing from their specific points of view, and the concept of the right to speak.

### **Sensuality – try playing the scene again**

You might also practice playing the game in a sensual way. Ask the players to play the scene at the nightclub again. But instead of focusing on the two young people meeting each other, ask the players to focus on the sensual dimension. Let them describe the nightclub and each other.

What does it smell like here? How is the light? How do you sense The Boy's presence across the room? How is The Girl dancing? What happens with the music? How does the alcohol feel in the body? What is it like getting excited and horny?

### **Wolves attacking a man – practice a victim scene**

Finally, you might try playing a victim scene.

A man is on his way home from a small town when he is attacked by a pack of wolves. One player is playing the man, the other three are playing the teeth, claws and the scary sounds of the wolves respectively. Let the man set the scene and play a short scene with the wolves attacking him. Let the players describe the attack and how the man experiences the teeth, the claws and the scary sounds.

### **Schedule for playing the game**

*Changeling* is supposed to take approximately 4-5 hours to play. At the first playtest we spent approximately three hours to play the game, with the game master focusing on running the game quite fast-paced.

- Briefing and warm up: App. 1 hour
- Act 1: App. 1 hour
- Act 2: App. 1 hour and 30 minutes
- Act 3: App. 45 minutes.



# Prologue - scene 1

## Prologue - scene 1

### Arve all alone

**Arve is alone in his room before school. His mom enters and scolds him.**

#### SUPPORTING CHARACTER - ARVE'S MOTHER

**Gaia's Fear** is playing *Arve's mother*

##### Briefing for the player:

You enter Arve's room and give him a scolding for not yet being ready for school. Wait for the game master's sign to enter. Please, let Arve sit alone for a while before entering.

Start your talk with Arve by telling him that he's being late for school (again) and hasn't done his homework - as always.

You are allowed to be cruel to Arve. You don't really like him. The purpose of the scene is to make Arve sad and uncomfortable, thereby giving his two perspectives something to talk about and react to.

#### CUES FOR ROOM DESCRIPTION

Faded posters of motorcycles. Strange drawings of dark shapes. A single drawing of a slender tree with long branches. Big rocks collected in the forest. The smell of unwashed laundry mixed with the aroma of soil. Dirty socks on the floor.

In his first scene, taking place in the morning before school, Arve sits alone in his room. He is just sitting there letting his thoughts fly. After a short while his mom enters the room and begins to scold him.

The purpose of the scene is to establish the introverted, sensual and descriptive mood of the game. When you sense that the scene is played out, you end it.

##### Trying out the game mechanics

In the first part of this scene Arve's two players can try out the game mechanic concerning playing the perspectives and having an inner dialogue. In the second part of the scene, when Arve's mom enters, the theme of the game with the adults not liking Arve is struck. At the same it gives Arve's perspectives something to react actively against, giving the inspiration to play.

##### Describe the room - and tell about Arve

Give the players a brief description of the room, and start out by making Anger and Shame tell about Arve from each of their perspectives. Please remember: At the beginning of the scene, the players only have their briefings and their role description to play from. It's only natural if they are a bit nervous about how to play.

##### Inspiration for your questions

- **Shame:** What are you looking at when sitting by the window?
- **Anger:** You have not yet packed your bag for school - why not?
- **Shame:** Your math book is in front of you - what have you been sketching in the book?
- **Anger:** What are you thinking of when looking at your drawings of dark trees?

##### Arve's mom enters

When you think it is time for Arve's mom to enter the room, give her a sign. Ask Anger and Shame who has The Right to Speak. Let them discuss it inside Arve's head for a bit.

##### Ask further questions during the scene

Anger or Shame: What happens when your mom talks to you in that way?  
Anger: Why hasn't Shame made sure your bag is packed for school?





# Prologue - Scene 2

## Prologue - Scene 2

### Gaia on her way to school

**Gaia is walking to school for the first time in many years. She meets a girl that seems nice at first, but then makes fun of Gaia.**

#### SUPPORTING CHARACTER - THE GIRL

**Arve's Shame** plays the girl

##### Briefing for the player:

Gaia meets a girl close to the school. At first the girl pretends to be nice but then she begins to comment and mock Gaia for her strange appearance and her clothing. And then she runs away, laughing.

Wait until the game master signals you to enter the scene. Start by saying hi to Gaia and ask her if she's new here.

Let Gaia think you are nice to her, before you start saying ugly things to her. Feel free to improvise. You decide when to stop by running away laughing.

You're supposed to be mean and you're supposed to make Gaia sad. The purpose of the scene is to give Gaia's perspectives something to talk about and to react to.

#### CUES FOR DESCRIBING THE ATMOSPHERE

Strange screams coming from the schoolyard. Smell of asphalt and the scent of fake flowers coming from the other girl's perfume. Shriill laughter.

In Gaia's first scene she is approaching the school while wondering what's going to happen today. She hasn't been to school in many years, as her father has been homeschooling her.

While approaching the schoolyard Gaia meets a girl. At first she seems nice, but then she starts laughing about and mocking Gaia's strange appearance and odd clothes. The girl confirms all of Fear's concerns. Stop the scene whenever you feel it is played out.

##### Describing Gaia and her expectations

Before Gaia meets the girl, ask the players to describe Gaia and her expectations.

##### Inspiration for your questions

- **Lust:** You're going to school - how does it feel?
- **Fear:** How does it feel to be out of the woods and so close to the school?
- **Fear** and **Lust:** What does Gaia look like and what clothes is she wearing? And why is she wearing that?
- **Fear:** What could go wrong on a day like this?
- Ask **Lust** to comfort **Fear**.

##### Meeting the girl

Introduce the girl when it fits the scene. When Gaia meets the girls ask the players who has The Right to Speak. Let them discuss it for a short time.

Afterwards, when the girl has run away from Gaia, you could have Lust and Fear discuss the encounter. How does this affect their expectations for the first day at school?

# Act 1 - Scene 1

## Act 1 - Scene 1

### Gaia og Arve mødes

**Gaia is introduced to the class as the new girl. A strong attraction between Arve and Gaia at their first look. Oskar gets jealous.**

#### SUPPORTING CHARACTERS

The game master plays the role of the teacher and perhaps also Oskar. Other children can interact but only in the background. They are played by you as well.

**The teacher** is predisposed against Gaia. Let his animosity shine through. The teacher also has a deep hatred towards Arve. The teacher is an unpleasant adult who constantly discriminates against Arve.

**Oskar** notices that Gaia and Arve look at each other with extreme interest. You can let Arve notice a very jealous stare from Oskar, but there's no talking yet. The look is a warning for the confrontation in the next scene.

#### CUES FOR DESCRIPTION OF THE CLASSROOM

The classroom seems shut off from the real world, dull and gray. The opposite of nature. Outside the trees seem distant and foggy. The window panes are matted with dirt and grime. The carpet feels unnatural. Fake and artificial. No natural materials. Not earth. Not stone. All fake.

In the classroom Arve and Gaia meet for the first time and experience an enormous and base attraction to each other – even though they have never met before.

Arve sits by himself as the teacher walks in accompanied by Gaia. The teacher introduces Gaia and Arve immediately recognizes her as the girl he has seen by the lake. Gaia is asked to introduce herself and during her - fumbling - presentation she suddenly notices Arve. She also recognizes Arve as the boy she's seen by the lake in the forest.

#### No direct communication

Arve and Gaia have no direct communication in this scene. Mostly, this scene takes place in the characters' minds, with the two perspectives of each character reacting to what is happening.

#### Make their attraction painfully clear

Arve and Gaia's attraction to each other must come clearly into play. If the players don't catch on by themselves you must facilitate this. You can tell them that it seems like their world is turning upside down in front of them. Gaia suddenly can hear the whispering from the trees while the smell of rotten leaves and stagnant water seems to seep into the room. They both sense flowers on the verge of budding.

This attraction is described in the characters and it has been said during the briefing. But feel free to emphasize it for the players once more if need be. It is important that this attraction becomes evident during this early scene - and it's OK that it becomes quite volatile right away.

Lead the players on by asking questions aimed towards establishing the sensuous universe between the main characters.

#### Arve recognizes Gaia

As the teacher introduces Gaia, Arve recognizes her and he becomes completely stunned by her appearance.

Go into Arve's experience. Both Anger and Shame should describe how they experience her. How do they react to her? How does her presence change the way Arve sees the world? What does he smell? What are his urges?

#### Gaia recognizes Arve

Gaia starts to tell about herself and suddenly during her introduction she sees Arve sitting in the back of the room. She has the same experience as Arve. She recognizes him too as the boy she has seen by the lake.

How does she cope? What are Lust and Shame's thoughts about the boy? How does she experience Arve in the classroom? What's happening to her senses? What does she want to do?

#### Oskar notices the attraction

Arve's classmate Oskar notices Arve's attraction towards Gaia, and Arve becomes aware of that. How does that make Arve feel? What signals from Oskar is Arve picking up? Ask Arve to tell a bit about his feelings towards Oskar. Is Gaia able to finish her introduction? Is she ok? How does the rest of the class feel for the two characters?

## Act 1 - Scene 2

### Oskar talks to Gaia

**Oskar seeks out Gaia during a break from class. He is bad-mouthing Arve.**

#### SUPPORTING CHARACTER - OSKAR

**Arve's Anger** plays Oskar

##### Briefing for the player:

During a break you seek out Gaia in the classroom. She stands by herself. She should stay away from Arve. He's a nasty little pervert who gropes the girls' titties.

You're supposed to be nasty towards Gaia, attempting to make her sad.

You can improvise or use these ideas:

- Tell her that Arve is a nasty bugger who touches the girls
- That Arve is looking at Gaia in that way because of her massive tits
- If she would like someone to look at her tits, Oskar will gladly volunteer
- You might let Oskar get physical with Gaia by hitting or groping her

#### CUES FOR DESCRIPTION

Buzzing of voices. Eyes looking.  
Unknown sound of tables and chairs moving. The smell of eggs and salami. On the walls, pictures from newspapers of women with bare breasts are hanging. Black and white pictures with lips painted red.

While standing by herself in the classroom, Gaia is approached by Oskar during a break. He tells her that Arve is crazy and a pervert and she'd better leave him alone - for her own sake. He also tells Gaia that Arve has been touching the other girls. The purpose of the scene is to establish Oskar as a very unpleasant boy and to give Arve and Gaia a shared enemy.

##### Remember the perspectives

Even though this scene seems like a rather classic dialogue scene, remember to get both of Gaia's perspectives into play inside her mind. How do they each react to Oskar? Who has The Right to Speak?

##### Ask questions to the player without The Right to Speak

During the scene you can activate the player without the right to speak by asking questions. How does the perspective react to what is being said? Is there something the perspective wants to be said?

- **Fear/Lust:** How do Oskar's remarks about your body make you feel?
- **Fear/Lust:** Do you think Arve is thinking about touching you?
- **Fear/Lust:** How do you feel about Arve's big hands?

##### End the scene with Arve showing up

The scene ends with Arve showing up. That leads directly into the next scene.

# Act 1 - Scene 3

## Act 1 - Scene 3

### Enough is enough for Arve

**Arve becomes mad at Oskar and confronts him. Oskar provokes Arve by telling him that his mom isn't his real mom. Finally they are stopped by the teacher.**

#### SUPPORTING CHARACTER - OSKAR

**Gaia's Lust** plays Oskar

##### Briefing for the player:

In this scene you are having a confrontation with Arve.

You must demean and belittle Arve. Tell him that only you can stand hanging out with him. He is not supposed to touch any of the girls. Only you are allowed to touch the girls.

Provoke Arve and do everything you can to make him angry. He must become so mad that he attacks you. If Arve doesn't start a fight, then you will do it. Become as mean and spiteful as you seem fit.

##### Oskar **MUST** do this in this scene:

You must at some point during the scene tell Arve that his mom isn't his real mom and that she doesn't love him (something Oskar's mom has told Oskar).

#### CUES FOR DESCRIBING THE CLASSROOM

The classroom is a closed space. There's no life. The windows are dirty and grimy and hide what is outside. The smell is almost chemical with a strange fake flower smell. The carpets are unnatural. The walls are dried plaster with plastic paint. On the walls are hanging strange posters of unknown people and cutouts from newspapers of women with big, bare breasts, staring eyes, and open black and white lips.

In this scene Arve has a direct confrontation with Oskar in the classroom. Oskar tells Arve that his mom isn't his real mom.

##### Arve comes running

Something of what Oskar said in the scene before to Gaia was overheard by Arve and now he's reacting with anger. It ends in a physical confrontation between the two before they are stopped by the teacher.

Start the scene by asking the two Arve perspectives what they heard Oskar say to Gaia. How do they react to that? Why is he running towards Oskar and Gaia?

##### Oskar provokes

Play out the scene with Arve confronting Oskar. What is Oskar's rebuttal to Arve? Make sure that the player playing Oskar understands that he has to be mean towards Arve and to say bad things to him - especially that Arve's mom isn't his real mom. What discussions are Anger and Shame having inside Arve's head?

##### Ends with a fight - the teacher slaps Arve

Let the scene escalate, preferably ending in a physical confrontation with Arve attacking Oskar. It is okay if it becomes quite violent.

The scene ends when the teacher arrives. He obviously blames Arve for it all, and even gives Arve a very hard slap in the face.

## Act 1 - Scene 4

### Gaia walks home from school

**When Gaia walks home from school, Arve follows her from a distance. They sense each other, and a lot happens inside their minds, without any of them speaking.**

#### NO SUPPORTING CHARACTERS

#### CUES FOR DESCRIBING THE ENVIRONMENT

Everything is grey. The road. The sky. The houses.

Gaia's shoes are green. A radiant red flower in a window. A distant sun beyond the clouds. Yellow daffodils exploding. The sounds of cars disappearing as the forest approaches.

Gaia is walking home from school. At first through the small town and then later towards the forest. Arve is following her from a distance.

This scene is without words between the two main characters. Instead it is supposed to establish and further develop the attraction between the two young people. Even though they have never spoken to each other, they feel a special bond.

#### Only inner dialogue in this scene

This scene consists only of descriptions of the surroundings and inner dialogue between the perspectives. Throughout the scene you crosscut between Gaia's and Arve's perspectives, letting them discuss the events of the day. Ask questions to both character's perspectives, relating to today's events as well as to the attraction they feel.

#### Describe one another

Ask the perspectives to describe the other character as they are walking. What kind of a girl is Arve looking at from behind? What boy is following Gaia?

Make the perspectives talk to each other. How are they feeling right now? Is Shame scolding Anger for making Arve angry and reckless? Or is Shame supportive? Will Gaia's Fear stop Lust from doing something not thought through?

#### Questions regarding the walk home

- *Anger/Shame*: Why are you following Gaia? What might she be thinking?
- *Fear/Lust*: How does it make you feel that Arve is following you? Why do you think he is doing that?

#### Questions regarding the events in school earlier that day

- *Anger/Shame*: How was it like to get into a fight with Oskar? What did it do to you?
- *Anger*: Why does the teacher always blame you? How does it make you feel?
- *Fear*: What did you think when Arve was hit by the teacher? How did you feel?
- *Shame*: How did you feel when the teacher slapped you?

#### Questions leading into the main characters' attraction towards each other

- *Lust/Fear*: How did you feel when Oskar talked about touching your breasts?
- *Lust*: What is happening to you when you touch yourself? What now when Arve walks behind you?
- *Anger*: What is Gaia's presence doing to you? How does she make you feel? Can you smell her? Can she smell you? What do you want to do to her?
- *Lust*: What is Arve making you feel when he is walking a bit behind you? How do you walk? How does your body react?

#### The world is becoming brighter and more magical

Start off by describing the grey and mundane town. Between the inner dialogues in Arve and Gaia it seems like the world as they are perceiving it is becoming more radiant. The connection between them makes their world change.

Describe the subtle changes and ask into it. What do they see? Do they notice it at all?

#### Scene ends when the forest begins - or if they start talking

When Gaia reaches the forestline, the scene ends. You might also end the scene if Gaia or Arve prepares to talk to the other. This scene leads directly into scene 5 with Arve and Gaia talking to each other for the first time.

## Act 1 - Scene 5

# Gaia and Arve talk to each other for the first time

**Arve and Gaia talk to each other for the first time. Perhaps they touch each other and hold hands. They experience The Underground for the first time and they see the manifestation of a creature.**

This scene is a continuation of the scene before.

As Gaia reaches the forestline she stops and waits for Arve and they can talk to each other for the first time. Perhaps they even get to hold hands in the scene, as they each experience a strong need for physical contact.

Their potential close physical contact establishes a stronger connection to The Underground. While they are talking, the trees and earth slowly begin to come to life. And without knowing it, Arve and Gaia are the reason that The Underground creates a manifestation, seeking out to attack Oskar (see next scene).

### **Starts at the forestline - ends with the creature**

The scene starts at the edge of the forest - perhaps earlier if Arve and Gaia started talking before reaching the forest. Inform the players directly that Gaia has stopped by the forest and is waiting for Arve.

What exactly they are doing is not that important. They might walk towards Gaia's house in the forest, run between the trees, or climb in trees - it doesn't really matter. The important thing is that they are together in the forest and they get the chance to talk to each other and be together.

The scene ends further into the forest - preferably at the forest lake with the hollow tree - and they see the manifestation of the creature.

### **First conversation**

The scene should be a kind of awkward first meeting between Arve and Gaia. Their first attempts at conversations and interaction are probably fumbling. Help them to become more comfortable during the scene.

Give them time enough to be hesitant and to sense the world around them. And give the perspectives time to talk to each other.

As the game master you may have to help conversation on its way. Ask questions about the situation. Ask how they react to each other. Ask Lust or Fear about Arve's big, rough hands. Ask Shame about the curves of Gaia's breasts and her

long legs. Insinuate what is happening between them: An awkward smile. Skin briefly touching skin. Smells and odours from the other one. Things happening inside the body.

### **Contact to The Underground**

In this scene Arve and Gaia for the first time create a direct connection to The Underground. The connection is created by their presence in the forest and their physical connection. Let the forest come alive when they touch each other.

Arve might hear the worms moving through the wet and soft soil beneath him. While Arve is stretching towards Gaia gently to touch her, the branches are creaking. Let nature react to Arve and Gaia's movements.

For example, describe the smell of fresh green leaves. Branches moving even though there's almost no wind. The earth is steaming and pulsing almost as if it is breathing. The earth itself gently moves as a giant mole burrows underneath. A big puddle of water suddenly empties itself with a slurping sound.

If the players are up to it, ask them to describe how the forest is reacting to Arve and Gaia.

### **Arve and Gaia sees the manifestation**

It should be completely clear to Arve and Gaia that something out of the ordinary is happening.

The creature from The Underground appears when Arve and Gaia are at their closest. It could happen as they are holding hands, briefly touching each other, or just standing very close to each other.

At that moment they see and hear a fierce wind rising very locally. A cloud of leaves rises from the forest floor, almost like it is a solid creature, and it moves through the forest towards town.

If they are present by the forest lake they see the wind appear directly from the hole in the hollow tree.

Give time for a brief reaction and end the scene shortly after they've seen the creature.

# Act 1 - Victim scene

## Act 1 - Victim scene

### Oskar is attacked

**Oskar is attacked by a terrifying creature. He ends up being seriously hurt.**

The victim in the first victim scene is Oskar. He's attacked by the creature for his offense of hindering Arve and Gaia seeing each other.

#### Consists of leaves

The Manifestation in this scene consists of leaves. Dry leaves. Wet leaves. Fresh leaves. Rotting leaves. They have amassed into a creature, now moving through town like a wind – even though no wind is stirring. It is in search of its victim.

#### Oskar sets the scene

Explain the mechanics of the victim scene and decide who will play the victim. Give the other players the roles of The Leaves, The Rot and The Wind.

Let Oskar set the scene. Where is he? What is he doing? What is happening?

#### The players describe

Let the other players describe what is happening. Take turns and let them start by, for instance, describing how Oskar feels a gust of wind. Then smells something strange and rotten in the air, and then ...

Ask them to narrate while the intensity and violence of the attack rises. Motivate the players by asking about details of what's happening. Make it unpleasant. A bike crashes. Oskar tries to scream with leaves in his mouth.

At the end of this text you will find a version of the briefing, describing Oskar and the creature for the players, that is easy for you to hand over.

#### Briefings for the players

##### Oskar, the Victim

You are the victim. In this scene you are about to be attacked. You're going to be very scared and you're also gonna get hurt - very hurt, actually. You start the scene by introducing to the others where you are and what you are doing. The other players will then participate by elaborating what is happening during the attack.

*You are Oskar. You are on your way home from football practice. There is a strange wind gushing about. You want to go home to your mommy. You want to tell her about stupid Arve, and she will take your side. Nothing is ever your fault.*

*The wind blows hard. You hear a rattling sound. Leaves are blowing around your head. But it is not your fault. It's somebody else's fault. You didn't do anything. The others. Arve!*

*Tell the other players how you're on your bike on the path when the wind suddenly rises in intensity.*

##### The Leaves

In this scene you're a part of a creature coming from The Underground and you are about to attack the boy Oskar. He's being punished for trying to get between Arve and Gaia. As Oscar finishes telling how he's riding his bike on the path, you begin your attack.

*You are a force of nature. An elemental from another world. You manifest yourself as the leaves from the forest, hurtling through the wind. The victim must feel the fear. And it should hurt. Hurt a lot. Oskar is supposed to get mauled through. Bones could break. He could be close to suffocating. But he won't die.*

*You are the leaves. Small leaves. Large leaves. Rotten leaves. Fresh leaves. You crawl under clothing. Scratching and pushing. Finding hidden crevices in the body. Creeping. Prodding. A warm mouth. An open nose. An open ear. A closed rectum. Soft creatures have many openings where you don't belong. You await screams for mercy and tears.*

##### The Rot

In this scene you're a part of a creature coming from The Underground and you are about to attack the boy Oskar. He's being punished for trying to get between Arve and Gaia. As Oscar finishes telling how he's riding his bike on the path, you begin your attack.

*You are a force of nature. An elemental from another world. You manifest yourself as the leaves from the forest hurtling through the wind. The victim must feel the fear. And it should hurt. Hurt a lot. Oskar is supposed to get mauled through. Bones could break. He could be close to suffocating. But he won't die.*

*You are the rotten smell of decomposition. Strange and unwelcome gases seeping from the dead forest floor. No one notices you until it's too late and you surround them and they smell something that should not be. You're close and you surround, confuse, and attack – and you fill the mind with horrible images of rotting creatures and the urge to vomit.*

##### The Wind

In this scene you're a part of a creature coming from The Underground and you are about to attack the boy Oskar. He's being punished for trying to get between Arve and Gaia. As Oscar finishes telling how he's riding his bike on the path, you begin your attack.

*You are a force of nature. An elemental from another world. You manifest yourself as the leaves from the forest hurtling through the wind. The victim must feel the fear. And it should hurt. Hurt a lot. Oskar is supposed to get mauled through. Bones could break. He could be close to suffocating. But he won't die.*

*You are the wind propelling the leaves. Invisible and innocent, but still very strong. You knock over. You push. Pick up, and drop. Envelope. You stop every attempt to get away. You cover your tracks.*



# Act 2 - Scene 1

## Act 2 - Scene 1

### Gaia's father is worried

**Gaia's father is worried about Gaia now attending school. He gets unpleasant and controlling.**

#### SUPPORTING CHARACTER - GAIA'S FATHER

**Arve's Anger** plays Gaia's father

##### Briefing for the player:

You are Gaia's dad, even though you're not really her father. You found her in the woods as a baby.

In this scene you must press Gaia to tell you about her first day at school. And you should press hard. You're a loving father but you're also very controlling. As the scene progresses try to make Gaia sad. Let the conversation become an argument. You should give Shame and Lust in Gaia something to react to and talk about during the scene.

Keep asking questions. You know there's something she's not telling. You're beginning to regret that you allowed her to attend school once again.

#### CUES FOR DESCRIBING THE HOUSE

The house is situated in the forest. Built of stone. Of wood and straw. A floor made out of large wooden planks with big cracks filled with dirt. A low ceiling - too low for Gaia. Almost like a cave. Almost like it's a part of the forest. Earth and dust everywhere but not dirty, though. A ray of sunlight touches yellow dried flowers in the windows. They still smell like summer. Small. Simple.

When worrying and wanting to protect his daughter Gaia's father shows his controlling side. In this scene he really gets the chance to show that in an unpleasant way.

Gaia has just come home from school when her father starts interrogating her about her first day at school. He is starting to regret giving permission for Gaia to go to school. The purpose of this scene is to show how claustrophobic Gaia's life can be.

The scene should start a bit cozy and then turn unpleasant as the father continues his questions, almost like an interrogation.

##### Gaia in her room - thinking

Gaia sits in her room. Describe the house and, if possible, ask the players to help with the description. How do you sense nature inside of this house?

Give the perspectives time and place to talk about the events of the day. Ask questions. What was it like being with Arve? How does Gaia feel now? Has she ever experienced anything like this? Is she nervous? Happy? Afraid?

##### Dad enters and starts asking questions

Gaia's father enters the room and asks her about her day at school. At first he seems kind but as he keeps asking about details his controlling side becomes more and more apparent. By asking the perspectives questions about the issues Gaia's father is asking about, you can help the player who plays the father. Make sure to make the scene unpleasant for Gaia.

End the scene when appropriate - either when Gaia has run away or when you see fit.

##### The forest outside is moving

As the scene becomes more unpleasant, nature outside the house reacts. Even though there is no wind moving, the trees start to move. This is a forewarning to a scene later in the game in which Gaia's father becomes even more aggressive against Gaia and nature therefore reacts strongly.





# Act 2 - Scene 2

## Act 2 - Scene 2

### Not my son

**Arve's mom tells him that he is not her son.**

#### SUPPORTING CHARACTER - ARVE'S MOTHER

**Gaia's Lust** plays Arve's mom

##### Briefing for the player:

In this scene Arve's mom must confess that Arve isn't her real son. The purpose of this is for Arve to learn that his 'mother' doesn't love him.

Please, do not show Arve any care or warm feelings - not even if he gets sad. Focus on YOUR feelings as Arve's 'mom'. By taking care of an orphan, you have sacrificed your personal life. He should be thankful. The scene is supposed to be very unpleasant for Arve.

During the scene Arve's mom **MUST** say: Arve is adopted. The vicar found him in the forest when Arve was a baby.

#### CUES FOR DESCRIBING THE KITCHEN

The kitchen is a strange mix of something ugly, something homely; and quite poor. It feels both sad and cozy at the same time. Faded orange plastic. A dripping faucet. An unpleasant and undetermined smell. A bowl with old wrinkly apples. A drawing of a tree with long, slender branches.

Arve gets confirmation that his mom actually isn't his real mom. His suspicion about her not loving him may be confirmed too.

##### At the morning table

It is morning and Arve and his mom are sitting by the kitchen table. Instruct the two players playing Arve that he would like to know more about what Oskar told him about his mom not being his real mom.

Start the scene by asking Anger and Shame what Oskar said earlier. Could it really be true? How do Anger and Shame feel about it?

##### Arve asks his mom

When asked about if she is Arve's real mom, Arve's mother confesses right away. She will also tell Arve that when he was a baby he was found in the woods by the vicar.

The player playing the mom should let it shine through that Arve's mom really doesn't care about Arve and that she certainly does not love him. If the message seems difficult to get through for the player, you might help by reminding her about it.

Make sure that Anger and Shame have a moment to react to this news. Ask about how they feel. What are the two perspectives talking about? Who has The Right to Speak? What will come out of it? Anger? Sadness? Tears?



# Act 2 - Scene 3

## Act 2 - Scene 3

### The vicar and the police

**When Arve and Gaia attend confirmation preparation at the church the local police come by wanting to talk to them. The police tells about the attack on Oskar. The priest wants Arve and Gaia to confess their sins.**

#### SUPPORTING CHARACTERS

The game master plays both supporting characters.

##### The vicar

The vicar is sure that something is not right with Arve. When he was just a small boy, it was easier. But now he has become big. And dangerous. The vicar really doesn't like how Arve and the new girl are looking at each other. Let the animosity towards Arve shine through very clearly.

##### The Officer

The local police officer is stern and serious. He is truly shocked about the attack. He has a strong feeling that Arve and Gaia are behind it. He has heard about the fight at school. He doesn't like Arve and Gaia but he hides it better than the priest.

#### CUES FOR DESCRIBING THE CHURCH

The church is silent, every sound is echoing. The smell of old stone. Like an ancient prison. The stone floor is made shiny from the dragging feet of centuries of sinners.

It is the next day. Arve and Gaia are attending preparations for their confirmation at the church when interrupted by the local constable who wants a word with both of them.

The purpose of the scene is to introduce the attack on Oskar to Arve and Gaia and make it clear that they are suspects. The scene also shows that Arve and Gaia - especially Arve - are being persecuted by the adults.

The interaction between the players and the supporting characters is not as violent as in the foregoing scenes. In the minds of both Arve and Gaia a lot will surely be happening, but it is not possible for the two teenagers to speak to each other during this scene.

##### How do you feel about Jesus, Gaia?

Start the scene in the church room. The vicar stands in his robe by the altar and all the children are standing before him. The vicar looks at the new girl and asks her why she wants her confirmation - and what relationship she has with the lord and savior Jesus Christ.

Gaia is not supposed to answer. It is more important what is going on inside her head. Ask the perspectives what they are thinking about. Give them time to reflect and speak to each other. How does Gaia feel about the church and Jesus? Some of the other children are giggling at Gaia's silence.

Let Arve react to the vicar's questions to Gaia. Let him notice that the priest is watching him with a smug smile.

##### The police arrives - questioning in the office

Before Gaia gets to answer the vicar's question she is interrupted by the local constable entering the church. He wishes to speak to Arve and Gaia.

Move the scene to the vicar's office. Gaia and Arve are standing in front of a large desk. The priest is sitting by the desk and the officer stands beside it.

The officer starts asking about what time Arve and Gaia saw Oskar yesterday. During the questions the officer tells them that Oskar has been attacked. He's very badly hurt and is at the hospital. The officer is very factual in his approach.

##### Confess your sins

While the officer questions Arve and Gaia, they get the evil eye from the priest. It is very important that they confess their sins, he interjects.

Give the two characters time and space to react. Give room for the perspectives to have inner discussions. Let Gaia and Arve communicate silently through gazes.

##### Questions for the officer to ask:

- **Arve:** When did you last see Oskar?
- **Gaia:** Were you in a fight with Oskar at school?
- **Arve:** Why did you strike Oskar?
- **Gaia:** When did you last see Oskar?
- **Arve:** Why did you stuff leaves in the throat of Oskar?
- **Gaia:** Did you tell Oskar to remove his pants and underwear?
- **Arve/Gaia:** What do you know about the attack last night??



# Act 2 - Scene 4

## Act 2 - Scene 4

### Come to my office

The teacher wants Gaia to admit that it was Arve who attacked Oskar. Nature reacts to Gaia's emotions.

#### SUPPORTING CHARACTER - THE TEACHER

**Arve's Shame** plays *The Teacher*

##### Briefing for the player:

You are the teacher and you have asked Gaia to come to your office. You want her to admit that it was Arve who attacked Oskar last night. You want it to be Arve.

Start off by being overly friendly towards her and then, later on, turn more and more unpleasant and threatening. You are allowed to lie and make up stories regarding both Gaia and Arve.

The purpose of the scene is to frighten Gaia and give her a clear sensation of every adult being nasty.

#### CUES FOR DESCRIBING THE OFFICE

The office seems lifeless. A smell of paper, mothballs and cheap detergent. Outside there are big trees with long branches. They seem almost like creatures with thousands of arms, each with thousands of whispering leaves.

Back at school - after confirmation preparations at the church - the teacher leads Gaia into his office. He wants Gaia to tattle on Arve. The teacher's questions become more and more unpleasant and his accusations become very direct.

How does Gaia react? What is going on in her mind? Who has The Right to Speak? Will she defend Arve? Is she silent? Does she fight back?

##### Questions about Gaia's reaction:

- **Lust/Fear:** What are you thinking?
- **Fear:** How does the teacher shouting make you react?
- **Lust:** What is it like to feel the teacher's rage?

##### Nature reacts

In this scene nature begins reacting to Gaia's frustration - a reaction that becomes even stronger later on.

During the scene the trees outside react to Gaia's distress. As the conflict between Gaia and the teachers becomes more intense, branches start scratching the window. It feels like the trees are trying to gain entrance.

Gaia can sense the trees communicating with her. They whisper: "Run!"

If needed, ask Anger or Shame to describe how the trees outside distract the teacher, giving Gaia a chance to escape from the office.

##### Ends when Gaia leaves the office

Gaia can react to the situation in many ways, but the scene should end with her running out of the teacher's office. If she doesn't do so, make the teacher throw her out.



# Act 2 - Scene 5

## Act 2 - Scene 5

### A talk in the school yard

**Arve and Gaia meet and talk at the school yard. Suddenly they are interrupted by Oskar's mother.**

#### NO SUPPORTING CHARACTER

#### CUES FOR DESCRIBING NATURE AND THE SCHOOL YARD

Bushes with thorns behind the playground. Long, strong strands of ivy on the school walls. Grass breaking through the asphalt.

After Gaia's encounter with the teacher Arve and Gaia meet at the school yard. Let them talk about the attack on Oskar, the events in the church, and Gaia's encounter with the teacher. Let them sense their attraction, but don't go too much into that in this scene.

This isn't a very long scene. Interrupt them with Oskar's mom, and proceed to the next scene.

#### Oskar's mother

When Oskar's mother turns up, this scene ends and you go to the next scene in which Arve and Gaia have a confrontation with her.

#### Introduce nature around them

Nature plays an active role in the next scene. Already during this actual scene you can set this up by introducing different elements to use in the next scene. Thorny bushes might be effective, since they can foreshadow Oskar's mom's demise in the final victim scene.



# Act 2 - Scene 6

## Act 2 - Scene 6

### You attacked him!

In the school yard Oskar's mom accuses Arve and Gaia of attacking her son. Nature intervenes.

#### SUPPORTING CHARACTER - OSKAR'S MOM

You as the game master are playing Oskar's mom. She's upset, self-righteous and unreasonable. She has no sympathy for Arve or Gaia at all. Her boy is hurt. You can be as mean as you see fit. The purpose is to be a common foe that Arve and Gaia together can stand up to against.

#### CUES FOR DESCRIBING THE SCHOOL YARD

Bushes with thorns behind the school.  
Long, strong strands of ivy on the school walls. Grass breaking through the asphalt.

This scene takes place directly after the preceding scene.

The purpose of this scene is to give Arve and Gaia a chance together to stand up against a common enemy. This can strengthen the bond between them and bring them closer to each other.

Oskar's mom is very mad and upset as she approaches Arve and Gaia. She's very agitated and completely unreasonable. And she is very sad too.

The scene ends with Arve and Gaia running out into the woods. It's not to say if Arve becomes mad and attacks Oskar's mom or if Arve and Gaia become frightened and defend themselves verbally.

#### Arve should be send to an institution

Oskar's mom makes it clear that she will see to it that Arve is committed to an institution far away from here. She accuses Gaia for goading Arve to attack Oskar.

#### Find inspiration in Oskar's victim scene

You can use Oskar's victim scene and what happened to him, and let Oskar's mom ask why they did those horrible things to her son.

#### She can say something like:

- *To Arve:* Ungrateful bastard! Oskar has been nothing but nice to you!
- *To Gaia:* What kind of beast fills another child's mouth with leaves?
- *To Gaia:* Why did you take off his trousers? What were you up to?
- *To Arve:* I'll have you committed to a place far away from here!

#### How does Gaia and Arve react?

Give them a chance to react to what Oskar's mom is saying.

#### You can ask them questions like:

- *Fear:* What do you feel about the accusations from Oskar's mom?
- *Anger:* What would happen if you really were to be committed?
- *Shame:* Do you think your mom will help you?
- *Lust:* Did you have something to do with the attack on Oskar?

#### Nature intervenes

During the scene nature starts to react and tries to interrupt Oskar's mom. It could perhaps be long stalks of ivy trying to grab her. Or it could be thorny bushes reaching out to her. It could be branches trying to move Arve and Gaia in the direction of the forest while pushing Oskar's mother away. The scene should end with Arve and Gaia going into the forest.



# Act 2 - Scene 7

## Act 2 - Scene 7

### Kissing in the woods

**Arve and Gaia flee into the forest. Once again they are drawn to each other and perhaps they share their first kiss. As The Underground awakens once more, once again a creature comes into this world.**

#### NO SUPPORTING CHARACTER

#### CUES FOR INSPIRATION

Damp ground. Fog from the lake.  
Dripping sounds. Squelching sounds.  
Slithering earthworms. Smells of life and death.

After the confrontations with the adults Arve and Gaia seek refuge by their secret forest lake. Here they get even closer than in the first act. Highlight their attraction to each other and let them become more intimate. Let them talk to each other and make them become a bit physical. Try to get them to touch each other and perhaps even to share a kiss.

When they get close physically The Underground awakens and they see a creature made from sticks and branches being born out of the hollow tree.

#### Highlight the physical attraction

Pay attention to the physical attraction between Arve and Gaia and ask about their feelings. They are probably both shaken and emotional. Perhaps they are still a bit shy and awkward towards each other - but nevertheless, they cannot contain themselves. They **MUST** be together. Let them overcome their inner voices holding them back.

- **Anger/Shame:** Tell about how you imagine how it would feel like to touch Gaia's skin
- **Lust/Fear:** Describe how Arve smells now you are out here in the forest
- **Anger/Shame:** Describe how the plants caresses Gaia's long legs
- **Lust/Fear:** Describe Arve's footprints in the mud

#### The Underground by the lake

In this scene Arve and Gaia (as well as the players) should have no more doubts that something supernatural is happening out here by the lake.

Out here by the hollow tree the barrier to The Underground is very thin. So thin that Arve and Gaia can reach the other world. The hollow tree is the gate.

As Arve and Gaia get closer to each other, the gate to The Underground opens further.

Arve and Gaia are not supposed to investigate the hollow tree, but if they do you can use that as a way to get them closer together - a way of letting them touch and show interest in each other.

#### It's alive

As the scene plays through, you should empathize nature and the magical lake. The lake stirs and bubbles when they touch each other. The more excited the two become, the more the hollow tree moves, making the hole widen.

As they kiss - or do something intimate - another creature emerges from the hollow tree. It is a monster made from branches and twigs. It rises out of the hollow tree and moves towards town.

# Act 2 – Victim scene

## Act 2 – Victim scene

### Oskar's mom is killed

**Oskar's mother is attacked and killed by a monster made out of twigs and branches.**

The victim in this second victim scene is Oskar's mother. She is attacked because she has been trying to keep Arve and Gaia apart – among other things, wanting Arve to be sent to an institution.

The scene is even more violent than the last victim scene with Oskar. This time, someone ends up dead.

#### **It's made from branches, thorns and vines**

The manifestation in this scene is made from branches and vines. There are thin tough sticks. Blackberry branches with sharp, pointy thorns. Long, strong vines.

#### **Oskar's mother sets the scene**

Explain to the players what is going to happen and decide who is playing the victim. Then hand out the sticks, the thorns, and the vines to the remaining players, giving them a moment to read the briefings.

#### **The players describe and narrate**

##### **– things gets worse and worse**

Let the players tell what is happening. Take turns asking them to describe how Oskar's mom at first hears some weird noises. Ask how she reacts and how she gets scared. Then a piece of furniture is turned over. Ask the players to keep on narrating until they have killed Oskar's mother.

The briefings for the victim and the manifestations are also available in an easy-to-cut-out version, easy to hand out to the players.

#### **Briefings for the players:**

##### **The victim, Oskar's mother**

You play the victim. In this scene you are attacked. You get scared and are badly hurt. In the end you end up dead. When the game master asks you to, you start the scene by telling that you are alone in the housing, hearing weird sounds.

*Oskar should be here. Your husband should be here too, but he is with Oskar at the hospital. Your anger is mixed with fear. Unhappiness. Everything went as planned – and now this has happened. Now, you have a weird feeling. A feeling of something is totally wrong. Your urge to just run away mixes with your urge to fight. Run away! Fight! The trees are creaking out there, the wind must be rising. Branches are poking the window. What branches?*

*Tell the others how you react when hearing these weird sounds coming from outside...*

##### **The branches**

In this scene three of you players each play a manifestation of The Underground, attacking and killing Oskar's mother. She is killed because she is trying to come between Arve and Gaia. She is trying to separate them.

*You are a force of nature, an elemental spirit from another world. You manifest yourself as branches from the wood, crawling and creeping along the ground. The victim has to feel the fear, making her realise that there is no escape. Realise that you crush, strangle and extinguish all life.*

*You are the branches from the wood. Hard. Strong. Pointy. You bend and break and become sharp splinters. You are harder than meat. You point, poke, drill. It squeaks when you move. It splinters when you tighten your grip. The white inside of the wood. The soft, pliable human flesh.*

##### **The thorns**

In this scene three of you players each play a manifestation of The Underground, attacking and killing Oskar's mother. She is killed because she is trying to come between Arve and Gaia. She is trying to separate them.

*You are a force of nature, an elemental spirit from another world. You manifest yourself as branches from the wood, crawling and creeping along the ground. The victim has to feel the fear, making her realise that there is no escape. Realise that you crush, strangle and extinguish all life.*

*You are the thorns on the blackberry vines. The barbs of the vine. A little prick. A big shock. Five tiny pricks. Fifty tiny pricks. You won't kill, but the victim doesn't know that.*

##### **The vines**

In this scene three of you players each play a manifestation of The Underground, attacking and killing Oskar's mother. She is killed because she is trying to come between Arve and Gaia. She is trying to separate them.

*You are a force of nature, an elemental spirit from another world. You manifest yourself as branches from the wood, crawling and creeping along the ground. The victim has to feel the fear, making her realise that there is no escape. Realise that you crush, strangle and extinguish all life.*

*You are the soft, tough plants, twining their way. Wrapping. Tightening. Strangling. Creeping, you are taking over. Your grip is strong. Binding, holding, stopping everything. Green and beautiful. Ivy is unstoppable. Hops grow and die. Grow and die.*

# Act 3 – Scene 1

## Act 3 - Scene 1

### Arve, go drown yourself!

**Arve goes to search for the vicar, wanting to know more about his past. The vicar tells him that Oskar's mother has been killed. He wants Arve to go drown himself in the forest lake.**

#### SUPPORTING CHARACTER – THE VICAR

**Gaia's Fear** plays the vicar

##### Brief for the player:

You have just heard that Oskar's mother has been found dead. You are sure that it is Arve, that despicable creature, who is behind it. He has to drown himself in the forest lake: that is where he came from in the first place.

You will try to convince Arve that he should kill himself in the forest lake. That is the best solution for anyone. At first you are kind and friendly, later on you might be threatening.

Arve will ask you about where you found him when he was found as an infant and where left in the woods. You can tell him that he was lying naked on the forest floor by the forest lake – dirty, wet and covered in mud, almost like he had been crawling up from the water. You might very well make up some more details.

#### CUES FOR DESCRIBING THE CHURCH AND THE CEMETERY

Withered leaves are covering the cemetery. The trees form a threatening circle surrounding the graves. The church tower is almost overshadowed by the forest, which seems like it is growing and getting nearer and nearer – it seems almost like the forest can threaten the church.

The next day Arve goes looking for the vicar, finding him at the cemetery outside the church. The vicar sits on a bench, looking nervous and frightened – he has just heard that Oskar's mother is dead.

Arve wants to know more about what Oskar and Oskar's mother have told him: That the vicar found him as an infant in the woods. What Arve doesn't know is that Oskar's mother has been killed. The vicar knows that and tells it to Arve during the scene.

This scene is supposed to give Arve a final and clear impression that no one will help him. The scene should also introduce Arve to the fact that Oskar's mother is dead – and that something terrible has happened.

##### The vicar seems compassionate

At first the vicar seems helpful and compassionate. He has no problem telling Arve that he was found by the forest lake and that Arve was adopted. But the vicar actually hates Arve and he is sure that Arve is behind the death of Oskar's mother. With a serious face he can tell Arve that she is dead – and that Arve surely already is aware of that. The vicar also thinks – for the sake of everyone – that Arve should drown himself in the forest lake and thereby return to wherever he comes from. He should do so to prevent even worse things from happening.

Remember to ask the perspectives how they react. What do they think of Oskar's mother being dead? And about drowning in the forest lake?

##### May become threatening and doomsday-like

During the scene, the vicar becomes more and more direct in his approach to Arve. He is worried about Arve and perhaps even scared of him. He keeps on pushing Arve and in the end Arve must flee into the forest, away from the Vicar's very intense pressure.

If Arve doesn't choose to flee from the Vicar by himself, you might let a police car arrive and the local officer might call for Arve – perhaps at the same time as worms and vines physically try to drag Arve into the forest.

##### The ground wants Arve to escape the Vicar

When the vicar gets more unpleasant, the ground beneath Arve reacts. This is The Underground trying to get Arve away from there. It won't not attack the vicar directly, though – not yet at least.

- The ground beneath Arve's feet is moving – almost as if he is sinking in.
- Tiny ivy fingers grab Arve's feet, trying to drag him away.
- The tombstones (if they are at the cemetery) are moving.





# Act 3 – Scene 2

## Act 3 - Scene 2

### You are not going anywhere

**Gaia's father wants to forbid her to leave the house. He is scared of all that could happen out there – and he too has heard about Oskar's mother's death. The forest gets alive, helping Gaia to escape.**

#### SUPPORTING CHARACTER – GAIA'S FATHER

**Arve's Shame** plays Gaia's father

##### Briefing for the player:

You have heard that Oskar's mother has been killed. And that Oskar is hurt too. The police say it is Arve who is behind it. You are willing to do everything to protect your daughter – even though she is not your actual daughter. You found her in the woods when she was a baby.

You have always taken care of her. You want to forbid Gaia to leave the house. You will forbid her meeting with Arve and going to school. It is too dangerous. Allowing her to attend school was a mistake. You must force her to stay in the house.

Please, be totally unreasonable, leaving Gaia with no other options than trying to escape. Force her to stay, perhaps by physical force. (That might give Gaia's two perspectives some interesting stuff to focus their play upon.)

#### CUES FOR DESCRIBING THE HOUSE

The environment in the house is mainly as it was before, but as the scene evolves, nature begins to react more and more – especially if Gaia gets furious. Please emphasize how much the house seems like a part of the forest.

Gaia's father shows his more controlling side. He has heard that Oskar's mother has been found dead and about the attack on Oskar too. Now, he finds it too dangerous for Gaia to go outside. She is not allowed to leave the house.

##### Wants to prevent Gaia from seeing Arve

Gaia is on her way out when her father comes home from the woods, shutting the door hard and determined. He confronts Gaia with what he has heard, forbidding her to leave the house and not to meet with Arve anymore. He makes it clear that he is convinced that it is Arve who has attacked Oskar and his mother. That is what he has been told.

And Gaia is not like other children. She is something special, he might cry. And he has to take care of her, that's his obligation.

It might turn into a physical confrontation between Gaia and her father. The scene should evolve in such a dramatic way that Gaia has no other option than to escape the house.

##### How does Gaia react?

Ask questions during the scene to push Gaia's emotions as much as possible and to power up discussions between Lust and Fear. What is her role in all this? What is her relationship with her father like? How much does she actually know about her background?

- **Lust:** Do you think Arve has something to do with the attacks? And what about yourself?
- **Fear:** What will it mean if you can never see Arve again?
- **Lust:** How does the forest call for you?
- **Fear:** What will happen if you never see your father again?
- **Lust:** Does it actually matter where you come from? – and does it matter that your father has been taking care of you like you were his actual daughter?

##### Nature helps Gaia

During the scene, nature starts getting alive and violent. It wants to help Gaia get away. Trees might start knocking on the windows, and ivy might start to pull them open. Perhaps roots are breaking through the floor from below, starting to rip the house apart. Vines might even grab the father, holding him back – or, if Gaia doesn't realise she has to escape, the forest might forcefully begin to pull Gaia towards it

## Act 3 - Scene 3

### Sex and death by the forest lake

**Arve and Gaia have escaped to the forest lake. Even though everything seems terrible, their mutual attraction is more intense than ever. They might end up having sex while merging together, becoming one. The scene crosscuts to yet another creature rampaging through the town, killing everyone it meets. Perhaps Arve and Gaia decide to stop the scene before everything is destroyed.**

Gaia and Arve meet by the forest lake where they comfort each other. They are close in a very physical way, kissing, and most likely end up having sex. That makes them merge into each other and into The Underground. Meanwhile yet another creature – awoken by their intense desire for each other – starts to rampage through town, killing along the way. The gate to The Underground is now wide open.

#### Climax and the last scene of the game

This is the last and most comprehensive scene of the game. First, the two young people meet by the forest lake, shocked by everything that has happened. Then their desire takes over, and while they intensely examine each other's bodies, a new creature is born from the hole in the tree.

They can choose to go all the way. Then the scene cuts between the two young lovers in the forest and the monster that, one after another, kills people in town who have been in contact with Arve and Gaia. If Arve and Gaia do not manage to handle their desire and pull away from each other, realising what is happening, then they totally merge with each other and with The Underground.

Depending on what the players do in the scene, the game can end in two different ways. Nevertheless, that is not a choice that should be presented to the players before actually playing the scene.

#### Arve and Gaia are upset

Start the scene with Arve and Gaia meeting in the forest, deeply affected by what has happened. Let their perspectives discuss the situation and what they want to do. Ask about moods and emotions. Like in the previous scenes in the woods, the attraction between Arve and Gaia is extra intense here.

You might help the players by asking questions and letting them describe and elaborate their mutual attraction and everything that is at stake for them.

If the players are not taking initiative to let Arve and Gaia have sex, you could make the questions more sexually explicit. How much do you want her right now? How is it like to see the outline of his large cock through his pants? Don't you want it?

#### A creature is born

Quite early in the scene, when Arve and Gaia are touching each other, or at least are very close, they see a creature – a large, muddy, creepy creature – being born from the hole in the tree.

Let them see this final, most violent manifestation of The Underground come out through the hole in the tree. This is the most physical and scary of the manifestations. But even so, Arve and Gaia might be too engaged in their lust and desire to actually do anything about – and they probably don't care anyway.

#### Crosscut between lovemaking and the rampaging creature

As the intensity between Arve and Gaia grows and they get more and

more engaged by each other, you can crosscut to the creature coming into town.

Ask one of the players to tell about the creature, approaching the vicar and the church. Cut to Arve and Gaia and ask them what is happening. Once again, cut to the church and ask the player to tell how the priest is killed.

Continue in the same way with the other players, asking them to tell about the killing of the other supporting characters, one by one. It might not be as detailed as in the first description – be careful not to take too long.

Who tells about which attack:

- Arve's Anger tells about the death of the vicar
- Gaia's Fear tells about the death of the teacher
- Arve's Shame tells about the death of Arve's mother
- Gaia's Lust tells about the death of Gaia's father

#### Do you feel any responsibility?

Ask about the different perspectives' emotions. Do they feel any responsibility for what the creatures have been doing? In some way, the main character must be aware of what is happening. But does it affect them? Or don't they care at all about the people who have been treating them badly?

#### Ending no. 1: Absorbed by The Underground

If Arve and Gaia keep on being close and physical, the game ends when they have their sexual climax. Then the game ends with Gaia's father being killed in a horrible, violent way.

Ask the players to tell about how Arve and Gaia almost merge together – and about how they almost seem to be embraced by the tree and how the water from the lake surrounds them in the end. The main characters have chosen The Underground. The game is over.

#### Ending no. 2: Pulling away from each other – the attraction is gone

Arve and Gaia don't have to go all the way and merge together while everything is destroyed around them.

They can choose to realise what is happening and, if they want to, pull away from each other. They can try to overcome their attraction, even though it is very hard to do. But they really have to fight to do so, wanting to scream and cry. Giving up on their desire is very heartbreaking.

If they stop what they are doing and pull away from each other, the tree by the lake starts fading, finally falling into the lake, making the gate to The Underground disappear.

If so, the game ends with two epilogues in which Arve and Gaia sit alone in their rooms, reflecting on what has happened. Their attraction is totally gone and it all feels almost like a weird dream. You might ask them about the next time they see each other, feeling no attraction or connection whatsoever. How does that feel?

# Supporting characters

## Prologue - Scene 1

### Arve's Mother (hand out to Gaia's Fear)

You enter Arve's room and give him a scolding for not yet being ready for school. Wait for the game master's sign to enter. Please, let Arve sit alone for a while before entering.

Start your talk with Arve by telling him that he's being late for school (again) and hasn't done his homework - as always.

You are allowed to be cruel to Arve. You don't really like him. The purpose of the scene is to make Arve sad and uncomfortable, thereby giving his two perspectives something to talk about and react to.

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## Prologue - Scene 2

### The girl (hand out to til Arve's Shame)

Gaia meets a girl close to the school. At first the girl pretends to be nice but then she begins to comment and mock Gaia for her strange appearance and her clothing. And then she runs away, laughing.

Wait until the game master signals you to enter the scene. Start by saying hi to Gaia and ask her if she's new here.

Let Gaia think you are nice to her, before you start saying ugly things to her. Feel free to improvise. You decide when to stop by running away laughing.

You're supposed to be mean and you're supposed to make Gaia sad. The purpose of the scene is to give Gaia's perspectives something to talk about and to react to.

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## Act 1 - Scene 2

### Oskar (hand out to til Arve's Anger)

During a break you seek out Gaia in the classroom. She stands by herself. She should stay away from Arve. He's a nasty little pervert who gropes the girls' titties. You're supposed to be nasty towards Gaia, attempting to make her sad.

You can improvise or use these ideas:

- Tell her that Arve is a nasty bugger who touches the girls
- That Arve is looking at Gaia in that way because of her massive tits
- If she would like someone to look at her tits, Oskar will gladly volunteer
- You might let Oskar get physical with Gaia by hitting or groping her

## Act 1 - Scene 3

### Oskar (hand out to til Gaia's Lust)

In this scene you are having a confrontation with Arve.

You must demean and belittle Arve. Tell him that only you can stand hanging out with him. He is not supposed to touch any of the girls. Only you are allowed to touch the girls.

Provoke Arve and do everything you can to make him angry. He must become so mad that he attacks you. If Arve doesn't start a fight, then you will do it. Become as mean and spiteful as you seem fit.

### Oskar MUST do this in this scene:

You must at some point during the scene tell Arve that his mom isn't his real mom and that she doesn't love him (something Oskar's mom has told Oskar).

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## Act 2 - Scene 1

### Gaia's father (hand out to til Arve's Anger)

You are Gaia's dad, even though you're not really her father. You found her in the woods as a baby.

In this scene you must press Gaia to tell you about her first day at school. And you should press hard. You're a loving father but you're also very controlling. As the scene progresses try to make Gaia sad. Let the conversation become an argument. You should give Shame and Lust in Gaia something to react to and talk about during the scene.

Keep asking questions. You know there's something she's not telling. You're beginning to regret that you allowed her to attend school once again.

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## Act 2 - Scene 2

### Arve's mother (hand out to til Gaia's Lust)

In this scene Arve's mom must confess that Arve isn't her real son. The purpose of this is for Arve to learn that his 'mother' doesn't love him.

Please, do not show Arve any care or warm feelings - not even if he gets sad. Focus on YOUR feelings as Arve's 'mom'. By taking care of an orphan, you have sacrificed your personal life. He should be thankful. The scene is supposed to be very unpleasant for Arve.

### During the scene Arve's mom MUST say:

Arve is adopted. The vicar found him in the forest when Arve was a baby.

# Supporting characters

## Act 2 - Scene 4

### The teacher (hand out to til Arve's Shame)

You are the teacher and you have asked Gaia to come to your office. You want her to admit that it was Arve who attacked Oskar last night. You want it to be Arve.

Start off by being overly friendly towards her and then, later on, turn more and more unpleasant and threatening. You are allowed to lie and make up stories regarding both Gaia and Arve.

The purpose of the scene is to frighten Gaia and give her a clear sensation of every adult being nasty.

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## Act 3 - Scene 1

### The vicar (hand out to til Gaia's Fear)

You have just heard that Oskar's mother has been found dead. You are sure that it is Arve, that despicable creature, who is behind it. He has to drown himself in the forest lake: that is where he came from in the first place.

You will try to convince Arve that he should kill himself in the forest lake. That is the best solution for anyone. At first you are kind and friendly, later on you might be threatening.

Arve will ask you about where you found him when he was found as an infant and where left in the woods. You can tell him that he was lying naked on the forest floor by the forest lake – dirty, wet and covered in mud, almost like he had been crawling up from the water. You might very well make up some more details.

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## Act 3 - Scene 2

### Gaia's father (hand out to til Arve's Shame)

You have heard that Oskar's mother has been killed. And that Oskar is hurt too. The police say it is Arve who is behind it. You are willing to do everything to protect your daughter – even though she is not your actual daughter. You found her in the woods when she was a baby.

You have always taken care of her.

You want to forbid Gaia to leave the house. You will forbid her meeting with Arve and going to school. It is too dangerous. Allowing her to attend school was a mistake. You must force her to stay in the house.

Please, be totally unreasonable, leaving Gaia with no other options than trying to escape. Force her to stay, perhaps by physical force. (That might give Gaia's two perspectives some interesting stuff to focus their play upon.)

# Victim scene 1

## Oskar, the Victim

You are the victim. In this scene you are about to be attacked. You're going to be very scared and you're also gonna get hurt - very hurt, actually. You start the scene by introducing to the others where you are and what you are doing. The other players will then participate by elaborating what is happening during the attack.

*You are Oskar. You are on your way home from football practice. There is a strange wind gushing about. You want to go home to your mommy. You want to tell her about stupid Arve, and she will take your side. Nothing is ever your fault.*

*The wind blows hard. You hear a rattling sound. Leaves are blowing around your head. But it is not your fault. It's somebody else's fault. You didn't do anything. The others. Arve!*

*Tell the other players how you're on your bike on the path when the wind suddenly rises in intensity.*

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## The Leaves

In this scene you're a part of a creature coming from The Underground and you are about to attack the boy Oskar. He's being punished for trying to get between Arve and Gaia. As Oscar finishes telling how he's riding his bike on the path, you begin your attack.

*You are a force of nature. An elemental from another world. You manifest yourself as the leaves from the forest, hurtling through the wind. The victim must feel the fear. And it should hurt. Hurt a lot. Oskar is supposed to get mauled through. Bones could break. He could be close to suffocating. But he won't die.*

*You are the leaves. Small leaves. Large leaves. Rotten leaves. Fresh leaves. You crawl under clothing. Scratching and pushing. Finding hidden crevices in the body. Creeping. Prodding. A warm mouth. An open nose. An open ear. A closed rectum. Soft creatures have many openings where you don't belong. You await screams for mercy and tears.*

## The Rot

In this scene you're a part of a creature coming from The Underground and you are about to attack the boy Oskar. He's being punished for trying to get between Arve and Gaia. As Oscar finishes telling how he's riding his bike on the path, you begin your attack.

*You are a force of nature. An elemental from another world. You manifest yourself as the leaves from the forest hurtling through the wind. The victim must feel the fear. And it should hurt. Hurt a lot. Oskar is supposed to get mauled through. Bones could break. He could be close to suffocating. But he won't die.*

*You are the rotten smell of decomposition. Strange and unwelcome gases seeping from the dead forest floor. No one notices you until it's too late and you surround them and they smell something that should not be. You're close and you surround, confuse, and attack - and you fill the mind with horrible images of rotting creatures and the urge to vomit.*

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## The Wind

In this scene you're a part of a creature coming from The Underground and you are about to attack the boy Oskar. He's being punished for trying to get between Arve and Gaia. As Oscar finishes telling how he's riding his bike on the path, you begin your attack.

*You are a force of nature. An elemental from another world. You manifest yourself as the leaves from the forest hurtling through the wind. The victim must feel the fear. And it should hurt. Hurt a lot. Oskar is supposed to get mauled through. Bones could break. He could be close to suffocating. But he won't die.*

*You are the wind propelling the leaves. Invisible and innocent, but still very strong. You knock over. You push. Pick up, and drop. Envelope. You stop every attempt to get away. You cover your tracks.*

## Victim scene 2

### The victim, Oskar's mother

You play the victim. In this scene you are attacked. You get scared and are badly hurt. In the end you end up dead. When the game master asks you to, you start the scene by telling that you are alone in the housing, hearing weird sounds.

*Oskar should be here. Your husband should be here too, but he is with Oskar at the hospital. Your anger is mixed with fear. Unhappiness. Everything went as planned – and now this has happened. Now, you have a weird feeling. A feeling of something is totally wrong. Your urge to just run away mixes with your urge to fight. Run away! Fight! The trees are creaking out there, the wind must be rising. Branches are poking the window. What branches?*

Tell the others how you react when hearing these weird sounds coming from outside...

---

### The branches

In this scene three of you players each play a manifestation of The Underground, attacking and killing Oksar's mother. She is killed because she is trying to come between Arve and Gaia. She is trying to separate them.

*You are a force of nature, an elemental spirit from another world. You manifest yourself as branches from the wood, crawling and creeping along the ground. The victim has to feel the fear, making her realise that there is no escape. Realise that you crush, strangle and extinguish all life.*

*You are the branches from the wood. Hard. Strong. Pointy. You bend and break and become sharp splinters. You are harder than meat. You point, poke, drill. It squeaks when you move. It splinters when you tighten your grip. The white inside of the wood. The soft, pliable human flesh.*

### The thorns

In this scene three of you players each play a manifestation of The Underground, attacking and killing Oksar's mother. She is killed because she is trying to come between Arve and Gaia. She is trying to separate them.

*You are a force of nature, an elemental spirit from another world. You manifest yourself as branches from the wood, crawling and creeping along the ground. The victim has to feel the fear, making her realise that there is no escape. Realise that you crush, strangle and extinguish all life.*

*You are the thorns on the blackberry vines. The barbs of the vine. A little prick. A big shock. Five tiny pricks. Fifty tiny pricks. You won't kill, but the victim doesn't know that.*

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### The vines

In this scene three of you players each play a manifestation of The Underground, attacking and killing Oksar's mother. She is killed because she is trying to come between Arve and Gaia. She is trying to separate them.

*You are a force of nature, an elemental spirit from another world. You manifest yourself as branches from the wood, crawling and creeping along the ground. The victim has to feel the fear, making her realise that there is no escape. Realise that you crush, strangle and extinguish all life.*

*You are the soft, tough plants, twining their way. Wrapping. Tightening. Strangling. Creeping, you are taking over. Your grip is strong. Binding, holding, stopping everything. Green and beautiful. Ivy is unstoppable. Hops grow and die. Grow and die.*



# ARVE

# ANGER

## PLAYING ARVE'S ANGER

In this game you will be playing Arve's Anger. Another player plays Arve's Shame. Together, you are responsible for portraying Arve as a whole person.

You are playing two different perspectives of Arve's personality, working together and holding each other in check. Sometimes you clash, but just as often you support each other. You need each other, or things would get out of hand. Arve feels ashamed of his anger, and when he's ashamed, he gets mad. But since Arve is filled with Anger he also needs Shame. Otherwise things could go really wrong for him. Anger and Shame, in a sort of balance, makes Arve a whole person.

When playing Arve and describing his thoughts and actions, please remember that it's his potential for anger that drives him. His anger only seldom explodes, but nevertheless it is somewhat present all the time. In his thoughts. As a driving motivation. And as an underlying feeling, guiding Arve's wants and mood.

When you're playing Arve you must consider his anger as much more than just being surly and aggressive. Anger is his **driving force**. It is **power, progress** and even **forgetfulness** – when he is angry, he forgets. When he is really angry, Arve is **thoughtless**. It is also the opposite of control and shame. It is **lust** and **desire**. It is not thinking about the consequences. It is **bitterness** and **frustration**.

The anger is like an animal, beastly side of Arve. It is where civilisation ends and nature begins. It is inhuman. It's the end of common sense and control for him. When really angry, it is the urges and the animal inside who is in charge.

The more Anger Arve is filled up with, the more beastly he becomes.

*“What will become of you. I wish there was something we could do to you.”*

*Silence has been filling the confirmation room for a while. The vicar has just been sitting there, looking at Arve. Looking at him with his little overbearing smile. His words are coming slowly. Whispering.*

*Arve feels the bubbles inside. The vicar shouldn't look at him with those overbearing eyes. He doesn't care at all about Arve, he knows that. There's no real help coming from the vicar. The vicar just wants to punish Arve. Arve can feel that, but he doesn't understand what he has done wrong. Is it for just thinking about picking up the heavy bible and throwing it at the vicar? But – it's just something in his mind. Something he sees for his inner eye.*

*Arve is restless on his chair. It makes a sound. Like a semi loud fart. Someone giggles and laughs. It's a girl's giggling. It cuts through loud and clear. Arve becomes red. Feels the shame and forms his meaty hands into hard fists. He feels ashamed even though he did nothing he should feel ashamed about. And he feels angry, knowing that the other kids think that he actually did something. He feels their eyes on him. They hate him. Hate him for touching the girls. He doesn't do that anymore. But how should he be supposed to know all the rules when nobody taught him?*

Arve has only one friend. That is Oskar from his class. And Oskar isn't actually a real friend and in some way Oskar hates Arve too. At least, Oskar often treats Arve really badly, making him feel angry. Oskar makes a show out of Arve, and the others laugh at him.

But Oskar also tells stories about girls, making Arve's eyes big. Oskar once showed him pictures of girls in a magazine. Naked girls. Totally naked girls. That makes Arve want to try all the things that Oskar tells him about. But he's not supposed to touch the girls – even if he wants to. That is for sure.

Anger is waiting just beneath Arve's skin. Waiting to be set free. To be released. And sometimes it feels just right letting go. Shouting. Screaming. Throwing things. Kicking something hard when nobody's watching.

All too often Anger hides his anger. He doesn't dare to show it. That makes his belly go hard and sore. Worrying about what would happen if he gives into his Anger. But oh, he longs to not care about it. Longs to let his anger grow. Just to give everybody what they deserve.

At home everything is quiet. It feels like even Mom doesn't notice him anymore. Like she just doesn't care. Just like everybody else doesn't care either.

Of course she is there in the house, physically, preparing dinner, telling him it's time to eat. Sometimes she even asks about school. But she's not really there. Not for Arve at least.



# ARVE ANGER

Once she saw Arve as a cute little boy, now she only sees him as something that's growing into a bigger and bigger disappointment. To her, he is becoming something big, clumsy, ugly and totally different from what he used to be.

He's not her little boy anymore – that's totally clear. He's just a bother. If only she could get rid of him, she is clearly thinking

Arve often goes out into the woods to get away from it all. Into the darkness and the soft soil. He enjoys the smells out there. Of the autumn, the rotting leaves, the fungus and the mud. Oh – to become dirty – all covered in earth and mulch. Smelling of it all – taking it all in through his nostrils. Experiencing it all through his senses. Letting it rip through him while rolling in leaves. Screaming. Crying. Laughing with only the trees and animals around to hear him.

Out there he can kick the rotting trunks, swing from branches, and be as angry as only Arve can be – as only Arve can dream of being. Out here he can dream of how it all should be. Imagine what he might do to all the others.

When Arve really needs to get away there is one special place for him. A place near the small lake in the forest. It has muddy waters and rotting tree trunks. The smell there speaks to him, almost dragging him. Drawing out something in him, making him feel good and even calm.

It was at the lake he saw her. Out by the tree, the special tree, his special tree. The magic tree that leans out over the water. An old tree with a big trunk that forms a perfect hole, a strange and fascinating hole. Like as if the world looks a little bit different when viewed through that hole.

Arve didn't think that anyone else knew about that tree. No trails lead to the ugly little lake. But he saw her there, a girl by his tree. A tall girl with long arms. She was wearing a funny dress, and when he saw her suddenly taking it off it almost made Arve's heart stop beating. Her white skin glowed in the light from the lake – as if the sun all of a sudden came from beneath instead of above. Even the trees reached out to touch her, to caress her breasts. Their gnarly fingers were moving up on her pale, slender legs. Touching her there. Oh, to bury his head in her hair. Taking her in. Taking him in. To smell her. To taste her ...

At that moment, he felt something a thousand times stronger than when Oskar showed him pictures of girls. The pictures had only been a weak taste of what was to come – of what he felt at the moment.

He so much wanted to step forward, showing the girl he was hiding. But instead, he hid himself. He didn't want to scare her away. He watched her. And pleased himself, out there on the soil.

## ABOUT ARVE

Arve is a 14-year-old boy living with his mother in a small rural town in a wooded area. Arve is an only child. Since Arve became a teenager, his mother doesn't really seem to be interested in him anymore.

Arve is short but stocky and sturdy – and rather clumsy. He's strong, but not very fast or athletic.

## THE ANIMAL SIDE IN ARVE

Buried deep inside Arve there's something strange and beastly. Arve is not very aware of this side of him right now. But during the game, it will become more clear and apparent. Imagine that there's something non-human inside Arve. Something which is more nature than human.

A side that reacts to odours and awakens inexplicable instincts. It is attracted to dirty and smelly things in nature. It is a side that likes mud and organic material, decaying. These are all things that only Arve seems to see the true beauty in.

In the beginning of the game, this side of Arve isn't dominant. It appears only through small hints, that he might not even acknowledge. But during the game the animal side becomes stronger. The animal side in him becomes a driving force. His anger and motivation becomes less human and more ... something else.





# ARVE

# SHAME

## PLAYING ARVE'S SHAME

In this game you will be playing Arve's Shame. Another player is playing Arve's Anger. Together, you are responsible for portraying Arve as a whole person.

You are playing two different perspectives of Arve's personality, working together and holding each other in check. Sometimes you clash, but just as often you support each other. You need each other, or things would get out of hand. Arve feels ashamed of his anger, and when he's ashamed, he gets mad. But since Arve is filled with Shame he also needs Anger. Otherwise, he would become totally self-effacing, disappearing into a state of apathy. Shame and Anger makes Arve a whole person.

Playing Shame doesn't mean that Arve is in a state of self hatred all the time. It's more like an underlying feeling shaping his thoughts and mood. It's the feeling of being a miscast, wanting to fit in, just wanting to be like all the others. When you are playing Arve and describing his actions and thoughts, it is the emotion of Shame that drives him. It's his wish to no longer be a weirdo. It is a wish to do the right things and to fit in. That feeling is what constantly is trying to balance his other more aggressive and brutish side.

When you're playing Arve you should consider his shame as a need for being in **control**. As long as Shame is leading the way, things won't get out of hand. Feeling Shame is considering the **consequences** of his actions. It is to **read** and **decode** the surroundings, trying to give the world what it needs. It is to show **consideration**, not doing something hastful. But feeling shameful is also about **bitterness**, letting all emotions pile up inside to prevent catastrophes from happening.

Shame is the human and civilised side of Arve, keeping his animal, wild and beastly side at bay. It is sensibility. It is to harness Arve's extreme and wild emotions.

*"What will become of you. I wish there was something we could do to you."*

*Silence has been filling the confirmation room for a while. The vicar has just been sitting there, looking at Arve. Looking at him with his little overbearing smile. His words are coming slowly. Whispering.*

*Arve doesn't answer him. It's all about the vicar, wanting to look at him with those piercing eyes. These eyes, saying that Arve doesn't belong here. They are saying – silently – that anything involving church and confirmation shouldn't have anything to do with Arve. He should just run away, instead they seem to say – into the woods and never come back.*

*But Arve doesn't run. He keeps himself under control, everything inside of him is kept in check. He must not lose control right now, letting Anger come to life, revealing what a terrible boy he really is.*

*He squirms in his chair and it makes a sound. Like a semi loud fart. Someone giggles and laughs. It's a girl who is giggling, cutting through loud and clear. Arve becomes red. He feels the shame, but controls it, forming his meaty hands into hard fists. Totally ashamed, even though he did nothing to feel ashamed about. Angry for knowing that the other kids think that he did it. He feels their eyes on him. They hate him. Hate him for touching the girls. He doesn't do that anymore. But how should he be supposed to know all the rules when nobody taught him?*

In class he just sits there, doing nothing. He has no right answers, when asked by the teacher. He stutters when trying to answer, feeling their eyes on him. And the teacher keeps asking him questions, won't let him off the hook. It makes him sink deeper and deeper into apathy and self-despair..

Then he feels their judgemental eyes. The indifference and annoyance from the ones sitting in front of him. The cold stares from those sitting behind. So he just sits there, feeling all alone, surrounded by the rest of the class.

It is not that they always laugh or make fun of him. At least not in the open. But he knows that they are doing so anyway. They give each other glances. They send notes to each other. Secret messages. And they giggle. Especially the girls. They look and giggle.

He doesn't do anything. He just sits there, bothering nobody. It's only once in a while his anger flares up and bubbles over, reacting to his anger. Violently. Outwards. Afterwards his mom has to talk to the teachers. And he feels so ashamed. More than ever. Ashamed of being nasty, ugly and despicable. Ashamed of being something that the girls will never ever look upon with any feeling of compassion whatsoever.

Oskar is Arve's only friend. Or a kind of friend. Arve is aware that they aren't exactly good friends. Arve doesn't have any real friends. But Oskar does spend time with Arve once in a while.



# ARVE

# SHAME

It was Oskar who showed Arve the magazine with the girls in. It was girls without any clothes on. That made it tear and burn inside of Arve. It was horrible, and Arve couldn't understand what was happening inside of him.

And it was Oskar that made Arve touch the girls. Nobody told him he wasn't supposed to do so. But they would like it, Oskar told him. Now he is aware that he must not do so. Now he knows.

At home everything is quiet. It feels like even Mom doesn't notice him anymore. It seems like she just doesn't care anymore. Like everyone else doesn't either.

She always tells him what not to do and what he must remember to do. She's always worrying that Arve will cause her trouble. He can't remember all her rules. He mixes them up all the time.

Once she saw him as her little boy. Now, it's different. He's not her little boy anymore – that's totally clear. He's just a bother to her.

Sometimes it all becomes too much for Arve. The angry and shameful thoughts fill him up and he just needs to get away. Then he escapes into the forest, into the darkness, out to the soil and mulch.

He relishes the smells out there; The sense of autumn, the dying leaves, the rotting fungus – the mud and the snails and the insects. He likes walking on the ground, feeling decades of death beneath his feet. Then he is wondering how it might feel to be down there. So quiet. So calm. He dreams of lying down on wet, rotting leaves, just sinking down, down, down.

There is one truly special place Arve likes to go in the forest. That is a small lake with muddy water, rotting tree trunks, and a strange odour that really affects him. It's almost dragging him, making him calm. Makes him forget that he doesn't belong anywhere. It feels almost like a calling.

It was out there he saw her. Out there by the tree in the lake. The strange tree, his magic tree. An old tree with a trunk that forms a perfect hole. A fascinating hole. It's almost like the world is a little bit different when perceived through that hole.

Arve didn't think that anyone else knew about the tree or the lake. No trails lead to the ugly little ugly lake. But he saw her. A girl by his tree. A tall girl with long arms. She was wearing a funny dress, and when he suddenly saw her taking it off it felt like Arve's heart was about to stop beating. Her white skin glowed in the light from the lake. As if the sun all of a sudden came from beneath instead of from above. Even the trees reached out to touch her, to caress her breasts. Their gnarly fingers were moving up on her pale, slender legs. Touching her there. Oh, to bury his head in her hair. Taking her in. Oh if she would take him in. To smell her. To taste her ...

At that moment, he felt something a thousand times stronger than when Oskar showed him pictures of girls. The pictures had only been a weak taste of what was to come – of what he felt at the moment.

He hid himself, ignoring the little voice inside of him telling him just to go forward and approach the girl, telling him that she wouldn't run away from him. He could have it all, the voice said. But he hid instead. And pleased himself onto the soil for the first time.

And felt ashamed. Oh, the terrible and wonderful shame.

## ABOUT ARVE

Arve is a 14-year-old boy living with his mother in a small rural town in a wooded area. Arve is an only child. Since Arve became a teenager, his mother doesn't really seem to be interested in him anymore.

Arve is short but stocky and sturdy – and rather clumsy. He's strong, but not very fast or athletic.

## THE ANIMAL SIDE IN ARVE

Buried deep inside Arve there's something strange and beastly. Arve is not very aware of this side of him right now. But during the game, it will become more clear and apparent. Imagine that there's something non-human inside Arve. Something which is more nature than human.

A side that reacts to odours and awakens inexplicable instincts. It is attracted to dirty and smelly things in nature. It is a side that likes mud and organic material, decaying. These are all things that only Arve seems to see the true beauty in.

In the beginning of the game, this side of Arve isn't dominant. It appears only through small hints, that he might not even acknowledge. But during the game the animal side becomes stronger. The animal side in him becomes a driving force. His anger and motivation becomes less human and more ... something else.



# GAIA LUST

## PLAYING GAIA'S LUST

In this game you will be playing Gaia's Lust. Another player plays Gaia's Fear. Together you are responsible for portraying Gaia as one whole person.

You are playing two different perspectives of Gaia's personality, working together to create a balance. Sometimes you clash, but just as often you support each other. You need each other, or things would get out of hand. Gaia has a drive and a lust that is being held in check by her fear of change and the unknown. The more the lust in Gaia rises and her longing for something new grows stronger, the more the fearful and apprehensive side of her grows stronger as well, wanting to protect her from humiliation and fearful things.

Playing Gaia's Lust isn't just about being **happy** and **positive** all the time. Her lust is an underlying feeling, **driving** her **forward**. It is **initiative** and **action**. It is her wish for things to be **different**. It is a **desire** that she doesn't even understand herself or know what is. It is **carelessness**. It is a **lust** that might seem almost **painful** if not pursued.

The lust in Gaia wants something that she doesn't understand yet. It is a way of discovering herself in a way that is hard to put into words. Something like an animal, something beastly. Something that can be violent and frightening. During the game you should expect the more beastly side of Gaia's lust to become stronger.

*Everything is going to be different now. Different in a wonderful way.*

*It's still nighttime but Gaia is awake. Way too awake. And even if the break of dawn is pretty soon, it's still way too far away. It will be the most fantastic day, the day where she's going to go out to discover the world. And – who knows – maybe even see the boy she saw in the forest that day.*

*She didn't think her father would succumb after their long talks and discussions about her attending a normal school filled with other children. He looked at her with those controlling eyes, almost all the time meaning a stern 'no'.*

*"This is really what you want?" he asked.*

*Oh yes! She wants to go to a normal school, not being schooled at home anymore. She wants to be among others. She can feel it in her body. She feels the urge. The need. It is like a tingling sensation, growing stronger every day. As if she was thousands of seeds from a dandelion, floating through the woods on the wind.*

*Her body is trembling and in like small glimpses of light, she feels like falling autumn leaves in all their colours. She is like forceful winds and powerful mudslides and creaking tree trunks. In a second she feels like looking at huge trees being pierced by thousands of spears from the sun. Like licking at rough bark on trunks filled with resin and fungus.*

*All these glimpses are flashing through her mind in a fantastic moment when the knot in her stomach reminds her of who she is. Then her everlasting sense of worry reminds her of the real world, sweeping away the giant trees in the wind, bringing her back to solid ground. As it always does.*

*She's been working a long time on persuading her inner fear that it would be a good thing, trying to go back to a real school. And she finally worked up the courage to ask dad.*

*She felt the tingling sensation in her body while everything in her at the same time was shouting that she should just forget, letting it be. They would laugh at her, her instinct told her. Calling her names, telling how ugly and different she is. Like they did when she was a small child and back then tried attending school. But the memories of bad things are fading.*

*"Yes. It is what I want".*

*There is something out there that she will soon meet. Someone like her. Something she's missing ... the boy from the woods.*

*Dad is being silent, looking away for a long time. She can still sense the control from his eyes. She knows he just wants to protect her.*

*"Alright," he suddenly exclaims. "Then it must be so."*



# GAIA LUST

When Gaia is having trouble finding rest she goes to find peace in the forest. The forest removes some of the constant struggle in her. That's the struggle between the side in her that wants to be a part of the world, meeting other children, and the side in her that wants to hide and perhaps even pretend that she never existed in the first place.

That constant struggle fades away when she's in the middle of the wind rushing through the trees, with all the leaves in the forest becoming alive.

Out there the pines have a voice, loud and hissing and yet still whispering. The old oak trees have a rattling voice – and perhaps if you really listen carefully enough you could hear every leaf on the tree all at once. Out there she feels the grass caressing her legs, begging her to lie down.

Her long legs take her quickly and quietly through the forest. She feels the spongy ground beneath her, filled with water and long dead leaves slowly turning into soil.

And once in a while – rarely and when the light flickers through the leaves and lights up the ground in beautiful patterns – both voices inside her scream in unison: “Run, run, run.”

She doesn't know what she's running from or towards. And even when she is in the forest she feels this unknown, constant sense of longing.

There is a special place in the forest for Gaia. It's a small forest lake with an ancient, magic tree, leaning over the strange, glowing water of the lake. The tree trunk forms a hole, and when she climbs the tree and looks through the hole, the world seems just a little bit different.

Once she took off all her clothes and let herself slide through the hole and into the cold darkness. But when she once again emerged into the light, nothing had changed.

Gaia didn't believe that anybody else knew about the lake and the tree. No paths lead to the tree. The lake doesn't appear on any maps – she checked on her father's map of the forest.

But one day there was a boy by the lake. She saw him. Perhaps he was an elf. A rather big one, that is. He was standing by the tree, touching the tree. He had a low kind of a booming voice, making her shiver all inside in a longing way.

She saw him put his long arms around the tree, squeezing the trunk, making her feel almost as if his arms were around her waist instead. When he removed his dirty sweater she let out a loud gasp and was sure she had revealed herself. And she controlled her gasping breath while the tickling inside her grew and grew and she touched herself while imagining it was his big hands touching her body instead of her own.

From far far away it was like a voice was saying that this was the way and she shouldn't be afraid of it.

## ABOUT GAIA

Gaia is a 14-year-old girl living in a small town in a rural wooded area. All her life, Gaia has been living alone with her father. He found her as a baby in the forest during a frightful storm. Gaia has no idea who her real parents are or why she was abandoned in the forest. Her father doesn't talk much about her heritage. He's been taking care of her, raising her as if she was his child.

Gaia's father is very protective and Gaia hasn't attended public school in many years. When she was a small child, she once tried to attend school. But she was so different from the other kids, who weren't nice to her. Since then, she has been homeschooled. But now, Gaia has decided to start in school once again.

Gaia is a tall girl with long limbs. Her upper body is almost a bit too large and she walks in a rather bent-over way. Her body is still developing, and her breasts are getting bigger, which is a strange experience for her - especially the lust for someone to touch them.

## THE ANIMAL SIDE OF GAIA

Buried deep inside Gaia there's something strange and animastic, almost beastly. Gaia doesn't know a lot about this side right now, but during the game, it will become more clear and apparent.

Imagine that there's something non-human inside of Gaia. Something more beastly than human – like a part of nature. A side that reacts strongly to smells, odours – a side with inexplicable instincts. That side is attracted to the woods and the trees: It's a need for crooked branches, the strange taste of bark, and the storm rushing through the trees. It's something that scares Gaia deeply.

This side of Gaia isn't dominant in the beginning of the game. It appears only through small hints, maybe not even acknowledged by Gaia. But during the game the beastly side becomes stronger. The beastly side in her becomes a driving force. Her lust and urges become less human and more ... something else.



# GAIA FEAR

## PLAYING GAIA'S FEAR

In this game you will be playing Gaia's Fear. Another player plays Gaia's Lust. Together you are responsible for portraying Gaia as one whole person.

You are playing two different perspectives of Gaia's personality, working together to create a balance. Sometimes you clash, but just as often you support each other. You need each other, or things would get out of hand.

Gaia has a drive and a lust that is being held in check by her fear of change and the unknown. The more the lust in Gaia rises and her longing for something new grows stronger, the more the fearful and apprehensive side of her grows stronger as well, wanting to protect her from humiliation and fearful things.

Playing Gaia's fear isn't just about being fearful and anxious all the time. Fear is an underlying emotion, controlling and influencing Gaia's thoughts and actions. The fear in Gaia is her reason, making whatever is hard to understand and to control easier to handle. Fear is her desire to **avoid conflict** and to **predict** dangerous situations. It is her desire to **just fit in**, not to stand out.

When playing Gaia you might consider her fear as something constantly present, trying to help her make situations as **comfortable** and **safe** as possible. For Gaia, fear is about not being able to fathom the consequences of new things. It is the **fear** of being **made fun of** and not being **accepted**. It is a fear that can grow really strong and scary when things escalate.

Fear in Gaia is also something civilised. It's the need for control and the need to understand society's norms. It's the opposite of chaos and violence. When allowed to run wild, the fear itself can turn completely chaotic.

*Everything is going to be different now. Awfully different. Something big, and perhaps even cataclysmic, is going to happen. She can feel it.*

*And Gaia herself has asked for it to happen. She asked if she could, please, please, please attend a normal school with children her own age instead of being home schooled. It was about time to get out amongst others. Perhaps even time to get some friends.*

*For a long time Dad looked at her with his stern and serious eyes. Only Dad has that look. A look that always made Gaia extra wary.*

*"This is what you really want?" he finally asked.*

*Gaia's body began to tremble, her long limbs shivered. Her inexplicable urges and desires were shaking her – shaking like a thousand leaves in the wind. They were beautiful, like when the sun shines through the trees. A light that is also blinding and can make all sense disappear. It was like thunder, earthquakes and mudslides.*

*At that moment Gaia became terribly afraid. More afraid than she'd been for a long time. Excited and unprepared for all the new things to come. But also terrified and anxious for all the disappointments and failures that sure awaited her.*

*Terrified of finally being able to ask for what she actually wanted. Terrified that nothing would go as she hoped it was going to.*

Once a long time ago, Gaia actually tried to be among the other kids. Back then they laughed at her, calling her names. They told her how ugly and different she was.

And now, they are going to tell her not to be so tall and gangly and strange. They will scream at her. She should bugger off and go home to the forest and to her weird dad.

But she has to go back to school. The uncontrollable and mystifying urge in her tells her to do so. That's the strange need in her, twisting things around inside Gaia's already tormenting head and body. That is what's going on Inside her, under her skin, hiding behind her long limbs and big head that nobody seems to understand.

Whenever it's hard for Gaia to find calm and ease she turns to the forest. The forest can remove some of the everlasting struggle in her – a struggle with one side of her wanting to see the world and the other one wanting to hide the fact that she ever existed.



# GAIA FEAR

The shouting inside her calms down when she hears the rustling in the leaves. Oh, the whooshing sound of the wind through the pines, almost shouting at one moment and then suddenly a whisper. In the summer the old oak trees rattles at her. And if you really try hard, you can hear the voice of every single leaf of the tree.

Her long legs take her quickly and quietly through the forest, feeling the spongy ground beneath her feet. The ground is filled with water and long-dead leaves turning into soil.

And once in a while – when the sun flickers through the leaves and lights the ground – both voices inside her scream in unison: “Run, run, run”.

She doesn't know what she's running from or towards. Even when she is in the forest, she feels the unexplainable longing.

There is a special place in the forest for Gaia. It's a small forest lake with an ancient, magic tree, leaning over the strange, glowing water of the lake. The tree trunk forms a hole, and when she climbs the tree and looks through the hole, the world seems just a little bit different.

Once she took off all her clothes and let herself slide through the hole and into the cold darkness of the water. But when she emerged back into the light, nothing had changed.

Gaia didn't believe that anybody else knew about the lake and the tree. No paths lead to the tree. The lake doesn't appear on any maps – she checked on her father's map of the forest.

But once there was a boy out by the lake. She saw him. Perhaps he was an elf. A rather big one, that is. He was standing by the tree, touching it. He had a low kind of a booming voice, making her shiver all inside in a longing way.

She saw him put his long arms around the tree, squeezing the trunk. It felt almost as if she could feel his arms around her waist instead. When he removed his dirty sweater she let out a loud gasp and was sure she had revealed herself. And she controlled her gasping breath while the tickling inside her grew and grew and she started touching herself while imagining it was his big hands on her body instead of her own.

And while pleasuring herself for the first time, she heard a voice inside her shouting that it was dangerous. That she should be afraid – even if it felt so good.

## ABOUT GAIA

Gaia is a 14-year-old girl living in a small town in a rural wooded area. All her life, Gaia has been living alone with her father. He found her as a baby in the forest during a frightful storm. Gaia has no idea who her real parents are or why she was abandoned in the forest. Her father doesn't talk much about her heritage. He's been taking care of her, raising her as if she was his child.

Gaia's father is very protective and Gaia hasn't attended public school in many years. When she was a small child, she once tried to attend school. But she was so different from the other kids, who weren't nice to her. Since then, she has been homeschooled. But now, Gaia has decided to start in school once again.

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