



Other Women

A scenario by Anneli Friedner

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About the game

Introduction

Why were there no great female artists?
History will call them something different. Muses, mistresses, wives.

This larp is set in the late 19th century and we play the women around a great male genius.
He is mostly off screen, busy elsewhere. We are the ones surrounding him. His wife and his mistress, her sister, his pupil. Attractive women. His biographer will call us "his affairs".

We are supposed to hate each other, to compete for his attention. They probably told you too what they told us as children - that girls can't have more than one friend, because girls always compete. Depending on who wrote the history book, we might be a deceived wife, a homewrecker, the other woman and a naïve girl getting victimised by the great male genius and his great libido. But that is not at all how we remember it.

"Other Women" is a scenario about sisterhood, friendship and some great female artists.
It is a feminist game.
It is about creating, art and getting the possibility to take oneself seriously as an artist.
It is about the trappings of womanhood and how they limit female artists. It is about sex.
It is about seeing and being seen.

The game is about developing the relationships between these women and how they grow to like, love and support each other.

Practical summary

This game is designed for four players and one game master.

It is played in four acts of 4-5 scenes each. The runtime is approximately 3,5 hours including the workshop.

Characters:

The Character sheets are two-sided. The backside has a collage of artwork symbolising “your inner landscape” and a short character summary. The main side has images showing them “in the eyes of others” and a longer character description. Here is a summary for you as GM:

			
Alice - The wife , who is the breadwinner of the family, selling illustrations to the newspapers and drawing postcards to pay the bills while he works and aches over his next big masterpiece.	Edith - The muse , his mistress of many years. Her beautiful red hair made his paintings famous and prevented her from keeping any respectable job. She is falling ill and her laudanum ¹ addiction is getting out of hand.	Martha - The sister , who came here to help her sister Edith, but she is also drawn to the art and the idea of an art career of her own. She tries to make him teach her, although he usually treats this as a form of seduction.	Florence - The pupil , an incredibly talented artist in the making. If she can make it into the Art Academy without slipping into the many traps of womanhood, she will soon outshine her master, and history will remember her as a great female artist.
Her art explores female bodies, sensuality, sex, childbirth, motherhood, pastels, abstract	Her art explores loss and pain, autumn, illness, despair. Expressionism or surrealism, passionate and hurting.	Her art explores loneliness, melancholy and search for connection. Cold or subdued colours, restrained.	Her art explores wanderlust, mysticism, search for the divine.
Sex is something she longs for and wants. She wishes for the Male Artist to show	Sex is something ambivalent and likely scary to her, because she	Sex is something she has mixed and complicated feelings about. She is not at all	Sex is something threatening, yet tempting, to her, because a young woman of her class

¹ Laudanum is an addictive opium tincture, commonly used as a pain medication or cough suppressant.

more interest in her, but after they had children that's been more and more rare. She might develop physical attraction to Martha.	fears getting pregnant. She has miscarried at least once, and while she still has a sexual relationship with the Male Artist, this has caused some strain between them.	attracted to men, but has consented to sex a few times, despite not enjoying it much. She might however develop a physical and romantic relationship with The Wife and discover that sex with a woman is something completely different.	must be pure and stay a virgin until she marries. She is likely kept a bit in the dark about it, but might be curious to ask the other women what it is all about. She also finds herself attracted to the Male Artist, which both fascinates and scares her.
Loyal confidante to Florence (the Pupil)	Loyal confidante to Martha	Loyal confidante to Edith	Loyal confidante to Alice
Could become: Friends with Edith A love interest to Martha	Could become: Friends with Alice Mentor to Florence	Could become: Work partner to Florence A love interest to Alice	Could become: Work partner to Martha Mentee to Edith

Note on content: While there are some heavier themes present (unwanted sexual attention, unwanted pregnancies and miscarriages, drug addiction, depression, loneliness, cheating) in the game, they are not supposed to be in the foreground. It is also possible that the players have themes they want to play on or avoid completely, that can be taken into account while casting.

Edith has struggled with unwanted pregnancies and suffered a late miscarriage. She also has the most physical and mental health issues.

Martha is written as a queer woman and struggles with loneliness and depression because of this.

While Alice also has a potential lesbian relationship, she seems less troubled by this identity-wise.

Florence has good potential for avoiding these kinds of themes, but might also be played towards a few of them if the player so decides.

Relationships:

The women all live in the same household, together with the Male Artist and his four children with Alice, his wife. The women are defined by their relationship to the Male Artist, and this won't develop much throughout the game. Their *feelings* about him might change, but they will stay with the same relation as they started with.

All of them start out with a loyal confidante (Alice/The Wife – Florence/The Pupil, and Edith/The Muse – Martha/The Sister). This relationship might be an anchor which stays the same throughout the game, but could also develop and change. The game is centred around developing the potential relationships, that start off as buds that might grow stronger through the game. The game is about developing the relationships between these women and how they grow to like, love and support each other.

Structure:

The larp begins after the Male Artist has had a great success with an exhibition. Everyone has been invited to his home to celebrate, and when the men move on to a pub for all-night rowdiness, the four women are left behind in the kitchen to tidy up.

The game follows them for approximately one year and ends with another big exhibition to which he (and perhaps some of the characters) will submit artwork.

There are multiple scenes happening at night in the kitchen where the women clean up after a party, to establish their function as supporting characters in the Male Artist's life, and give the players a sense of recognition.

There is a bit of an act structure where the characters take turns being a bit more of a central character. First Alice (summer), then Edith (autumn), then Martha (winter) and finally Florence (spring). In general, though, they all appear throughout the game. This is mostly because the former two to some extent represent "the past" while the latter two has more of a future. The "acts" are colour coded in the scene structure overview. The game master starts off each act by reading the short prompt, which sets a season and centre one of the characters.

There are a few different kinds of scenes:

Art scenes must pass the Bechdel test (i.e. two women talking with each other about something else than a man). These are meant for the women to explore what they want to achieve in life, what art means and what they want to explore as artists.

Sex scenes are scenes where the women talk about sex. The focus here is on what place sex takes in these women's narrative: something risky, something coerced, something insulting, something to long for, something to fear.

The Kitchen is a place where the women keep finding themselves throughout the game. This place has a double meaning. Partly, it is a prison, somewhere they're restrained to despite their ambitions. Partly, it is a sanctuary and a place where they can emotionally support each other, far away from any men.

Scenes generally start "in medias res" to avoid small-talk and dry-larping. They are usually centred around one character who starts telling about something she thinks about or feels. Encourage the players to bring in the central content of the scene as early as possible.

The Male Artist is present in a few scenes. Let the players take turns playing him. He always dominates the scene he is in and everyone are supposed to follow along. If he is happy, everyone should try to be happy. If he is sad, everyone are supposed to drop what they are doing to comfort him. The women will not openly challenge him. He is a larger-than-life male genius, after all.

Running the game

Practical instructions for the game master

The timeframe of the game is approximately 3,5 hours (workshop included). In the playtest, the character workshop took approximately 50 minutes and the runtime 2 hours and 15 minutes. Each scene is around five minutes long, but it is up to you to cut them when you see fit. With the parallel

scenes, it might be fitting to cut them at different times for the different pairs.

This game is written for the Stockholm Scenario Festival, and intended to be playable in a classroom or similar. Thus, it uses minimal props.

You want to set up 'The Kitchen, where most scenes take place. This requires a table and a few chairs. These can also be turned into the Studio.

Apart from that you need **painting props** (a box of crayons and a notepad or sketch book), and perhaps some dishes and bottles (to drink, to clean up). Allow the players to improvise and set up locations for the scenes as they see fit.

((If you want to play this with slightly more props, it is of course possible. In a few scenes, characters are looking at art, so adding some kind of paintings or sculptures might be a good idea. There are also a few scenes taking place in Edith's bedroom, so a couch or bed might be good to have – although not necessary to run the game))

Your job is to set each scene and give the players instructions. You also keep track of time and cut the scenes after approximately five minutes. Depending on your personal preference and the player group, you can be more active in prompting and shadowing the players, or staying mostly passive and invisible during the scenes.

Pre-game workshop (ca 50 minutes)

The workshop is in three parts. First it is information about the game, then character work, and finally we will introduce and practice the game mechanics.

Introduce the game

Introduce the scenario to the players by reading them the Introduction at p.1

Give the players the information about the game from the About the game section:

Tell them about the themes, relationships and different kinds of scenes.

Character workshop

Hand out characters

Print them and put them before the players with backside up, and let the players chose from there. (The backsides have "your inner landscape" images and the short prompt from p.2). If any of the players have triggers or themes they want to avoid, you can help them with the notes on content from p.3.

Give the players time to read the characters.

Who are you?

Do a presentation round where the players describe their characters neutrally and share the most important biographical information about their characters with each other. Make sure everyone has a basic understanding about who the other characters are.

Feeling your body and describing it by metaphors. Take a few deep breaths and discover a

sensation. Try to describe it metaphorically, not literally. Eg *There is a bear in my chest, tearing to get out. My skin is flaky and frail like ashes, about to blow away and disappear any moment. There is a small fire behind my eyes. My hands are about to bloom, like heavy roses.* First try to do this as yourself, to find the language. Then try to channel your character and describe what sensations she can feel in her body.

How men see you

There are some paintings for inspiration in your character sheet. Describe yourself, in character, as a male artist would. Try to watch yourself from the outside and tell the others what you see. Feel free to let the sexism flow.

This will come into play in all scenes where the Male Artist is present.

Your inner artist

There are some paintings for inspiration in your character sheet. Try again, describing yourself. This time I want you to embrace your inner artist and do it like you wish you could. Don't be humble! What motivates you? What do you want to explore through art? What makes you genius?

This will come into play in all the "art scenes"

The man, the myth, the legend. Help each other describe the Male Artist:

Start with the larger-than-life version of him. The hero, the genius, the one you all are drawn to in some way.

Then take another round and describe his everyday self. The things that make him human and small. The things you like about him.

Then take another round and rant about his bad sides and what you dislike about him.

Game mechanics

Painting

There are a few scenes where characters paint, and the thought of this mechanic is to add painting physically to the game without it taking too much focus.

Let the players pick a few crayons each, with colours that feels right for them.

Doodle abstractly with them to show their mood in the scene (e.g. thoughtful, angry, bored, restless, stressed). Try this out!

Meta rules about art:

All the characters are skilled artists, so all art created in the game is good. When characters make remarks about their own or other's art, it is not to be taken as comments about the art itself, but rather as comments about how they feel about their own or the others' opportunities as artists, or if they want to support each other.





Physical intimacy

While there are no sex scenes in the game, there might be one where characters are physically intimate. Let the players establish a baseline for touch and emphasise slow escalation. I suggest lightly touching each other's arms to signal "this is flirty and intimate touch".

This is a good place in the workshop to let the players express preferences and boundaries.












This is the end of the workshop, and now is a good time to take a short break before we start playing.

Scenes

Summer	<p>Summer days are long, bright and full of joy. The house is full of life and laughter from four children being home all day. A little bit of lovely chaos. The spring was long and stressful, with him preparing for an exhibition and everyone else tiptoeing around. Tonight, you can draw a breath of relief. The exhibition was a success.</p> <p>But for Alice, wife and mother, the long, beautiful summer never offers rest or relaxation. As usual, she's hosted the after party and been left at home with the cleaning. For Alice, summer means children at home, house guests to entertain, and constantly being short of money.</p> <p>The rest of you have a slightly better chance of enjoying this lovely season, with its expeditions, balls and parties. But it would also be wise to not overstay your welcome.</p>
1	<div data-bbox="332 814 393 898">  </div> <p>In the kitchen: The thousand everyday chores</p> <p>It is late night, and the four women are left behind in the kitchen to clean up after a party. Establish what life in the household is like and talk about the party - which was wild and fun, especially for the men present.</p> <p>This scene starts with: Alice brings up how she is stressed out; trying to deal with economical strain, raising children and the thousand little chores of everyday married life.</p>
2	<div data-bbox="332 1165 393 1249">  </div> <p>Art is... paying the bills</p> <p>Alice is working by her desk, and is joined by Florence. They talk about what they long for and how they would want to express it through their art – although Alice has to focus on finishing the Mother's Day greeting cards she's commissioned to. Art is what pays the bills.</p>
3	<div data-bbox="332 1375 393 1459">  </div> <p>Sex is... painful</p> <p>Florence wonders whether sex hurts, and all the other women tells her how it does. Alice talks about being humiliated by her husband when he is seen in public with other women - particularly Edith. Edith talks about being objectified and sexualised by lots of men. Martha hurts from her unfulfilled longing for connection.</p>
4	<div data-bbox="332 1617 393 1743">  </div> <p>In the kitchen: Sex is longing (played simultaneously in pairs)</p> <p>Florence has been chaperoned by Edith at a ball, and after arriving home late at night they talk about lust, longing and the restraints put on women.</p> <p>Alice and Martha are both curious about whether sex with a woman would be something completely different than sex with a man.</p>

5	AE MF	<p>In the kitchen: He is in a really bad mood today</p> <p>He lost a stipend, and his current monumental painting is not working out as planned. The next exhibition is only a week away. All four of you start in the kitchen, trying to make a plan for how to handle his bad mood.</p> <p><i>In this scene the GM play the Male Artist and help stressing out the women by making noise, shouting or cursing from off-stage.</i></p>
Autumn		<p>The days turn shorter, nights colder, and the house is once more filled with silence, as everyone is getting back to work and life goes on as usual. The trees outside your windows put on a last show, a wonderful explosion of colours, before they wither and die – as all beautiful things must come to an end.</p> <p>For Edith, once so famous and celebrated for her beauty, this notion is real and painful. Her illness is getting worse, and it likely won't get better. Her sister Martha is there to help, and that is a little bit of a relief of course, but the rest of you can get on with your lives like they'll continue forever.</p> <p>And perhaps, just like the autumn leaves, Edith will not leave this world unnoticed or silently. There is still so much left to experience!</p>
6	E M	<p>Art is... connection</p> <p>Edith is looking through an art exhibition, joined by Martha. They look back at their upbringing and the path laid out for them, and talk about how art is a tool to connect with others and oneself. Edith wonders what her legacy will be.</p>
7	AE F MA	<p>He is... great fun and larger than life</p> <p>The last exhibition went much better than one could ever hope for. He has ordered a coach, booked a table at a restaurant and invites Alice, Edith and Florence for a fancy dinner, followed by an after party at their house. Lots of champagne! Music! Laughter! Party!</p>
8	AE MF	<p>In the kitchen: Fear of death</p> <p>Late at night, the four women are left to clean up the kitchen after the party. Edith is trying to come to terms with her illness and her fear of death.</p> <p>This scene starts with Edith bringing up the realisation that she will likely die from her illness.</p>
9	E F	<p>Art is... pain.</p> <p>Edith is confined in bed because of her illness, and spends the time painting. Florence checks in on her and sits by the bedside. They talk about sacrifices Edith has made for art, and what Florence should watch out for.</p>
10	AE	<p>He is... drunk and sentimental</p> <p>He opens up to Alice and Edith, being sentimental and feeling like a piece</p>

	MA	of shit. He and his art career wouldn't be <i>anything</i> without these two women.
Winter		<p>When you wake up in the morning, frost has left roses on the windows, and in the kitchen, there is ice on the water buckets in the morning. The house is covered in snow, and life itself seems frozen. Everyone is resting and trying to deal with the cold and darkness as best as they can.</p> <p>Martha, forever the lonely spinster, can feel the cold and darkness resonate with her. She never thought she'd stay here this long, but in a way, she has come to enjoy her place in this house. No one likes the ice and snow, but maybe there could be a way to thaw Martha and her frozen heart?</p> <p>The rest of you prepare for Christmas, decorate the house, light the candles and try to find connection and joy in the darkness.</p>
11	AE MF	<p>In the kitchen: Sex is threatening (played in pairs)</p> <p>Martha thinks about how to avoid men trying to seduce her. Florence thinks about the importance of preserving her virginity, and the threats if she fails to do so.</p> <p>Edith and Alice open up to each other about sex getting spoiled by the risk of getting pregnant and the constant anxiety that provokes.</p>
12	AE MF	<p>In the kitchen: Loneliness</p> <p>It is late at night and the four women are left cleaning up after a party. Martha is seeking meaningful connections (both in general and to the other women in particular) and fear dying a lonely spinster</p> <p>This scene starts with Martha bringing up her longing for a place to belong.</p>
13	M MA	<p>He is... full of his own genius</p> <p>Martha is painting in the garden and gets joined by the Male Artist. She perhaps asks him for some favour (introducing her to a critic or something like that). He constantly switches the topic into his own art and all the genius ideas he's got. She tries to be nice to get what she wants. He belittles her and reads her attention as sexual attraction.</p>
14	AFM	<p>Art is... independence</p> <p>Florence is practicing anatomy by drawing a sculpture in a museum, and is joined by Martha and Alice. They talk about the possibilities of being a female artist and able to live and work independently, without any men.</p>
Spring		And when you long for it the most – the sun comes back – like it always does. At first, it is just a pale ray of light, but soon enough sunshine is flowing through the house again. The snow melts away, you open up the

		<p>doors and clean the winter away. All the old dust must go! Let light and air in!</p> <p>As nature and all the animals outside seems to awaken again, so does Florence. The Artist's apprentice finds herself once again full of energy and hungry for life, for art, for new beginnings!</p> <p>The rest of you might also thrive in the spring and the welcome sunshine, and perhaps Florence's enthusiasm will be rubbing off on you.</p>
15	  	<p>Sex is... exploration (played simultaneously in pairs)</p> <p>Florence is alone with the Male Artist, who steers the conversation topic into sex and starts hitting on her. She is equal parts longing and terrified.</p> <p>Martha and Alice pick up their earlier conversation about if sex with a woman is something different than sex with a man. The conversation turns flirty and steamy.</p>
16	 	<p>He is... just a little bit condescending</p> <p>Florence's last drawings are too tame, too bourgeoisie, too unoriginal. If she doesn't put her heart into her art, she will probably end up like Alice, who hasn't been painting anything particularly interesting since she married. Maybe this is proof that women don't become good artists.</p>
17	 	<p>In the kitchen: Taking oneself seriously as an artist</p> <p>Florence has been told that women can't paint, and this is starting to get to her. What if there are no great female artists because women never get the opportunity to take their art seriously? They really should!</p> <p>This scene starts with Florence ranting about the condescending talk she had with the Male Artist in the last scene.</p>
18	 	<p>In the kitchen: After the exhibition</p> <p>Before this scene, the players get to decide off-game whether their character sent in any artwork for the Open Spring Exhibition, and whether it got admitted.</p> <p>It is late at night and the four women are left in the kitchen, cleaning up after a party. They talk about the exhibition they have just seen, and react on each other's artworks and their reception.</p>
19	 	<p>Epilogues</p> <p>What became her legacy? The players take turns doing short monologues, telling us about their character and what happened to her after the game.</p>

After the game

The epilogues close the game.

Afterwards, you might want to let the players talk a bit more about their characters or what happened after the game. When playtesting, I ended up sharing some of the inspirations for the story (see appendix) with the players as a final activity. There is no organised debriefing exercise.

Thanks to

Lukas Renklint, Elin Gissén, Samuel Sjöberg and Erland Nylund for playtesting.

Mo Holkar, Lu Larpová, Trine Lise Lindahl and Graham Walmsley for feedback on the script.

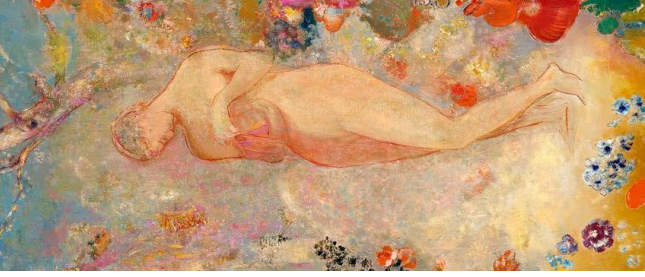
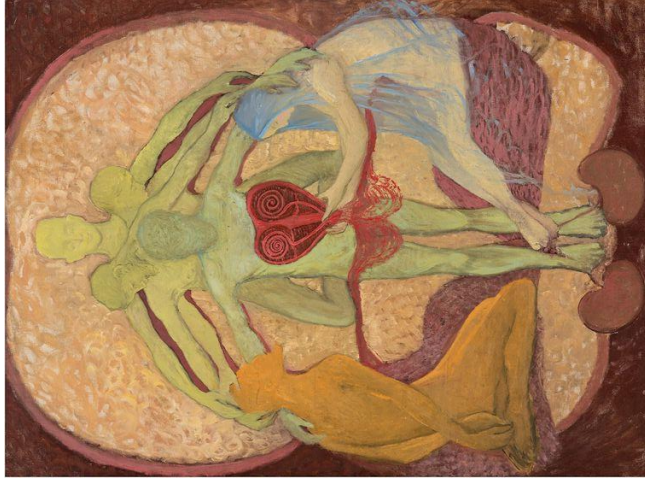
Linnea Cecilia Fredin for playing a lovely heartbreaking dynamic like these with me in a completely different setting.

And to Anna Westerling for some great talks about men, feminism and taking one's art seriously.

Appendix: Characters

Alice - The wife

You are the breadwinner of the family, selling illustrations to the newspapers and drawing postcards to pay the bills while he works and aches over his next big masterpiece.



Alice - 'The Wife

You met him in Paris in your early 20s, when you both were young and ambitious artists. You started working together, staying up all nights. You soon became partners in love as well as in art. After a brief courtship, he proposed and you decided to get married. **Almost twenty years later, you have four children. And depending on how you define success, you are both successful artists.**

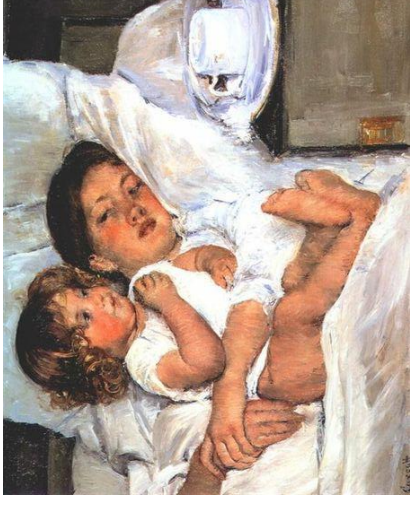
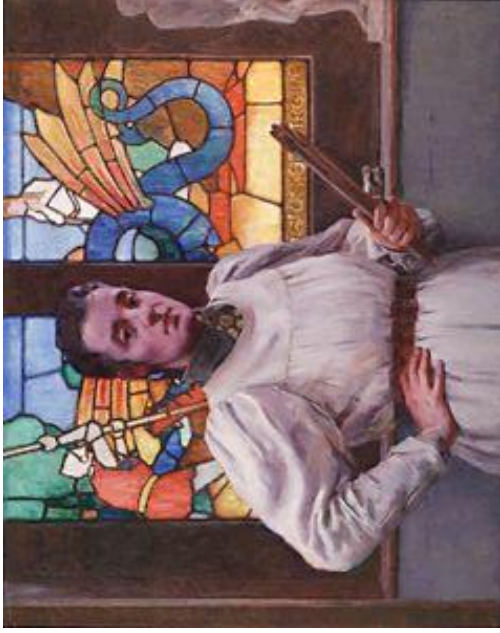
He is the one with the big name, who gets the big commissions and wins the awards.

You, on the other side, are the one who make sure the children don't starve. Since they were young, you've done lots of low-status but paid art: illustrations for magazines, giftcards, children's books. You are hard-working, reliable and quick. Good at what you do, although you must admit it is not very inspiring.

Of course, you are also the one making sure things run smoothly at your house. When your husband spontaneously invites friends and colleagues over for a party on a weekday night, he can do so because you've made sure there's food and wine at home.

In your art, as well as in life, Motherhood is an important theme. You also explore sensuality, female bodies, sex, childbirth. You are drawn to pastel colours.

Sex, though, is something you crave and long for, but since you had the children that side of your marriage has died out almost completely. You know very well that your husband is having affairs, and have pondered many times doing the same.



The Other Women:

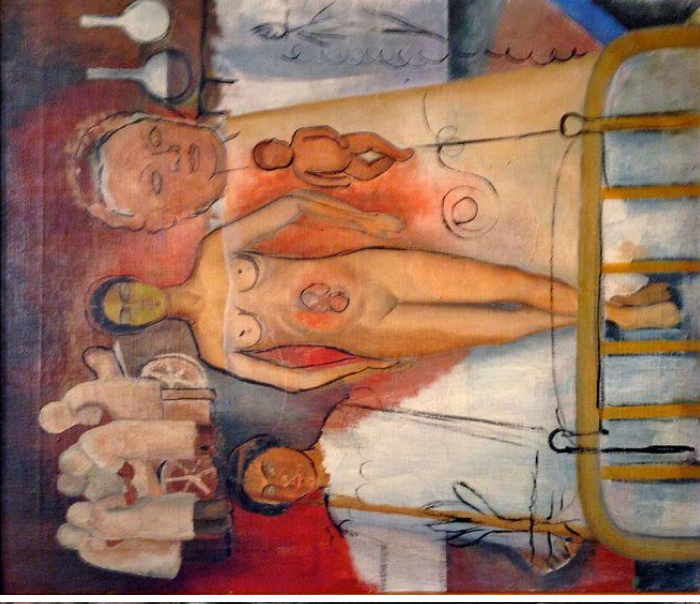
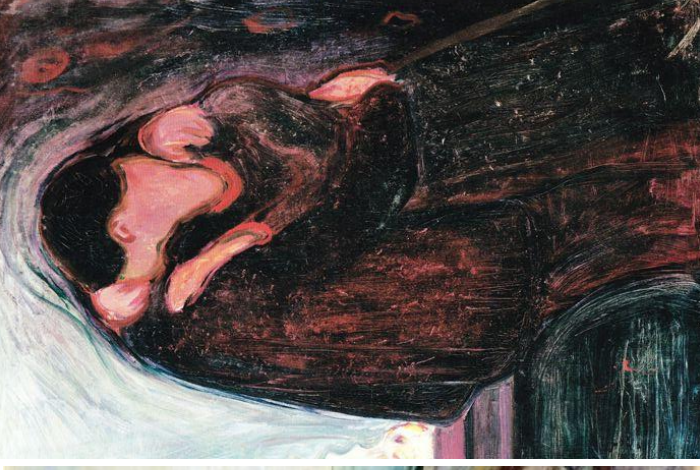
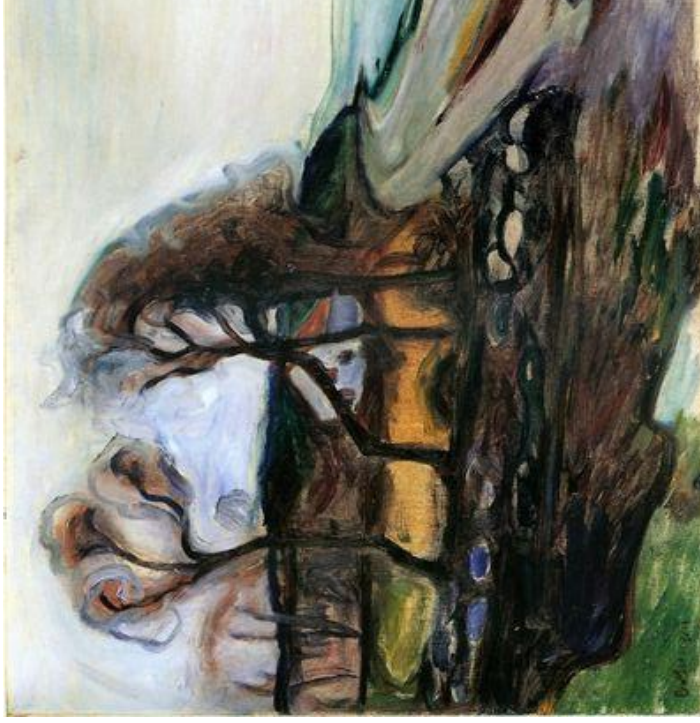
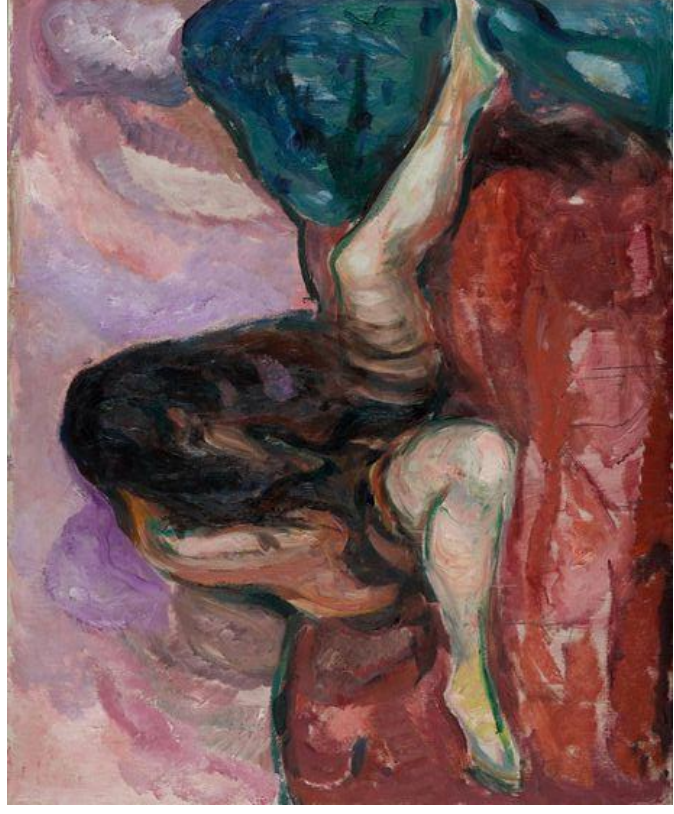
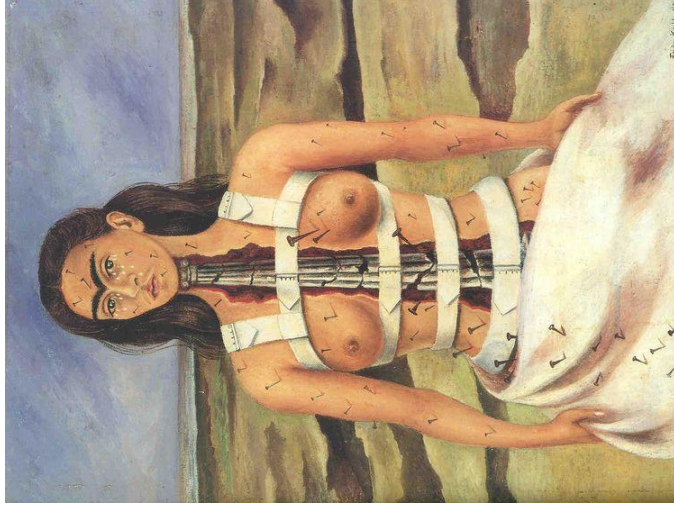
Your loyal confidante is **Florence**, a young woman that almost feels like another daughter of yours. She studies for your husband, and you can clearly see that she has talent.

Initially when **Edith** moved into your house, you hated it. It felt really humiliating to have another woman - a beautiful, fallen woman, under your roof and to leave your husband alone with her in the studio for hours at the time. Now, you don't know really. Perhaps you are slowly warming up towards her.

Martha on the other hand, was immediately likeable. She moved in a few months ago to help her sister, but she has been a reliable help in your household from the start, and you two get along really well. In fact, you have never gotten along this well with a woman before. This could be the start of a love affair.

Edith - The muse

You are his mistress of many years. Your beautiful red hair made his paintings famous and prevented you from keeping any respectable job. You are falling ill and your laudanum addiction is getting out of hand.



Edith - The Muse

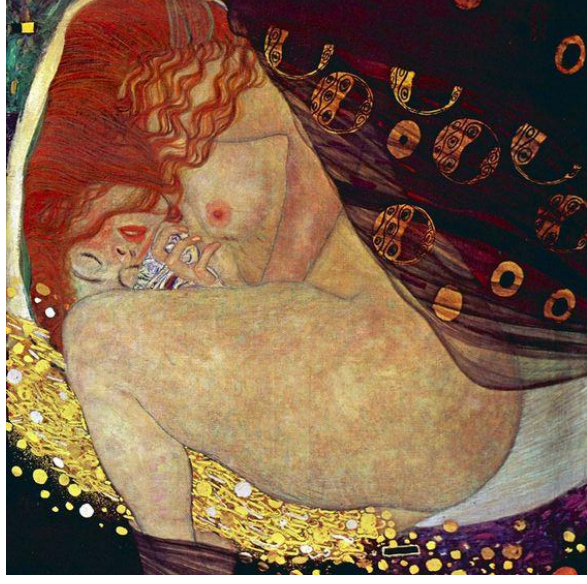
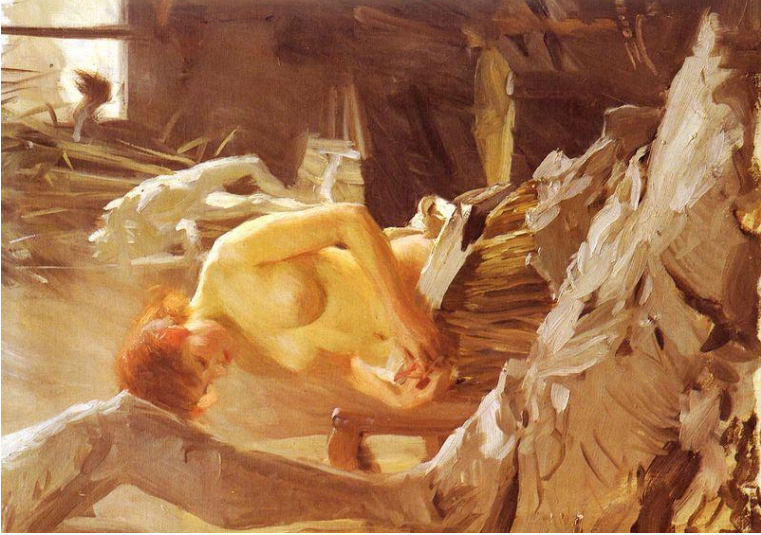
Before you met him, you were working in a milliners shop. Your sparkling red hair caught the eyes of him and his artist friends, and soon enough you had been persuaded into modelling for them. When this came out, you were fired from your job - being an artists' model is hardly respectable for a young woman - **but your fame and reputation just grew, and your beauty inspired a whole generation of great male artists.**

Especially him. Early on he dubbed you his muse, and he has painted you over and over. There was strong attraction between you from the start, and soon enough you also became his mistress. The two of you marrying has never been on the table - he is already married and even if he wasn't, he is way above your station.

Once, you got pregnant with his child, but suffered a late miscarriage. **Ever since, sex is something you have mixed feelings about.** You still have an intimate relationship, but the fear of getting pregnant again is holding you back and causing a strain between you.

You are now in your early 30s, but you feel frail and old. Overall the unconventional lifestyle: long cold modeling sessions in the studio, long nights partying, lots of men trying to court you, or get under your skirts, has started taking its toll on your physical and mental health. Perhaps you suffer from tuberculosis, or hysteria. A doctor started prescribing you laudanum a while back, but **you might still be in denial about how addicted to it you've become.**

In your art you explore feelings of loss and pain, autumn, illness and despair. Like yourself, it is simultaneously passionate and hurting.



The Other Women:

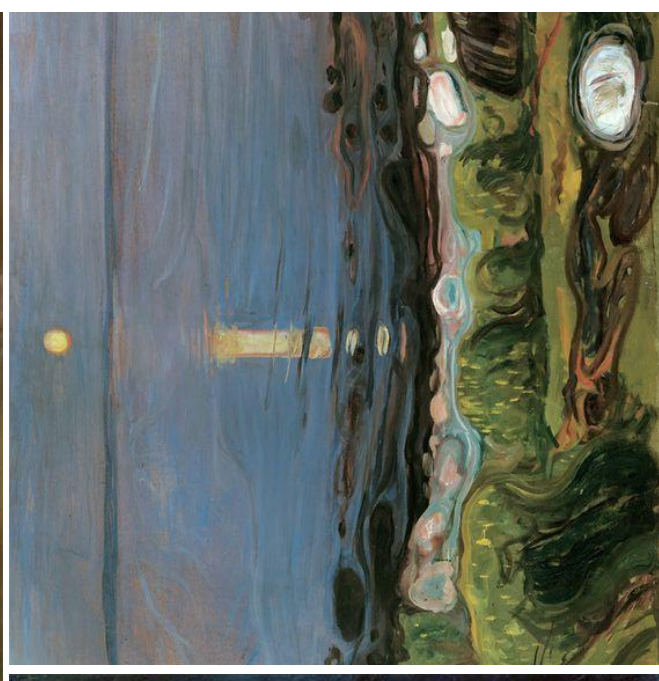
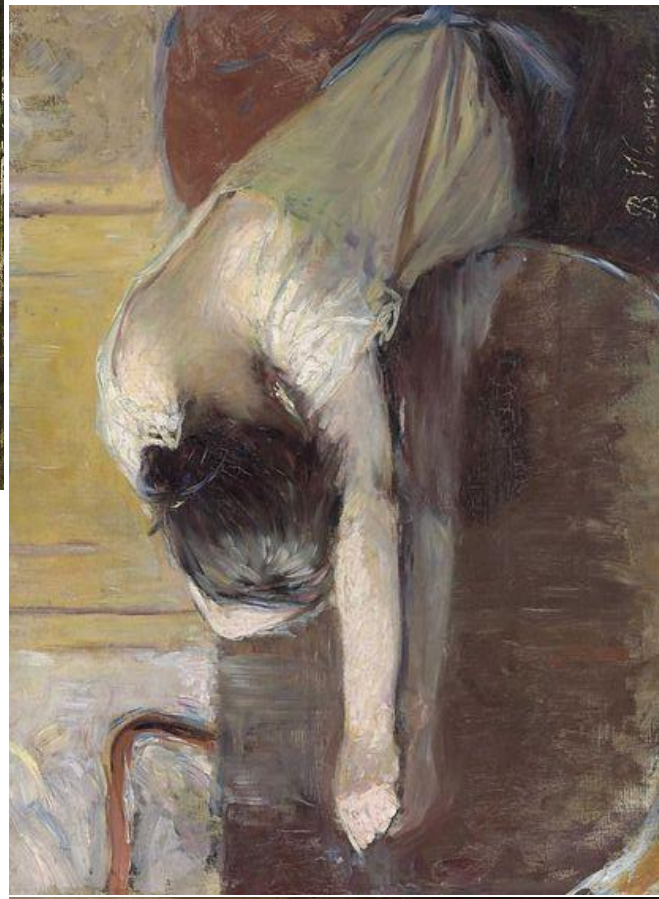
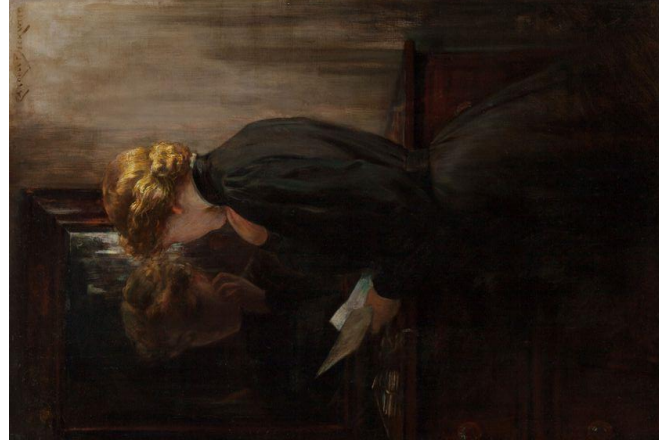
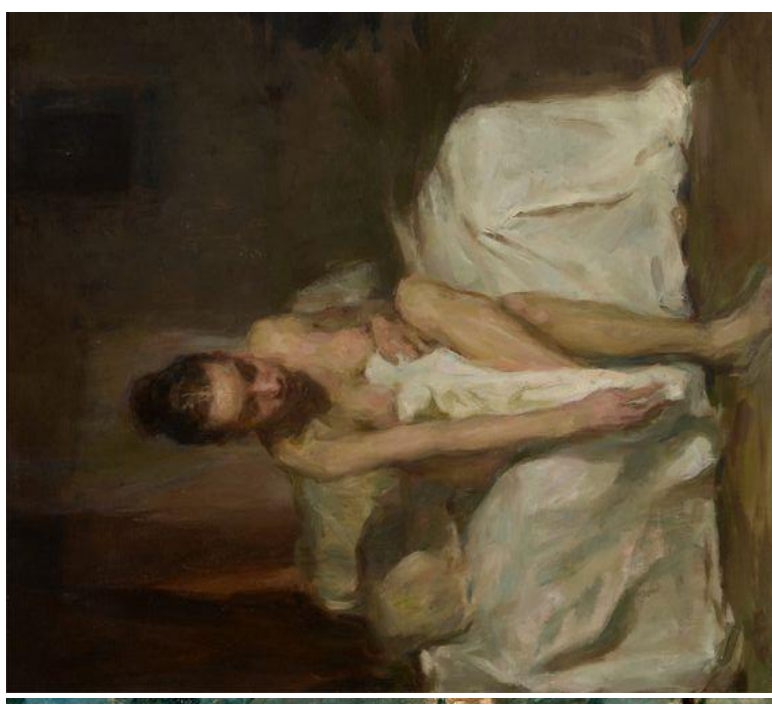
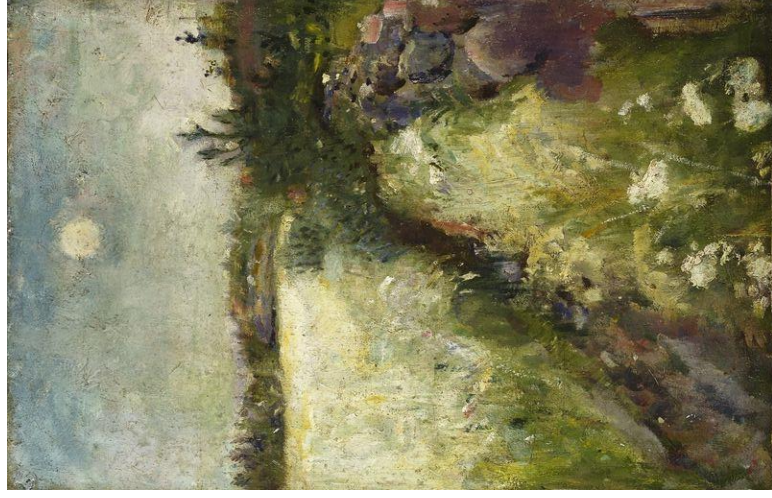
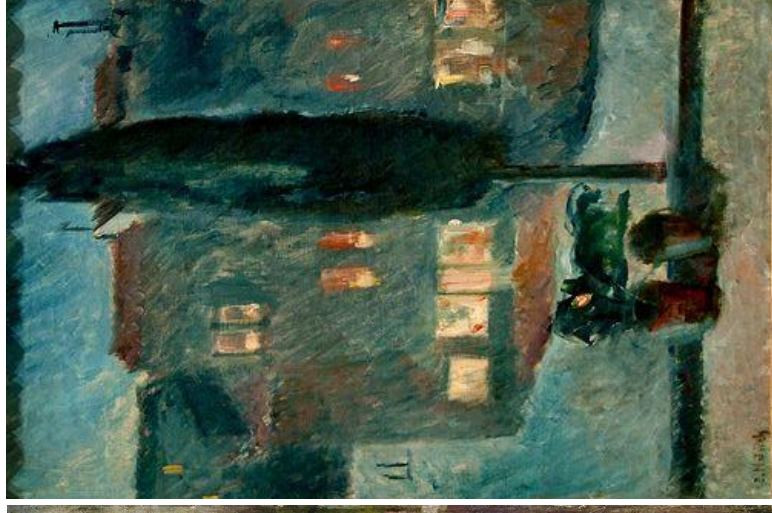
Your loyal confidante is your sister **Martha**, who moved in with you since you fell ill. The two of you has always been close, and you consider her your best friend.

When **Florence** first showed up in the studio, you feared that she would take your place, as a younger and more beautiful muse. But instead, she looks up to you and often comes to you for advice. You can clearly see that she is talented, although you worry that her beauty will get in the way for her success as an artist.

Before you moved into her house a few years ago, you were rather afraid of **Alice** and tried to stay out of her way as much as possible. You imagine she despises you - you would if you were her - but you have come to really admire her strength and compassion.

Martha - The sister

You came here to help your sister, the Muse, but are also drawn to the art, and the idea of an art career of your own. You try to make him teach you, although he usually treats this as a form of seduction.





Martha - The Sister

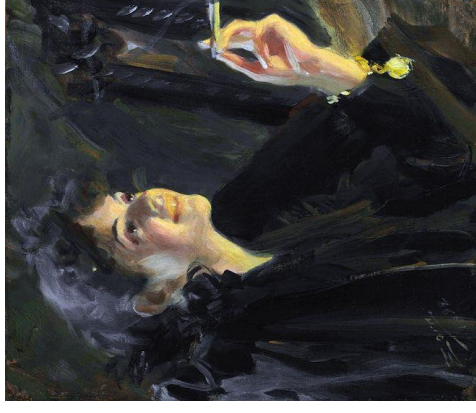
You are a spinster in her early 30s who moved into his house to help your sister, as she has gotten very frail and ill. You have become a well-needed help in the household, and soon befriended his Wife, whom you feel very close to.

Up until recently you have been living with your elderly parents, making silk flowers as piecework for a local textile factory to make a living. You are a skilled artisan, but your days are long and lonely, and you crave connection with other people and something more to this life. **You often feel bleak and restrained, like a wallflower just a few steps from permanently blending into the walls.**

Getting married was never anything you dreamt of, but since your sister became a model many years ago you have felt drawn to art and an artist's lifestyle. You have tried asking the Male Artist if he might teach you, but he seems oblivious to the fact that you're attracted to the art, not the artist.

Sex is something complicated to you. A few times when men has tried to seduce you, you've consented, but always ended up more certain about the fact that you don't feel sexual desire towards them. You have a growing suspicion, though, that it would be a completely different thing with a woman.

Your art is subdued and emotional. It explores loneliness, search for connection and melancholy. A Romantic at heart, you like painting landscapes – the cold beauty of the world around you, reflecting the nature of your mind.



The Other Women:

Your loyal confidante is **Edith**, your brave and bohemian sister who dared to create a different life for herself. The two of you has always been close, and you consider her your best friend.

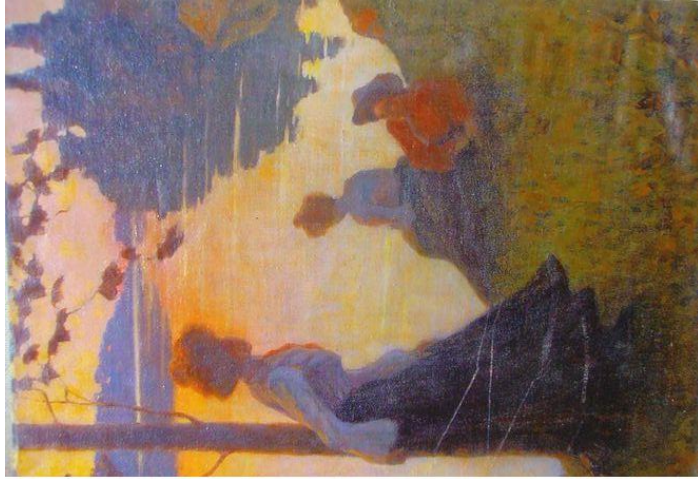
When you moved in, you instantly got along with **Alice**. You consider her a remarkable, admirable woman and the two of you has gotten very close over the last months. You spend much of your days helping her taking care of the home and her children, and if you dare to admit it to yourself, it is clear that you are falling in love with her.

Florence is a young and promising artist who studies for the Male Artist, and seems to have a lot of what you want in life. Sometimes, this makes you feel jealous and bitter, especially since she is much younger than you. But it is also really inspiring!



Florence - The pupil

You are an incredibly talented artist in the making. If you can make it into the Art Academy without slipping into the many traps of womanhood you will soon outshine your master, and history will remember you as a great female artist.





Florence - The Pupil

A 20-year-old, beautiful and affluent woman, you would certainly be an eligible wife, if you felt ready to get married yet. **Instead you have convinced your parents to allow you to study art, and now you live in the house of your tutor, who is a very successful artist.**

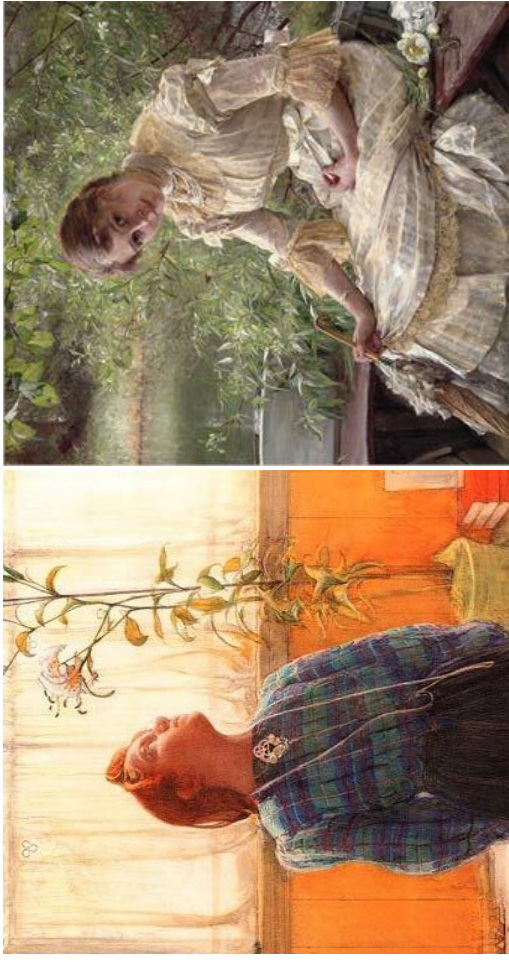
Since you were a child, you've had a vivid imagination, and you **always kept searching for the hidden meanings of things**, the depth behind it all, the divine. Sometimes this means you create fantastical stories, or hide yourself in the library. Sometimes this just means you feel the sun on your skin and get a wonderful sense of purpose.

The world truly is wonderful, and you often feel like art can make you connect with and understand it even more. Make it make sense. This is your passion, and it is deeply meaningful to you.

Your art explores wanderlust, mysticism and the search for the divine.

Sex is something dangerous that you have likely been kept in the dark about, as it is utterly important for a young woman of your class to stay a virgin until she marries. You have, however, discovered feeling lust, and you are curious about it. You also find yourself attracted to the Male Artist, which both fascinates and scares you.

You have big dreams – the closest one is to finally get accepted as a student at the Art Academy next year. And then, well, the sky is the limit.



The Other Women:

Your loyal confidante is **Alice**, who almost feels like a mother to you. It was also her presence in the household that convinced your mother that sending you off to study art in their home was respectable enough.

Much less conventionally motherly – and thus much more interesting – is **Edith**, who is always present in the studio. She is slightly older and less beautiful now than on all the iconic paintings you've seen of her, but she is also a bit of a mentor. She is the one who chaperones you to exhibitions and balls, and the one who tells you what life is really like instead of sheltering you like everyone else does.

It has taken you some time to warm up to **Martha**, who seems like a shy and pale version of the other women in the household. At first you thought you had nothing at all in common, but when you talk about art and your hopes for the future there might be something more connecting you there.



Appendix: Credits, images and inspiration

I have always been interested in art and specifically female artists, and this game draws inspiration from numerous sources. A few to be mentioned:

The dynamic between the bread-winning illustrator wife and the more passionate artist husband was inspired by Tove Jansson's stories about her parents: artists Victor Jansson and Signe Hammarsten-Jansson. The emphasis in this scenario on talking about the Wife as an artist in her own right and trying to lift her legacy from that of "just a wife" also has a resemblance with that of textile artist Karin Larsson, mostly known as wife of artist Carl Larsson and mother of his many children.

Unconventional relationship dynamics are somewhat common in artist's biographies. This obviously open marriage where other partners are also living with the couple was inspired by the marriage of artists Frida Kahlo and Diego Rivera – who both had a number of affairs and an open relationship which seems to have worked out fine until he started an affair with her younger sister.

While the Muse character's art (and her sister) has resemblances to Kahlo, the biggest source of inspiration for her is Elizabeth Siddal, model and muse for the Pre-Raphaelite movement. She modelled exclusively for Dante Gabriel Rossetti for about ten years and studied for him to become an artist herself. A few years into her art career, after marrying Rossetti, her health deteriorated, and she died from a laudanum overdose.

The artworks in the scenario also comes from a number of different sources (brought to me by Pinterest). Artists featured includes:

Edward Munch, Frida Kahlo, Hanna Hirsch-Pauli, Mary Cassatt, Hilma af Klint, William Blaire Bruce, Anders Zorn, Carl Larsson, Bertha Wegmann, Sigrid Hjertén, Odilon Redon, Ron Hicks, Edmund Blair Leighton, Gustav Klimt, Dante Gabriel Rossetti, James Carroll Beckwith, Bertha Muller, Helene Schjerfbeck and George Hendrick Breitner.

Pitches for Stockholm Scenario Festival

Short presentation (300 characters)

Four women surrounding a great male genius. In the history books, they will seem like rivals. Muses. Affairs. His wife and his mistress, her sister, his pupil. That is, however, only a fragment of the real story. A scenario about art, sisterhood, friendship, and some great female artists.

Long presentation (1200 characters)

Why were there no great female artists?

History will call them something different. Muses, mistresses, wives.

It is late 19th century and we play the women around a great male genius.

He is mostly off screen, busy elsewhere. We are the ones surrounding him. His wife and his mistress, her sister, his pupil. Attractive women. His biographer will call us "his affairs".

We are supposed to hate each other, being rivals for his attention. Maybe they told you too what they told us as children - that girls can't play three, because girls always compete? Depending on who wrote our story, we might be a deceived wife, a homewrecker, the other woman and a naïve girl getting victimised by the great male genius and his libido.

But that is not at all how we remember it.

"Other Women" is a scenario about sisterhood, friendship and some great female artists.

It is about creating, art and getting the possibility to take oneself seriously as an artist.

It is about the trappings of womanhood and how they limit female artists. It is about sex.

It is about seeing and being seen.

The game is about developing the relationships between these women and how they grow to like, love and support each other.