

# The Lesbian Tangle

A larp about love, jealousy and friendship between  
five women in 1940's Sweden

**By Samuel Sjöberg**

**Written for Women's History Museum Stockholms kvinnohistoriska**

**Translated into English by Charlie Haldén**

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# Introduction

“Anyone who commits fornication against nature with another person, and anyone who commits fornication with animals, shall be sentenced to up to two years of hard labour.”  
 The Swedish Penal Code of 1864.

In 1943, police were called to an apartment on Grev Turegatan in central Stockholm to investigate an apartment fight. When they entered the apartment, they found two women sleeping close to each other on a couch. The story that unfolded after that was a multifaceted tale of love and jealousy, where five women had been involved with each other in different constellations since the 1930s. This event went down in history as “the lesbian tangle” or “the lesbian gang”, and it is one of few cases in Swedish history where female homosexuality has been prosecuted.

This is a larp about these women. About love, jealousy and what happens when everything comes to a head because someone finally calls the police.

The characters in the larp are based on the real people involved, and the scenes are based on the stories and events the women spoke about in police interrogations. However, some poetic licence has been taken in order to create characters that are interesting and playable, and in order to give the larp a clear dramatic arc.

# Practical

**Genre:** Relationship drama

**Number of players:** 5

**Number of game masters:** 1

**Time:** 4 hours, including workshops and discussion afterwards.

**Meta techniques:** Ars Amandi with touching cheeks to simulate kissing and making out.

**Props:** Glasses and dish towels to dry/polish glasses with for **scene**

3. A plastic bottle that can be used as a wine bottle, mainly by the person playing **Eva**.

**Furniture:** six chairs one table.

**Scenography:** The Lesbian Tangle has been designed so that it can be played without period-appropriate clothing. It also doesn't need any specific kind of venue, but can be played in a normal apartment or black box. Move furniture around and change the venue to suit the different scenes. For example, it's a good idea to limit the waiting-for-trial scenes to a small part of the room, marked with tape or similar, and to not provide chairs for everyone in these scenes, in order to avoid play becoming too stationary.

**Preparations:** Print one copy of the scenario as a whole, five copies of the Player pamphlets (one per player) and make sure you have the props mentioned above.

**Contents:** Intimacy, physical closeness with other players, meta techniques to simulate kissing and making out, internalised and institutionalised homophobia, unclear relationship agreements, jealousy, betrayal, aggressivity, intoxication (simulated only, no actual alcohol in play), fear of violence from a partner (but no actual abuse), a lot of game master steering, illness.

# Game master instructions

As game master, you will guide the players through the scenario, lead the workshop beforehand and the discussion after the end of the larp.

During the pre-larp workshop, you will initiate the exercises in playing intimacy by showing how the mechanic works.

Before each scene of the larp, you will set the scene by describing which characters are involved, where the scene takes place and reading the short description of the scene. After reading the description out loud, the scene starts when you say "go ahead". When the players have reached the end of the scene, you mark the transition to off-game by saying "thank you".

Both the pre-game workshop and the larp have a tight schedule. As a game master, you need to make sure the scenes do not run too long. Around 5 minutes per scene is a good guideline. If a scene runs short, another scene can be allowed to take more time.

However, the scenes generally benefit from being short and to the point and it's primarily the scenes where everyone is gathered that can benefit from getting a little more time. Most of the scenes have a pre-written ending that the players need to play towards - when there's about a minute left of the scene, signal to the players that they need to start moving towards the ending. One suggestion on how to signal this is to tap a glass or cup with a spoon/fork to make a sound. A couple of scenes also has one character in the start of the scene that leaves before the scene ends, in these cases you can always whisper to the player that they need to start getting themselves out of the scene.

As game master, you will also play the judge in the trial, as well as a police officer in **Scene 25, Invasion**, where one of the players can play another police officer.

## Briefing and workshops before the larp:

Start by having everyone sit in a circle and welcome the players. Do a round where everyone says their name, why they want to play the larp or something they feel excited about, a few sentences each.

Then tell them what's going to happen:

"We're going to talk about the historical background, do some workshopping and talk about characters for about 50 minutes. The larp will take somewhere around 2,5 hours, and then we'll finish with some discussion and some more historical background.

Some of the exercises we'll do during the workshop might feel a little awkward, and that's absolutely fine. You can be giggly, you can feel weird, that just means you're doing it right. If you are

feeling "I don't want to do this" in one of the exercises, it's perfectly ok to sit that one out. And if something feels uncomfortable during the larp, it's always ok to stop the scene by saying "offgame".

You can also say "offgame" to communicate something briefly, such as "offgame, please don't stand on my foot".

Then give a short historical background:

"During the first half of the twentieth century, homosexuality was criminalised in Sweden. This larp is set in the time before it was instead classified as an illness. The maximum penalty was two years of hard labour. In the beginning of the twentieth century, homosexuality between women was included in the legislation, which it had not been when it was first implemented in the 1860s. The characters in the larp might not necessarily know that women were now included in this legislation. It is also not possible to find more than a small handful of criminal cases regarding female homosexuality in Swedish history, and the event we're going to larp here is one of those few cases.

In 1943, police were called to an apartment on Grev Turegatan in Stockholm because of an apartment fight. When they entered the apartment, they found two women sleeping close together on a couch. One of these women, Eva, had barged into the apartment uninvited, because she suspected that the two women in the apartment were having a date. After she barged in, Margit, the woman who lived there, left the apartment and went to the neighbours to call the police, since she was frightened that Eva would become violent. While she was at the neighbours', calling the police, the other two women stayed in the apartment. We don't know what happened during this time, but when the police arrived, the two of them were asleep together on a couch. The police wrote in their report "the constables received the impression that the women were perverse". The thing is, they were probably sleeping together in a pretty innocent way. One of them seems to have been resting her head on the other one's arm. And what we can see here is a growing societal skepticism towards closeness between people of the same sex that has not been present in the same way earlier throughout history. In the police interrogations, it transpired that Margit, the woman who lived in the apartment, and Eva, the woman who barged in, had previously been in a relationship, and that Eva and the other woman sleeping on the couch had also had relationships with yet another woman. Margit also had a friend who was involved with Eva for a time, and all this had been going on since the 1930's. This event went down in history as "the Lesbian tangle" or "the Lesbian gang".

This larp tells the stories of these women and their

relationships, from the '30s up until the moment the verdict is handed down in 1943. The characters are all named after these women, and the scenes we will play are heavily inspired by the real events. However, some liberties have been taken in order to make it all suitable for larping, just so you're aware of that."

After that, move the chairs back for the workshop. Remind the players once again that it's perfectly fine if things feel a bit awkward.

### **Exercise 1**

Time: 2 minutes. Give the players a short while to follow each new instruction before you go on to the next one.

Instructions to the players:

Walk around in the room. Notice how your body parts and joints feel. Stretch out. Keep walking. Now start noticing each other. Don't talk, but start seeking eye contact with the others. It makes you happy to see these people.

Hold the eye contact for longer and longer.

Start flirting a little with each other. Still not using words, only non-verbal flirting. Thank you!

### **Exercise 2**

Time: 7 minutes. In order to make an even number of players, the game master participates in this exercise. Set a timer for one minute for each part of the exercise.

Instructions to players:

Separate into couples. Take each other's hands and look into each other's eyes until I say stop.

Thank you! Now find a new partner. And let's do the same thing again.

Thank you! Find a new partner, and this time hug each other.

Thank you! Now find yet another partner. This time, decide which one of you is the mother and which is the daughter. Then hug each other again, as a mother and daughter.

Thank you! And now pick a new partner, and this time hug as a couple who have been away from each other for a long time.

Thank you!

### **Exercise 3**

Time: 4 minutes. Now go on to explain the meta technique for kissing and making out, cheek ars amandi. Demonstrate the technique with a player while you explain it. After you've explained it: sit down and just as in exercise 1, give the instructions to the players while they are moving around. Give

them a short while to follow every new instruction before you move on to the next one.

Demonstration and explanation of the technique:

Cheek ars amandi is a technique for simulating making out by caressing each other's cheeks with your hands. You can also simulate kissing by a short touch of someone's cheek. It's easy to include different emotions here, for example by touching someone's cheek quickly and nervously or slowly and confidently.

Instruction to the players:

Start walking around the room, and start checking each other out again. Start to try to find eye contact, start flirting with each other. And when you have established eye contact with someone, try getting closer to each other. Play your way up to kissing. When you've kissed, move on and flirt with someone new.

Try doing this nervously and quickly.

Try doing it in a slow and confident way. Then you can try making out by staying a little longer, touching each other for a longer while. And then move on to someone new.

**-Note to the Game master: around 20 minutes left of the workshop**

#### **Exercise 4**

Characters, relationships and timeline

Casting. First, present the characters with their name and archetype, **Eva: the heartbreaker, Margit: the pragmatic (that also comes with an illness-plot), Sonja: the rejected one, Anna-Lisa: the doubter** and **Ellen: the romantic**. Then go through the names and archetypes again and let the players express interest in what characters they want to play by a show of hands. Sort it out together if multiple people are interested in playing the same character, don't get caught in lengthy discussions about it. When everyone has a character, give them time to read through their own characters closely.

Character presentation. Time: 5 minutes. Gather the participants in a circle. Do a round where everyone says their character's name and gives a short introduction (maximum one minute per person). When you are done with the round, move back the chairs and do the next step of the exercise standing.

Timeline. Time: 3 minutes. As game master, go through which characters have had relationships and when by reading the instructions below out loud, and at the same time let the players illustrate who is with who by holding each other's hands.

**1935:** Eva, Ellen and Sonja work together at a restaurant on Fjäderholmarna island. Eva and Sonja become a couple and Sonja moves in with Eva (have the players of Eva and Sonja hold hands).

**1938:** Anna-Lisa gets divorced from her husband, and Eva has her over for dinner behind Sonja's back. Anna-Lisa pretends not to realise that Eva is being unfaithful, although she does understand this, and they start an affair (have Anna-Lisa's player take Eva's other hand).

**1941:** This affair continues, in parallel with the relationship with Sonja, until 1941. At that time, Eva breaks up with Sonja and starts living together with Anna-Lisa instead (Sonja's player lets go of the hand of Eva's player).

**1941:** After having been dumped by Eva, Sonja moves in with Ellen. They become a couple. (Ellen's and Sonja's players take each other's hands.)

**1941:** Eva and Margit get to know each other through Anna-Lisa, and they start having a thing. (Have Eva's and Margit's players take each other's hands.) It's up to you as players if you want to play this as being open and fine with everyone, Eva being with both women at once, or if there's secrecy and friction. Regardless, Margit and Anna-Lisa are still friends afterwards.

**1942:** Anna-Lisa has had enough of Eva's mood swings and drinking and breaks up with her (Eva's and Anna-Lisa's players let go of each other's hands).

**1942:** Eva introduces Margit to her friend Ellen. Margit and Ellen also start a relationship (Margit's and Ellen's players hold hands, while Ellen's player keeps on holding Sonja's hand). Ellen is open with Sonja about the new relationship. Margit, however, is not really honest with Eva about it.

**1942:** Eva realises that she and Margit have drifted apart. She confronts Margit, and they end up breaking up (Eva and Margit let go of each other's hands). This is the relationship line-up in 1943, when the larp starts.

Place the relationship chart on a table or put it on the wall so the participants can freshen up their memory of the timeline if they feel the need during the game.

### **Exercise 5**

Friend and enemy. Time: 2-3 minutes. Based on their character, where the character's relationships are now, and how they feel about the others in the group, let the players for this exercise choose one person as their "friend" and another as their "enemy". Then have them move around the room with the aim of keeping their friend between themselves and their enemy. Stop the exercise after a while and ask everyone to give a short explanation of who they chose as friend and enemy, and why.

### **Going through the scenario**

Distribute the participant pamphlets that contain short descriptions of each scene.

Explain how the larp works:

The larp consists of 27 short scenes. The first scene is the start of the trial, where each character will be asked if she wants to say something or add something. You can all give a short statement about your stance on the accusations, such as "it was just because I was young and stupid" or "I regret nothing" and so on. After that, the court will adjourn to discuss the matter, and during that time the characters will wait together in a locked room, where they can talk freely, confront each other about things they have wanted to know, and try to convince the others to agree to some sort of strategy. Then, we will play out a number of flashbacks from the women's shared history, and between those scenes we will return to the scene where they sit waiting for the court's verdict.

None of the characters is in every flashback, and you can use scenes you are not in as bathroom breaks.

The last scene, Waiting for the verdict, will end with the characters being brought back to the courtroom. There, they will have the opportunity to change their story or add something if they wish. Then, the verdict will be read, and you will get a few minutes to react to it and ask questions in character. The verdict will be in the bureaucratic language of the time, so don't worry if you don't understand it all at first. I, as a game master, will read the short description before each scene. You can use the pamphlets to check when you can have a bathroom break. If you feel the need to find some direction for your play in one scene, you can also use the pamphlet to check what the next scene you will be playing is about.

Then, give the players these instructions:

- Keep the scenes short and to the point. Each scene can take around five minutes. Skip things like knocking on the door and saying hello, instead try to start the scene at a point where the conversation has started to get interesting.
- Play to lose. You can't "win the larp". Our aim is to tell a story together.
- In the scenes where you're waiting for the verdict, don't all get along or agree on how you want to handle things. You can start reaching some sort of consensus in the last scene if you wish, but not before that, and it's not at all necessary that you all get along in the last scene either. Don't focus on solutions. You can listen to different opinions and start moving in new directions, but make sure that all five of you

haven't made up and/or agreed until the last scene, if at all.

- You're very welcome to react in a negative and emotional way to the police arriving or the verdict being read, but you are not allowed to get violent with the police or the judge, or to physically try to stop what's happening.
- Feel free to play out anger and aggression, but do not play out any physical violence towards any other character. Shouting, stamping your feet, hitting a table etc. is fine, but no violence towards people.
- Some scenes have a given end, for example a specific line that someone needs to say. I will signal to you when you have one minute left of the scene so you'll know when you need to start moving towards the end.
- Regarding playstyle, go for relationship drama rather than comedy.

Ask the participants if they have any questions. Then, give them a short break to drink water and go to the bathroom. After that, get everything ready for the start of the first scene. See instructions below for starting the scenes.

## Discussion afterwards:

When the larp is over, gather all the participants in a circle. Do a round (it's completely ok to pass or if someone needs a little more time to think, to get back to them at the end of the round) where everyone gets to say:

- Their real name
- A few sentences about how they're feeling right now
- If they need anything in particular
- Something very off-gamey about themselves, such as their favourite TV series or what Subway sandwich they prefer

Then, give a short briefing to give further context for the larp as well as some explanations around what has been changed from the reality to the larp. Make it clear that the briefing is in no way meant to "correct" anything the players may have done during the larp, but only to contextualise the real events.

### Briefing:

The real trials were held on several different occasions, so all the women were never actually locked in a room together in the way we've played it in the larp. On the first occasion, in July, Ellen couldn't be there, so the others spoke for her. The verdict came in August. And in the real verdict, everyone except Margit was sentenced to six or four months of hard labour. It's also worth

mentioning that Ellen actually wasn't named Ellen, her real name was Gunvor, but we changed it in the translation of the scenario for it to work out better in an international context.

Eva was given a female probation officer, and there is a later addendum with a decision that the supervision should end after the probation period. What happened to Margit in reality was that she had to go through a forensic psychiatric evaluation to decide whether she could be seen as having been of sound mind during the period when she was involved in these same-sex relationships. And both the pre-trial investigation and the trial records show that the impression was that she was mentally unstable. However, Eva said during the trial that Margit really wasn't as innocent as she made herself out to be. Margit died from tuberculosis shortly after the verdict was handed down.

Another interesting thing is that all the women received a lot of support from people around them. For example, several employers say they trust this person and would still employ her. We can see some cases of homophobia in the records, but in general, the women are supported by those close to them. Eva's ex-husband, for one, gives a wonderful character witness statement for her. Anna-Lisa and Sonja both later married men, but we have no way of knowing if this was for love or more of marriages of convenience.

On the topic of Anna-Lisa, she claimed to have felt only revulsion regarding same-sex practices, but we don't know if this was actually true. In a similar vein, Sonja said she wasn't really homosexual but that it was all being young and foolish.

Furthermore, Sonja had actually moved out from Ellen's apartment by the time the police were called. She had left Stockholm altogether by the time of the trial, and her relationship with Ellen seems to have been rather brief. Ellen and Margit also claimed they had ended their sexual relationship during the winter of 1942. Just as in the larp, the real Ellen was very open about loving women, and never married. We don't know how much of a rebound Ellen was for Sonja, but we know they started a relationship while living together, and we know Sonja was heartbroken over the breakup with Eva. Ellen also talked about being worried about Sonja during the relationship with Eva, and how she was relieved at the breakup. There are conflicting versions regarding who took the initiative to the relationship, Sonja or Ellen, they say different things at different times. While we have no way of knowing exactly how these people felt around everything that happened, the relationships you have just played did exist between these real women.

It's a good idea to be a bit skeptical towards what we can read from the police interrogations and court transcripts. It's possible that the women downplayed what had happened in order to get off more lightly. We also don't know how well what they said

about their preferences and actions corresponded with how they really felt.

More generally, the year after this, homosexuality was decriminalised in Sweden and instead became classified as an illness. This might not in fact have been a good thing. Mental illness was extremely stigmatised during this time, so it might actually have been preferable to be seen as a criminal than as mentally ill.

Let the participants ask questions if they want to. If possible, let them stay around and talk about the larp more casually if they feel like it, but make it clear that nobody has to do so.

# Characters

**Eva Lindberg. 44 years old, the heartbreaker.**

#notgayasinhappybutqueerasinfuckyou #nobullshit #impulsive

You have known since you were 18 years old that you are homosexual. You are blunt and direct, not afraid to speak your mind and say what you want. Others might see you as intimidating or even be scared of you, but you would never harm anyone you love, even though you feel things strongly and are quick to both anger and love.

Perhaps you have a tendency to fall in love with new people easily. That also leads to you making decisions on impulse. Like when you started courting Anna-Lisa while still living with Sonja. Sonja had to move out so that Anna-Lisa could move in instead. But that all went wrong. Anna-Lisa thought you drank too much, and she couldn't handle your mood swings.

Since she moved out you have tried to speak to her on the telephone and explain how much you love her, but she hasn't wanted to see you. And you have been jealous of Ellen and Margit. You were the one who introduced them, and then you suspected they had started seeing each other without you. You asked Margit once whether the two of them were seeing each other, and she said no. You feel angry and betrayed that she lied.

You're not overly worried about the court case. Do women even get convicted for things like this? You have no interest in playing innocent. You were married for a while, and yes, you suppose you loved your husband in a way, but as time went on you couldn't deny that men were not what you really wanted. You grew apart and eventually divorced.

Some might say that there is shame in being a divorced 44-year-old mannish woman, but you have never cared much what others think. You have your lovers, and the gossiping busybodies in town can go to blazes!

**Relationships**

**Margit Zacke:** The two of you got involved a few years ago, but you drifted apart relatively recently after you had introduced Margit and Ellen to each other. This made you jealous.

**Anna-Lisa Lind:** Your former girlfriend who you wish was still yours. Also the person who introduced you to Margit.

**Sonja Söderström:** Another former love from 1941, who you broke things off with for Anna-Lisa. You like her, but that book is firmly closed as far as you're concerned.

**Ellen Lindequist:** Nothing has ever happened between the two of you, but you have been friends and there has been some flirting at times. You introduced her and Margit to each other. At first, you

were happy that they enjoyed each other's company, but when Margit seemed to like Ellen more than she liked you, you turned jealous.

**Margit Zacke. 39 years old, the pragmatic.**

#highstakes #healthissues #anythingbutjail

You are homosexual. You don't actually mind it that much. Yes, you love Ellen and what you have had together.

Another one of the accused is your friend Anna-Lisa. A year ago, when you had to spend time in the sanatorium because of your lungs, Anna-Lisa was the one who kept in touch with you, and when you came home, she was the one who helped you get back on your feet again. You have been friends for many years, and she was the one who introduced you to Eva. Eva and you had a fling a while back, but you drifted apart when she introduced you to Ellen and you lost yourself utterly in that relationship.

Your health is still very delicate, though. The lung problems refuse to go away. You know you probably won't be able to take either prison or forced labour for any length of time. That means you need to think of yourself now. You have to get out of this. It is actually a matter of life and death for you, and since your health problems persist, you want to have a chance to live life before your time runs out.

You have also been worried about Eva. She has seemed jealous of you and Ellen, and she might be out to harm Ellen. You really hate having to point fingers, but you know you have to paint a picture of yourself as innocent, and shift the blame to someone else. Eva should never have come to your apartment. It was really her fault you had to call the police. And you didn't make Eva and Ellen lie there together for the police to see. Furthermore, you called the police just as much for Ellen's sake as for your own.

**Relationships**

**Eva Lindberg:** Your former partner. You have worried about her harbouring malice towards Ellen, and when she barged into the apartment you felt you had to call the police. It's her fault that you're all sitting here.

**Sonja Söderström:** Has been involved with both Eva and Ellen (who she now lives with). You do feel sorry for her for having had to move out of Eva's place, but you get the feeling that she's really not that interested in Ellen. And if she doesn't understand how wonderful Ellen is, she really doesn't deserve her love.

**Anna-Lisa Lind:** One of your oldest friends that you love warmly. Now that your fates are hanging in the balance, she's trying to completely distance herself from everything. But you wonder how she really feels about her preferences.

**Ellen Lindequist:** The woman you love. You don't know what she thinks of the fact that you called the police, but you did it for

her sake. Surely, she must understand that?

### **Sonja Söderström. 29 years old, the rejected one.**

#unrequitedlove #see\_me #smokescreens

Eva is the love of your life. You suppose you like or even feel love for Ellen as well, but it's nothing like your feelings for Eva. You have told the police that your actions were due to youth and foolishness, but if truth be told, your love for women has always been strong and passionate. At the same time, your love for Eva is not uncomplicated. She chose Anna-Lisa over you. The day Eva asked you to move out was one of the worst days of your life. You felt so betrayed.

Ellen let you move in with her, and you made advances for the two of you to become more than friends. And she reciprocated. You hoped this would either make Eva jealous so she would take you back, or make you fall in love with Ellen and forget Eva. Neither of those things happened. Eva and Anna-Lisa are no longer together, but you know Eva wants her back. On top of that, Ellen has started something with Margit. You do think Ellen has a heart big enough that she can love both you and Margit, but will you become some sort of second choice now? Come to think of it, isn't Ellen your second choice? Is being with the next best thing better than being alone?

You're still angry with Eva for how she treated you, but you cannot deny that you're still in love with her. And you don't want Eva to get in trouble with the court case. She doesn't seem to grasp how serious this is. Anna-Lisa seems to be denying everything, perhaps in a similar way that you yourself have done. But it makes your blood boil that she is doing just that. She won Eva, what right does she have to deny all responsibility for what has happened? Does she have to win both the court case and Eva?

### **Relationships**

**Eva Lindberg:** Your former girlfriend from a few years back, who you are still in love with. It worries you that she doesn't realise the seriousness of all this.

**Margit Zacke:** Has been involved with both Eva and Ellen. You have wondered whether you should see her as a threat. You also get the feeling she doesn't like you, but you don't understand why.

**Anna-Lisa Lind:** The one Eva threw you aside for, but who then threw Eva aside, and now denies everything. This makes you angry. She won Eva, so the least she could do is take responsibility for her actions.

**Ellen Lindequist:** Your rebound relationship. You suppose you feel some sort of love for her, but you can't stop comparing her to Eva. She has been completely honest with the police, which is concerning. Even though you don't feel the "revulsion" that

Anna-Lisa claims to feel, there's no need to go around broadcasting what you've been doing.

**Anna-Lisa Lind. 30 years old, the doubter.**

#whatdoireallywant #selfloathing #singlemother

This is not where you thought life would take you. You divorced your husband around five years ago and had to leave your son with your parents. You felt lonely and lost, and that's when you met Eva. She invited you over, you had a little more alcohol than you probably should have had, and you ended up having sex. You kept on seeing each other, and a few years ago she asked you to move in with her. She told you she had a roommate who needed to move out since they were not getting along. But you're not stupid. Eva chose you over the other one, Sonja. And you enjoyed feeling chosen. You lived with her for a few years, but then it all became too much. Eva drank often, and had frequent mood swings. You had also become unemployed and could no longer pay the rent. Yes, you did have feelings for her. Perhaps you still do? You liked the way she made you feel. But on the other hand, you had feelings for your husband too, and surely it's not possible to like both men and women?

Since you've moved back in with your parents, Eva has contacted you several times. She wants to see you and says she still loves you.

The woman among the accused you have known longer than Eva is Margit. You have been good friends for several years, and you introduced Margit and Eva to each other. You know Margit is sick, and it worries you. You can't think how she would cope with prison or hard labour. And what about your son, how would he feel if you were sent to prison? You have already missed much of his childhood, and you don't want to miss another day of it. You've told the police that you now only feel revulsion around homosexual activities. While there's something to that, it's not the whole truth. Part of you wants to go back to a normal, uncomplicated life. Another part of you wonders whether there is a way back at all.

### **Relationships**

**Eva Lindberg:** Your former girlfriend who you broke it off with, but who you might still have feelings for. You're not certain. Alarmingly, she has been completely honest with the police about everything she's done.

**Margit Zacke:** An old friend, that you're very fond of. Perhaps the one you care most about and are most anxious to have go free, apart from yourself.

**Sonja Söderström:** You don't know her very well, but you know Eva chose you over her. You have a feeling she doesn't like you very much, but what does that matter?

**Ellen Lindequist:** You haven't had much to do with each other, but

she seems neither honourable enough to have any qualms about what she's done nor clever enough to pretend to have them to let you all get away. This makes you angry.

**Ellen Lindequist. 30 years old, the romantic.**

#outandproud #lovesharedislovemultiplied #noregrets

For a long time, you thought love was not for you. But eight years ago, you met Sonja and Eva, when the three of you worked at the same restaurant at Fjäderholmarna. At first, you thought your feelings for Sonja were purely friendly ones. You thought the discomfort you felt when Sonja told you what she and Eva got up to was revulsion. But when Eva wanted Sonja to move out because she had met someone new, you took care of Sonja. She moved in with you, and you realised your feelings never had anything to do with revulsion. Sonja was the one who taught you that you really were able to love. Sonja was the one who wanted the two of you to be more than friends, and you loved it.

Then, Sonja introduced you to Margit, and the two of you also became a couple. You would meet for dinner and then you'd stay the night at her place. The evening the police came was another one of your evenings together. But then Eva turned up. You had been afraid of her before. You knew she had been jealous of you and Margit. And yes, she was drunk and upset now. But once Margit had left the apartment, you were able to calm her down, and the two of you started talking. After a while, you both fell asleep, and then you woke up to the police knocking on the door and taking Eva away. You're angry with Margit for calling the police, and you can't understand how she could do something so reckless.

Like Eva, you have been honest with the police about your relationships with women. You might not seek out conflict in the way Eva does, but you are definitely not a coward, and you feel no shame or regret over what you've done. Your relationships with women have given you so much joy and love, and that's not something you want to disregard or pretend like it never happened.

**Relationships**

**Eva Lindberg:** A friend of yours, but not an uncomplicated friendship. There has been flirting at times, but it has never resulted in anything more. When you and Margit became close, she became jealous, and you sometimes felt worried that she might wish you harm.

**Margit Zacke:** Your sweetheart since a year back. You love her, but you're angry with her for dragging the police into all this.

**Sonja Söderström:** Also a sweetheart... or something like it. You love her dearly too, but you get the feeling there's someone else she actually wants.

**Anna-Lisa Lind:** You don't know each other very well. She now seems

to be pretending that she never wanted any of this. That is cowardly. She's not any more normal than the rest of you, and she should own up to that.

# Scenes

**Scene 1. In court. Characters:** Everyone.

**The game master starts the scene by reading the following, in the role of the prosecutor:**

"15th of July, 1943. To this day, chief city prosecutor Carl-Axel Åkerman, in his official capacity, had received a summons regarding Eva Lindberg, Ellen Lindequist, Anna-Lisa Lind, Margit Zacke and Sonja Söderström. In my capacity as prosecutor, I hereby declare my complaint against each of the defendants to have reference to liability pertaining to chapter eighteen, section ten of the Penal Code, for committing fornication against nature."

Then ask the characters, one at a time, if they have anything to say in their defense or any additional remarks to make.

**Scene 2. Waiting for the verdict. Characters:** Everyone.

You're sitting in a locked room, waiting for the verdict to be announced. For the first time, you're all gathered together and have the opportunity to talk. This is your chance to actually confront the others about unanswered questions or things you're angry about.

**Scene 3. Flashback: 1935, Three waitresses. Characters:** Eva, Ellen and Sonja (the game master and the other players can play other staff walking by, shouting out orders, etc).

**Props:** Glasses and tea towels to polish the glasses with.  
Summer on Fjäderholmarna island. The three of you are working hard at the restaurant and have just started to get to know each other. Eva is flirting with both Sonja, who is cautiously positive, and Ellen, who is curious despite herself about Eva's lifestyle that she's heard so much gossip about. You try to have hushed conversations when people around you are busy with other things, and you get physical with each other when no-one is looking.

**Scene 4. Flashback: 1935, You are the one for me. Characters:** Eva and Sonja. The Fjäderholmarna summer is coming to an end, and the question is what happens now. Eva and Sonja are meeting up to finally speak openly about their feelings. The scene ends with Sonja saying yes to moving in with Eva.

**Scene 5. Flashback: 1937, Better off alone. Characters:** Margit and Anna-Lisa. Anna-Lisa has just left her apartment after a huge argument with her husband, who turned aggressive. She has come to Margit for support and comfort. She would in fact want to leave her husband, but what would she do with her child? How do you cope as a divorced woman?

**Scene 6. Waiting for the verdict. Characters:** Everyone. The longer you're all locked in here, the more you start to understand what it might be like to be in prison or to be sentenced to hard labour. But do they really do that to women? Is it important to each one of you to avoid going to prison at all costs, and could you live with doing so at someone else's expense?

**Scene 7. Flashback: 1938, Just a simple supper. Characters:** Eva and Anna-Lisa. Anna-Lisa is newly divorced, has left her child with her parents and feels lonely. But she has been invited to dinner by Eva, who she has met through work. Eva has taken the opportunity to ask her over when Sonja isn't at home. Anna-Lisa looks forward to getting to know Eva better. Eva, on the other hand, has taken a fancy to Anna-Lisa, and wants to find out whether Anna-Lisa might be interested in being more than friends. The scene ends when Anna-Lisa says yes to Eva's invitations to "spend the night".

**Scene 8. Flashback: 1938, The new love. Characters:** Eva and Anna-Lisa. The evening ended with Eva and Anna-Lisa having sex. Now, the morning after is here, with a hangover and a need to deal with the feelings around what happened yesterday. The scene ends when Anna-Lisa agrees to see Eva again.

**Scene 9. Flashback: 1941, The parting. Characters:** Eva and Sonja. Eva has secretly continued to see Anna-Lisa over the past few years, and now she wants to share her life with her instead. It's time to break up with Sonja and tell her to move out. Sonja is heartbroken and crushed. The scene ends when Sonja leaves the apartment.

**Scene 10. Flashback: 1941, A shoulder to cry on. Characters:** Sonja and Ellen. After having been ditched by Eva, Sonja has come to her friend Ellen for comfort and perhaps somewhere to live. The scene ends when Ellen agrees to have Sonja move in.

**Scene 11. Flashback: 1941, Home again. Characters:** Anna-Lisa and Margit. Margit has spent a while at a sanatorium for her ailing lungs, and has just come home. Anna-Lisa has come over to help her get back on her feet. Margit feels well now, but she's weak, and she knows the problems will probably return. Anna-Lisa is afraid to ask just how serious the situation is. The scene ends when Anna-Lisa says "I will always be here for you".

**Scene 12. Waiting for the verdict. Characters:** Everyone. The more time you spend together, the more you remember how much disappointment these people have caused you, but also how much joy and happiness. But the deep chasms between you, created by years

of relationships, love and betrayal, feel impossible to bridge.

**Scene 13. Flashback: 1941, More than friends?** **Characters:** Sonja and Ellen. Sonja and Ellen have been living together for a couple of weeks. It's late one evening and they're getting ready to go to bed. Sonja wants to show herself and everyone else how she has really, truly gotten over Eva, and Ellen has started to realise that her feelings for Sonja are something more than just friendship. The scene ends when they start making out.

**-Note to the Game master:** Around 78 minutes of play time left.

**Scene 14. Flashback: 1941, Just good friends.** **Characters:** Eva, Anna-Lisa and Margit. Anna-Lisa wants to introduce her friend Margit to Eva, since she knows Margit wants to find more friends, and Eva has wanted to meet Margit since Anna-Lisa started talking about her. The scene ends when Eva compliments Margit on her beautiful eyes.

**Scene 15. Flashback: 1941, A cup of coffee.** **Characters:** Eva and Margit. Margit has invited Eva over for coffee, and is pondering whether she wants more than that. Eva was happy to accept the invitation, and would very much like to do more than just drink coffee together. The scene ends with them kissing.

**Scene 16. Flashback: 1942, Do you really love me?** **Characters:** Ellen and Sonja. Ellen and Sonja have started some sort of relationship. Ellen is in love with Sonja and is sure of her feelings, but she has a feeling that Sonja actually wants someone else, and now she wants to have an honest talk about it. Sonja does like Ellen back, but she doesn't really want to admit that there's some truth to the idea that there might be someone else she wants. The scene ends when Sonja cuts the conversation short by saying she needs to go food shopping.

**Scene 17. Flashback: 1942, Do you miss me?** **Characters:** Sonja and Eva. This scene is a phone conversation. The players sit on chairs with their backs toward each other. Sonja calls Eva to tell her that she's doing great and has moved on, but she's really sort of hoping that Eva might want to see her and eventually take her back. Instead, Eva announces that she is now seeing Margit. The scene ends when Eva hangs up the phone.

**Scene 18. Flashback: The breakup, 1942.** **Characters:** Anna-Lisa and Eva. Anna-Lisa has had enough of Eva's wild mood swings and her drinking. She has talked to her parents and made plans to move back in with them and her child. All that's left now is the hardest part: telling Eva. The scene ends when Anna-Lisa leaves

the apartment.

**Scene 19. Flashback: The phone call, 1942. Characters:** Anna-Lisa and Eva. The scene is played with the players sitting on chairs with their backs to each other. Anna-Lisa moved out a month ago, and Eva wants her back. The scene ends when Anna-Lisa throws down the receiver.

**Scene 20. Waiting for the verdict. Characters:** Everyone. What's taking so long? Why is nobody coming to get us? Being trapped in a small space with these people is driving you crazy.

**Scene 21. Flashback: 1942, Have you met...? Characters:** Margit, Ellen and Eva (to start with). Eva is eager to introduce her sweetheart Margit to her friend Ellen, because we all need friends who are like ourselves. Eva has invited them both over for coffee. Eva only has eyes for Margit, but Margit and Ellen start making eyes at each other over the coffee table. Eva realises that she's out of milk and pops out to get some more, leaving Margit and Ellen alone. The scene ends when Ellen and Margit have made arrangements to see each other again at a later date.

**Scene 22. Flashback: 1942, I love you. Characters:** Margit and Ellen. Margit and Ellen meet at Margit's home, a few months after they first met at Eva's. They have seen each other often, and they have both started to realise that they have fallen for each other. But they do not yet know how the other feels. Margit has kept their visits secret from Eva, and she worries what Eva would say if she knew how much they see each other without her. The scene ends with them confessing that they are in love with each other.

**Scene 23. Flashback: 1942, But what about me? Characters:** Ellen and Sonja. Sonja has noticed the growing closeness between Ellen and Margit and is starting to feel jealous. She is now going to confront Ellen about it. She and Ellen are the ones living together, after all. Will Ellen do the same thing to her that Eva did? Ellen takes the chance to talk about her feeling that Sonja really wants someone else. The scene ends with the two of them sitting in uncomfortable silence.

**Scene 24. Flashback: 1942, Another woman. Characters:** Margit and Eva. This scene is a phone conversation. The players sit on chairs with their backs to each other. Eva has started to feel that she and Margit are drifting apart, and calls her to talk about it. She has a hunch that this is about Ellen, and that makes her angry. They only got to know each other because of her, so surely Margit can't go and leave her for Ellen? The scene ends with them

breaking up.

**Scene 25. Flashback: 1943, I do like her, but...** **Characters:** Anna-Lisa and Margit. Anna-Lisa and Margit haven't seen each other for a while, but are now reuniting in Margit's place. Anna-Lisa has moved back in with her parents, and even though it's difficult at times, she's happy to be with her child again. They both feel a need to talk about their feelings about their former love Eva, who they now have in common as an ex.

**Scene 26. Flashback: 1943, Invasion.** **Characters:** Margit (to start with) and Ellen, later Eva. Finally it's just the two of you again, and you can have some time together. Your plan is to have dinner and then Ellen will stay the night. In the middle of everything, Eva barges in, drunk and angry. Margit feels frightened and leaves the apartment. The situation calms down, and after some time, Eva and Ellen fall asleep on the couch. The scene ends when the police come and take Eva away.

**Last scene: The verdict is handed down.** **Characters:** Everyone. The scene starts in the small room, with everyone's last chance to voice their feelings. Then, the characters are brought to the courtroom.

The game master, here playing the judge, asks if anyone wants to change anything in their statements, or if they have anything more to add. Then, read the verdict. Afterwards, give the characters a few minutes to react to it and ask questions. And after that, end the scene by saying "Thank you" and move on to after-larp discussion.

**Summary:** Eva receives a suspended sentence of six months of hard labour. Ellen, Anna-Lisa and Sonja are given suspended sentences of four months. The probationary period is three years, and during that time, Eva will be under the supervision of a probation officer, while the others won't. The court's decision regarding Margit is pending, as she will first undergo a medical examination because of her unstable health.

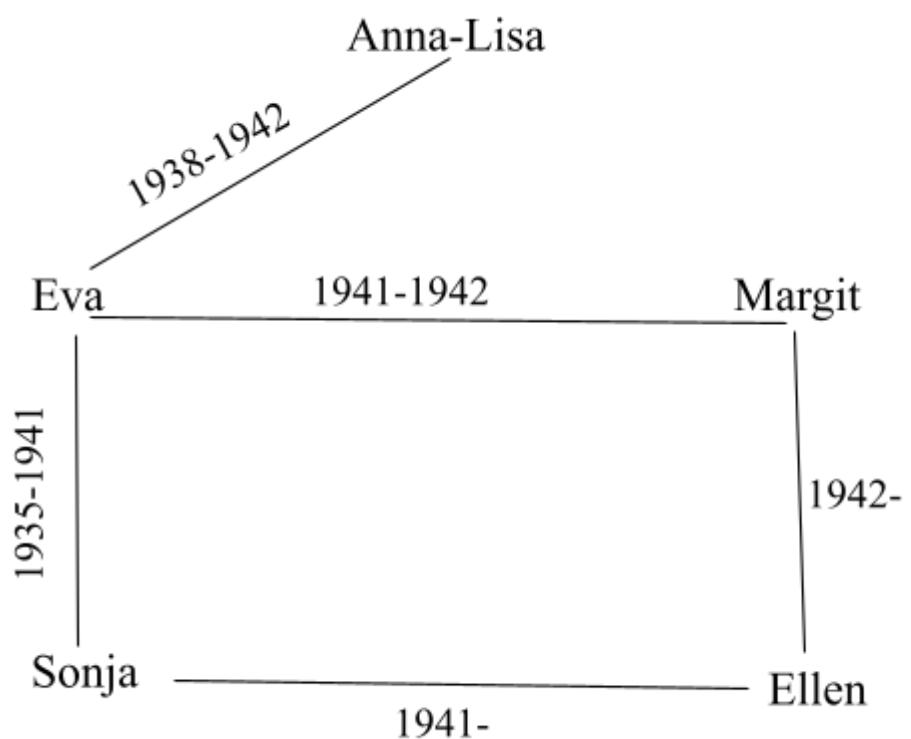
**The verdict, read aloud:** The case. Since through what has been confessed by Mrs Eva Lindberg, Ellen Lindequist and Sonja Söderström and has otherwise occurred has been unravelled, it stands that they have, on multiple occasions, committed fornication against nature. Therefore, it is incumbent upon the court to fairly sentence Eva Lindberg, Ellen Lindequist, Anna-Lisa Lind and Sonja Söderström for the on several occasions committed fornication against nature, to undertake hard labour, Eva Lindberg for six months and each of the others four months.

However, the court recommends that the upon Eva Lindberg, Ellen Lindequist, Anna-Lisa Lind and Sonja Söderström imposed penalties should be suspended, and it upon their conduct over a probational period of three years as well as on other circumstances, which are denoted in the Suspended Sentencing Law, depend, whether the aforementioned penalties shall be enforced, while Eva Lindberg during the probation period shall be required to report to a probation officer, but the court considers supervision to be otherwise unnecessary.

Decision: The court deems it essential to, prior to the conclusion of the case, obtain a medical assessment regarding the health of Margit Zacke and whether she is in need of medical attention. In anticipation of such assessment, the proceedings pertaining to Margit Zacke are declared to be stayed.

Finally, the court recommends that no records and documents regarding the proceedings of this case in camera as they pertain to Eva Lindberg, Ellen Lindequist, Anna-Lisa Lind, Sonja Söderström and Margit Zacke shall be disclosed to the public without the consent of the individual parties mentioned therein, until 40 years have elapsed since this day.

## Relationship chart



# Player pamphlet

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After the allegation has been read everyone gets to say their stance on the allegation.

**Scene 2. Waiting for the verdict. Characters:** Everyone.

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**Props:** Glasses and tea towels to polish the glasses with.

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**Last scene: The verdict is handed down.** **Characters:** Everyone. The scene starts in the small room, with everyone's last chance to voice their feelings. Then, the characters are brought to the courtroom.

The judge asks if anyone wants to change anything in their statements, or if they have anything more to add, before he reads the verdict.