



# *The Season*

Stockholm Scenario Festival 2025

# The world we are in

- Archaic, pseudohistorical world - think Jane Austen's *Pride and Prejudice* or *Sense and Sensibility*
- You are all part of "Society", but in the lower end, desperately trying to keep your position
- The only way to stay in Society is to marry within Society
- Reputation is everything

# The Season

- All players are coming of age this season
- This season is your only chance to marry into Society
- Not all players will be allowed to marry, only those with good enough reputation

# Family

- In game families consist of siblings or cousins
- All players are eligible to marry
- You may not marry within your family
- All other family members are also here - but not part of the game.

# Gender

- Two genders: leaders and followers
  - A conventional marriage is between a leader and a follower
  - Leaders who do not marry go into the military
  - Followers who do not marry go into household service
- 
- Leaders are addressed as “Mr Lastname” by other families
  - Followers are addressed as “Miss Lastname” by other families
  - First names are used by the family and between fiancées

# Marriage

- The goal is to get married at the end of the season
- Not all characters will be allowed to marry
- If you do not marry you will go into service (followers) or to war (leaders)



# The Rules of the Game

# The etiquette of The Season

## *Silence is golden*

Opposite genders do not speak to each other, except  
... during dances  
... if introduced by a family member  
... during an arranged visit  
... if you are engaged

## *Keep hands to oneself*

Opposite genders do not touch, except  
... as instructed as part of a dance  
... if you are engaged

## *Dignity is the mark of society*

Always act politely and with dignity – no shouting, no lewd remarks or gestures

## *Only fools and ruffians wink with half their face*

Flirting must be done discreetly



# Scandals

- You do not know your family's secrets in advance.
- Scandals are revealed to an entire family, not to an individual.
- You will receive a note on a piece of paper. Make sure that everyone in the family reads it.
- If another family receives a scandal about your family, your family will receive an identical note at the same time. Make sure that everyone in the family reads it.
- Scandals are true. Do not make up scandals.
- If a scandal is publicly announced, everyone in the scandalous family receives a black mark.

# Breaking the social rules gives you a black mark

- Speaking to or touching the opposite gender outside of the approved exceptions
- Behaving in an unbecoming way
- Approaching the other gender's water cooler area unchaperoned
- Writing letters or visiting without previous arrangement
- If an engagement is broken off
- If a scandal about your family is revealed publicly
- If you are accused of breaking the social rules (at the game masters' discretion)
- Anything else the game masters disapprove of

**Black marks are denoted by black tape on your family ribbon**

# You may only approach those who have *the same or more black marks*

- This means that you **cannot**
  - ask them to dance
  - be introduced to them
  - ask them if you can write to them
  - ask them if you can visit them.
- If **they** ask you to dance, write or visit, you may do so.
- **Exception: proposals**  
(leaders only)

Whether a couple will be allowed to marry at the end of the season, is affected by their combined number of black marks

*One must look to one's betters  
and hope to be seen!*

## Breaking the rules - discreetly

- Discreetly breaking a rule is a way to show passion
- Would you rather risk a black mark or risk your loved one not knowing your true feelings?
- A person who would never take a risk is a bore - or a gold digger

*A coward's love is never true*



# Areas

# The dance floor

- Before each dance, the game masters will announce if it is the leaders' or the followers' turn to ask for a dance.
- To ask someone for a dance:
  - Walk up to them
  - Ask "May I have this dance"
  - If they say yes, take their hand and lead them onto the dance floor
- When the music stops, return to the water cooler area of your gender.

# Water cooler area

- Water cooler moments - a few minutes break between dances
- One area for each gender
- Drink water and gossip
- Opportunity to introduce someone or get introduced
- Always stay in the water cooler area for your gender unless being introduced

# Water cooler area - being introduced

You can introduce a friend to a relative of the opposite gender. Introductions can only take place in the water cooler areas

- Bring your friend to the other water cooler area.
- You must cross the floor together, and you may only bring one friend.
- You and your friend may only talk to one person: the relative you are introducing them to. Conversation must be brief.
- Walk back to your own water cooler area afterwards.

***An introduction  
is not the time to  
introduce oneself!***



# Family home

- Interludes at home between the balls
- Other family members and staff also live in the house

# At home: Letters

- Followers will get to ask one or two leaders to exchange letters
- Only leaders with the same or more black marks can be asked
- Each person may accept any number of requests, but can only write 2 letters.
- Not writing to someone you have promised a letter to may cause a scandal.
- You may write to anyone
- Both leaders and followers write letters:
  - Write letters to one or two people
  - Receive and read letters

*One letter good  
Two letters better  
Three letters a scandal!*

# At home: Visits

- Each leader will get to ask one or two people if they may visit them.
- Only followers with the same or more black marks can be asked
- Followers may accept as many requests as they like
- Leaders must go on the promised visits
- You may not go on unplanned visits
- There will be two rounds visits, with a family gathering at home in between
- If you ask only one person, you may visit them twice, or stay at home to chaperone your relatives for one of the rounds

*A missed visit is  
a missed reputation*

The image features decorative corner patterns in the top-left and top-right corners. These patterns consist of intricate, dark grey scrollwork and floral motifs that curve along the edges of the page.

# Getting married

# Proposing

- Only leaders may propose
- At any time, except during dances
- To anyone, even those with fewer black marks
- White tape = engaged

Go down on one knee, hold out your hand and say:

***“Full name, will you marry me?”***

Reply:

**“Yes”** - take hand and walk away together

**“No”** - you may add a short explanation, then walk away on your own

# Breaking up an engagement

Anyone can break up an engagement, at anytime except during a dance

- Ask the game masters to stop the proceedings
- Face each other, with family behind each person
- **“Full name, I wish to break off our engagement because...”**
- Short reply and reaction to break up
- Each person gets a black mark
- Everyone else chooses sides
- If more than 2/3 of the players take one party's side, the other gets a second black mark

# Weddings

- Not all engaged couples will get to marry
- Depends on the couple's combined number of black marks
- End of the game:
  - Those who will not marry form arches with their hands
  - The marrying couple do a wedding march under the arches
  - All say farewell to those going off to war or into service

The top corners of the slide feature decorative, symmetrical scrollwork patterns in a light gray color.

# **The structure of the game**



# Order of events

## Entrance

### First ball

- First dance (leaders)
- *Water cooler-moment*
- Second dance (followers)
- *Water cooler-moment*
- Third dance
- Followers ask for permission to write

### Writing and reading letters

## Second ball

- First dance (leaders)
- *Water cooler-moment*
- Second dance (followers)
- Leaders ask for permission to visit

### Visits

## Third ball

- First dance (followers)
- *Water cooler-moment*
- Second dance
- *Water cooler-moment*
- Third dance (leaders)
- Proposals

### Wedding procession and farewell

# Don't get lost in the rules!

- We will remind you of the rules along the way
- Play to interact, not to win :-)
- Have fun!



# Dances

Organise the players in to equal numbers of leader and followers

# Dances

*Hole in the Wall* no touching!

*Chain Dance* only holding hands with those next to you in the chain

*Waltz* waltz position  
+ stealing partners

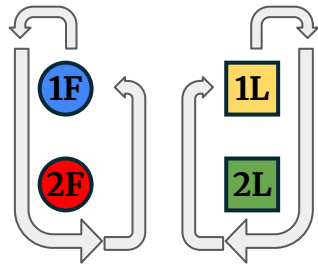
*Free Dance* no touching!

You can talk to anyone on the dance floor

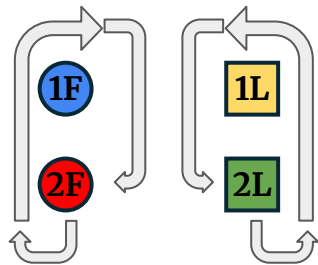
The bell means end of dance and return to your area

# Hole in the wall

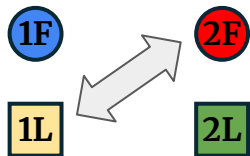
1:  
First couple  
casts down



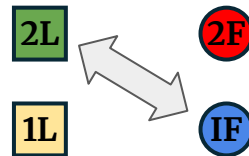
2:  
Second couple  
casts up



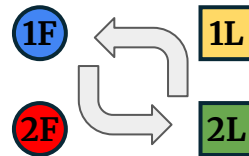
3A: 1st leader and  
2nd follower  
trade places



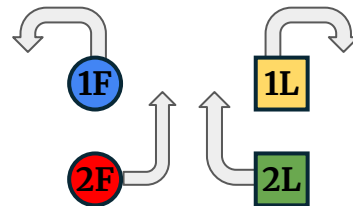
3B: 2nd leader and  
1st follower  
trade places



4A:  
Circle half round



4B:  
Progress





# Characters and families

# Who does what?

## Leaders:

- “Mr Lastname”
- Unmarried go to **military**
- Can **propose**
- Ask to dance:
  - 1st dance at the 1st ball
  - 1st dance at the 2nd ball
  - 3rd dance at the 3rd ball
- Can ask one or two to **visit** (second interlude)

## Followers:

- “Miss Lastname”
- Unmarried go into **service**
- Ask to dance:
  - 2nd dance at 1st ball
  - 2nd dance at 2nd ball
  - 1st dance at 3rd ball
- Can ask one or two to exchange **letters** (first interlude)

## Everyone:

- First name between family members and fiancées
- Can **introduce** a friend to a relative (water cooler moments)
- Can **break up** an engagement

## Abbingdon

Connections

History

Wealth

Refinement

*Pious  
Frugal  
Charitable*

## Frankley

Connections

History

Wealth

Refinement

*Trade  
Travel  
Exotic*

## Membury

Connections

History

Wealth

Refinement

*Military  
Humble  
background*

## Strensham

Connections

History

Wealth

Refinement

*Industrialists  
Progressive  
Nouveau riche*

## Woodal

Connections

History

Wealth

Refinement

*Old money  
Old ways  
Duty*



# Get to know your family

- What is your family like?
- Who are you?
- What are your family dynamics?
- When we tell you, play a short scene about receiving invitations to the balls

# Get to know the other leaders/followers

You will have known most of these characters for years - because of schools or social functions.

Play out some interactions:

- Leaders at their club
- Followers at a tea house
- Who is your friend?
- Who is your rival?



# *The Season*

The game begins!

# The First Ball

Entrance

Hole in the wall - leaders ask

*Water cooler break*

Chain dance - followers ask

*Water cooler break*

Free dance - no couples

May I write to you? -  
followers ask

*Silence is golden*

*Keep hands to oneself*

*Dignity is the mark of society*

*Only fools and ruffians  
wink with half their face*

*One must look to one's betters  
and hope to be seen!*

*A coward's love is never true*

## Abbingdon

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Connections

History

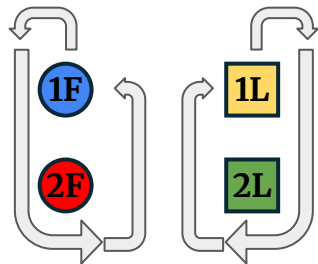
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Refinement

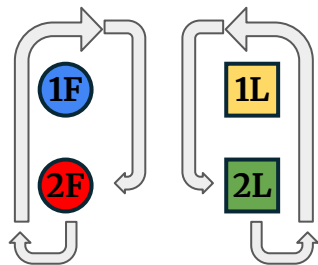
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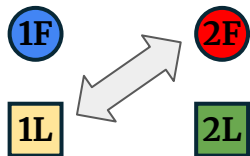
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First couple  
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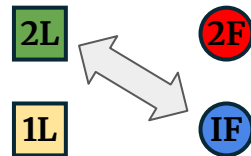
2:  
Second couple  
casts up



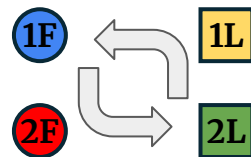
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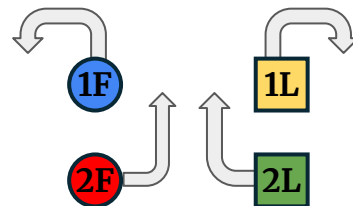
3B: 2nd leader and  
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trade places



4A:  
Circle half round



4B:  
Progress



# The First Ball

Entrance

Hole in the wall - leaders ask

*Water cooler break*

Chain dance - followers ask

*Water cooler break*

Free dance - no couples

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*Dignity is the mark of society*

*Only fools and ruffians  
wink with half their face*

*One must look to one's betters  
and hope to be seen!*

*A coward's love is never true*

# Letters

Followers ask one or two to exchange letters.

Only ask those with the **same number or more black marks** as you

Each person may accept any number of requests, but can only write 2 letters.

Not writing to someone you have promised a letter to may cause a scandal.

- Writing
- The postman comes
- Reading

*One letter good  
Two letters better  
Three letters a scandal!*



# The Second Ball

Hole in the Wall - leaders ask

*Water cooler break*

Waltz - followers ask -  
change partners when bell  
rings (3 times)

May I visit you? - leaders ask

*Silence is golden*

*Keep hands to oneself*

*Dignity is the mark of society*

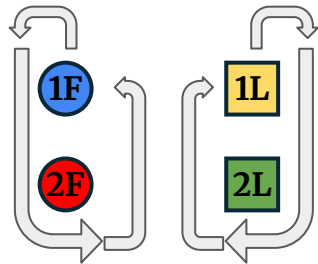
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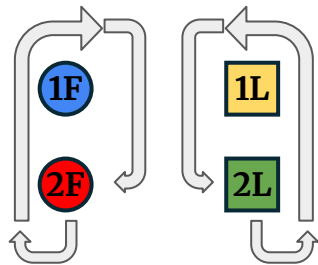
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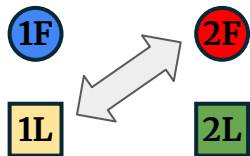
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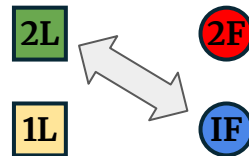
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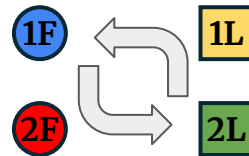
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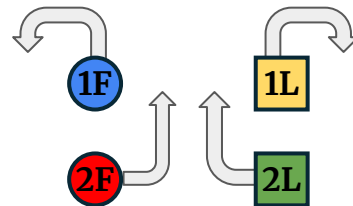
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4A:  
Circle half round



4B:  
Progress



# The Second Ball

Hole in the Wall - leaders ask

*Water cooler break*

Waltz - followers ask -  
change partners when bell  
rings (3 times)

May I visit you? - leaders ask

*Silence is golden*

*Keep hands to oneself*

*Dignity is the mark of society*

*Only fools and ruffians  
wink with half their face*

*One must look to one's betters  
and hope to be seen!*

*A coward's love is never true*

# Visits

Each leader gets to ask up to two people if they may visit them.

Leaders may only ask characters with the same number or more black marks as they have

Followers may accept as many requests as they like

*Family gathering*

Leaders go to first visit

*Family gathering*

Leaders go to second visit

*Family gathering*

*A missed visit is  
a missed reputation*

# The Third Ball

Hole in the Wall - followers ask

*Water cooler break*

Free dance - no couples

*Water cooler break*

Waltz - leaders ask  
- change partners when bell  
rings (3 times)

Engagements

*Silence is golden*

*Keep hands to oneself*

*Dignity is the mark of society*

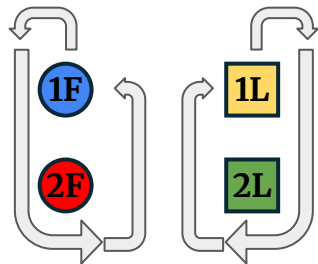
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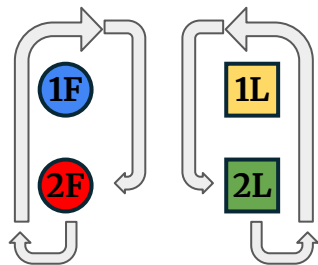
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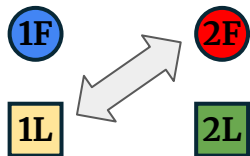
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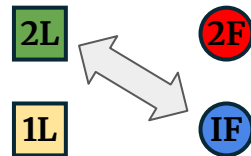
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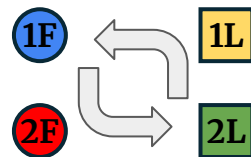
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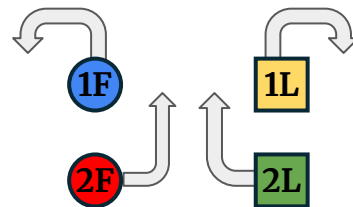
3B: 2nd leader and  
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trade places



4A:  
Circle half round



4B:  
Progress



# The Third Ball

Hole in the Wall - followers ask

*Water cooler break*

Free dance - no couples

*Water cooler break*

Waltz - leaders ask  
- change partners when bell  
rings (3 times)

Engagements

*Silence is golden*

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# The Finale

Announcement of who will get to marry

Wedding March

Final farewell





*The End*