

DOUBT



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About Doubt

Doubt contains

This booklet

A “game board” on a large paper

Four copies of the play “On the Other Side of You”

Peter and Nicole’s monologues

Two descriptions of all extras

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Play test & acknowledgements

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Doubt is a scenario about relations. It is about love, active and passive choices, about the death of romanticising and about the implicit contracts in a relationship. Doubt is a game for players who know to bring their own experiences and feelings into the mix, and play their characters “close to home.”

Doubt is also about player freedom. The responsibility for making the game work is almost solely on the players. We want the players to create their own Doubt, and play in their own way. That it may not turn out the way we imagined it is okay.

As game master, you are also given ample freedom and responsibility (something we Jeepers aren’t known for). Just sitting back and relax and letting the players do the dirty work might work, but you can give them so much more.

You could say that Doubt, by accident, borders on psycho drama. Our goal is to discuss love and relationships, toy with more or less electric everyday situations from your life, and role-play about things that are close. We believe a good gaming experience is one way of getting there, but by no means the only one, or even a necessary one. If you feel you can get there by sacrificing the game experience: please do.

Doubt has four main characters: the actors Tom and Julia, plus Peter and Nicole. Peter and Nicole characters in a play, played by Tom and Julia. In the game, however, the main characters will be played by four different players.

Doubt has two parallel story arcs: everyday and the play. Tom and Julia are the main characters of the first, and Peter and Nicole the main characters of the second. The



purpose of the everyday scenes are to explore a relationship with problems. The purpose of the play is to contrast the everyday and make possible inter-textual references and meta-commenting in an environment where monologues, dramatic acting, and addressing the audience is expected. The players will construct their own everyday, and the play is set by the game.

The everyday part illustrates Tom and Julia's life. In this part of the game, they will both be "tempted" by people they meet. At most one of Tom and Julia, may, but need not, fall for a temptation. We visit places and people from everyday life and let the players pretty much decide everything that happens.

The play is about Peter's and Nicole's broken relationship—they live in the same physical world, but spend their time dreaming about their "imaginary lovers." In difference with the everyday, the scenes and their content are controlled and Peter and Nicole grow apart more and more.

How the everyday ends is decided upon by the players, whereas the outcome of the play is decided by you. The game starts and ends with a scene from the play.

<i>Genre</i>	<i>jeepform</i>
<i>Players</i>	<i>four, at least one woman per group</i>
<i>Game master</i>	<i>at least one</i>
<i>Duration</i>	<i>about 4 hours incl. 30–60 mins. of preparation</i>

Outline It is hard to describe a game that does not exist until it has been played. We have chosen to structure this booklet in accordance with our play test. We start by greeting the players and end with beer. We use examples from the play test, sometimes lying ever so little for pedagogic reasons, and elaborate on suitable techniques, problems and possibilities.

But first we discuss the game master role, to ground you before we get into the story, or absence thereof.



Game Mastering Doubt

By design, Doubt places a lot of the responsibility for the game on the players. If the players are in the wrong mood to play on emotions and relationships or feel uninspired, there is a great risk that the game will be boring or tedious. We have decided not to include a safety-net or having a fall-back story line to rescue the game if the players are in the wrong place, mentally. The game places a lot of responsibility on the game master too.

As game master, you can help the players understand what the game is about, inspire them and enthuse them to build their own story from their own experiences. If that fails, you should not do their work for them, but rather finish off the game and explain to them why you think that was the right choice.

The most important task for the game master is to interpret and communicate the scenario's premise, to help the players stay on target and work with the premise and their own baggage. That is no small feat, and how to do it will vary from time to time. Other than that, we think that your main tasks will be to set the bar, the tone (e.g, by use of monologues), help the players construct a good everyday, start and stop scenes, give direction, ask questions and rescue players that lose their train of thought or suffers a brain freeze. The usual stuff, more or less. We address that bit by bit below.

Game Master Monologues

We want you to prepare about 5–7 monologues. Don't create detailed scripts for what to say, but rather an outline and message. The monologues should be *your very personal reflections* on relationships, love, infidelity, etc. Subjects that everyone can relate to.

The idea is that you, *playing* yourself, will give these monologues when it suits the

story—but not as the first or last thing in the game. By that, we hope that you will show the players how cool it is to mix character and player and how to use your own emotions and feelings in the game. And also set a suitable, high, bar. You can also use the monologues to show that it is okay to joke about a bit—that the heavy parts of the game are much more interesting in contrast to less heavy ones. If you can do that, the game is likely to become so much better.

Look at Peter and Nicole’s monologues for examples and inspiration. One of Peter’s monologues reads like this:

What is a relationship? Is it beautiful or pathetic that two persons cling to each other waiting for someone better to come along?

Remember that reading out loud from a note will give off the impression that we wrote the monologue, and not you. And that is completely wrong.

Logistics

Aided by lists of places and persons, the players will construct their own set of scenes to play through. These scenes will be added to a list of pre-decided scenes. The idea is to give the players freedom to create their own story—make their own build-up to a (possible) climax. Making this list of scenes to play in advance is meant to stimulate that thought process, and create a better story than one where the next scene is decided completely on-demand. Also, doing the work up-front will relieve the game of long pauses to decide where it is currently headed.

The players must be clear on what characters are in the game and the freedom they have to define the characters and that there is a purpose to the up-front creation of scenes. Players that discuss this forever must be hurried, and players that randomly combine people and places should be encouraged to design a story up-front instead of “just getting the job done to get to start playing.” This is also part of the game.

At Fastaval 2007, Tobias game mastered a team of players that used more than 90 minutes for preparation. However, they held great speed and came up with great stuff—for this session, preparing was as good as playing (and they played great!).

The bottom line is of course that everything is your call.

The scene creation should be a collective process—not two choices per person thrown together to make eight scenes. Feel free to participate, but remember that you are in a tricky place status-wise. The players are meant to be controlling the everyday. You are the director of the play.

Cutting and Announcing

You should announce every scene in a suitable way. Some scenes have names that you may want to use. Others might need a brief introduction setting the mood and whatnot. Sometimes, a scene might need a brief discussion before being played (more about that later). In some cases, all that is required of you is a nod to the right player to get going.

As you already know, timing for cutting (ending) a scene is very important. A scene that is too short or too long creates a feeling of non-satisfaction or pointlessness. From our experience, it is better that the scene is too short than too long. Try to understand what the players (or you) want to say with the scene and cut it accordingly. Sometimes, 15 seconds is the perfect length of a scene, if everyone knows what is its purpose.

In our play test, the lengths of the scenes were very varied. The scenario took a little more than three hours to play, plus one hour of preparation and talking between scenes. The scene *The Party* was over 20 minutes long, *The Singing Coach* was 2 minutes and the play's last scene AT THE DOOR was 10 seconds. Most scenes were 5–7 minutes long.

*Names of scenens in the play
are written LIKE THIS.*

Underline and Confront

Something that worked well in the play test was when the game master tried to give the players some perspective on what was happening, or forced them to make choices. Ending a scene might involve asking the players five quick yes/no questions. An-

other technique was to do “meanwhile’s”—if Julia and Link were making out in the kitchen, we would pause the game and ask: “what is Tom doing right now?” Then we cut back to Julia after the sex to avoid playing that bit. Out-of-the-blue questions like “Are you looking to fuck her tonight?” help the players communicate their goals to each other, and thus everyone can help realising them.

Playing Doubt

Doubt has two parallel stories. The scenes in the everyday life are controlled by the players and the play by you. In everyday, Tom and Julia are tempted by people they meet possibly causing tension in their relationship. The scenes in the play are there to contrast the everyday life, and serve as a natural platform for theatrical playing with monologues and dramatic scenes.

The game is divided into four acts: *establishing*, *temptation*, *action* and *consequences*. The second act starts with the scene *The Party*. When act three and four start is (sort of) up to the players. In the play, act three starts at LIT CANDLES, and the ending is the last scene, AT THE DOOR. In the play test, we never reached the third act in the everyday life, which is perfectly fine.

The first act should introduce Tom and Julia and their relationship. Is it healthy, are they happy, or are there cracks in the facade? In this act, possible tempters and temptresses can be introduced. Introducing and establishing Tom and Julia’s relationship is imperative, as the entire game relates to that. In the second act, Tom and Julia are tempted. Here, scenes should be played that put Tom or Julia alone with someone else, or situations that are electric or unsuitable for non-singles. The idea is for the temptations to not just be one-night-stands, but rooted in a will to find a new partner, non-satisfaction, etc. On the other hand, Doubt can well be about how a re-

relationship deals with drunken infidelity. The third act starts when Tom or Julia somehow have decided to fall or not to fall for the temptations. This must not necessarily come to their partner's attention. For example, Julia might fall in love with someone without this person or Tom finding out during the entire game. Shortly put: act three is all about deciding how to deal with the outcome of act two—whether to act on it or not. Even if neither Tom nor Julia falls for a temptation, there can still be a great game around them trying to communicate their new-found commitment to each other. The fourth act is the conclusion, where we get to know what happens, or what is going to happen. Remember that an implicit decision or action might be as strong as one explicitly played out.

Preparation

The preparatory phase of Doubt is a tad unorthodox even for freeform. Apart from choosing characters, some of the scenes must be discussed and the players must get an overview of premises, places, persons and the rules of the game. After having greeted the players, you should:

- Introduce the game's premise*
- Explain the everyday and play dichotomy*
- Introduce the monologue concept*
- Explain freedom and responsibility*
- Show and explain the “game board”*

The game board contains a list of the scenes, the rules, characters and places gathered in one place to facilitate preparation and play. The scene list has gaps where the player's scenes can be entered.

When this is done, you should do the following:

Look at all characters
You walk the players through the play (your interpretation)
Look at all places
Look at all rules
Create eight scenes and add them to the scene list
Casting

After this, the game starts. More information about these things are found below.

The characters in *Doubt* are short, inspired by what you may find in a play manuscript. There, characters are defined by the director and by analysis of what the character says or does in the play. In *Doubt*, the characters stay vague because they are not so important. We want the players to use their own experiences, thoughts and feelings in the game, and thick characters would only be in the way. The players have full freedom to interpret the characters.

Player Monologues

Each scene in the play is meant to start with a monologue, if suitable. Monologues are directed at the audience, which is any idle players. The monologues are given by Peter or Nicole, before the scene starts. There are no pre-written monologues, just outlines and ideas that the players may discard if they want to. There is no preferred order.

Monologues should not be announced, but “just happen.” The players can imagine that Peter and Nicole are at different sides of the door in *AT THE DOOR* (see the description of the play) with a spotlight on the one giving the monologue. When the monologue is over, the lights fade up and the scene starts.

Note that two monologues should never be given back to back. Even if one of them is given by the game master.

Some suggestions for Peter and Nicole can be found at the last pages of this booklet.

Scenes

At the door
Coming home after a great show (E)
The video camera (E)
The party (E)
Nicole's show
Return to the scene of the crime
Martyr
A good day
The dream of the ideal
Different perspectives
Surrender E = everyday life
Lit candles
All-out war
At the door

The scenes are described on the centrefold



Rules

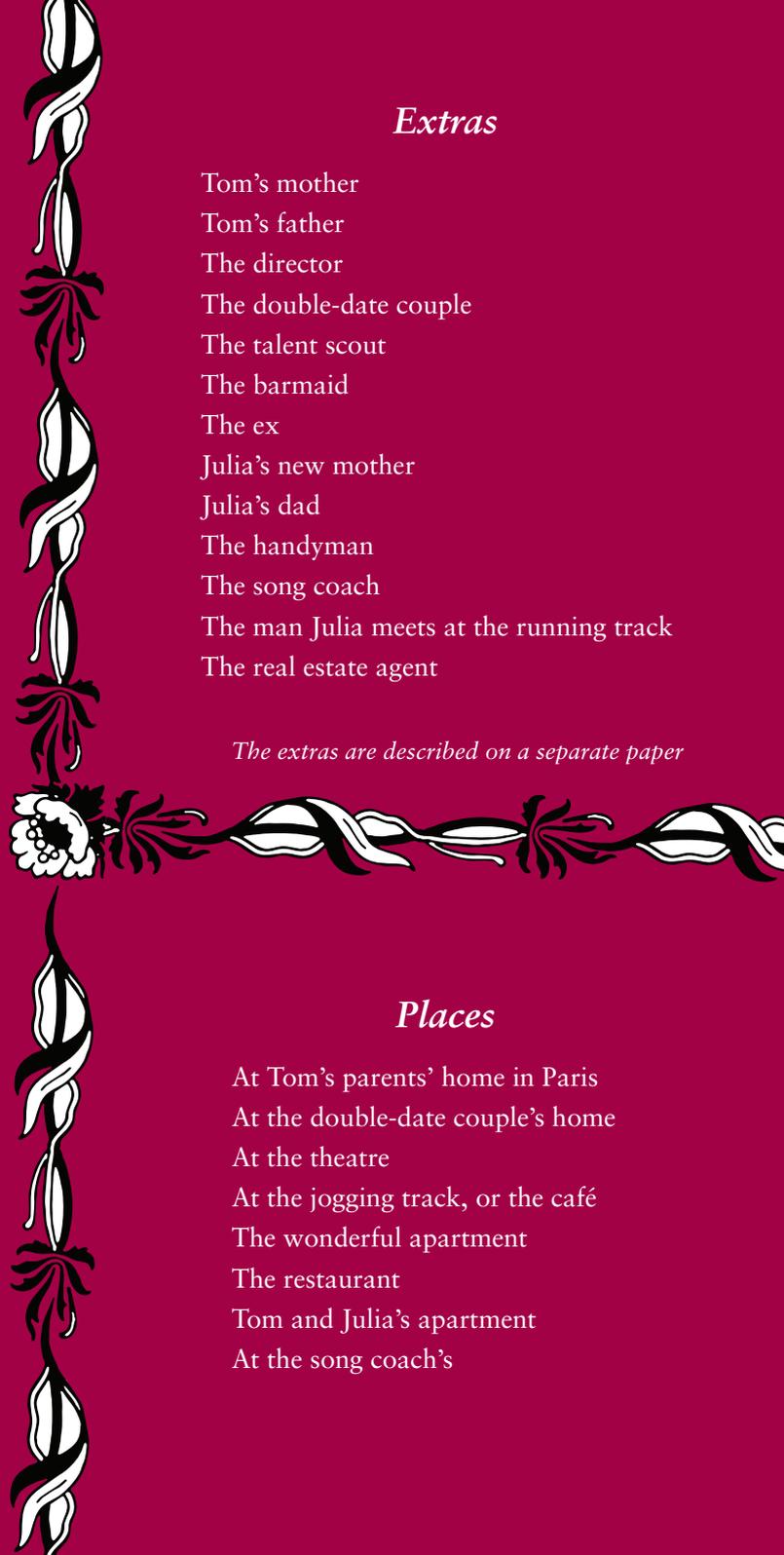
At most one of Tom and Julia may succumb to a temptation
Doubt is a heterosexual game
What happens in Paris, stays in Paris
At most one trip to Paris
No one-night stands
Only characters and places from the lists
Linear time

The rules are described on page 16

Extras

Tom's mother
Tom's father
The director
The double-date couple
The talent scout
The barmaid
The ex
Julia's new mother
Julia's dad
The handyman
The song coach
The man Julia meets at the running track
The real estate agent

The extras are described on a separate paper



Places

At Tom's parents' home in Paris
At the double-date couple's home
At the theatre
At the jogging track, or the café
The wonderful apartment
The restaurant
Tom and Julia's apartment
At the song coach's

Characters

Doubt has no less than 20 characters of which 16 are in the everyday life. These are Tom and Julia, Tom's parents, Julia's parents, the double-date couple, the female director, the female talent scout, the ex-lover, the male handyman, the male singing coach, the man Julia meets at the jogging trip and the real estate agent. The play has four characters: Peter and Nicole, and Lewis and Maude. Most characters have no long description and are fully defined by the players.

Sometimes, we will write Tom to denote the player playing Tom. This will be obvious from context.

Who plays what character is very important. Everyday Tom and Lewis in the play are played by the same player, and like-wise for everyday Julia and Maude in the play. The players who play Peter and Nicole in the play play all male and female characters in the everyday, respectively.

In some way, Tom and Peter are two sides of the same entity with different names in different situations, and like-wise for Julia and Nicole. There is a point by Peter playing Julia's tempter in the everyday and Tom Nicole's dream in the play, etc. As a side-effect, a player always plays characters of the same sex in the entire game.

Finishing the Scene List

The pre-determined scenes in the scene list are mostly scenes from the play. As the play is supposed to be a play with a written script, we chose to have fixed scenes with (to some extent) fixed content and force them to be played in a certain order. As the play nears its end, we hope to create feeling of the game drawing to a close.

In the preparatory phase, you and the players are to agree on eight scenes by combining places and persons from the lists included in the game. The idea is that the players should speculate on the possible outcomes of the game. Hopefully, this will generate ideas about how they want to play the game, and, as a positive side-effect, unify the

The game board contains a scene list for the play with white spaces where the scenes the players plan can be recorded. All fixed scenes already entered.

Scene schedule Doubt

ACT ONE

AT THE DOOR

Coming home after a great show (E)

Double date

Meeting with the director

At Tom and Julia's home

The video camera (E)

ACT TWO

The party (E)

NICOLES SHOW

The restaurant

RETURNING TO THE SC. OF CRIME

Matchmaking with the real-estate agent and Jennie

MARTYR

Coffee after running 1

At the song coach's

A GOOD DAY

In Paris with Tom's parents

THE DREAM OF THE IDEAL

DIFFERENT PERSPECTIVES

ACT THREE

LIT CANDLES

ALL-OUT WAR

ACT FOUR

AT THE DOOR

(E) = predetermined scenes from the everyday life

SCENE FROM THE PLAY

Scene planned by the players

different views and make sure everyone “plays in the same direction.” At this point, you will form your opinion about the group—what they may need help with during the game, etc.

Make sure the players take this part seriously. If they argue endlessly they will lose focus and speed, or try to make too much of the game. If they just randomly combine things, this part of the game is wasted as no unified vision will come out of it, and no ideas about what they want to play. You might need to get involved, ask questions, challenge implicit assumptions and force the players to make decisions about their characters. (“How long have Julia and the jogging man bumped into each other at the jogging track?”, “Who does the laundry?”, “Has Tom been unfaithful to any of his previous girlfriends?”, etc.)

When you feel that the players have digested all information (rules, places, characters), had some ideas about how to play the game and some momentum it is time to stop preparing. Under no circumstances should the players spend more than one hour from entering the room before the start of the casting scene (see below).

Add every scene to the list on the form place + persons with clear big hand and if possible name the scene with a short mnemonic name. Make sure to have a copy of your own of the finished scene list, if you cannot readily read the players, during the game. The players will lose track of what scene to play when so this is up to you. You will start and stop scenes (if necessary), possibly by using the short name to help the players recollect, and discuss the scene if that feels good.

An important design goal is not to create too many scenes with just two characters in them. It is important for the flow of the game to have a few scenes where most of the players are “on stage” at the same time and play against each other. Acts two and three should have the most player decided scenes. It is also likely that too many scenes are placed early in the game (act one), which should be avoided. Also make sure there are room for “fast scenes” (see below), especially at the end.

A brief description of the play is located at the centrefold of this booklet.

How to interpret the places is entirely up to the players. With “The wonderful apartment,” we imagined a flat shown to Julia by the real estate agent, or an apartment that Tom and Julia just bought, but it can just as well be the jogging man’s flat that Julia’s immediately falls in love with.

In our play test, the players created the following scenes:

Double-date with the double-date couple; Meeting the director; In Tom and Julia’s home; Tom in the restaurant with Miriam and Julia; Match-making with the real estate agent and Jennie; In Paris with Tom’s parents, Coffee after jogging; and At the song coach’s.

Fast Scenes

Apart from the eight scenes that the players will agree on before the game starts, every player is allowed to add two “fast scenes” during the game.

The fast scenes are regular scenes, and will be necessary to follow-up on things like temptations, to “force” a meeting between two characters or revisit a special place. In our play test, the players did not start using the fast scenes until after all pre-determined everyday scenes were played, but that is the only time this has happened.

Fast scenes may take place anywhere provided that the place has been introduced in a previous scene. For example, if the bartender has talked to Tom about the club she’ll be going to later it is perfectly alright to have a fast scene take place at the club. A player may add a fast scene whenever between to other scenes. If two players want to add scenes at the same time, the first who spoke gets to decide the order.

The Seven Rules

Doubt has, as all good freeform games, a set of rules. Their purpose is to make the game into what we imagined. Explain and motivate the rules early in the preparatory phase.

§1 At most one of Tom and Julia may succumb to a temptation

This means that neither Tom nor Julia may fall for a temptation, and that the game cannot be reduced into a “swinger scenario.” Observe that just because Tom falls for with his ex-lover again, the feelings don’t have to be mutual. Who falls, etc. may not be decided in the preparatory phase or outside of character.

§2 Doubt is a heterosexual game

This means that all temptations are of heterosexual nature. The reason for this is to lower the number of possible relations to keep them manageable. Doubt is not a game about coming out or fighting hetero-normativity but about partner-relationships.

§3 What happens in Paris, stays in Paris

Interpret that however you want. Our interpretation is that possible flirts in Paris will be secret, that any mending effects on a relationship a trip to Paris may have will cease when back home again and that the love the bartender girl felt for Tom in Paris cools off once she is back behind the bar disk, serving beers again.

§4 At least a two-scene build-up

This means that there must be at least two scenes with a temptation before Tom or Julia may fall. As the game is also about what it means to fall for a temptation, we leave it to you to define what that means. It is your game.

§5 At most one trip to Paris

Of the scenes created by the players in the preparatory phase, at most one may take place in Paris.

§6 Only characters and places from the lists

This means that no characters and places other than those on the lists may be used in the scenes created in the preparatory phase. If it turns out that the bartender girl needs a boyfriend, or that Tom must be bullied by a paparazzi, that might be okay, but try to avoid it and rely on the given characters. Note that fast scenes don’t suffer by these rules.

§7 Linear time

Only the game master may introduce flash backs and dream sequences.

Casting

The purpose of the casting scene (except to continue our flirt with theatre) is to get the players warmed up before the actual game. The casting scene is played like this: a man and a woman are lying in bed. In another room in another place, a man and a woman are sitting in two chairs in a shabby living room.

The couple in bed wake up after a party. They have most likely fucked, and don't remember exactly how they got here. It is probably a bit embarrassing—maybe this is how Tom and Julia first met?

The couple in the living room are drinking coffee. Suddenly, one of them puts down the newspaper and realises that he (or she) don't really know the person sitting opposite. They've been lover for a long time, but he suddenly realises that he doesn't really know who she is. "Who are you, *really*? I know how you take your coffee, that you like to sleep in on Sundays and is a chronic time optimist, but who *are* you!?"

In the casting scene, the players may not reveal (e.g., by giving names) who is playing what character. If that would happen, simply restart the scene. The reason for this is to keep open who the couples are so that after the casting scene, you can decide who *did play* who. You don't need to cast in pairs.

Now, cast the players and ask them to keep their character interpretations for the character they are given (if applicable, or with modifications, etc.). You may want to cast so that players that seem to be able to pull off monologues get to play Peter and Nicole, or whose character interpretation best fit your picture of Tom, etc. Note that it is not about finding out what player who is best (whatever the definition of that is). You can also listen for the players' desires when they create the scenes and cast accordingly. Make sure that no player feel that he or she "failed the casting scene."

During the casting scene, we suggest that you give one of your monologues. This is the best place to set the bar and the tone. Grasp it!

The Game is Afoot

After the casting it is probably a good idea to repeat what scenes are the first to be played and then start playing. Just nod to Julia to start the first monologue for the first scene in the play, AT THE DOOR. If you are not familiar with the play, scan it briefly before continuing. It can be found at the centrefold of this booklet.

In our play test, Nicole (who was played by a newlywed woman) talked about marriage, the meaning of the ring, that you have to come home to dinner, even if you don't want to. The monologue was very strong and really set the tone for the game.

Act one: Establishing

The first act has three fixed scenes: AT THE DOOR, *Coming home after a great show* and *The Video Camera*. The first two are played back-to-back as the first two scenes of the game. The last is preceded and succeeded by gaps where other scenes can be placed.

The monologue in AT THE DOOR should be good as it is the first, and is a trend setter, just like yours in the casting scene. If it sucks, try and help the player, for example by asking questions about the subject, or restart the monologue if that can be done without the player losing face. One way to do that is to say “next show,” and keep doing so until the player nails the monologue. Be sure to revisit that technique later not to single out the player.

The first act is, as you know, about establishing—giving the players a feeling for Tom and Julia, their relations relation in the everyday and Peter and Nicole's relation in the play. Depending on what scenes the players have planned it could also be about introducing the tempters and temptresses.

The purpose of the scene *Coming home after a great show* is to introduce Tom and Julia's relationship. The idea is for Tom and Julia to be happy, filled with satisfaction from having acted well on a premiere evening. Of course, some players may want to play a relationship in turmoil this early—let happiness turn to quarrel, etc.

If the scene stagnates or the players have a hard time getting started, try and help them with some simple input. Here are five examples of event that could spice things up ever so slightly (in decreasing level of subtleness):

Phone call with congrats from celebrity

Neighbours playing music very loud

Tom or Julia breaks something

The house across the street is on fire

Tom or Julia falls and hurt him/herself

Throwing some event in there is a good trick to provoke Tom and Julia to act and thus force them to make decisions about their relationship.

In *The Video Camera*, Tom and Julia have promised to appear in an up-coming TV program in the culture section. For this, they have been given a video camera to capture some of their private life. Tonight, Julia's parents are visiting. The scene is thus about public and private personalities (when the camera is on and off) but also about difference in behaviour when Tom and Julia are alone and when Julia's parents are there. The scene has three parts: preparing for the visit, the dinner, and when Julia's parents have finally left.

During the scene, Tom and Julia may turn on and off the camera as they please. The camera may be mounted on a tripod so that no-one will have to pretend to hold it. We hope that the players will take over the scene. If the scene lacks spark, you may want to use some of these events:

The lens protection is not off

ON THE OTHER SIDE OF YOU
- scenes from a relationship -

Roles:

Peter 30, successful stock broker

Nicole 29, successful fashion designer

Maude 23, Nicole's assistant

Lewis 40, Nicole's former teacher at the design academy

Maude and Lewis also appear as dream-roles in Peter's and Nicole's imaginations. Dream-Maude and Dream-Lewis can see and talk to each other. Nicole can only see Dream-Lewis, and Peter can only see Dream-Maude.

If applicable, every scene starts like in AT THE DOOR, with Peter and Nicole speaking to the audience, before the lights go up at the other side, and the scene starts proper. (Scene 2-10 are really flashbacks before the action in scene 1 ends with scene 11.)

1. AT THE DOOR

Nicole stands in the doorway, on her side of the wall. In there is Peter with his face turned away. She talks to the audience: where are we, and how did it get this way?

2. NICOLE'S SHOW

Peter goes to Nicole's fashion show, and happens on Maude, next to the stage. No Nicole.

3. RETURN TO THE SCENE OF THE CRIME

Dream-Lewis has asked Nicole to lecture at the design academy. Afterwards they sit in his study. The same room where they first kissed. He is crawling in the dust, and she is magnanimous.

4. MARTYR

Peter surprises Nicole on the job, really to see Maude. Nicole becomes glad, but soon has to leave. Peter acts like a martyr, and gets away with it.

Dear friend, do what you want with this play. I have left much open for your interpretation, and I trust you will make it great. I see the 90's, but you are the boss. It doesn't really matter.

Alex S.

5. A GOOD DAY

Peter and Nicole return home in a taxi, still high after a party at an in-crowd place. They will remember nothing of what happens during this scene in later scenes.

6. THE DREAM OF THE IDEAL

Nicole fantasises that she is Dream-Lewis' wife, in the house she never got to see.

7. DIFFERENT PERSPECTIVES

At home with Peter and Nicole. Something leads to a discussion about gender roles in their relationship. Dream-Maude and Dream-Lewis are present, and sometimes interfere.

8. SURRENDER

Peter and Nicole have fell asleep in different parts of the apartment after partying hard. One of them awakens and goes to sleep next to the other. No lines.

9. LIT CANDLES

Peter and Nicole have dinner together for the first time this week. Dream-Maude and Dream-Lewis also sit at the table. Peter and Dream-Maude start making out and finally have sex on the table. Nicole and Dream-Lewis keep talking. "You cooked this well."

10. ALL-OUT WAR

On their side of the wall, Dream-Lewis and Dream-Maude talk about how bad Peter and Nicole are for each other. They lay up a strategy to convince the couple to leave each other. They go in to Peter and Nicole (who have just had sex), and begin.

11. AT THE DOOR.

Nicole opens the door, and enters.

The scenes in the play can preferably be played slightly more dramatic. It is important that they don't have the same feel as the scenes in the everyday life. Inspire your players to a more theatrical way of playing, with no stepping on someone's lines, and fuller gestures.

What happens in the last scene is open. The most important thing is that we get some form of closure.

Every time the scenario goes back into the play, the scene should start with Peter and Nicole on either side of a door. Peter or Nicole hold a monologue for the audience, and then the scene starts.

The chicken is not thoroughly cooked
Julia's mother spills on Tom's trousers
Someone dials the wrong number (?) many times
The camera falls over or is damaged
Julia's dad chokes on something he eats

The events above are hardly ground shaking, and purposefully so. An good idea might be to give Tom and Julia a note with questions to interview each other in front of the camera. It could be questions like, “What did you first notice with Tom/Julia?”, “What is the best with Tom/Julia?”, “What would you like to change in Tom/Julia, and how?”, etc. Other interesting questions include “How is it to play against each other on the stage?”, “Have you used experiences from your relationship in your rendition of Peter and Nicole?” and “Does it help to be lovers off the stage when portraying lovers on the stage?”

In our play test, the players placed three scenes in the first act. *Double-date with the double-date couple*, *Meeting the director*, and *In Tom and Julia's home*. The double-date came to be about the contrast between the double-date couple's almost disgustingly happy relationship and that of Tom and Julia. It quickly became clear that Tom and Julia, that quickly took on a new set of masks and were quick to steer clear of any dangerous topics, were through some rough patches.

Meeting the director was a very good scene where the director called Tom and Julia to a meeting where she in a very delicate way wanted to discuss the lack of energy between the two of them on stage. She wondered if they had similar problems at home, and if they had felt the same thing. Tom and Julia immediately started defending each other, especially Julia, and pretended to interpret the situation as if Claire (the director) was trying to say that they were bad actors. During the scene, Claire asked the handyman, Link, if he agreed on the lack of energy, which he did, blaming Tom. Julia was very aggressive to the point of Claire taking everything back. Tom leaned forward saying: “Do you think I am a bad actor?” There we cut the scene.

Immediately after the scene, we asked Tom and Julia some questions about what

has just happened. “What is Tom thinking now?” Tom immediately launched into a monologue where he explained how liberating it was that someone else had addressed this thing that he too had felt—contrary to what he had just been saying in the scene. He continued talking about how much he had looked forward to play against Julia on stage, but that it had not turned out the way he had expected.

In a very short discussion about the content of *In Tom and Julia’s home*, it became clear that the players wanted to keep on talking about what had happened in the meeting with the director. We decided it was later the same evening and that they were just coming home. Tom tried to discuss the meeting and Julia didn’t as she felt that would be like admitting that Claire had a point. They talked about energy between the different people on the set and Julia started complaining that there was too much energy going on between Tom and the actress playing Maude. She tried to convince him to “tone that down a bit.” The scene came to be about Tom and Julia having problems and trouble talking about that. Tom expressively denied feeling any lack of energy between Julia and himself, going completely against his monologue—we all knew he was lying.

At the end of the first act, Tom and Julia’s characters were established, as was their relationship. Their love boat was rocking, and they had trouble talking about that. And realising it.





Act two: Temptation

Act two has only one predetermined scene from the everyday life—*The Party*, which is also the first scene. Starting with this scene, Tom and Julia are allowed to fall for temptations. The foremost purpose of the scene is to make it easy to introduce as many temptations as possible. Almost all extras could well have been invited or for some other reason appear at the party (probably not the runner and the real estate agent, of course depending on what has happened in previous scenes).

Preferably start the party two hours in, when people have drunk a bit. The party should be intense from the start.

Possible spices for the party scene are:

Someone pukes

Someone reads aloud a review that praises the electricity between Julia and Lewis

“They are fucking on the toilet, I swear!”

Pot smoking at the balcony

Cora tempts Tom with a main part in a movie

“Haven’t you seen that Link has a crush on you?”

In the play test, Tom had the opportunity to talk to Claire and we could see some kind of spark. The initial topic of their conversation was of course the talk of lack of energy on scene, and Tom continued with the stuff from his monologue until Julia, who had been talking to Link, overheard something, and it almost turned into a scene. Later, Julia’s parents came by for a visit, but nothing happened.

The second act contains the following scenes from the play: NICOLE’S SHOW, RETURN TO THE SCENE OF THE CRIME, MARTYR, A GOOD DAY, THE DREAM OF THE IDEAL, DIFFERENT PERSPECTIVES and SURRENDER. The scenes are described in more detail in the play. Roughly, Peter falls in love with Maude, Nicole’s assistant.

Nicole, on the other hand, dreams of Lewis, her old love and teacher when she was a student at the design school.

In terms of falling for a temptation and acting on it, we didn't get further than act two in the play test. Tom and Julia were afraid to act on their temptations, which is a perfectly valid way of playing *Doubt*. Their story came to be about neither of them being strong enough to break free from their bad relationship, nor have the strength (or interest?) to make it work. Meta play-wise, the scenario also came to be about leaving things hanging, and not getting any answers.

NICOLE'S SHOW and RETURN TO THE SCENE OF THE CRIME worked extremely well and followed the instructions pretty much down to the letter. Initially, we had some problems with getting a tense atmosphere between Peter and Maude, but that was solved easily by Peter and Maude playing "insides and outsides" (see the Jeep Dictionary at <http://jeeopen.org/dict>)—basically commenting on the events of the scene to the audience, "Is he hitting on me?," etc. From that, it became apparent that Maude was not really interested in Peter, but played along for the fun. In RETURN TO THE SCENE OF THE CRIME, Lewis spoke lots and Nicole little. It was obvious that Nicole very much enjoyed gunning down Lewis' attempts at bridging the gap between them, and apologies for old wrongdoings.

In the *Restaurant* Tom met with Miriam and Julia, and we all thought we saw something happening between Tom and Miriam before Julia entered the scene wondering why Tom hadn't come home. Julia was very condescending towards Miriam, who ducked the poisoned arrows. Eventually, Julia left alone with a promise from Tom that he would be home soon.

In *Matchmaking with John and Jennie*, the players tried to quickly explore if something could happen between either John and Jennie, or Tom and Jennie, or John and Julia. It very quickly became obvious that nothing would happen and it all just felt wrong. Tom and Jennie made Julia jealous by constantly referring to their first apartment etc.—"a thousand years ago." Jennie invited herself to a flat showing that Julia otherwise would have gone alone with John on, effectively killing any chance of something happening there.

In *Coffee After Running*, it turned out that the jogger, safe, without pretention, and slightly older, was just what Julia needed. He was interested in her, but didn't push—that was up to her.

At the Song Coach's was in reality skipped—Tom met Julia there, waited for her to finish briefly, said hi to the Song coach, and that was that. We didn't think the scene was needed from the start, but tried to play it anyway to give room for the unexpected.

The players finished of their eight scenes with a visit to Paris with Tom's parents. In our play test, the players were expecting something to happen here, as Paris may only be visited once. To counter that, the "What happens in Paris stays in Paris" rule has been added, which subsequent playing sessions have used extremely well—Tom and Julia make up, but Tom cannot resist Jennie when they are back again, etc. If the players (this has not happened so far) need something unexpected to happen, here is a list of suggestions:

Tom's parents are getting a divorce
Tom's mother or father is dying from a disease
Tom's mother or father is turning into an alcoholic
Tom's parents are gone, but have made their home into a love-nest for Tom and Julia

Naturally, Tom's parents need not be present in Paris, even if it is likely. If they are not, and the players still need something to happen, here is another list:

Tom or Julia is hit by a car and is mildly hurt
Tom and Julia are caught up in a violent demonstration of some sort
The flight to Paris has engine troubles and has to make an emergency landing at another airport
The flight is cancelled or delayed

A Good Thing™ to do when coaching the players when they build the initial scenes is make them stick to just a few persons from the beginning. If they don't, there is no time for the two-scene build-up, which is sad.



Tom and Julia mistakenly goes to the wrong party

The scene A GOOD DAY is the play's equivalent of the Paris scene. The players have excellent opportunities to play the scenes very much alike or the total opposite depending on what is fitting. Whatever happens in this scene will not be remembered by Peter or Nicole in latter scenes of the play.

In THE DREAM OF THE IDEAL, Nicole walked around in the house where she never lived and dreamed about what her life could have been like if Lewis would only have left his wife for her. The scene turned into a discussion about what he would have done for her, and so on. She waited on Lewis, and he gave her compliments, and love.

The remainder of the scenes from the play were played according to the script. The connection between the play and the everyday life was not overly strong, but it was very apparent that it was two stories about the same things, but from completely different angles. A few mirrorings also happened, unbeknownst to the players—Peter played all his extras as half-inverses of Peter, and sentences used in monologues ended up as lines in the everyday life, etc.

At the end of act two, all temptations should have been introduced, and it is now time for Tom and Julia to act. To fall or not to fall. Exactly how to do this is completely up to the players—but observe that this must be solved in-game. The players are not to decide this outside of character.



Act three: Action

In our play test, the players had already “spent” their eight scenes, and only scenes from the play, and fast scenes were left when the third act started. On the other hand, the players had not used any of their fast scenes at all.

Act three was started off with *Coffee After Running II*, which was a dinner at the jogging man’s house, a place introduced when a date was set in a previous scene. Again, Julia took on an active role and had a virtually open goal the entire time, until it became apparent for her that she was about to cross a line over into a dangerous place. She became upset with herself and left the scene crying (Julia, not the player). The scene was not ordered by Julia, but by Peter who wanted to force Julia to act.

Immediately after the second jogging scene, Peter ordered another fast scene with Claire and Tom. This time, Claire was quite pushy and for a long time, it look like Tom was going to fall, but nothing definitive happened. The scene turned into a meta play thing where Tom played against the other players’ expectations. The other players started throwing more fast scenes at Tom and first up was *Tom and Miriam*, where Tom was given more time to flirt with Miriam, without being interrupted by Julia. Immediately afterwards, another player threw a fast scene at Tom, sending Claire into the restaurant. Tom and Claire was standing outside the restaurant, a classic moment where something will or won’t happen. Tom waved in a cab and put Claire in it. She leaned to him “You can if you want to...” Tom and Claire whispered for a while and neither the game masters nor the other players could here what they were saying. Finally, Tom closed the door on Claire, and the taxi took off. This was the last scene we played in the everyday life.

The scene LIT CANDLES deserves a comment. It can be a quite difficult scene as it requires hot physical interaction. Under the play test, the scene worked extremely well, and the sex scene at the table was carried out as Nicole and Lewis kept talking about important things in their imaginary relationship. It was powerful and very strong. Players that don’t like playing out sex scenes should under no circumstances be pushed—the players decide their own limits. It is more important that all players have read the scene and know what is supposed to happen, than that it is actually played.

ALL-OUT WAR started with a dialogue between Lewis and Maude. The players had previously discussed this dialogue and realised that since Lewis and Maude were the fantasies of Peter and Nicole, this should affect the scene somehow. They played the scene in terms of Lewis going through Peter's shortcomings and why he was not good enough for Nicole, and Maude did the same. At the other end of the scene were Peter and Nicole, talking about their relationship, and the two conversations stole quite a lot from each other, which is fitting.

At the end, Maude presented Peter with an ultimatum: Peter had to choose between her and Nicole. Peter sat up in the couch where they were lying, and said "Nicole, we need to talk." As there was no closure in the everyday life, the game masters quickly decided that there should be none here too, and so cut the scene right there, leaving the choice somewhat open.

At the end of act three, it should be obvious is anyone of Tom and Julia has fallen for a temptation.

Act four: Consequences

The purpose of the fourth act is to play two endings—one in the play and one in the everyday life. These two endings in their context is the end of the game.

Continuing with the line of denying closure, the game masters choose to cut the last scene extremely early. Neither Tom nor Julia had fallen, but their relationship was not great. Peter and Nicole gave their last monologues, which were both very good, and then Nicole opened the door and stepped through it.

"Honey, I'm home."

"Hi, Nicole."

The End.



Discussion

The Play as Inverted Everyday Life

What you want to do with the play is really up to you. We imagine the play as an inverse to the everyday life. If Tom and Julia's relationship had been great all through the game, we would probably have let Peter and Nicole's go down the drain in a really bad way. If so, we would probably have had to start building for that early on. For example, ALL-OUT WAR would have had to end in a miserable way. Conversely, if Tom and Julia does break up, it can be nice if Peter and Nicole's end happily, thus forcing Tom and Julia to play characters that make up and have a final hug on the stage a couple of weeks more while the play is still on.

The scenes in the play can very well be played over and over again to drive in the fact that the play is played every evening over and over again. In the same fashion, certain scenes from the play can be skipped altogether. It is more important that the players know what happens in the play, than playing it. For example, the scene MARTYR can be revisited several times if things like that happen in the everyday, or why not play A GOOD DAY several times to really drive the point home? If repeated scenes should be identical or not, we leave up to you (but suggest that they must not).

Using a Workshop Model

How the transitions between the scenes will be made is going to vary with player group and whatnot. Some groups are comfortable with discussing the scene before and then play to see what happens. Others like starting right away and then decide everything else through telegraphing while the scene is running.

In the play test, we used a workshop model where scenes where often talked through very shortly: "What were you thinking for this scene? Give me five short sentences!"

or something like that. Sometimes, this took less than ten seconds to do. For example, the discussion leading up to the scene *At Tom and Julia's home* was exactly like this:

– At Tom and Julia's home. You thoughts?

(Peter) – Everyday routine and chores, like taking out the trash!

(Julia) – No, I want it to be about what just happened.

– OK, it is later the same evening. You are coming home through the door. You are holding hands.

For other scenes, the discussion was much longer and more analytical. All discussions were however relevant for the scenario. At one point, the players were caught up in a pretty serious discussion about how to avoid not saying the name of an ex-partner when you have an orgasm. As the game master, I (Tobias) decided that the conversations were well within the frame set out by the game's premiss, and so I decided not to hurry them along. *Bottom line: there are other ways of playing the scenario than through a character.*

Gender Distribution

Doubt is likely to be best with two female players and two male players. Most likely, the conversations and the topics will differ. Having played the game with two men plus to women groups twice and once with an all-male group, I (Tobias) think that the experience will be equally good regardless of gender, but that there is a lot more tension and sense of danger when there are not just all males.

Game Master Techniques

Something that was very appreciated in the play test was when the game master shortly interrupted the game to put the finger on or emphasise something. In a dinner scene with Tom and Julia, we asked things like "Who cooked dinner?", "Who

did the shopping”, “What did Tom do while Julia cooked?” etc. That game the players more material to play with later, and also brought out certain aspects of Tom and Julia’s relationship.

Just before Peter and Nicole entered the stage to play *A GOOD DAY*, we forced them to answer ten yes/no questions about what they felt about certain things. Most players are naturally bad at just answering yes or no, but that matters little. At one time, we asked Tom for five sentences about how he believed that Maude saw him, and then let Maude give the true answer.

As input and control technique, Bird-in-ear worked great. The game master wanders around the room with the players in the on-going game and speaks as the players’ inner voices. In the role of the game master, I only used my own voice (for monologues, and to quickly discuss the scenes), the voice of the director, and the players’ inner voices (to give ideas on how to move the scene forward) as the bird-in-ear. We never used descriptions of the surroundings or “mood setting texts.”

A longer description of bird-in-ear can be found at <http://jeepen.org/dict/>, together with a whole bunch of otherwise useful techniques for scenario writing and game mastering.

The scenes in the play are the back-bone of the game. It is easy to use the voice of the director to control them. If you think the players have misunderstood something, you can simply say “No, no, no! Stop! Have you thought about the script? I interpret it like this...” To emphasise, you can say things like “Great Nicole, but even more intense and angrily! Once more from Peter’s last line!” If things are stuck in the everyday life, feel free to play the same scene from the play over and over as a metaphor for that.



The “Game Board”

The game board isn’t strictly a game board, just a sheet of paper where all important information is written down. It contains the rules, the characters, the places, and also a list of all predefined scenes with lot of white space for the players to enter their scenes and fast scenes if you like. Make sure the game board is copied onto a big enough sheet of paper rather than having several small ones that have to be kept in sync.

Finally

We hope you will enjoy Doubt, that you think the subject is interesting, and that you like how the scenario is designed. As you have seen, most of it is left open for interpretation or for you to decide completely. That’s what we wanted for this game, and we hope that you will make decisions and rules, and interpret the play “manuscript” and the premise so that your game becomes great. All feedback to us is very welcome, just send an email or grab us if you happen to see us at a con somewhere.

The best of luck, and thanks for your interest

Fredrik & Tobias

Vi åker jeep / We Go By Jeep

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Peter's Monologues

There is no such thing as true love. You cannot pledge yourself to anyone until death do you part. Every day, you might meet the woman you are meant to be with.

A relationship never gets better than the moment when your eyes meet for the first time. The potential is at its max then, I can carry this meeting with me for the rest of my life—escape into it if I have to dream away.

I dream of Maude, but who does Nicole dream about? Who am I judged against?

What is a relationship? Is it beautiful or pathetic that two people lean against each other in waiting for someone better to come along?

What will happen if she ever pops the marriage question? How can you not say yes without busting the relationship? Asking someone to marry you is an ultimatum.

Nicole's Monologues

How did this come to happen, that we live together, but never are alone? That there is always the feeling of a third person present. In between us. Keeping us away from each other.

How does love work? How can I dream of Lewis but live with Peter? What is it that I want, and how do I understand that? I cannot feel in my bones if something is right or wrong. When should I break it up? Is it not infidelity even if it is just in my head?

Could it be the case that almost all people can form a working couple? That the hard part is getting over that threshold making love work? A relationship is like a romantic agreement. Marriage is a false way of trying to own another person. A false sense of security.

What is a relationship? Is it a platform for us to make individual excursions from, or is there anything valuable about being a couple? What did we see in each other from the start? Is that still there?

Loving costs. You have to decide to keep doing it. Even when that tingling sensations dies out. And then forgetting that's the case.

A serious story of love. About how one glance can stop time. About daring to love and daring to move on.

Doubt is two stories about each other. A life and a play. Tom and Julia love each other. Both on stage and off stage.

It is about temptation, the importance to love and be loved. About constant choosing. About living with one person, and at the same time dreaming about others.

In Doubt, the players are responsible for the story. Decide the fate of Tom and Julia. Play the play to its final act. Two players play Tom and two play Julia. And extras. And lovers.

A beautiful scenario of love.

