

Helga & Tamuz

A LARP Thought Experiment

by [Mike Young](#)

I wrote this scenario to try to test the boundaries of what people think LARP is. It was influenced by the Jeepform larps. Read the first larp and ask yourself if it is LARP. Then read the second and ask the same question. And then ask yourself why you had two different answers.

Scenario 1

This is a GMless LARP for two players. It should last around 5-10 minutes, or as long as the players wish. Your goal as players is to feel the emotions of the characters in the scene, not necessarily to resolve the problem that has been presented.

You are Helga. You are a young woman in your late teens, a junior at college. You have fallen deeply in love with your boyfriend Tamuz, a man of whom your parents would not approve. But you do not care. You are in love. Tamuz also goes to your college; he is a senior.

Unfortunately, you have just discovered that you are pregnant. You are positive of this; there can be no mistake. And Tamuz is definitely the father. You donât know what to do. You would like to keep the child that is a beautiful symbol of the love that you and Tamuz share, but you know that you are not yet ready to be a mother. You want to finish college and find a job, and having a child would interfere with that. Also, your parents would be furious and might even disown you. You donât know what to do, but you know you need to talk to Tamuz about it.

You are Tamuz. You are a senior in college and you have a girlfriend, Helga. You met her in college - she is a year younger than you - and the two of you are in love. But you know your parents would not approve of Helga. You havenât even told them that the two of you are dating. They are very conservative Catholics and would be distraught if you did anything that didnât align with their world views.

Oh you have dreams for the future. You are poised to graduate with honors - the first person from your family to do so. You know you will have no trouble finding a good job, and you want to live life to the fullest before finally settling down and asking Helga to marry you. You love her, but you are certainly not ready to get married and raise a family yet. You are young and you want to party and travel and live life to the fullest.

You know that Helga wants to talk to you about something, but you donât know what. You have a tendency to try to fix problems, even when they are emotional, which you know upsets Helga. Still, you care, and you want the best for the two of you.

Scenario 2

This is a GMless LARP for two players. It should last around 5-10 minutes, or as long as the players wish. Your goal as players is to feel the emotions of the characters in the scene, not necessarily to resolve the problem that has been presented.

Helga and Tamuz are two college students; Helga is a junior and Tamuz is a senior. They come from very different ethnic and religious backgrounds and their parents would not approve of their relationship. The relationship is currently kept secret from the parents.

The characters are definitely in love and want their relationship to prosper, but they both want some time to enjoy life after graduating college.

Unfortunately, Helga has just discovered that she is pregnant with Tamuzâs child. She does not know what to do. Tamuz does not know this yet, nor does he even suspect that she is pregnant. Both characters know that their parents would be furious, possibly to the point of disowning the children if a pregnancy were revealed.

In this LARP, Helga is to reveal her pregnancy to Tamuz. After a bit of shock at the revelation, Tamuz might try to see this as a problem to solve, but Helga will see it more as an emotional issue. An argument will ensue. The event ends when Helga and Tamuz come to a decision or when both players agree that the event is over.

Expectations and Results

It was my expectation that American LARPers would feel the second scenario - the one inspired by Jeepform - was somehow less of a larp than the first scenario. However, that turned out not to be the case. Most people felt the two scenarios were equivalent in their larpyness. One comment of note was that several people felt neither scenario was a larp because it was only two people, that the scenario needed more to be a larp. At best, it was part of a larp.

What do you think?