

Women



A Game by:

Susanne Gräslund & Anders Hultman

Women - Game Master Instructions



In every generation, the fight for gender equality goes on. No matter what victories we build upon, there is constantly a new glass roof to break through; there is always another sexist, misogynist or patriarchal structure that needs to be challenged. However, most of all we, need to conquer our own expectations and misgivings.

In *Women* you will experience the state of the Swedish feminist struggle during the last 100 years. You will dive down in five very different times and meet three very different women each time. There will be *The Friend*, the ex-radical; *The Mother*, who has accepted a life according to societal norms; and *The Daughter*, a radical who rebels against her mother and looks up to *The Friend*. These women are invented anew in each episode but still stay the same.

By telling this story we believe the players will have a chance to experience, reflect, and create their own version of 100+ years of development. Each episode will have its own particular difficulties and progress of the feminist struggle.

This game is written by Susanne Gräslund & Anders Hultman 2017 and inspired by the Nobel Prize awarded author Doris Lessing's *The Golden Notebook*.

Game Outline

Women is designed to be played by three or possibly four players and a Game Master. If you play with three players each player sticks to the same persona in all episodes. If you add a fourth player you can either have one willing player play The Society in all episodes or two of the players can switch back and forth between The Society and The Daughter. The Mother and The Friend stays with the same player either way.

This game is played in 6 different episodes divided into 3 – 5 scenes. The first 5 episodes are very similar in setup and play style. The last (year 2040) is different in that you and the players will have to invent the content yourselves. Each episode will follow approximately 25 years after the previous.

With each episode you will give a short historical introduction to the players for the episode and afterwards they will get their characters for the episode. After these characters have been read, you will give the players the first scene of the episode and have them play each scene in order. You are free to invent your own scenes and change the ones we have written if you or your players need something different. When you are done with an episode you move on to the next.

For each episode there is a theme song that you can use to set the mood at the beginning of the episode after you have explained the historical context.

When the first five episodes have been played you can move on to the last and most difficult part. By building upon their personas and what they have learned of feminist political development, they will create their own norms and radical ideas for the year 2040 and create their own characters. These characters should then be challenged in scenes.

Episodes and Historical Context

The episodes are evenly spaced starting in 1915 and going all the way to 2040. These years are not exactly fixed and some historical facts might happen a few years beyond the specific year and still be in play. Consider them more as time periods with a few years give or take.

1915 - Before Suffrage

The first episode is played out in 1915 while the first world war is raging on the continent. Suffragettes are fighting for women's right to vote and for other equal rights. The general view of women in the society is that they are dependent beings meant to support their husbands and to do a good job within the family in a way that benefits society. A woman should let her husband make the decisions for the family and herself concentrate on giving birth to healthy children.

Themes and Inspiration

- Women's right to vote
- A doll's house
- Education
- Sacrifices
- Illegitimate children

1940 - Wartime Emancipation

The second episode is played out around 1940 when war is again raging in Europe. The women's right to vote was won two decades ago, and women are joining the workforce to replace men who have been called to military service. The general view of women in the society is that she needs to be productive and sacrificing. She needs to raise her children to become good and productive citizens.

Themes and Inspiration

- War in Europe
- Some sexual education
- Educating the public about contraception becomes legal
- Homosexuality is no longer a crime (but is still a disease)
- First woman in the government
- Fight for legalization of abortion due to medical reasons

1965 - Sexual Revolution

The third episode is set around 1965 when the cold war is at its peak. It is also the beginning of the sexual revolution with the recent access to contraception pills and sexual education. The general view of women in the society is that they should now enter the workforce without hesitation, but also take care of everything at home as proficiently as ever.

Themes and Inspiration

- From housewife to a working woman
- Sexual enlightenment in school
- Cold war
- Contraceptive pills from 1964
- Rape within marriage becomes illegal
- Fight for free abortion and general paid parental leave (both came 1974)

1990 - Political Feminism

The Berlin wall has fallen, capitalism has been victorious and this is a time when women are free to work with and live with whoever they like. But in all this, the pressures of double labour in the home and the workplace are taking their toll. Many marriages end in divorce and the heavy load of supporting divided families falls mainly on the women. The general view of women in the society is that they now have equal rights as men in all aspects and it is up to the women to take their chances in life.

Themes and Inspiration

- The Cold war has ended
- Materialism
- Unmarried partnerships (Sambo)
- Male parental leave is emerging
- Double labour
- Homosexuality gaining acceptance

2017 - Present Day

This episode takes place in our present day society. It is a time of globalization, polarisation and social media. Many feminist victories are won, but we also see a counter reaction from misogynists who think feminism has gone too far. The general view of women in the society is that even if women officially have the same rights as men there are still structures in society that discriminates against women - the Patriarchy.

Themes and inspiration

- Globalisation and climate crisis
- 50/50 representation in politics
- Equal pay for the equal work
- Queer is an acceptable way of life
- Fathers take some parental leave
- Women's right to equally enjoy sex
- Women's revolt against sexual harassment and assault, #metoo

Pregame and Preparations

Practical Preparations

Read through the entire game including the persona booklet to familiarize yourself with the contents.

To play the game you will need the following:

1. 3 or 4 players
2. About 4 hours of play time
3. The persona booklet printed for each player + 1
4. PostIT-notes and pens for Episode 6
5. If you want to use music, find a speaker and subscribe to the Spotify playlist

The Booklets

There is one handout part of this scenario - the persona booklet. It should be printed for each player plus one extra for the Game Master. You all receive the same handout since the game is written with full transparency between players.

The Society

Besides the three main personas there is a fourth persona - the Society. This represents the strength of tradition, society, and public appearance which holds back The Mother and Friend. This can either be played by the Game Master or a separate fourth player. The Society's function is not explicitly stated in each episode, but as a rule of thumb it should hold The Mother to the norms/ideals of the previous episode and The Friend to the ideals of the present. It should try to suppress wishes that come close to the progressive ideas of The Daughter.

The tools of the Society are anything you can come up with that you and the other players are comfortable using. You can use touch and closeness to empower or weaken a player, you can take over the voice of a character and say things in their stead. You can whisper something to give guidance. Use the shadowing-/GM-techniques that

you like but you must follow the rule - The Society is not allowed to influence/shadow The Daughter. She is immune.

Prepare the players

Before the game begins you follow these steps with your players.

1. What is this About?

Tell the players that this is a game about women and feminism. All characters are female and we will delve into topics like domestic violence, sexual abuse, abortion and sexual liberation. If there is any topic you would like not to play on or deal with, let the Game Master know and appropriate changes will be made.

2. Round of Introductions - 5 – 10 min

Have each player think about the things below and then make a round where each player in turn answers uninterrupted.

The contents of the round can be:

1. Tell the group of a feminist development in your lifetime that is important to you.
2. What are your expectations on the game we are about to play?
3. Do you have any boundaries regarding physical or emotional play you want the others to be aware of?
4. If some of you do not know each other add things like, name, larp/role playing experience, etc.

3. The Personas - 5 min

Explain to the players that they will now receive a “persona” -- it is a like character but the persona will not be the same person in each episode. You will change characters when we move forward in time. However, the general persona will stay the same. Note: if you are running with four players and you have shifting personas for The Daughter and The Society you can explain the difference.

You can now distribute the Persona booklets to the players and let them read the first page. We suggest that you give a short introduction to the personas and let the players choose who to play. But you can do the casting in a different way if it fits your group better. If you introduce the personas you can say this:

The Mother

She is the conservative ideal of her time. A strong woman in her prime.

The Friend

She used to be a rebel and a fighter. Now she is doing what she can to uphold the victories of her youth.

The Daughter

She is a rebel and a wild fire who refuses to accept the status quo.

The Society

It is the strength of tradition, society and public appearance holding The Mother and Friend back. Played either by a player (if four players) or the Game Master (if three players).

4. Rules - 5 min

There are three rules of the game that you should inform your players about. If they deviate from them you can remind them in between episodes or scenes.

1. Every scene should pass the Bechdel test. This means that (1) the scene has to have at least two women in it, (2) who talk to each other, (3) about something besides a man. Talking about men is not forbidden but they have to talk about something other than men for a significant part of each scene.
2. The Society is not allowed to influence/shadow The Daughter. She is immune.
3. The Mother and The Friend should genuinely believe that the other leads a happier life. No matter how broken their lives are, the other's life seems to be happier.

5. Warm up - 15 min (including break)

Do this short game to get your players warmed up and to release some of the tension of interacting with new people.

1. Ask the group to move around the room, loosely swinging their arms and gently relaxing their heads and necks.
2. Explain that you will soon say "Make" and then a word. When you do they must quickly try to form themselves into statues describing the word.
3. Say let's begin with an easy one "Make a bird." When everyone has settled they can glance at each other.
4. Tell them to walk about again.
5. Now you can play with this for a while. Say things like:
 - a. Make a housewife
 - b. Make a leader
 - c. Make a stand
 - d. Make a shaming
 - e. Make love
 - f. Make a victim
 - g. Make peace
6. You can let the players observe and shortly comment on the statues if it feels right. But don't get stuck talking at this point. This should be fun, fast and a little challenging.

When the exercise is done you should be ready to start playing. Ask if the players have any questions and then proceed. This could be a good time for a short bio break.

Running the Game

Episodes

The game is divided into six episodes and the first five are run in the same way. You can follow the step by step instruction below or make the changes you need. For each episode the players will be more comfortable with the format and your prepping will be easier. When you reach the last episode you will do something completely different as explained below.

Scenes

The scenes described in the episodes are suggestions and if you or your players come up with others or if there is a scene you or your players are not comfortable with playing, please make whatever changes you like. Remember to keep the tempo and, if you can avoid it, don't let the scenes go on for more than 7 – 9 minutes. During play testing we had great scenes with none of them extending beyond 8 minutes. If you let the players play longer than that you will run out of time and have to rush the important parts in the last episodes, if you need to confine the game to four hours, that is.

Step by Step: Episodes 1 – 5

1. The Music

You can play the chosen song for the episode from the playlist found at http://bit.ly/women_larp. Let it play for a little while, until you are in the mood and have moved forward in time to the new episode. About 1 minute is enough.

1. The Setting

Read or paraphrase the text describing the episode. The players have this text in their player folders but it is good to read it out loud for all to hear.

2. The Characters

Have each player read their character description out loud to the others. If you are three players, you can read the Society.

If there are no questions, you move on to Scene 1 of the episode.

3. The Scenes

Read the text describing the scene. The players have this text in their player folders but it is good to read it out loud for all to hear while they read along if they like.

While you give the players a minute to think about their character in the scene, if needed, you can rearrange chairs or the play area into a fitting composition for the scene.

Invite the players to play the scene and, if needed, contribute as the Society or an NPC.

End the scene when the important points have been played through but before it turns tedious. No scene should be more than 9 minutes, but most will not run for more than 6.

When the scene is done you move to the next scene. Remember that you have final say in what scenes should be played and if there are any additional scenes you want to add.

Episode 6 - The Year 2040

This episode is different since we do not know what are the normal and progressive ideas of the future. You will use the process described below to let the players create their own future and, after this, you will have to invent suitable scenes for it. The scene or scenes will take place in the year 2040 but if it is a dystopic, utopic or in between future is up to the players. By now, we hope both you and your players will be comfortable enough with each other and how this game runs to be able to create this together.

PostITs or similar notes are convenient for writing down and showing others what has been written for this part.

Introduction to the Players

Read or paraphrase the following:

“The year is 2040. It is a future that could be brighter or darker in many different ways. Based on the struggles of 2017, some fights might have been won and others are still there to be fought. What are the new and progressive ideas of the young generation born in the 2020-ties? Who are The Mother, The Friend and The Daughter of this future world?”

“In the year 2017 the following were fairly mainstream:

- Equal pay for the equal work
- Queer is an acceptable way of life
- Fathers take some parental leave
- Women's right to equally enjoy sex
- 50/50 representation in politics
- Feminist political parties
- Homosexual couples can adopt children
- Buying sex is a crime”

“In the year 2017 the following were examples of radical ideas:

- Polyamory should be an accepted way to live
- The responsibility for emotional labour should be shared equally
- Shaming of other women should not be accepted
- Equal pay for different work
- 6 hours work day
- Basic income for all
- A woman can be the top executive in any position
- Women have the right to choose their own level of body hair
- Women can be topless in public baths
- Sexual assault is unacceptable “#metoo”

The New Mainstream

1. Ask each player to individually write down three things they think could have become mainstream and a norm in society in 2040. Maybe some of the radicals above are now the norm? - 2 min
2. Ask the players to, one by one, tell the others what they have written - 1 min per player
3. Ask the players to use this to decide on a now shared mainstream society for 2040 with maybe 5 or 6 changes from today.

The New Radical

1. Ask each player to individually write down 1 – 3 things they think could have emerged as new radical ideas in 2040 - 2 min
2. Ask the players to one by one tell the others what they have written - 1 min per player
3. Let this list be inspiration for The Daughter's character of 2040.

The Characters

1. Give the players a minute or two to think about who their character is in 2040. What is she proud of? What are her worries? Of what does she dream? Remember that The Mother and Friend should still be convinced that the other is the more happy of the two. - 5 min
2. Ask the players to describe their characters to each other. Begin with The Mother, then The Friend and finally The Daughter. Some changes may have to be made to connect them to each other but do not spend too much time with this. - 4 min

Scenes

The Game Master should then run one or a few scenes based on these characters and their situation. You can ask the players for suggestions if you find this difficult. You could also begin with a very open scene where The Mother and Friend are talking about things for a little while and then The Daughter appears upset about something.

The purpose of this part is to explore where the progressive ideas of our time could have come to rest in the future society and how a new generation might have new and to our eyes strange ideas and demands upon society.

When you feel this is done and 2040 is concluded you move on to debrief.

Debrief

The Story

Ask the players to sit down comfortably, close their eyes and then read or paraphrase the following:

“Thank you for taking part in the story of Women. When the story began in the year 1915 a woman was not seen as an adult, she was not allowed to vote or educate herself. If a child was born outside of marriage it was often taken from its mother to be raised by strangers.

During the war in 1940 she entered into the workforce, she was an adult and allowed to vote. There was still no sexual education and abortions were illegal. A woman was expected to be provided for by her husband.

In the 60s the sexual revolution gave men and women knowledge about sex and the tools to prevent pregnancy and the right to make abortions for medical reasons. A woman should stick to her husband and divorces were rare. Homosexuality was still considered an illness.

In the happy 90s many things were different. Everyone could choose who to live with, be married or unmarried, straight or gay. A woman could make a career but she should not aim too high or be too confident or the men might take her down. Parental leave was still a woman's task and she should be content with being paid less for the same work.

Today we have come a long way. Many struggles have been hard fought in the last century but still there are so many things left to do. In 2040 we will be able to look back upon 2017 and hopefully see that some good has been accomplished.”

Their Thoughts

Give the players a moment to digest this and then you can let the players open their eyes and make a round where they all can share their thoughts on characters, story and the topics.

You could for instance ask them to: “Share your immediate thoughts on your character and her place in this story we have told, how do you feel about it?”

If you want you can do a second round after the first, focusing on the topic of feminism in the past 100 years. You could ask something like: “Do you have any feminist achievements, and not yet achievements, that are more important to you that you would like to share?”

The End

Thank you for playing our scenario. We would love to hear from you or your players on your thoughts on the topics; the way they are presented; or what works and what doesn't in how it is supposed to be played. Before Stockholm Scenario Festival 2017 it had only been playtested in an early form and there is possibly more to be done to improve on the scenario.

You can reach us on anders@betahaus.net or susanne.graslund@gmail.com. We would love to hear from you!

License and Credits

This work is licensed under “Attribution-NonCommercial-ShareAlike 4.0 International (CC BY-NC-SA 4.0)”.

Our thanks goes to:

- Sofia Nordin, Martin Rother-Schirren and Emma Öhrström Wedberg for playtesting
- Anna Westerling for being our writing coach
- Ericka Skirpan for proofreading

Women - Persona Booklet



The Personas

The Mother - A bit old-fashioned and likes to do things the traditional way. She doesn't fight the system at all and her ways are based on what was mainstream in the time period before. The Mother is jealous of her Friend who dares shape her life according to her beliefs.

The Friend - A middle-aged woman who has become more and more mainstream as she has grown up. She continues to fight for what she believes in, but within the boundaries set up by the society. She used to be radical in the earlier time period. The Friend is jealous of The Mother whom she thinks leads a very successful and harmonic life and who seems to be content with the way things are.

The Daughter - A radical and leader of the fight for equal rights on the front lines. She questions the boundaries of the society and expands them. She is a young and angry rebel, but will become more and more mainstream as she grows up. She looks up to The Friend and thinks that her Mother is boring and old-fashioned.

The Society - Acts out the current norms of the episode. It represents the strength of tradition, society and public appearance holding The Mother and The Friend back. The Society's function is not explicitly stated in each episode but, as a rule of thumb, it should hold The Mother to the norms and ideals of the previous episode and The Friend to the ideals of the present. It should try to suppress wishes that come close to the progressive ideas of The Daughter. The Society is not allowed to influence/shadow The Daughter. She is immune.

EPISODE 1 - 1915

Music: The March of the women - Ethel Smyth, Eiddwen Harrhy. Start at 0:40.

Historical Summary

The first episode is played out in 1915, while the first world war is raging on the continent. Suffragettes are fighting for women's right to vote and for other equal rights. The general view of women in the society is that they are dependent beings meant to support their husbands to do a good job within the family in a way that benefits society. A woman should let her husband make the decisions for the family and herself concentrate on giving birth to healthy children.

Themes and Inspiration

- Women's right to vote
- A doll's house
- Housewives
- Education
- Sacrifices
- Illegitimate children

The Characters

The Friend is an intellectual woman who has chosen not to get married since that lets her make her own decisions about her life. In her younger years, she was forced to give up an illegitimate child as she was an unmarried woman.

The Mother is married and has four children. She works hard to keep up her home and tend to her "doll's house", but her husband is never content. As a married woman she is dependent on her husband.

The Daughter is the eldest child of The Mother and in her late teenage years. She has a suitor, but she is hesitating to get married as she would rather educate herself and see the world before she settles, if she even decides to get married at all.

The Society is supportive of women who support their men and are good housewives. It is hard on The Friend who has not been able to produce any legitimate children.

Scenes

Scene 1: The Birthday

It is Eric's birthday today. Or rather, The Friend doesn't really know if he is really named Eric, but she likes to call him that to make the memory of him more alive. It is his 19th birthday today. 19 long years have passed since she was forced to give him away and this day is a difficult one each year. As The Mother is the only living person who knows the full truth, The Friend always spends this day in her company to talk about what could have been. What does he look like now and what does he do? What if The Friend had married Eric's father? Maybe she could have forced him to do that? The Mother is trying to calm The Friend down the best she can. She can hardly visualize what it would have been like to have been forced to give up any of her children. Oftentimes, The Mother is jealous of The Friend who enjoys so much more freedom in life, but this very day each year is different and she is fully content with her life and her choices.

The scene takes place in the home of The Mother, The Friend is visiting. They sit in the kitchen and talk.

Scene 2: The Rally

The Friend comes over to The Mother for a visit. She brings a leaflet about a rally for Women's right to vote. The Mother serves some tea in the kitchen. The daughter is curious and starts by eavesdropping from the hallway. After a while she knocks on the door and joins the other two in the kitchen.

The Friend has decided that she will go to the rally. The Daughter listens to her and asks if she can join. The Mother says no; she also knows that her husband is strictly against these ideas and never would give his permission. Is the rally really legal, and what good is voting for women anyway? We women have no education and don't know anything about politics, so why should we take part in the decision making? Instead we should support our men to make good decisions for their families. Anyway, it ends with The Daughter joining for a little while at least. The Society is questioning the rally.

The scene takes place in the home of The Mother, kitchen and hallway. The Friend is visiting and The Daughter joins.

Scene 3: The Police

The Friend comes back to The Mother and has to tell her that she actually lost track of The Daughter at the rally. The Mother freaks out, and The Friend does what she can to calm her down. Most likely The Daughter has just been delayed and will be home soon. Suddenly, the doorbell rings and a Police officer waits outside with The Daughter who was caught at the rally. He talks harshly about how young women like The Daughter should not be out in such circumstances and The Mother has to reassure him that this will not happen again. The Mother knows that if her husband finds out, he will punish both her and The Daughter. The Society lashes out at The Mother for not being able to properly take care of her daughter. The Society also criticizes The Friend for not being able to take responsibility for a child when needed the most.

The scene takes place in the home of The Mother and the hallway. The Friend comes back and later The Daughter escorted by a Policeman.

Scene 4: Education

The Mother and The Daughter have an intimate talk at home in the kitchen. The Daughter wants to study medicine and become a medical doctor, just like Karolina Widerström who gave a talk at the rally the other day. The Mother gets upset by hearing the Daughter talk openly about having been there, and also suggests that The Daughter could become a nurse instead, which is much more fitting for a woman. Let the men be doctors who have families they need to support. The Mother also suggests that The Daughter should get married soon and wasn't there a nice suitor already? The most important thing is to choose a man who has or will get a decent job with a stable income and to support him in all possible ways. The doorbell rings and it is The Friend who joins the other two. The Mother tells about The Daughter's plans on education and asks The Friend for her opinion. The Friend tries to be supportive without hurting The Mother's feelings too obviously. The Society does not approve of women's ambitions. It criticizes The Friend for supporting ideas like that and praises The Mother for her caring.

The scene takes place in the home of The Mother, the kitchen. The Friend arrives after a while and joins the other two.

EPISODE 2 - 1940

Music: Min soldat - Ulla Billquist. English alternative: As Time Goes By - Billie Holiday

Historical Summary

The second episode is played out around 1940 when war is again raging in Europe. The women's right to vote has been won for two decades, and women are joining the workforce to replace men who have been called to military service. The general view of a woman in the society is that she needs to be productive and sacrificing. She needs to raise her children to become good and productive citizens.

Themes and Inspiration

- War in Europe
- Some sexual education
- Educating the public about contraception becomes legal
- Homosexuality is no longer a crime (but is still a disease)
- First woman in the government
- Fight for legalization of abortion due to medical reasons

The Characters

The Mother: Is married and has two children. Has been a housewife, but is now reluctantly working at a factory due to the war. Her husband is not at home much.

The Friend: Is unmarried and has an illegitimate child, a son of 7 years. She has taken evening courses in economy to educate herself and wants to enter politics. Her dream is to get a place in the parliament for the social democrats. During the daytime, she works at the same factory as The Mother to support herself and her son. Before the war she had problems with getting enough work and is now very content about having a reliable job. A neighbour helps taking care of the boy when he's not in school.

The Daughter: Studies social sciences at the university, an education she had to work very hard to get into. She is particularly interested in studies on women's role in the workforce and has listened a lot to Karin Kock, a politician in the social democrat party.

The Society: Demands of women to do what they can to support in times of war. At the same time they must know their proper place.

Scenes

Scene 1: Late for Work

The Mother and The Friend now work at a factory to replace men who have been called to do military service. Early one morning before work, The Friend calls The Mother. The Friend's son is sick again and she has to take him to see the doctor. The Friend cannot really afford to lose work hours again so she asks The Mother if she can stamp her time card as well when The Mother arrives at work? The Friend will come as soon as she can after dropping off her son with her neighbour after the doctor's appointment. The Mother hesitates. Does she really dare do this? In the end she promises she will do it.

The scene takes place with The Friend and The Mother in a phone call.

Scene 2: On the Tram

The Mother and The Friend are traveling home from work. They meet The Daughter who is also on her way home from the University where she is studying. The Friend is content with the day, although she wishes that she had received more support for her views at the workers union meeting. She has been studying economy and tries to find ways to advance at work and earn more responsibility. Maybe she can enter the local union board? The Mother doesn't like her new working life and finds it hard to combine that with her home duties. Also, she is very nervous that their cheating with the time cards will be discovered. The Daughter has been to a lecture about women's role in the workforce and finds it very important and interesting. The Society doesn't approve of The Friend's ambitions. Women need to help out now in times of war, but they must know their place and not take over.

The scene takes place on the tram, where The Mother and The Friend sit side by side. The Daughter gets on and joins them.

Scene 3: Pregnancy

The Daughter has discovered that her period is late and has realized that she is most likely pregnant. The would be father is a brief acquaintance who is away in the military, and whom she met at a student party about a month ago. The Daughter doesn't know much about how babies are made, but she knows that she cannot keep this baby as she wants to continue her studies. She has locked herself up in her room and The Mother is worried. The Mother has finally called The Friend and asked her to come over and try talk to The Daughter. The Friend has just arrived and The Daughter has unlocked the door and let them in. The Daughter tells them about the pregnancy and says that she needs an illegal abortion. The Mother becomes upset and says that that abortion is illegal for a reason and blames The Daughter for ending up in this situation. The Friend blames the father, the lack of sexual enlightenment and contraception.

The scene takes place in The Daughter's room. She has just opened the door and let The Friend and The Mother come in.

Scene 4: Politics

The Daughter has had an early miscarriage and is both relieved and surprisingly sad. One week has passed and she can't stop thinking of the child that never came to be. She has also realized how little she knew about this and has made up her mind to join RFSU, the newly formed the Swedish Association for Sexuality Education, and work with contraception information. She already has lots of ideas on actions and rallies. The Mother and The Friend have met at a café and are waiting for The Daughter who arrives late as she was at her first RFSU meeting. The Mother wants The Daughter to settle and marry her boyfriend. Now that she by chance slipped out of the pregnancy situation, it is best to prevent a similar thing to happen by marrying. The Friend encourages The Daughter to continue her studies and wishes that she herself could have had that chance. The Friend has had to stick to evening courses while working and is now aiming at a seat in the parliament to fight for women's rights.

The scene takes place in a café, The Mother and The Friend having coffee together. The Daughter arrives late.

EPISODE 3 - 1965

Music: You don't own me - Lesley Gore

Historical Summary

The third episode is set around 1965 when the cold war is at its peak. It is also the beginning of the sexual revolution with the recent access to contraception pills and sexual education. The general view of women in the society is that they should now enter the workforce without hesitation, but also take care of everything at home as proficiently as ever.

Themes and Inspiration

- From housewife to a working woman
- Sexual enlightenment in school
- Cold war
- Contraceptive pills from 1964
- Rape within marriage becomes illegal
- Fight for free abortion and general paid parental leave (both came 1974)

The Characters

The Mother is a mother of two, and a housewife who takes care of her youngest child. The eldest, The Daughter, has recently moved out and in a few years her little brother will do the same. The Mother is unhappy as her husband seems uninterested in her and probably is having an affair with someone else. The Mother dreams of a meaningful life beyond household chores, but divorce is not an option as she cannot support herself economically.

The Friend works as a journalist at a newspaper and writes about internal politics. She is divorced many years from an unhappy and childless marriage. The Friend leads a very lonely life which is a great sorrow.

The Daughter studies cultural sciences at the University and is a member of a radical feminist group fighting for women's right to full-time employment, general childcare, right to free abortion and pain relief when giving birth. She has just moved out of her parent's home and in with her boyfriend.

The Society criticizes the faltering responsibility of The Mother and The Friend for their families, and thus for society and the world.

Scenes

Scene 1: Loneliness

The Mother and The Friend are at The Mother's place and are working together on repainting the son's room. The Friend asks casually about The Mother's plans for the upcoming Christmas celebrations. The Mother understands that The Friend would like to be invited to celebrate with them as she has no family of her own to celebrate with -- no children to buy Christmas presents for. The Friend's ex-husband is happily re-married and has two children with his new wife. The Mother asks if The Friend has any new men in her life and comes up with good suggestions on how to find a new special someone.

The scene takes place in The Mother's place. The Mother and The Friend are working together.

Scene 2: Moving out

The Daughter has come home to pick up some more things and The Friend stops by at the same time. The Mother is worried about The Daughter moving in with her boyfriend without being married. The Daughter ensures her mother that she will be fine and that she just started taking contraceptive pills. The Daughter has grand plans for her new life with her boyfriend where she dreams of organising cultural evenings in their apartment to discuss humans rights, gender equality, and more. The Friend thinks this sounds splendid and wishes that she had been young now and given the chance to live her life that way. She tries to be happy for The Daughter, and suppress her own sorrow for her very lonely life.

The scene takes place in The Mother's place. The Daughter is collecting things. The Friend comes by.

Scene 3: The Rape

The Mother has understood that her husband is having an affair and earlier today she confronted him about it. He became angry and demanded they have sex. The Mother refused, but then he forced himself upon her and afterwards he just left. The Mother called The Friend, who in turn called The Daughter, and now they have both come over for support. The Mother is very upset and afraid that she has scared her husband away for ever. She has no means to support herself and is thus dependant on him. Divorce is not an alternative. The Friend points out that what happened is actually rape which was newly criminalized even within marriage and is trying to encourage The Mother to consider reporting it to the police. The Daughter is furious and doesn't want her mother to waste her life on a man who treats her like shit. The Society demands responsibility from The Mother and The Friend to make family life work. The Husband does actually have a tiresome employment and must be allowed to focus on providing for the family. The Mother should make herself more sexually interesting for her husband.

The scene takes place in The Mother's place. The Friend and The Daughter have just come over to support The Mother.

Scene 4: Separation and a Fresh Start

The Daughter has called The Friend and asked to meet and talk. They take a walk in the park and end up on a bench. The Daughter is so disappointed on her new life which has not at all turned out the way she was hoping for. Instead, her boyfriend expects her to do all the household work while he invites friends over to discuss philosophy and smoke pot. The Daughter cannot stay with him and needs to move out. However, she refuses to move back home to her parents as she doesn't speak to her father after what he did to her mother. The Friend listens to The Daughter and offers the guest room in her apartment, at least for the time being. They unite in cursing men who acts like douchebags.

The scene takes place on a park bench. The Friend and The Daughter have an intimate conversation.

EPISODE 4 - 1990

Music: You Oughta Know - Alanis Morissette

Historical Summary

The Berlin wall has fallen, capitalism has been victorious and this is a time when women are free to work and live with whomever they like. But in all this, the pressures of double labour in the home and the workplace are taking their toll. Many marriages end in divorce and the heavy load of supporting divided families is falling on women. The general view of women in the society is that they now have equal rights as men in all aspects and it is up to the women to take their chances in life.

Themes and Inspiration

- The Cold war has ended
- Materialism
- Unmarried partnerships (Sambo)
- Male parental leave is emerging
- Double labour
- Homosexuality gaining acceptance

The Characters

The Mother - is divorced and has shared custody of her two children, The Daughter and her little sister, who is still in high school. The little sister stays with her father every other weekend. The Mother works in old age care and it is both heavy and demanding work. She dreams of finding a new man with lots of money.

The Friend - works hard and with devotion within the workers union to make a difference. She lives with her female partner who she wishes to marry as soon as the law will allow it.

The Daughter - is a gender theory student at the university living in her small student apartment.

The Society - with all these freedoms and rights to do whatever they like the women have no reason to complain and should make their own happiness. If they are unhappy they have themselves to blame.

Scenes

Scene 1: Discrimination

The Friend and her girlfriend have been evicted from a restaurant for kissing. The Friend visits The Mother feeling humiliated and frustrated. She is undecided if she should report it to the authorities or not. The friend has not told of her sexual orientation at work and is unsure how it will be received. Will a report have any effect? The Mother tries to comfort her friend.

The scene takes place in The Mother's living room. The Mother and The Friend are standing beside the couch.

Scene 2: Parental Anguish

Friday evening at The Mother's place. The Mother and Friend are drinking wine when the little sister calls (played by the GM). She is afraid since her father has had too much to drink and she wants to come home. The Mother wants to accept but it is the father's weekend, can she not try to stay? In the end she says yes and hangs up. Her ex-husband really drinks too much and she is afraid that he could get violent with the girls.

Shortly after The Daughter stops by asking if The Mother has spoken to the little sister. The Daughter accuses The Mother of not doing enough to protect her daughters from their drunken and violent father. The mother tries to defend herself with having tried but failed to get sole custody.

The scene is in The Mother's place. The Mother and Friend at the kitchen table. The Daughter arrives after the phone call.

Scene 3: The Feminist Party

The Daughter and The Friend meet at the university. The Daughter is excited about a feminist political party that is about to be founded. She has decided to join and is curious if The Friend is willing to join as well. The Friend, who is an active Social democrat and working at the union, is unsure. Had she been 22 and free she would have said yes but now what if she loses her job? It is enough that her colleagues will believe her strange if she opens up about being a lesbian.

The Daughter is shocked when she understands that The Friend has suppressed her orientation and relationship at work for so long. How will she act when the law of registered partnership becomes reality? This law will be an important policy of the new party.

The scene takes place at the university. The Daughter and The Friend are smoking a cigarette.

Scene 4: The Lunch

The Mother and The Friend have planned to have lunch in town on a Saturday. The Mother suggests they only have coffee, since she is not very hungry after all. But after some embarrassment she explains that she cannot afford a restaurant lunch this month. Her salary is not high as it is and she has been sick from work a few days and that shows on the pay check. After more than 20 years in elderly care, she has chronic back problems. Maybe she could borrow some money from The Friend to buy Christmas presents for her daughters?

The Friend tries to come up with suggestions on how The Mother can improve her economic situation. Maybe she should change jobs or even type of work? The Mother answers with telling about different men she has been seeing who have pretty good income that could support her if she managed to hook up with them.

The scene takes place at a small restaurant. The Mother arrives after The Friend has found a table for two.

EPISODE 5 - 2017

Music: Quiet - MILCK

Historical Summary

This episode takes place in our present day society. It is a time of globalization, polarisation, and social media. Many feminist victories are won, but we also see a counter reaction from misogynists who think feminism has gone too far. The general view of women in the society is that even if women officially have the same rights as men, there are still structures in society that discriminate against women - the Patriarchy.

Themes and Inspiration

- Globalisation and climate crisis
- 50/50 representation in politics
- Equal pay for the equal work
- Queer is an acceptable way of life
- Fathers take some parental leave
- Women's right to equally enjoy sex
- Women's revolt against sexual harassment and assault, "#metoo"

The Characters

The Mother works with public relations at a governmental office. She is married for the second time and has two kids with different fathers. She is currently on sick leave due to Occupational burnout (Utbrändhet) which she is slowly recovering from. It is likely caused by all the emotional labour she has had to do, both at home with her family and at work for her male boss.

The Friend is a politically active top official, and might get an offer to become a minister of the national cabinet. She has been exposed to a lot of net hate already and it will most likely increase greatly. Does she dare accept if the offer comes? She has paid under the table salaries to nannies when the children were young. Male colleagues have done the same and gotten away with it, but will she also manage that?

The Daughter is a non-binary relationship anarchist and wants to be called "they". Is still in high school and runs a popular anti-patriarchy Youtube channel called "Fuck your mind."

The Society thinks that The Mother should take better care of her mental health and work more with mindfulness and yoga.

Scenes

Scene 1: The Chat

The Friend has realized that it is likely she will get an offer from the prime minister to join the cabinet. She is chatting with The Mother on how to deal with this. The Mother, who works with public relations, is an expert in handling political crisis and advises The Friend to be careful. The Friend is worried how the under the table nanny salaries will affect her chances. She knows she needs to inform the prime minister about them, but on the other hand she is definitely not the only one who has done that. The Society believes that The Friend must be prepared to be more carefully examined than a man would be. And since net hate can be so intense it might be wise not to stand first in line.

The scene takes place in with The Mother and The Friend chatting over messenger with the players saying what they write back and forth.

Scene 2: After Work

The Mother has finally started to work a few hours per week again and meets The Friend for her first After Work drink in a long time. The Daughter stops by as well. The Mother is a bit ashamed of her illness, but The Daughter blames the society and The Mother's new husband, who doesn't take his part of the home responsibility. To exemplify how weird today's society is The Daughter tells about how she was persuaded to have sex with a male friend. Afterwards she also had to comfort him as he was upset about not having understood that she was not interested. The Friend tells about having experienced similar sexual harassment throughout her whole life and how she has learned to limit herself to avoid situations that might lead to assault. The Mother is first upset, but then she also tells about having been raped by her first husband (The Daughter's father) which led to their divorce. She did not report it to the police as she thought it was partly her own fault. The Society doesn't think this is a big deal. The women might have encouraged the men after all, and a little groping is really nothing.

The scene takes place at a bar. The Mother and The Friend are having a drink. The Daughter joins them.

Scene 3: Continued After Work

The past week The Friend has told the prime minister about the under the table salaries and is now waiting for the offer to become minister of education. Instead she receives a text message from him: "I am going to nominate Lars, just FYI". But Lars has also paid under the table salaries when he renovated his summer house. It has even been out in media! The Daughter becomes furious. The fucking patriarchy! They just protect each other, and demands on female candidates are increasingly higher than on their male counterparts. At the same time women get lower salaries, do more work at home and are expected to do most emotional labour. The Mother on the other hand, thinks the prime minister acted wisely and probably avoided a media crisis by choosing a man. And even if it is wrong, what can they do about it? The Society thinks that The Friend has herself to blame for her mistake. The prime minister must of course think of the party first.

The Mother, The Friend and The Daughter still at the bar.

Scene 4: The Hatred

Following the decision by the prime minister, The Friend went to the media and disclosed the story about the nomination. How she had been bypassed as patriarchy applies different rules for men and women. After this, The Friend has received a shit storm of hatred and threats online. The Friend cannot sleep at home, but stays at The Mother's place. Another hate message flashes on her mobile:

"Gender equality is when a sexist feminist whore gets fucked with a knife! The best thing one can do for gender equality is to take a baseball bat and simply kill feminist scum like you"

The Friend is really scared now and regrets everything, but how can the society accept men to behave like this? The Mother thinks The Friend was unwise to expose herself like that, but tries to comfort her. Usually the threats are just empty phrases, and they will pass if The Friend just lies low. The Daughter gets mad and thinks that the men must be outed! It is like the gamergate trolls harassing Anita Sarkeesian, they have to find out who wrote what and make it public! The Society finds it impossible to do anything against the haters. They have always been out there and we have to deal with that. The best is to not provoke them any further.

The scene takes place in The Mother's place. All three sit in the living room and talk when the hate message arrives.

EPISODE 6 - 2040

Music: Oceania - Björk

Historical Summary

The year is 2040. It is a future that could be brighter or darker in many different ways. Based on the struggles of 2017 some fights might have been won and others are still there to be fought. What are the new and progressive ideas of the young generation born in the 2020-ties? Who is The Mother, The Friend and The Daughter of this future world?

In the year 2017 the following were fairly mainstream:

- Equal pay for the equal work
- Queer is an acceptable way of life
- Fathers take some parental leave
- Women's right to equally enjoy sex
- 50/50 representation in politics
- Feminist political parties
- Homosexual couples can adopt children
- Buying sex is a crime

In the year 2017 the following were examples of radical ideas:

- Polyamory should be an accepted way to live
- The responsibility for emotional labour should be shared equally
- Shaming of other women should not be accepted
- Equal pay for different work
- 6 hours work day
- Basic income for all
- A woman can be the top executive in any position
- Women have the right to choose their own level of body hair
- Women can be topless in public baths
- Sexual assault is unacceptable, “#metoo