

**Simon Larsson**

# All a facade

# Table of Contents

Introduction.....	3
Synopsis.....	4
Charachter summary.....	5
About the characters.....	6
Toolbox.....	7
Setting up the game .....	9
The structure of the scenario .....	12
After the game .....	13

Number of players: 6

Number of game masters: 2

Time: 4 hours (of which 2.5 hour is actual gameplay)

Props: 6 white facial masks (for the players), 1 black facial mask (for the game master)

Written by: Simon Larsson 2013

Proofreading: Daniel Holmbäck, Anders Lundin and Hugo-Lina Sandelin

Tested by: Joy Jonsson, Martin Nilsson, Åsa Lundin, Anders Lundin and Fredric Landén 2013

# Introduction

The scenario centers around the social facade that almost everyone puts on in today's society. No matter what dreams, visions and dark secrets we have, we never show them to our surrounding. No matter how bad we feel, the answer is always "Just fine", when someone asks. No matter how much we yearn to just be ourselves, we always put on a facade for our surroundings.

The scenario centers around our inner struggle; between who we really are and who we try to be. This inner struggle should be the main focus during all the scenes of the scenario.

We use the facade to fit in to the norms and values of our society. We use the facade to protect ourselves and as a way to not have to show others our inner feelings. We use the facade to hide ourselves behind a mask.

But there are some occasions when we put our facade down; as when we are drunk, safe or with our family. There are also occasions when we switch between our facade and our real selves; like when we want to, but don't really dare.

# Synopsis

The scenario is played over three acts and circles around three couples; in which every individual consist of two parts, one true personality and one facade. The couples are colleagues, siblings and husband and wife. The couples are there so that from the beginning there is someone that everyone has a natural connection to, but despite that hasn't seen their true self. In addition to that, everyone has a secondary relation to someone outside their own couple.

In the first scene the characters all meet for the first time. There has been a demonstration of a new residential area, in which they all are interested to move to. When the scene starts the demonstration has just ended and the characters meet outside to mingle. The feeling in this scene should be "uncertainty" and all the players must play up their facade during the whole scene.

In the second scene a time jump has occurred. It is now a couple of months later and all the characters have moved into the residential area. It is time for a cleanup of the surroundings. When the scene starts here is a coffee break and they all get a chance to talk to their neighbors. The feeling in this scene should be "If only I dared" and all players must play up both their facade and their true personality during this scene.

In the third scene another time jump has occurred. It is now several months later and it's time for the big party on the block. When the scene starts the party has been going on for some time and the characters have started to become slightly drunk. The feeling in this scene should be "The truth" and all players must play up their true personality during the whole scene.

If the game master finds that it promotes the game play, shorter scenes can be added in between the three scenes above. It's recommended to do so, because it really lifts the scenario. These smaller scenes should contain some of the characters in a given situation and with given instructions on how to use (or not to use) the facade. These smaller scenes could be used for monologues or to play out a specific meeting that gives something to the overall game play.

After the last (third scene mentioned above) every couple gets their own ending scene. In this scene they get the chance to express their characters thoughts and feelings after the "facade journey" they have made.

# Character summary

All the characters plan to, are going to and have moved in to the same residential area and that is the place where they meet and hang out. Every character belongs to a group of two characters, who have a strong relation to each other. Every character consists of both a facade and a true personality.

## **The married couple:**

**Adam/Amanda** - Outwards your facade is to be heterosexual. Due to the fears from your childhood you push homosexuality aside.

**Benjamin/Bianca** - After your prayers were not answered you became an atheist. Thanks to your religious upbringing the facade of Christianity holds up.

## **The new lovers:**

**Carl/Cecilia** - You show up the facade of being a rock to lean on. Even though you carry a heavy depression and search for your own rock.

**Daniel/Dora** - After you were betrayed, you promised to be incurably loyal. Yet it is you who has an affair on the side.

## **Colleagues:**

**Erik/Evelina** - During your upbringing you learned that the only thing that matters is career. In reality you actually strive for the family dream.

**Fredrik/Filippa** - You are really down-and-out, without any savings. Outwards though, you still belong to the upper-class of society.

# About the characters

## **Gender**

All the characters are written gender-neutrally and can be played by or as either gender. However, gender has some importance for the scenario because some of the characters have an explicit sexual orientation. Therefore the characters "Adam/Amanda" and "Benjamin/Bianca" must be of different genders. However, the character's and the player's gender doesn't have to be the same, although it's preferable so that the scenario gets as "close to home" as possible.

## **Age**

None of the characters has been given an specific age, although some of their backgrounds restrict the age span somewhat, if the scenario is going to be realistic. The reason why they don't have fixed ages is to make the scenario more "close to home", by letting the players set an age for their character that is close to their own age, if possible. However, there is nothing that prevents a character from being of a deviating age from the player.

## **Facade**

All characters consist of a real personality and a facade. These characters have a constant inner battle with themselves about who they really are and how they want others to see them. This inner conflict is central for the scenario. The players should be encouraged to fill out the character's different sides with more information, preferably things from themselves to make it more "close to home".

# Toolbox

## **Up on the floor**

This is a scenario where the players act out everything that happens. For instance, if "Adam/Amanda" shakes hands with "Benjamin/Bianca", the players actually shake hands with each other. This means that you don't sit around a table and talk about what you do, but you are up on the floor, acting it out.

## **Time jump**

All of the time jumps in this scenario are predefined in the descriptions of the scenes. Every time jump occurs between the three main scenes and never during a scene. As game master you are free to put the other smaller scenes wherever you want and whenever you want. For example it might be of interest to play out a scene between characters A and B before they baptize their first child.

## **Facades**

Since facades are an important part of this scenario, they will not only be portrayed by the characters actions; but also on the outside of the characters. In the scenario, white facial masks are used to portray the facade of a person. This means that when the masks are worn over the face, the characters show up their facades and when the masks are removed, they show their true personality. This way it is very obvious when they show their facades and when they don't.

## **Shadows**

Shadows are a meta technique that means a person will be in the gaming area, but not visible to the characters, only to the players. The shadow can be your character's thoughts, a mood, an impulse or a feeling.(Shadows aren't ghosts, and should not be played as if someone is being haunted, or that you hear mystical things). The shadows can whisper things in your ears, encourage you to do things or ask you not to act. They can grasp you and try to control some of your actions.

## **Music**

By the end of each scene, the game master will put on a tune that will play. The tune serves as a marker for the players that the scene is about to end. The players should wrap up their performances to leave the game area during the tune. When the music ends none of the players should remain in the gaming area.

If the game master wants it, a tune can be played just before the beginning of the first scene to further enhance the mood and introduce the scenario. (See the structure of the scenario for examples).

## **Close to home**

Playing "close to home" is to play the character close to yourself and to add things from your daily life to the character. By adding your own experiences and emotions to the character you are more likely to get a strong experience of the scenario. Playing "close to home" is also quite practical, because it is easier to play close to your own way of thinking than far from it.

## **The game masters**

As game master for this scenario, you should be active and take responsibility for creating a good experience for the players. You should be flexible and use the input that the players share with you, as well as the parts that you notice during game play. The scenario has three predefined scenes, but between those you have the freedom to insert the scenes you would like to see played. This can be done in consultation with the players to create a good experience for all of them.

One of the game masters should focus only on the music, the scene introductions and creating the smaller optional scenes. If you find it useful, this game master can give some direction during the main scenes as well as the smaller scenes.

The other game master's task is to be a shadow during the scenario. The shadowing is primarily used in the three main scenes, but if the game master thinks it fits the small scenes as well, it can be used there too. This game master should focus only on shadowing and shouldn't have any other responsibilities during the game play.

# Setting up the game

## **Introducing the scenario**

Welcome all the players and ask them to have a seat on one of the chairs that you have assembled in a circle. Introduce them to the scenario. Tell them that this is a scenario that foremost centers to the inner struggle among some ordinary people, an inner struggle about the conflict between who we really are and who we pretend to be.

## **About facades**

This scenario centers around facades; therefore it can be a good idea to begin with letting the players think about and reflect upon their own experiences about facades. Sit in a circle and ask each player to say something positive about facades. Then go once more around the circle and let everyone say something negative about them.

If the group are okay with it, ask them if someone would like to share something from their own life where they really felt the presence of facades. It can be when they felt like they put on a facade or that the person they met had a facade on. Try to find out what feelings they have thinking about facades.

## **Selecting characters**

Either, you as a game master, just give each player a character, or you let the players choose for themselves. If you let the players choose freely, just let them read the character summary when they do their pick. Regardless of which way you chose to distribute the characters, it is of the utmost importance that you, as game master, make sure that the genders of the characters "Adam/Amanda" and "Benjamin/Bianca" are different.

## **Deepening the couple relations**

Ask the players to sit together in the couples and discuss their characters with their counterpart. As game master you should ask them to use this discussion to expand their characters and fill their backgrounds with more information. For example they can discuss how they first met, what they usually do together, common interests or what they feel is relevant to talk about.

When this is done, ask the players to once more sit in a circle, but this time adjacent to their partner.

## **Character presentation**

Let each couple present their characters briefly. Ask them to describe the character as a unity (not only what is stated in the background). The presentation should contain both the facade and the real personality. It is important to note that no character knows of any other person's real personality when the play begins.

However, the players should know everything about all the characters before the play starts, so that they can use that knowledge to create stronger scenes.

## **Out of couple relations**

The way the players are sitting at the moment, they should have their partner on one side and another player on their other side.

Ask the players to get together with the player they have next to them, who isn't in their own couple. Let the players in this new couple create a secondary relationship between each other. This relation should be subordinate to the relation they have with their partner. For example it can be that they have played soccer together, gone to the same school, lived on the same street or something in that manner.

The relationships are being created mostly because the characters should have a natural reason to engage conversations with each other during the first scene.

## **The structure of the scenario**

Explain the scenario in more detail and explain the story (use the synopsis if necessary). You should also explain which scenes will be played, the feeling of each scenes and that every main scene will end with a tune, which is a signal to act yourself out of the scene. You should stress that a song will also be played after the last end scene for the last couple. Also explain the use of the masks and when it is free for the players to control them (only in scene two and maybe in the smaller scenes).

If you have access to a whiteboard or a big piece of paper, it can be a good idea to write the game structure down so that all players have easy access to it during the run of the scenario. This scenario has full transparency, so answer every question that may arise.

## **Starting the game**

Introduce everyone to the first scene and start the game up. Then follow the game structure and introduce the scenes as they come.

## **After the game**

After the scenario is over, ask the players to once again sit in a circle. Let everyone share their thoughts and feelings after they have played the scenario. Then go over to discuss the attached questions for this scenario. Make sure to plan this discussion within the timeframe of the game.

# The structure of the scenario

1. Introduction and creation of the relationships (ca: 60min)  
Possible introductions music: Love Me for Who I Am - James John Bianco
2. First scene - After the demonstration of the residential area (ca: 20min)  
Facade - Feeling of "Uncertainty"  
End music: No One Knows Who I Am - Jekyll & Hyde
3. Possible smaller scenes (ca: 20min if used)
4. Second scene - Coffee break during community clean up (ca: 40min)  
Facade and real personality - Feeling of "If only I dared"  
End music: Cartographist - Purity Ring
5. Possible smaller scenes (ca: 15min if used)
6. Third scene - The party on the block (ca: 30min)  
Real personality - Feeling of "The truth"  
End music: Lofticries - Purity Ring
7. Ending scenes in couples (ca: 20min)  
End music: Älska mig för den jag är - Lotta Engberg
8. Discussion after the game (ca: 30min)

# After the game

Ask the players to sit in a circle and let them share their thoughts and feelings about the game.

Questions to discuss:

- After you have played the game, do you see any new positive things about facades?
- After you have played the game, do you see any new negative things about facades?
- Which of the scenes was the easiest/hardest to play? What does that say about us as human beings?

Thank them for their participation and then the scenario is over.

# **The married couple:**

## **Adam/Amanda**

### **Facade: Heterosexual**

You and your friend were amongst the more popular and cool kids in high school. This fact changed for your friend. The reason was that your friend came out as homosexual. After your friend had "come out of the closet" her life was hell. Bullying, ostracism and loss of all status. You have held up the heterosexual facade for your surroundings since then, to escape a destiny of disparaging gazes and comments.

### **Real Personality: Homosexual**

It was by the end of your time in school that you realized that you were attracted to people of the same sex as yourself. In the dressing room after sports your heart often beat a little faster and when you were on "normal" dates, you only showed off faked smiles. You dream about spending your life together with someone who attracts you for real.

*There's a face that we wear  
In the cold light of day -  
It's society's mask,  
It's society's way,  
And the truth is  
That it's all a facade!*

## **The married couple:**

### **Benjamin/Bianca**

#### **Facade: Christian**

You grew up in a family with strong Christian beliefs. That meant that there was always a prayer before dinner and church visits on Sundays. The Ten Commandments should be heeded and not to believe wholeheartedly was not an option. Also, your associations got colored by the Christian beliefs. You have ever since had a Christian facade for your surroundings, through the baptism of your kid, confirmation, dinner prayers and such.

#### **Real Personality: Atheist**

Some years ago, an accident occurred that would affect you from within. Your closest friend was involved in a severe car accident and was transported to the hospital with serious injuries. The doctors said early on that the state was critical. You prayed to God for your friend's life, having done anything but living as the Bible taught. Your friend passed away and with time more things happened where your prayers couldn't help. Inside you a truth was born that there is no God at all.

*So, what is the sinister secret?*

*The lie he will tell you is true? -*

*It's that each man you meet*

*In the street*

*Isn't one man but two!*

## **The new lovers:**

### **Carl/Cecilia**

#### **Facade: The helping hand**

You have always had a smile on your lips and been seen as a positive and helpful person. It all started when you mediated in a couple of conflicts in your class during high school, with great success. People started to seek your advice and support after this event. You never said no, just continued to be there for people as a helping hand for those who needed it. You have since then showed off a positive facade, the rock that others can cling to.

#### **Real Personality: Depressed**

When you grew up your parents weren't really there for you. It felt like they never had any time left for you. During your school years a certain feeling came closer and closer to you, a feeling about the meaningless of living. You went to psychologists and were very quickly diagnosed with depression. Today you still take medication for it and you still feel like shit deep within. But you have to be the rock, even if it's you who would need one.

*There's a face that we hide  
Till the nighttime appears,  
And what's hiding inside,  
Behind all of our fears,  
Is our true self,  
Locked inside the facade!*

## **The new lovers:**

### **Daniel/Dora**

#### **Facade: The loyal**

You were over-your-head in love with your first love. You could have sacrificed everything just to be able to spend the rest of your life with that person. But it didn't turn out that way, your love cheated on you and betrayed you. A scar that still hurts today and which has made you to honor values and relationships much more. You are recognized as the one who always stands up for his words and keeps his promises. Something you were clear about with your current love "Carl/Cecilia" is that you would never betray them, what so ever.

#### **Real Personality: "Affair on the side"**

The flame of your first love still burns strong inside you. Even though you have built a new relationship with "Carl/Cecilia" and promised to be loyal, the dreams about your old flame is still there. You got a text "Want to meet? <3" from the old flame you still dream about. Even though you shouldn't, you fell victim to your lusts. You met, talked, cuddled, enjoyed yourselves and after awhile it was the next morning. Since then you have met on a regular basis and started what you could call "an affair on the side".

*Man is not one, but two,  
He is evil and good,  
An' he walks the fine line  
We'd all cross if we could!*

## **The colleagues:**

### **Erik/Evelina**

#### **Facade: Career**

"You have to get a proper education and a real job. Doctor or lawyer. Not an underclass work as cleaner or musician." Your parents were always, both during your childhood and after you grew up, very determined that you should have a "real job" and "make a career". Therefore you have been the one in the company who has spent all your time on work, you have risen in the company faster than anyone else and one sees you as a rising star.

#### **Real Personality: The family dream**

Wherever you go, the only things you see are family cars, strollers, wedding rings and loving hugs. Inside you there is a longing to settle down, start your own family and buy a car, a dog and a home. You haven't got the time to go on any dates due to your work. Sometimes it just feels like you would like to scream "I quit!", just to be able to chase your family dream.

*At the end of the day,  
They don't mean what they say,  
They don't say what they mean,  
They don't ever come clean -  
And the answer -  
Is it's all a facade!*

## **The colleagues:**

### **Fredrik/Filippa**

#### **Facade: Upper class**

You were born into a family with a famous surname and a great deal of status. You went to a school for the upper class and early on you were taught the importance of keeping the honor of the family name. And the importance of owning expensive things, buying the right stocks, acting proper and giving an image that states that you belong to the upper class. All your life, you have done whatever you could to keep the facade of "upper class" up.

#### **Real personality: The poor**

You staked all your last savings on stocks, that quite quickly went to the bottom, zero payoff. Your home, the new car, the big TV screen, the racing boat, the golf club membership and the luxury dinners. All this has been bought with borrowed money and on installment buying. You own nothing and it won't take long before you are visited by the enforcement officer.

*It's a nightmare*

*We can never discard*

*So we stay on our guard*

*Though we love the facade*

*What's behind the facade?*

*Look behind the facade!*