

Tryst

a larp
^{or} the
magical
mundane

"Someday perhaps the inner light will shine forth from us
and then we'll need no other light"

Johann Wolfgang von Goethe

We live in a magical world

Each moment of our lives is a gleaming pearl. Motes of dust swirl about us like galaxies. Yet eventually everything becomes mundane.

There comes a time when we can live a whole day without recognising magic. Those days drip by like wax from a candle, until finally the candle is gone and only a waxy puddle remains.

Novelty itself can become familiar, and we may say “that’s just another new thing.” You can travel to another country full of new things and not rediscover magic. It’s with you everywhere you go. It’s right there in your home, it’s in every blade of grass.

It’s under every stone.



If you know how to look at it

This larp is a medium for looking at the same old world in a new way. Instead of helping you escape, it makes reality more real.

Try this now. It's called the Wrong Name Game, and you can play it alone. Walk about pointing at things around you and shout out the wrong name for them. Do this for a couple of minutes. Are you more aware of your surroundings?

Think about this. For millions of years humans were yoked to the face of the earth, in bondage to our birth planet. Then one summer's day three humans broke away from the Earth into space and sailed to the moon. The bacteria have escaped the Petri dish!

Right now is a time of magic as much as any other.



This is a larp about right now

The setting of this larp is your living room. It's your doorstep, your garden and your garage. It's right here, right now.

It's said that public art makes us look at public spaces in a new way. Tryst is private art, and it makes us look at private spaces in a new way. It allows us to re-examine our ordinary surroundings and life.

It does this by putting paradoxes into our ordinary world. In this sense, Tryst is like the Wrong Name Game.



We've put something in your coffee

Your surroundings in a Tryst larp will be the ordinary modern world, but we've added something strange. It might be you. That is, you may be a strange creature that is unfamiliar with the world. Or, you may be a normal person going about your life, who comes into contact with these strange creatures without really being aware of them.

In Tryst, ordinary people like us are surrounded by these strange creatures, but we don't see them. Perhaps they are bogeymen. Who knows what they are? They don't know themselves, for they are like newborns. Each is different, but all are grotesque and unfathomable, childish and inhuman.

They've come to repair the universe. They don't know what's wrong with it, or even what sort of thing might go wrong with it.

They'll know it when they see it.



But you can't see it

If you're playing an ordinary person, you can't see the grotesque strangers. They will be right here among you, but you just have to ignore them.

When strange things happen, you will attempt to rationalise them as if there was no magic in the world. When your keys go missing you'll assume you've misplaced them. When something invisible gets in the way of the mirror you were using, you'll realise that you were finished with it. Most things can be explained away with simple rationalisations. There may also be other magical things that you'll need to ignore. You will receive a briefing about these.

Usually, you should avoid eye contact with the invisible. However, if an invisible person or creature makes itself so obvious to you that you can find no way to rationalise it, cast a glance into their eyes. Your character hasn't seen it; you're just staring into space. But your glance is a warning to the creature that it is crossing the boundary. If the creature continues to be impossible to rationalise, stare into its eyes. The problem will go away.

You will play a modern person going about their mundane life. You will create your character in cooperation with the organiser, to fit the scenario. Your character may also be fleshed out in a workshop before the session.



Unless you are it

If you're playing one of the creatures, you're a stranger in a strange world. You have no memory, but you have an extreme personality. You may have strong childlike emotions. You may be devious, idiotic, insane, capricious, inventive, irritating, ghoulish, or perverse. You may be ashamed or proud of your grotesque appearance, or ignorant of it.

You will wear makeup to alter your appearance. You will develop your character in a workshop just before the session begins, based on how you perceive your altered appearance.

Some things in the world will seem familiar to you, as if from a dream. Other things will be completely alien and you'll have no idea what to make of them. You can see the other invisible strangers, and can interact with them.

You should not make yourself obvious to the mundane people. Usually they will do everything they can to ignore you, but if they can't pretend you're not there they will glance into your eyes. This is a warning that you have crossed the line. If they stare into your eyes, you will leave and not return.

Your goal is to fix something specific that has gone wrong with the universe. You don't know what is wrong, or how to repair it. There may be a number of ways to fix the problem, or it might be impossible.

While you don't understand everything about the world, you'll recognise when something is definitely not ordinary, when it appears to be supernatural or magical. And that will be the problem you must fix, to revert the world back to ordinariness. When it's fixed, your purpose is complete and you will cease to exist.

You could be anything

You might be playing something else. Not an ordinary person, not a grotesque invader. The organiser will give you a full briefing in this case.

If you do get an extraordinary briefing of this sort, you may receive some insight into the secrets of Tryst. Don't tell anyone.

Anything could happen

Every session is unique. The characters and the problems are different every time. But beneath it all is a single and consistent magical premise. It's all laid out in the Tryst organiser's handbook.

It's not required that the cosmic conundrum be fixed in each session. The world probably won't end if it's not. The strangers will tire of their efforts and eventually leave if they fail to fix things.



Use your common sense

When deciding what results actions have in the larp, use your gut instinct. If violence occurs, then play-fight it out. If you think you'd be dead as a result of things that have happened, play dead.

People's comfort boundaries vary. Some people may feel comfortable playing intimately, others will not. Only use physical contact if the other person will be comfortable with it. Players should also pay the usual respect to the venue. Some places and items may be relevant to the play and players should try to make themselves at home if the setting belongs to their character. But hunting through drawers will not be required.

Play may occur as a single in-character event or a series of vignettes. The organisers will set up the scenes and narrate what happens in the time in between them. The organisers will play characters too. During play they may sometimes need to drop out of character to give the other players briefings.

If play hasn't resolved somehow by the time the larp is due to end, the invisible strangers will tire of their efforts and depart. The players should tie up loose ends and finish, usually by leaving the play area too.

Hopefully you'll get as much enjoyment out of Tryst as went into creating it.



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