

## ***Matchmaking and Machinations***

A role playing scenario by Jenni Sands, based on the works of Jane Austen.

~ Idea conceived by Jenni Sands, system bastardized off The Wuthering Heights role-playing game by Philippe Tromeur.

“It is a truth universally acknowledged that a single man in possession of a good fortune, must be in want of a wife.” ~ Jane Austen. *Pride and Prejudice*.



## **Setting:**

Jane Austen's England in the early 1800's:

The story takes place in the countryside where the noble families have large stone houses staffed with servants. Manners rule supreme and scandal can end a person's life.

The country is picturesque, moors and forests leading to beautiful houses with ponds and hedge mazes. Men go hunting on their fine stallions and shoot foxes with rifle, women embroider linen and take turns about the garden.

## **The System:**

Each character has values for Manners and Sensibility. These are used to make them role-play in certain ways.

To notice anything other than one's own affairs a player must roll above their Sensibility with a D100. A roll below their Sensibility means they are too wrapped up in themselves to notice.

To behave in a polite way a player must roll above their Manners score on a D100. If they roll below the score their sheet shows for Manners the Game Master must demand that they act inappropriately. This is a fantastic test to demand of characters at first meetings, second meetings and when the players aren't too sure what to do next. Everyone loves to scream at other people and a failed roll here allows it.

To test a character's wisdom they must roll below their stated age. To test the physical, roll above the age.

In addition to these attributes, the characters all have a list of descriptive characteristics. If they role-play any of these convincingly in the course of the game they should receive a tea cake. In the situation where no tea cakes are available they should make a check mark next to the role-played characteristic. Each of these marks counts for one event they may narrate in the end of game wrap up. If they achieve any or all of their goals they should also be rewarded with tea cakes or check marks.

Foibles are provided on the character sheets to aid role-playing. There is a page of pictures of most of the characters at the end of the sheets. Place this on the table so that everyone may see how handsome they all are.

Give the players full rein on their own actions, governing them by the reactions of the NPCs and throwing manners checks at them whenever you feel it appropriate. I discourage the use of secret handwritten notes and encourage everyone to state their

intentions so that everyone else can hear and act accordingly. (The one exception to this is the disappearance of Lily that forms the game's climax.)

### **Characters:**

#### **The Angelworthy Family:**

**Mama and Papa (NPCs)** Mama and Papa are foils of each other, yet never need to be in the same scene.

**Playing Mrs. Angelworthy:** If anything goes wrong for any of the girls Mrs. Angelworthy will take to bed in a fit of shrieking, fainting and general melodrama. The rest of the time she is working to get them married off to suitable bachelors. She is always helping them to get invitations, visiting and working on their dowries. She is quite irrational but she loves her daughters very much. She wants them to marry for love, but marry money all the same.

**Mr. Angelworthy:** Is a sensible man. He quickly gets tired of Lily's tantrums and moans that he never gets any peace in a house full of women. However he loves his daughters very much and is likely to be a bit indulgent, especially to Elspeth. He is in charge of the family's meagre fortune and works hard to make it stretch to all three girls.

#### **Their daughters (PCs):**

**Elspeth:** the eldest and most lovely.

**Patience:** a bitter, sour faced middle child.

**Lily:** The youngest and most frivolous.

#### **Others (PCs):**

**Alice Trelissick:** Glamorous city cousin of the Angelworthies. She is possessed of fifteen hundred pounds per year, and can thus afford whatever she likes.

**Darryl Knight:** an eligible young man with an invalid sister. (**Maryanne**). She lives in the country for her health and he comes to visit.

**Elliot McKinley:** an eligible young man with gambling debts and a dark past. He is trying to charm and marry someone to take care of his financial troubles.

#### **Others (NPCs):**

**Lucy Dashwood:** best friend to Lily and of much the same temperament. She enjoys flirting, dancing and going along with Lily's plans.

**Mycroft King:** A portly, middle aged bachelor who is very rich and somewhat boring. He has an elderly infirmed Aunt who needs a companion. He is to be used as an alternative suitor to Darryl so play him rather slimy, old fashioned and odious.

**Maryanne Knight:** Darcy's younger sister. She is of a delicate disposition so spends a lot of her time in their country estate. She gets terribly lonely.

**Mallory Waugh:** A bitchy London socialite who has her eye on Darryl Knight. She can be used to mess up the Angelworthy's plans by claiming prior engagements, etc.

## Scenes:

The game begins in picturesque **Graining Estate**, where the Angelworthy family resides. It is a comfortable but not palatial manor with charming garden surrounds and a swinging love seat in the back. The girls are all aflutter about the party they are attending at their neighbour's house. Suggestions for things the girls are concerned with:

- Lily is sick of her old party dress and wants a new one.
- Will there be any eligible bachelors at the party?
- What are the ideal qualities in a husband?

Suddenly there is the clatter on the gravel driveway of a coach and four. It is their stylish city cousin Miss Alice Trelissick arriving! Miss Trelissick brings with her many cases of fashionable dresses.

This is the start of the story and should establish the familial relationships, the anticipation of the party and get them all thinking about marriage.

## The party:

At the Collins house there are many people gathered. The girls are introduced to Mr. Knight and Mr. McKinley. (Manners rolls all around here, as it sets up relationships.) There is dancing and drinking and gossip.

Sometime at the party introduce Mr. King, make him odious. E.g. "I'm in no humour to give consequence to ladies who are slighted by other men."

If the players are having trouble thinking of things to say/do mention that there is a battalion of fine young soldiers staying in the nearby village and some of them are attending the party in uniform. Also you can introduce Mallory the city conniver to add some conflict. She should go after whoever the Angelworthy girls seem most interested in.

**After the party:**

Well, just let the players make their own plans.

The men may go visiting the girls or go hunting. The women may find out about Mr. Knight's invalid sister and go visiting to cheer her, throwing them together with Mr. Knight again.

Alice should be trying to set people up by suggesting visits, invitations to dinner, picnics, etc. You can always have another ball or party.

**Climax:**

Lily goes missing! You may allow Lily to concoct her own reason for going missing, but some good ideas are:

- She has eloped with a member of the regiment (huge crisis!)
- She has gone into the village without telling anyone to spy on the regiment (not such a crisis as she is easily retrieved.)
- She has gone to someone else's estate and fallen ill with a terrible fever. (Quite a big crisis, but allows some wonderful role-playing.)
- She has gone to Brighton with a friend neglecting to tell anyone. (Giving Mr. Knight a reason to go and bring her back.)

When Lily is missing the men are given a fantastic opportunity to be dashing and heroic, winning the hearts of the women. The women can have fun role-playing tragedy and fear. The Angelworthy Mother is so overcome with fear for Lily that she takes to her bed in hysterics, requiring her daughter's care.

Lily is returned home/cured/etc and everyone is happy. Perhaps certain people get left alone together so proposals happen, meetings on the love seat, etc.

Once everything is sorted out regarding the climax, you get to narrate the ridiculously happy ending. Everyone who has earned a check mark may add something to the epilogue but it goes much like this: So-and-so marries Mr. Blah and they live happily in his estate. Double weddings are very happy and thus necessary. People fall in love very quickly at the end of the game and weddings wrap things up nicely.

**Character handouts follow:**

## Elsbeth Angelworthy



Eldest daughter

Age 18  
 Clever  
 Vivacious  
 Challenging  
 Lovely  
 Pretty

Manners: 43  
 Sensibility: 56

Foibles: Stick with your first impressions, loyalty to your family. You are all in all close to perfect.

Goal: Take care of your sisters, make a good marriage.

Quotes:

“Without thinking of either men or matrimony, marriage had always been her object; it was the only honourable provision for well-educated young women of small fortune, and however uncertain of giving happiness, must be their pleasantest preservative from want. (Jane Austen, *Pride and Prejudice*.)

“You ought to forgive them as a Christian, but never to admit them in your sight, or allow their names to be mentioned in your hearing. (Jane Austen, *Pride and Prejudice*.)

### **People in your family:**

Patience: middle sister, plain looking and dour.

Lily: youngest, cheerful, and spoilt.

Mama Angelworthy is somewhat dramatic, but has your best interests at heart.  
 Papa Angelworthy is very indulgent and you are his favourite.

Alice Trelissick: your beautiful and stylish city cousin.

## Patience Angelworthy

Middle Daughter

Age: 17

Dour

Bitter

Plain looking

Dead Pan

Pious

Manners: 43

Sensibility: 82

Foibles: You are not blessed with beauty, so you have chosen the path of piety to be your virtue. When others are being 'unseemly' you like to remind them of such virtues as humility and other teachings of the bible.

You can play the piano nicely.

Goal: Try to get married, but mostly you should try to make other people less happy.

Quote: "Loss of Virtue in a female is irretrievable...one false step involves her in endless ruin." (Jane Austen, *Pride and Prejudice*.)

### People in your family:

Elsbeth: Eldest, Clever, Lovely

Lily: youngest, cheerful, and spoiled.

Mama Angelworthy is somewhat dramatic, but has your best interests at heart.

Papa Angelworthy is very indulgent to your sisters.

Alice Trelissick: your beautiful and stylish city cousin.

## Lily Angelworthy



Youngest Daughter

Age: 15  
 Enthusiastic  
 Cheerful  
 Outgoing  
 Gorgeous  
 Impatient

Manners: 82  
 Sensibility: 90

Foibles: You think of nothing beyond the next moment of pleasure. If something doesn't go your way you cry and whine until it does. You love your sisters but find them insufferably polite.

Goal: Have fun, dance as much as possible, cheer people up! Meet a nice man (or several) and marry one of them.

Quote: "For what do we live, but to make sport for our neighbours, and laugh at them in our turn?" (Jane Austen, *Pride and Prejudice*).

### People in your family:

Elsbeth: Eldest, Clever, Lovely  
 Patience: middle sister, plain looking and dour.  
 Mama Angelworthy is somewhat dramatic, but has your best interests at heart.  
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**Best Friend:** Lucy

## Alice Trelissick



Stylish city socialite

Age: 18

Caring

Generous

Meddlesome

Charming

Glamorous

Manners: 35

Sensibility: 65

Foibles: You are constantly trying to rearrange the world to suit your personal preferences. Your way is the right way to do things after all, and you are only doing it to make people happier.

Goals: Match everyone you know up so that they can get married. Then they'll be happy and you can think of yourself!

Quote: "A large income is the best recipe for happiness I ever heard of." (Jane Austen, Mansfield Park.)

### Angelworthies

Elspeth: Eldest, Clever, Lovely

Patience: middle sister, plain looking and dour.

Lily: youngest, cheerful, and spoilt.

Mama Angelworthy is somewhat dramatic, but has your best interests at heart.

Papa Angelworthy is very indulgent to his daughters.

### London People

Darryl Knight: a very dashing and eligible bachelor, if only he wasn't so proud!

Elliot McKinley: He seems charming, but you don't know much about him.

## Darryl Knight



Age: 24  
 Loyal  
 Caring, but appears dour  
 Superior  
 Dashing

Manners: 43  
 Sensibility: 56

Foibles: You say precisely what you think, which people tend to find off-putting. You are judgmental of people but once you see their true worth you are devoted for life. You are fiercely protective of those you do care about.  
 You don't much like parties, but attend if asked.

Goal: Make a good marriage to a lady you esteem.

Quotes: "She is tolerable I suppose, but not handsome enough to tempt me." (Jane Austen, *Pride and Prejudice*.)

### People you know

Maryanne: Your invalid sister.

Alice Trelissick: A socialite from London, thoroughly charming and handsome.

Elliot McKinley: A great one for hunting and riding. He did have some trouble a while back with that girl. It all went very badly for the girl as you recall, but Elliot seemed to do alright out of it. He does lose at cards rather a lot though. You wonder how he's going to cover all his debts with his lack of fortune.

## Elliot McKinley



Youngest son of a minor Lord

Age: 26  
 Charming  
 Dashing  
 Conniving  
 Salacious

Manners: 82  
 Sensibility: 70

Foibles: for the first few meetings you are charm itself. You love women and you want to make them happy. Once you've won them over and flirted with them a few times, you lose interest. Your father is at you to marry however, to alleviate the pressure on him to pay your gambling debts.

Goal: Marry a well off girl, so you can use her money to pay off your debts....just don't let her find out that's the reason!

Quote:

"With men he can be rational and unaffected, but when he has ladies to please every feature works." (Jane Austen, Emma)

### People you know:

Darryl Knight: A great shot with a rifle, owns a stunning horse.

Alice Trelissick: Gorgeous gel from London, you haven't yet had much of a chance to get close to her yet though.



Mr. and Mrs. Angelworthy  
Lily, Elspeth, Maryanne Knight,  
Patience, Lucy.



Elspeth Angelworthy



Darryl Knight



Lydia Angelworthy and member of the  
Regiment.



Alice Trelissick



Mallory Waugh and Elliot McKinley