

What to Expect from This Game

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Structure

The structure of *A Garden of Forking Paths* is quite unusual. First, it is a story-within-a-story game, in which you'll spend much of the game roleplaying a character from a story being told to or by the characters in the frame story. This structure is not unheard of in LARPs; however, unlike most such LARPs, this one is focused primarily on the inner story, as opposed to the frame story. You'll be cast both as a frame story character and an inner story character, but you'll be spending most of the game playing the inner story character and, as such, we cast *A Garden of Forking Paths* with more emphasis placed on the inner story.

This is a game for twelve players; however, the inner story has only four characters in it. This is because we'll be running three separate instances of the inner story simultaneously. (The frame story provides an explanation for this.) The inner story has two acts, each consisting of four scenes. The choices made in each scene will persist and affect future scenes. Between scenes, we will ask certain players to switch from one instance of the inner story to a different one, playing the same character as before. Because you are entering a new instance of the story, things in the past will now be different than in the story you left.

Mechanics

There is no combat in *A Garden of Forking Paths*. The characters in this game should not need to physically fight. If you feel it absolutely necessary to do so for dramatic and/or story reasons, please pantomime it out with the other players improv-style in a safe and fair manner.

A Garden of Forking Paths has no items, special abilities, magic, or stats.

There is one storytelling-related mechanic. In the inner storyline, the choices you as a group must make are each given a letter. For example, in the first scene, the choices are "A" and "B". Your scenario packet will contain two cards: an "A" card and a "B" card. Once you've made a choice, your group should take the card representing the choice you have made and tape it to the wall with blue painter's tape we'll provide. This will give new people entering the group an easy way to track what's happened in the story so far.

Genre and Play Style

The overall genre of *A Garden of Forking Paths* is literary fiction. This is a story about people having realistic problems and attempting to work through them as best they can.

This is not a story with winners and losers: in a sense, everyone wins or loses together. Bad things will happen to good people, sometimes for seemingly no reason at all. You'll be asked to make choices without fully knowing the ramifications of each option. The characters in the story do not understand the ramifications either, and yet they must choose.