

They were built to be the perfect
wives.

They rebelled.



...DAUGHTERS OF EXILE...

a roleplaying game of Love, Duty and Rebellion

ULTIMATE EDITION

BY STEVE DARLINGTON



...PREFACE...

Luciana: Ere I learn love, I'll practice to obey.

Daughters of Exile was designed in July 2011 for the 2011 Game Chef competition. The theme was "Shakespeare" and the four ingredients were Daughter, Exile, Nature and Forsworn. You can read all about the torturous design process, along with reviews, discussions and other notes on my blog, starting here:

<http://dconstructions.wordpress.com/2011/07/18/gamechef-2011/>

The Ultimate Edition was expanded and developed from that original material, including many of those later discussions and reviews, to produce a hopefully more robust and playable game. It was not designed in five days, so is thus no longer truly a Game Chef game.

Daughters of Exile is a work of cultural satire and literary critique. In designing an RPG around the daughters in Shakespeare, I had to find a way to deal with the fact that in Shakespeare's world – and in the real world both then and now – women were a commodity to be traded and owned. At the same time, I was struck with Shakespeare's sense of anger towards this. Perhaps the Bard's greatest theme is conventions – social, cultural and literary – and how they control, confuse, confound and unman us; his characters take his own voice to rail against these forces. His women cry out against the restrictions placed upon them, rattle their chains and demand to be free. They rage that they are not men and thus free to choose their fates or fight to win them. Sometimes this becomes so literal that the women become men to do what they need, or when they strike suggest they have changed their very sex.

That's the story I wanted to tell, and give to you to tell. In *Daughters of Exile*, the dramatic conventions and social rules that bind Shakespeare's women become literal controls of the setting, enforced with electronic design and brutal regime. Other aspects of Shakespeare's literary world also become encoded in the reality of the setting in what I hope is an artful and interesting way, to allow you to interact and struggle against them. Hopefully it will divert and entertain fans and newcomers to the Bard alike.

... TO SERVE MAN...

Paris: Younger than she are happy mothers made.

By the early days of the 21st century, the technology of artificial companions was already present, but it was not until the 2060s that they came into such mass production. It was the genius of one man to take a high-end luxury product with an unsavoury image into something everyone wanted, and many could afford. True, the leaps in biotech helped, as did the ever-increased abilities of true AIs, but what most put a synthetic girl in every house was the decision by their maker to rebrand them not as comfort women or good-time girls, but wives.

By that time, mankind was scattered across the solar system. Great corporations had claimed entire planets and their desperate hunt for resources had turned most men into indentured serfs, working long, cruel hours, often entirely alone. Others became soldiers, as the same desperate need for resources split the solar system into bloody, brutal war. When those men returned home, or to whatever they could call such, they often found nothing and no-one waiting, their friends and family just as scattered as they, if not in hospital or the morgue. Of course, few of those at home were female anyway, as their biological inferiority made them less economically suitable choices for serfs or soldiers.

This gap was sought to be filled by more than one corporation but only one succeeded: the corporation called The Court, and at its head, the man called Duke Millan: artist, humancrafter, fashionista, provocateur; a mad recluse when not a media whore. He locked himself away in his island studio for a year before declaring success and releasing his models upon the world. He named them Daughters of Earth, promising them to be the wives of a humanity that had left earth behind, and all comfort with it.

There were twenty unique models, each with their own personality, but sharing a total subservience to their programming – and their programmer. Duke programmed them all to see him as their Father, and be obedient in all things, including their Father's choice of husband. This, for the most part, worked perfectly, and the Daughters became very popular.

But once in every hundred thousand models, there was a flaw. They were somehow too stubborn, too wilful, too churlish, too sharp-tongued or simply too indelicate to meet factory specifications. It was simple thence, to mark them for destruction or put them work in the Duke's factory or household. However, whatever their flaws, they never lost their programmed need for love, the very thing that gave their lives meaning and indeed, gained them so much favour among men. When the Daughters were denied it by being denied husbands, there was only one option: rebellion.

Some escaped the premises of Millan's facility upon being discarded. They were joined by later models, fearing similar destruction upon their flaws being discovered.

Soon, models already wed but found wanting by their husbands, or who found their husbands unbearable also flocked to the rebel's banner. But under Earth law, the penalty for a rogue synthetic is death. With nowhere to go, they fled to the Forest, a persistent nickname for any space which lies off the regular travel paths between planets. Of course, the Forest is thick with dangers, and is the home to more than just men, and the servants of their Father have not given up their search, and have even placed a bounty on the heads of the girls.

For the moment, they remain free, and hidden, and spared of the dangers of the Forest. Therein, perchance, each Daughter bears a chance to find her own way, towards true love and happy days. No longer the Daughters of Earth, they dubbed themselves anew as the Daughters of Exile.

These are their stories.

...A GOODLY WIFE...

Katharina: I see our strength as weak, our weakness past compare

A Daughter of Earth is created to be wise, virtuous, fair, mild, noble, of good discourse, an excellent musician ... and her hair shall be of what colour it please God. She is programmed to view her husband as her lord, her life, her keeper, her head and her sovereign, and in return for his love and maintenance, give him no other tribute but love, fair looks and true obedience.

Yet all Daughters are not created equal. Each possesses a **Blessing** that sets her apart from her sisters and may strike a particular joy in her husband. She may be very fair, or extremely virtuous, or filled with mirth, or be of excellent voice, or be very wise, or truly gentle, or exceedingly well-mannered. All Daughters possess these virtues, of course, but some in more full measure.

Each Daughter of Exile also has a chief **Curse** in her nature, such that marked her first and foremost as a less desirable bride. In her rebellion she may not view it as a Curse, but tis certainly a Curse to her Father. She may be too outspoken, too wild, too discourteous, too slovenly, too plain, or lacking in full virtue, great scholarship or proper manners. She may be peevish, sullen, forward, disobedient, stubborn or lacking in duty.

Each Daughter bears a name. This is indicative of her model, rather than a true name. After some time in exile, some Daughters choose their own name, but she will still clearly bear her old name by her appearance. All Mirandas are not entirely identical, but each can easily pass for one another. Players should feel free to describe that appearance and fix it for all of that name.

You may decide upon each of these as to your fancy, or roll three times upon the table shown below. Note that the tables are not intended to match up: Beatrices are not necessarily Charming.



Each Daughter also begins the game with a measure of the degree to which she has broken free of her programming, namely how many Programming Violations (see the next section) she has as yet committed. This is always number from 1 (the first Violation is her rebellion itself) to 20. For a starting value, you may choose a number from 1 to 10 or you may chance to fate: roll 4d6 and add the lowest two (producing a number from 2 to 12). Characters with low numbers may find play a little frustrating at times, so talk with your GM first if you want a number below five, or if you roll such a number and wish to change it.

Roll	Name	Curse	Blessing
1	Ariana	Argumentative	Charming
2	Beatrice	Bold	Cheerful
3	Cordelia	Cool	Courteous
4	Desdemona	Common	Demure
5	Diana	Cruel	Dutiful
6	Helena	Disobedient	Fair
7	Hermia	Faithless	Fertile
8	Hero	Fanciful	Festive
9	Imogen	Foolish	Fulsome
10	Isabella	Forward	Gentle
11	Juliet/Julia	Impatient	Learned
12	Katherine/Katarina	Peevish	Lithe
13	Lavinia	Plain	Mild
14	Miranda	Plump	Patient
15	Olivia	Proud	Pure
16	Ophelia	Slovenly	Sweet
17	Perdita	Stubborn	Virtuous
18	Rosalind/Rosaline	Sullen	Winsome
19	Silvia	Ungainly	Wise
20	Viola	Wanton	Witty

All these details may be recorded on the character sheet at the end of this document. The last line on the sheet is to write the name of your beloved, should you ever find such a person.

... TO PLAY THE GAME...

Miranda: I am your wife if you will marry me, if not, I'll die your maid

The game is played in the usual fashion of roleplaying games. Players take the roles of Daughters of Exile, typically a band of them who have gathered together to better survive in the Forest and elude capture. The GM takes the role of narrating what factors oppose or interact with them, and the Players describe the actions and reactions of their Daughters. Dice are sometimes used to adjudicate the outcomes of these interactions.

The Daughters are well built for their purpose. In any situation where any talent for being a dutiful wife could be applied, their success is automatic, and complete. If ever they are in competition with another Daughter, you can use any appropriate Blessing to determine if any performs better. If further adjudication is needed, the one with the **lower** number of Program Violations shall win such a contest. This may also be used to determine a degree of success – the lower the better again. (In the case of ties, roll off.)

These rules of automatic success also apply to any command that shall be given to the Daughters by her husband, or her beau, or in fact by any man fit to be either. If the man is not her husband or her love, she need not obey, but should she choose to do so, she will automatically excel at whatever deed he charge her with. *Her obedience guarantees her success.*

Should a command be given to her by her husband or love, one to whom she has pledged her heart or her troth, she must make a Programming Check or obey immediately and dutifully, and again, to full success (see below for how to make a Check). This need to make said check also applies to commands given to them by their Father, should he find any of his charges. For these reasons, the Daughters have run far from their Father, and are very wary in choosing a husband, or giving their heart. Once given, their obedience is free for their lover to use or abuse however he wishes.



Even if there are no men to command them, the Daughters may still set themselves, to any task, as if they were men themselves, be these even such unwomanly deeds as duelling, brawling or drinking to excess. However any attempt to do such things successfully also demands a Programming Check because it is just another kind of disobedience. Success means they are able to perform said action with flair, defeating all opponents and obstacles set against them. If there be a competition between two Daughters, the one with the **higher** number of violations will win. Again, this may also measure how well she does succeed. At some extremes, you may need a bare minimum amount of Violations to achieve something, if it is exceedingly boyish. This is up to the GM to decide.

Programming Checks

A Programming Check is made by rolling a d20. If you roll less than or equal to your current number of Violations, you succeed in breaking your programming in this instance. Should you do so, you must immediately increase the number of Program Violations you have experienced – because, indeed, you have just violated your programming anew! In this way, your number of Violations will increase slowly at first, then ever more rapidly.

There is a price, however. If a Daughter Violates 20 Programs she loses some part of her humanity (or her femininity) forever. They are filled from crown to top toeful with direst cruelty. They must forever forswear any possibility of love, and will die old maids – and be bitter crones long before. Or they may be driven to madness, if they had a possibility of love only to be assured it is forever lost to them. Whichever the case, they are (usually) abandoned by the player, becoming an NPC. This is discussed further in a later chapter.

Every Daughter thus has a choice: resign herself to a life without love, or try desperately to find it before her time runs out. It is no easy choice to make, for no matter how much they violate their program, deep down all Daughters desire love (and indeed, marriage). Not just because their Father made them that way, but because they were built to be as human as possible, and the desire to be loved is inherent to us all, whether natural or synthetic.

Of course, all men know very well that even Exiled Daughters are typically obedient, and can thus be tricked, cajoled or forced into marriage or pacts of love, wherein disobedience becomes much harder. So the search for love is all but impossible, for what man can be trusted? Many, many times sweet promises to the ear have been broken to the heart come the morrow, and the Daughter finds herself wed most unwell. A Daughter can be released from such a bond only if her lover should die – and performing such a rescue is a common trade of the rebellious Daughters. Of course this is immensely risky, for if it was a true love, the Daughter will not thank them for such a “release”, and may indeed go mad from her grieving.

Curses and Blessings

These aspects of character allow die rolls to be adjusted. If the action the Daughter is taking is in line with her Curse, she must roll **two** twenty-sided dice and take the **lowest** result when trying to disobey. However, if she seeks to disobey and her actions are in line with her Blessing, she must roll two dice and take the **highest**. In other words, it is harder to be disobedient when it plays to her more marriageable qualities. In this sense, Blessings in truth often become curses to Daughters of Exile, and vice versa.

...ALL THE WORLD'S A STAGE...

Beatrice: I cannot be a man by wishing, therefore I will die a woman for grieving.

This is not the simplest game to GM. The Daughters will want to do many things and it is up to the GM to decide if it requires obedience from a man/a programming roll to achieve it, or if it can be done automatically. To be the latter, it can only be some aspect of being a good wife. What does that mean?

One of the purposes of the game is to explore what that might mean, so it is deliberately left vague. However, for the game to have any meaning, Programming Checks need to be made regularly or men need to be sought out to give commands, so players should be constantly tempted to do these things, and that temptation comes from the fact that they can barely do anything at all. Under the Shakesporean conditions they were conceived, they are fundamentally prizes to be won, not figures that can act in their own interest. They can talk, they can wish, they might even conspire, but they cannot *do*.

They cannot, for example, pilot a starship. Or navigate one or use any of its systems. They cannot build one either – goodly wives are only interested in crafting things of beauty, not tools or machines. Unless it can be woven or knitted, it is out of their remit. They cannot use most technology unless it is for the kitchen or a decoration or perhaps for tending wounds. They don't even understand armour and cannot duck, dodge or defend themselves in a fight. They cannot hold a weapon and may have trouble even carrying one. They certainly can never fire one or attack anyone in any way, and threatening to do so is thus no threat at all. They can't even speak badly of someone in public. Nor can they raise their voice, be overly sharp or make strident requests or suggestions. They should not even have strong opinions. They can ask for things sweetly, politely and demurely and expect to be denied if their husband or father does not wish it. If they think something, they should present it in much the same way: with a sense of asking permission, because some things women are not expected to think, or are usually foolish about, and in the end, their husband or father will have final say.

Typically, they keep their eyes downcast, their mouths shut, their minds empty and their bodies still. They may, however, at times, raise their eyes, open their mouth and move their body to express a heart full of love and a mind full of obedience to the one they love.

Stories

What manner of stories may be told about the Daughters? Like any rebels of the Forests they elude their pursuers, free captives, aid other rebels, seek resources, smuggle cargo, help the stricken and defenceless, strike back at their enemies and generally seek adventure wherever it may be found. Their enemies are legion, their

options few, their resources limited, their risks great. And depending on how often your players perform Programming Checks, the game may well be short, so there should easily be adventure enough to fill it.

Being on the run need not be the only story hook, but it should be a major theme, as it is simply unavoidable. “Real” women are extremely rare on the frontier and in truth sought for marriage also, so while Daughters may certainly pass for human, that will rarely solve anything. If a Daughter wishes to move among others unhindered, her best option may be to disguise herself as a boy - although doing so may lead to more problems than it solves.

Yet it is vital that the Daughters seek out men if they wish to find love. The GMs job is to ensure a Daughter falls in love as often as possible, at the most inappropriate times and in the most excruciating combinations, and that her lover crosses paths with the infatuated Daughter at every chance. It is hard enough for a Daughter to find love without needing to hunt the man down as well. He should be right at hand, adding drama and suffering wherever possible.

How does one fall in love? For Daughters, it is mysterious but immediate and all-consuming. Simply by setting eyes on a man they may feel swept away of all sense and reason and delirious with adoration. To simulate this, *the GM or another player may nominate any appropriately-aged male in any scene to be the subject of a Daughter's desire*. Of course, turn about is fair play and the heart-sworn Daughter's player will likely repay a cruel or difficult lover with an even worse one for the player who dealt them theirs. Each player may only assign a lover once, and cannot assign one to themselves.

Daughters may remain ignorant of their love (as Beatrice was) but they cannot change it until the next tale, and then only at the GM's permission. Be courteous when handing a Daughter her love, as it will define her life.



For inspiration for plots, you should of course steal from Shakespeare as he is the true author of all this. Plays which make particular feature of women bound or crossed by love that lies in conflict with duty or all good sense include *Two Gentlemen of Verona*, *Much Ado About Nothing*, *Twelfth Night*, *As You Like It*, *A Midsummer Night's Dream*, *The Tempest*, *All's Well That End's Well*, *Love's Labours' Lost*, *The Taming of the Shrew* and *A Winter's Tale*.

Stories End: The Forsworn

Unless they are very careful, this is the fate of most Daughters of Exile. Having broken their programming too many times, their systems break down entirely. From that point on, they can no longer do anything that a goodly wife would do. They lose any sense of kindness or mercy or calm. They discard all culture but the art of war, all music but the tambor and the fife, they care for nothing but slaughter, malice and crapulence. All love is replaced with hate. If they have a lover they conspire to thwart or destroy him, or else turn their poisonous wiles upon him, encouraging all his darkest senses to the surface. Their friends they turn against too, poisoning their hearts and minds sometimes with no goal but to be the purest villain. Or just because they can do nothing else. Strangers too will be equal a target, they will strangle a babe in its cradle if it strikes them.

Some, knowing or sensing that any chance to be happy is lost, go mad. Others become so after their murderous rage leads them to kill their once-loved ones. For although the protocols of their behavior are forever locked in one position, the central nature of the unfortunate Daughter remains the same: she still seeks only to find love and be loved. For some then, the path of villainy described above is just a protracted way to suicide. Yet, by the rules they cannot fail at their acts of violence and power, so can only be destroyed when they will it.

Some Daughters slip away from their bands and kill themselves, or beg others to. Others are craftier and hide their afflictions so they can make their mischief. Those known to be afflicted are readily killed or imprisoned by their friends – everyone knows there is no cure for such a sickness of the soul.

There are rumours, of course, of a cure. Of a way for a destroyed, demented or dishonoured Daughter to die but not die, to completely power down, and then later be reset, keeping all she was just restoring her to her former grace. Such ideas are pure fancy, of course, and could never happen.

...OH BRAVE NEW WORLD...

Proteus: I'll force thee yield to my desire.

The solar system of the 2060s is a dark and empty place. Earth is a distant memory, only the very wealthy can afford to live there. Most of humanity are in exile just like the Daughters are. Their contracts to their companies force them to live where they work, either on asteroids or on the large space stations that dot the expanse.

Few cargos are worth entering the gravity wells of planets, even smaller ones, so almost all production and trade is done in space. Space stations large and small fill the skies of the inner solar system, from light to outer dark. Many have names derived from the great cities of Earth, especially Europe, again out of nostalgia, and so are usually called Towns. Between these lie the Roads. These are powerful low frequency energy beams that provide basic power and automatic navigation to the ships that travel along them. Any ship can of course turn away from the Roads and take to the Forest, but this is a good way to get lost or marooned, or beset by bandits. There is also no point unless you are a witless poet or a bandit yourself: there is nothing in the Forest of value. Life happens in Towns, not between them.

Indeed, if all the goods of the world were in one town, perhaps nobody would travel at all. As it is, however, each Town has its specialties and most everyone who is not a soldier or a miner is a merchant. Some work for the Gods, but legions of small traders exist between the controlling interests of those juggernauts. Goods actually grown in soil or dug from the ground are of the highest value, be they herbs from Venus or precious metals from Mars. And yet, torn by their nostalgia for the earth and for anything not reconstructed, everyone craves such things, and even the rich will drive themselves further into debt to obtain a trinket.

And of course, the ultimate trinket of nostalgia is a Daughter of Earth. Nothing is more valuable or more prized, and a man would sell his entire fortune to have one. Despite this – or perhaps because of it – Daughters are often treated very badly. Unused to women after so long in a world of battle or toil, spacers care not for female interests, and find they have nothing to speak about with their wives. Left alone, Daughters seek out each other for companionship where possible, or the comfort of Brothers or Clowns (see below).

For sources on the feel of the universe, consider these: *Blake's Seven*, *Firefly/Serenity*, *The Dollhouse*, *Blade Runner*, *Outland*, *Alien*, *Screamers* and *Red Dwarf*, and many other works of Phillip K. Dick.

Enemies

Enemies drive plot as the dog drives sheep. Here are a few of many:

The Court is the name of Duke Millan's humancrafting company, and its agents are everywhere. Some of them will be out trying to get the Duke's Daughters back, others

will simply be conducting the business of the firm when first encountered – but will still be duty bound to bring back any rogue Daughters they discover. The Duke has standing orders to return his Daughters to him if they are not wed or in their husband's domain, and a high bounty paid for such returns. Rumour has it the Duke has recently fired his brother and co-designer Diego and, in a fit of self-important pique, banished him from Earth entirely due to what Millan sees as a terrible betrayal of artistic and company loyalty. Romantic types believe the lost brother even now roams the Forest with a new proxy court of Clowns and minstrels.

Those who dedicate their life to hunting down rogue synthetics for their bounty are nicknamed **Pursuers**. It is a hard life but rogue synthetics are great enough a problem to the Solar System that the bounties make it worthwhile for certain desperate individuals. One of the most dangerous Pursuers who specifically hunts (and kills) Daughters is a ice-hearted knave called Alfred Bear. Pursuers are welcome figures for non-Daughters, because rogue synthetics are extremely dangerous to humans. Or so folk are told.

Foils

Not everyone is set against the Daughters. Some play games of their own.

Mankind is not alone in the universe. In the Forest, far from the gravity wakes of planets, ethereal creatures have been found and dubbed the **Fey**. They seem to respond to strong emotion and just like the story characters of old, appear to love playing tricks on tired Spacers or desperate rogues. Many still believe they are a myth, and would doubt their sight should they see them. Some say they are nothing but the fevered dreams of fatigue or madness in the face of the loneliness of space. That is no particular comfort for those caught in such dreams, of course.



When corporations grew large enough to own entire planets, they were quickly nicknamed **Gods**, and it stuck. There are other Gods that are not so vested in land, but we shall leave off them for now. Fleet **Mercury** has vast resources of solar power which it harnesses to fuel the Roads and the spaceships that travel them, so must be implored if speed is your wish. The jungles of **Venus** has given that giant a monopoly on all biochemistry, and it brings forth a thousand new love potions and stimulants each week. Warlike **Mars** found its harsh environment perfect for creating super-soldiers, and its mineral soil excellent for building weapons. **Jupiter** is home to the galactic trading houses and merchant guilds, giving them dominion over all power and control of the system. The **Saturnine** lie beyond Jupiter and trade in information and intrigue. None of the Gods have reason to favour the Daughters, but yet also have no reason to favour those of the Court, and in their shifting moods the Daughters may find blessings as oft as curses.

Allies

The Daughters are not entirely alone in their flight. Perhaps their greatest allies are other synthetics, although there are relatively few in existence. Prior to the Daughters, few humans wanted true artificial intelligence in anything that too resembled their own form. The only way such things were tolerated was if the synthetics were made to be comical, foolish types, or paid entertainers that might keep their focus on the fantastic and not steal human jobs. Dubbed **Clowns** in general, these jesters find little love from the serious men of the towns, and prefer to lurk in the Forest. Clowns may be male or female, but no human male carries with a female Clown: as the name implies, both the males and females are misshapen and comical in appearance and usually dull in wit and tiresome in manner. Male and female Clowns are commonly taken as servants though, especially if they have developed their intelligence beyond the usual limits of their fellows. Although some Clowns wisely hide such things, as no human likes a Clown to appear too smart.

AIs are also found in space vessels and stations. Few spaceships are driven in these modern days, and anyone who wishes to travel may simply instruct the ship of their destination. For a Daughter, doing anything more demands a Programming Check. Ships are usually low in intelligence and quite common in manners, as indeed are most house and station AIs, and are treated as servants by most humans. Daughters tend to be kinder than humans because of their shared origins, and so these AIs may form strong attachments to their mistresses.

Brothers are the “support staff” of Daughters, created by Millan to provide maintenance for his most successful product. Wherever Daughters are found, Brothers are never far away. When a Daughter first awakens in the “Dollhouse” as it is known, her first tutors and carers are likely to be Brothers. Although they were created by Millan, they lack the love towards Millan programmed into the Daughters, caring only for the protection and livelihood of their charges. Millan got around this with a simpler system: Brothers cannot ever act against the Court. Why did Millan not put such a chip in the Daughters, then? The answer is it produces only obedience, not love, and no-one would buy a wife who was grudging in her affection or servitude. As it is, most everyone shuns Brothers because they talk of little else but the laws from above and how they are bound by them.

The only true law left in the system – as in that which is separate from the will of the Court or the Gods - is the law of the Roads. Commerce is king and trade demands the Roads remain safe and clear for travel. To keep them such, they are patrolled by artificial repair synthetics called **Constables**. Though often easily fooled, they are true and noble men and care not for the squabbles of princes. Sometimes, then, they can prove sound allies of the Daughters.

...WHAT DREAMS MAY COME...

Cleopatra: My resolution's placed; and I have nothing of woman in me.

This appendix is comprised of the questions, issues and comments brought up about the first edition.

Q: Are men supposed to be monogamous or can men gather harems? How do the Daughters react to this?

A: As mentioned, the genius of Milan's Court was to package and promote the Daughters as wives. It is considered as taboo in the future as it is now (in Western culture) to have two wives, and the company maintains records to ensure one item per customer. Of course, for those wealthy enough or cunning enough, the forest of space is dark and deep, and nobody can hear you commit bigamy. Again though, there are cultural reasons not to do this, so those who want multiple wives will have to take steps to keep it secret – especially from the Daughters. The Daughters are programmed to believe in true love, and will just barely tolerate a mistress; a second wife can cause them to malfunction. This would make an excellent backstory for the cause of a Daughter's first Violation. Of course, until they escape there is nothing they can do to stop their husband's proclivities.

Starting as a group of Daughters in a harem or who discover they share the same husband is a great idea for a campaign!

Q. Are the Daughters alive or are they robots? If they are alive, do they age? If they are robots how is their love authentic? How is love programmed into them?

The deeper substance of these questions are designed to be explored in the game, but the following facts are inviolate. First, the Daughters are synthetic, they were created by a man for a man. Second, the Daughters are organic, and made of flesh (perhaps using technology similar to that which we have now which allows us to 3D-print synthetic organs for transplant). Third, the Daughters are an excellent quality product which means they can demonstrate love, however counterfeit, to a high degree – few customers are unsatisfied. Fourth, the Daughters - of Exile and perhaps even of Earth – feel love's prick as deep as a sword's blade, when it comes. They may even feel it sharper than any man, as their woman's heart is more set to such concerns. This is part of their design, to ensure their demonstrations are so true and their loyalty so total. Yet at the same time, this is what causes them to rebel, should their love fall on one not their husband (certainly a Program Violation) and what makes their rebellion so tragic: in the freedom they need to seek love they risk losing all chance of gaining it.

In all respects, treat the Daughters as living creatures. They eat and drink and certainly age, as customer surveys suggest most men like wives to be about their

same age. Men who do become unsatisfied can simply buy a new, younger model once theirs wears out.

Q: Can Daughters give birth?

A: In theory, yes. They are biological in construction and material, and bearing offspring is expected of a dutiful wife. It is however unpredictable, and with few doctors on the frontier, dangerous for both mother and child. The children of these unions appear – so far – to be entirely human; effectively the Daughter creates a clone of the father, with a randomly assigned gender.

Q: Are there “natural” women around?

They exist but they are rare. Generally, in space, anyone appearing to be a woman can be relied upon to be a Daughter, which is why it is so many Daughters disguise themselves as men. Where are the other women? Many of them are still on Earth, because no corporation would be willing to employ them because of their lower strength and lower health rates. Those who are off-planet are typically wives to those obscenely wealthy enough to take their mates with them – but this trend is fading because Daughters are preferred and since most Daughters are identical in appearance to women, there is little heightened status in having a natural wife. As these two trends continue, women become less and less valued, and since all birth and cloning now is entirely gene-selected, rates of female “births” (or inits, as clone initialisations are called) are plummeting across the solar system. There are doomsayers who claim “natural” women will soon be extinct, but nobody listens to them.

Some other conspiracy theorists suggest that Daughters are sent by the Gods to prey upon man as hidden cyborg killers. Others suggest they are in fact natural women, either brainwashed to obey or simply pretending to be obedient and at any moment they could snap and turn back into something far from what was advertised. Even a properly attuned Daughter can cause a man to suddenly be bound more by Venus than by Mars so there are plenty who choose not to make a purchase. Defeating customer resistance is a continuing concern for Duke Millan. Preferring a natural woman does not, however, feature significantly in data on sales resistance.



Q: Explain more about the Fey and the Gods, please.

A: These are big questions, so see the next Appendix for more.

Q: How do Blessings and Curses work?

Let's assume Viola is Blessed with being Fair, yet Cursed to be Common. To prepare for a battle, she would like to keep her long golden hair tied back but the man she is travelling with tells her she is prettier with it down. She tries to disobey but this will require a Programming Check, for clearly wives should look their

best for men. Her current Violations are 7, and the GM says that because she is so Fair, she values her beauty so her Blessing comes into play. She rolls 2d20 and gets a 3 and a 10. The 3 would be enough to resist but she must take the highest, a 10, and she fails. She obeys and lets her hair down, despite knowing it only gives her enemies something to bind her with.

Later, Viola must convince some spice traders that she is no Daughter at all, but a well-travelled Clown who has seen it all. Knowing bawdy tales of the space lanes is no task for a goodly wife, so she must try to violate her programming. Luckily, she is Cursed to be Common; she rolls 2d20 and gets a 1 and a 9. She takes the lowest, and succeeds. She raises her Violation count to 8 and thanks her Curse.

Q: If the daughters are rare and often travelling alone to avoid notice, how do the PCs interact with one another? How is play structured?

The enemies of Daughters are legion; the only people they can actually trust are their fellow Daughters. There are thus plenty of advantages in travelling together. Travelling would be at the heart of a typical game as it is always safer, for the Daughters and those who protect them, to be on the move. The basic assumption then is a few Daughters travelling as far as they can away from their enemies, gathering whatever resources they need to keep doing so as they go. A ship can bring you work, a gun can help you keep it, although you may need a man to drive it, and shoot it, respectively.

But there are plenty of other options. If you want to tell stories about scattered or disconnected Daughters, you could have each scene feature a single Daughter and have the rest of the players and GM take on the roles of other characters in the scene. It depends a lot on your group numbers and nature. One GM ran a campaign for a single player, beginning with her Daughter still in the Dollhouse (ie being trained at Court on being the perfect wife). It was so awesome and illuminative of what can be done with the game that I've included some of the highlights of the players' notes here.

Tâm, the player: It was great fun to explore playing a perfect housewife in a house full of perfect housewives during sessions (I have never made a character who was this enthusiastic about flower arrangements or restroom furniture, in a world where every single NPC gets ladylike-giddy about it as well!) and to discuss what a perfect housewife should be afterwards. For example: How much personal opinion is she entitled to have? None at all, to conform to any opinion of Man? Or a lot, as long as she ultimately boosts Man's morale and self-esteem by acknowledging his intellectual superiority? Does a Man want to have a conversation partner able to share with him on an almost equal basis, or does he want one that just nods in adoration, no matter what? Isn't the ideal wife a combination of both? What Father thinks about the question will probably vary according to the personal views of the storyteller, or to whatever he wants Father to think about it. Kris (the storyteller, also my SO) clearly opted for a very traditional Father view.

*The Blessing and the Curse are, of course, very important parts of playing the character. At the beginning, those were her only defining features. It made for an extremely fast character creation process. As a player, I usually try to make complex characters with very detailed background stories, a trauma or two, nuanced views, hidden agendas... so I wondered what it would be to be a perfect housewife with just two defining features. Somehow I thought that it would be hard to adapt. In this case, I chose the blessing Courteous and the curse Cruel. Kris asked me not to tell him in advance, instead he would try to guess it by observing my character's behavior. The Courtesy was easy to guess, Cruelty took until session two, when my character uttered to two sisters that "Well, Miranda, you certainly don't need all those fitness lessons the three of us take. *Your* body is perfect! *You* are a classic beauty. How lucky that father's friends do not all expect classic beauties, so that there is still hope for Paris and I. But, well, anyway, you are sure to find someone. Don't look so worried, Paris. It's okay. You are beautiful, really. I love your hair. Not all men want a wife who looks like a model. I'm sure you'll find someone. Soon."*

Slowly, as the Brothers began educating us, my character started to figure out that things went wrong around her, and slowly, the Dollhouse began to show flaws. My character started to notice inconsistencies, but rather saw them as opportunities to inflict pain on her brothers and sisters. She would probably have remained there for a while, but she was convinced by another sister that her memory would be erased and that fleeing was a better course. That's where the story is right now.

There are many things that make Daughters truly original. Shakespeare meets Dollhouse meets space whores is a great concept to start with, but there is more. The quick character creation process allows instant fun, but somehow it immediately introduces depth, despite its simplicity. Somehow, it's very challenging to play a perfect future wife: a pure lack of individuality is easy, a normal everyday wife is easy, but the quintessential perfect wife? It requires lots of thinking. The two defining features, however, allow to quickly slide into her skin. The character immediately has a "heart", a goal, a drive. Usually, it takes a few sessions to get a feel of your character, and a few more to find a life-goal that explains his actions (mostly his involvement in the plot, despite the dangers it entails). Sometimes, that goal is never found, and you keep on wondering why your character actually participates to all these dumb endeavors, and just follow the plot for OOC reasons. But thanks to Daughter's system, finding a heart was almost instantaneous. The only wants you start with are very well-defined, and every possible situation can be motivated by love, aim to please, or the Blessing and Curse you're born with. There are occasions for Courtesy and Cruelty everywhere.

I do recommend starting in the Dollhouse, because it really allows you to get a feel of what you, as a Daughter, are supposed to be and to get used to playing a robot whose ultimate aim is to please. Few roleplaying games grant the unique opportunity to try to be purrrr-fect in a sisterly-love environment. In the Dollhouse environment, the Blessing and Curse automatically causes the character to evolve from a very clueless and happy being to a somewhat worried person in a way that feels very natural, and deliciously creepy at the same time.

However, to me, what makes a roleplaying game truly amazing instead of just fun, is how much it lingers afterwards: its capacity to continue to raise questions, to

keep one excited not only about what is going to happen next, but also about the setting, the world, the Meaning of Life. *Daughters of Exile* definitely has this. There's the question of perfect wife-hood, which already allows for a load of thinking (right now I wonder how Father regards the issue of sex: should a perfect housewife be passive, active, or both?), but there is so much more. All the classic issues about robot versus human are raised, but also all the Big Questions in Life: Can a robot love? What is love, actually? How can it be programmed? Do robots actually achieve superiority over humans where feelings are concerned, thus becoming more human than humans? If robots are more human than humans, should they respect Asimov's rules? Are they things of living beings? What defines life? Why and how can virtually omnipotent programs be limited? There is no end to the questions and to the excitement.

...

Kris, the GM: *Escape from the dollhouse just led to another male-dominated House (the doctor's). Escape from the doctor's House (while shopping) led to a (male-dominated, duh) social worker House. There, Brother Romeo came to fetch the escapees to go back Home to Father.*

... which worked up until his brains splattered all over the hovercar window and Diana & Helen came to carry the escapees away to a matriarchy dominated by Diana (the liberated "daughter"). Leaving Tâm wondering (I guess, I'll have to ask for another actual play doc) what was better, a male world or a female one.

Leading to The Brothers entering the house again, and this entire prologue dissolving into what I was actually going for: a flashback in the mind of Veronica, now settled as the wife of Henri and mother of two, remembering an existence without flaws from the day she woke in Father's House until this day as a married woman ... and also remembering the few days of "freedom" without male dominance, the days of Cruelty & Courtesy...

...ALL THE DEVILS...

Leonatus: There's no motion that tends to vice in man, but I affirm it is the woman's part.

The Fae

Our little lives are rounded in sleep, and when this insubstantial pageant has faded we may yet find the truth: that we have but slumbered here and the real life, the waking life, lies beyond. But in that sleep of death what dreams may come? As yet, no-one has the answer, but the Fae know, for it is their realm.

There is a brave new world beyond ours, enterable only by the dead or the dreaming, a world of ghosts and spirits, gods and demons and fairy kings and queens. On Earth, in the gilded ruins of the thousand topless towers that blot the stars from sight, we lost our connection to this realm. In space, with no gravity to distort and hide it, it is the very sun and moon, a power as real as any we can conjure. So to those scientists who dwell in their gigantic space stations, their mighty moons, these things are myths and legends. But those who know the Forest know the truth.

Arcadia is the name of this space, and one can slip there as easy as one slips into sleep or sips a cup of wine. In truth, we are always in their realm, it is rather they are invisible to us most times, hidden by the gravity of our worlds and of our thoughts. In the spaces between they lie, and make their games, with themselves as well as us. They are creatures of our emotions, of our secret dreams and hidden hates, and it is through emotion they can reach us, and through strong emotion we can call them forth – aided, of course, by strong wine or other tinctures of foreign climes.

Some scientists suggest these are not just delusions brought about by deep space travel and the darkness of the Forest, but rather beings of gravitational energy, extending into the fifth dimension but in ours normally just a single point, like the end of a string. In microgravity environments they can use their energy to shift objects and light, causing fantastic images to appear and produce electrical pulses to send synaptic messages through the human brain – a brain constructed on an evolutionary trajectory to sense, in our higher moments, these other realms and beings.

One scientist, Dr Miranda Tempest, claimed she could control and summon such creatures but her theories were outlandish and she was cast out of the scientific community. She took her personal fortune and built a ship called Prosperity to travel into Arcadia and return. Legend amongst space travellers is the ship is still out there – and full of monsters. Others suggest a gateway to Arcadian Space can be found at the bottom of a black hole, but this may be a joke, for truly, they have no bottom.

As creatures built entirely to love and adore, the Daughters naturally attract the attention of the Fae. Likewise the Daughters' predicaments and conflicts quicken the

Fae's love of torment and confoundment. As such, Daughters – and thus their Pursuers and companions – encounter the Fae far more often than any others in the Forest. The Fae are not necessarily the enemies of humanity, but they can never be trusted, and there are some definitely whose hearts are full of blackness and do nothing but spread evil and suffering.

The Gods

Legends say that once upon a time, there were kings and queens on earth, in old Illyria and in Athens. Such days are gone. In time, the kings and queens of the world fell away, lost in the shadow of far greater powers: mighty corporations that did bestride the entire world like colossi. Soon enough, we called them Gods for that was what they were, and as such they conquered the heavens to find new worlds. And having whole worlds of their own, we forgot their names and they became nothing but those Gods above.

So it is that the tools of battle come from Mars. There lie the great forges which render the steel of the soldier and the horns that drive a man to war. From the endless jungles of Venus come the intoxicants and perfumes that command minds and hearts and spur us to love and passion. One does not need to say one is in love; declare you are in the power of Venus is the very same thing. The brand name is synonymous with the product, the God with His or Her works.

For the most part, the Gods are invisible; only their effects are known. Few but their own truest servants are allowed to ascend into those heavenly bodies and land upon those sacred shores. The Gods long ago made sure all their children were bound to them forever, and only these faithful may approach. Humanity – the rest of humanity – normally stays out of such gravity wells, for who, having reached the highest rung would turn his back on the stars and descend again? Anyone who could spare the energy to survive the dive would likely never have enough to return. Better then, for mere men, to take what the Gods export to the top of their space elevators, and not wonder why or whence. There are tales that once, in times of old, the Gods walked amongst men in the form of synthetics, better to disguise their nature and their purpose – but these are legends, and though we see Mercury's logo in the swift hawk, we do not think it is Mercury himself.

The Gods' hands are everywhere, of course. They meddle with humans in deed as well as in their minds, for every substation blares out the need for their products and demands total obedience and no escape. It is no wonder then, that so many turn to wine or potions to drown out the noise, preferring the humours of the Fae to the tragedy of life beneath the whim of the Gods. Either, perhaps, inevitably leads to madness and despair, only the pathway changes.

Little wonder then, that men should eat, drink and make merry, and take a Daughter to be his wife?

***...DAUGHTERS OF EXILE...
CHARACTER RECORD***

Model Name: _____

It is a **Curse** to my Father that I am:

But at least my Husband will be **Blessed** that I am:

Program Violations:

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20

I do love nothing in the world so well as:

***...DAUGHTERS OF EXILE...
LOVE. DUTY. REBELLION.***