

Fortune's Always Hiding

By Mo Holkar

Fortune's Always Hiding! is a two-player larp about the inheritance of football fandom, and its use as a proxy for generational transfer of other masculine attributes.

It was inspired by a discussion, about football and masculinity, with Michael Esperum (thanks Michael!)

Setup

The characters are a father and son, about to go to their first football match together. The son is about 10 at the start of the game. The two players should choose which of them is going to play the father, and which the son.

Answer together:

What are your names, where do you live (country, town, what kind of house), who else is in your family, which football team do you support (it should be local), when does the game start (it should be at least 25 years ago, but don't get too bogged down in historical details)?

For the father to answer:

What sort of work do you do (if you do work), how happy are you, are you optimistic or pessimistic, do you have a partner, what are you expecting to do after taking your son home after the match, do you have friends who you'll be meeting at the match?

For the son to answer:

How much do you actually know and/or care about football, how do you get on with your dad, how do you feel in big crowds of people, what would you really like to get for your next birthday present, did you have a wee before coming out?

Play

The larp is in five scenes, which take place at approx 5-year intervals. In each scene, a father is taking his son to a football match at the home ground of their local professional club.

- Scene 1 - son is 10 and it is his first match
- Scene 2 - son is 15 and would rather be with his own friends
- Scene 3 - son is 20 and feels like he is now a man

- Scene 4 - son is 25, has been living away, and is trying to reconnect with father
- Scene 5 - son is 35 and is taking his own 10-year-old son (played by the Father player). Father is dead.

Each scene lasts 10 minutes and plays out in conversation between the two, with periods of watching the game and exclaiming at what's going on out there on the pitch. In brief interludes between the scenes, the players decide what has happened in their characters' lives during the years that have passed.

Their team loses all five matches. Although the two of them may disagree about the details of the awful players, diabolical refereeing, and rotten luck, they are basically on the same page, as supporters.

In each scene, the father has something important that he wants to tell the son, and vice versa. But they have to work up to it: the football match provides an excuse for sharing a genuine emotion.

Scene 5 is intended to act as a sentimental echo of Scene 1, one generation on in time.

Why is it about fathers and sons?

Because I was interested in looking at that particular gendered angle. If you're interested in exploring the theme with characters of other genders, though, then that's great: please do go ahead and try that.

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