Everything you Always Wanted to Know About Peter
(And Should Not Be Afraid to Ask)
Outline

- General idea
- Prototype
- Actual story example
Assumptions

- Same kind of story
- Same kind of platform (dialogue-based)
- Hypothetical improved version of Scenejo (no limitations)
Background Story

- **Peter**, a really influential person in town, organises a charity party — every person Peter has ever met is invited.

- **Mary**, the user's best friend, has recently dated him, but she's unsure about Peter's real intentions.

- Moreover, she can't be part of the party because of another engagement previously taken.

- So she asks the **user** to attend the party and, incognito, get some information about Peter for her.
Setting

- **One location**: the dancehall of the castle where the party takes place

- **Many people** the user can interact with: all of them know Peter in a way or another
Main Mechanics 1

- you can speak to everyone
- BUT every character has their own personality
  and not everyone is necessarily interested in talking with you:
  - open characters who will welcome you but know just a little about Peter
  - more closed characters who know Peter really well, though
  - and everything in between
Main Mechanics 2

- you can **move freely** within the boundaries of the dancehall and switch from a group of people to another

- **BUT** **social rules** apply:
  - if you leave a discussion abruptly, you won't be seen in a positive way
  - if you insist too much in getting the more information you can about Peter you'll look suspicious
  - and so on
Characters' modelling (dialogue)

• basic smalltalk patterns
  - «It's so hot these days in Wiesbaden, isn't it?»

• social rules and behaviours
  - «Would you like something to drink?»

• personal interests (2 or 3 per character)

• past experience with Peter and gossip about him
Characters' modelling (behaviour)

- **dynamic emotions**
- **static personality** and gesture patterns
  - open towards unknown people
  - shy
  - aggressive
- **dynamic judgments** and beliefs
  - about Peter
  - about other guests
  - about the user
Emergent Storytelling 1

- random **matching** of NPCs into groups, according to:
  - personal interests
  - social rules
  - time of arriving (random)

- random **wandering** and **choice** by the user

- random progress of **dialogues**, according to:
  - personal interests
  - knowledge about Peter
  - user's questions
Emergent Storytelling 2

• different possible events for Peter arrival:
  - random choice within partly pre-written events
  - choice depending on previous actions
  - mix of the two

• different kind of discussions with Peter and Mary
  - depending on information collected by the user
  - depending on user's opinion about Peter
Actual story example
(Is There Any Chance To Finally Know Something About This Peter Guy?)
Beginning 1

- The **user** has just arrived at the castle and wants to join the other guests.
- At the doors the **security guy** asks the user for their invitation card.
- The user shows him the **Mary's invitation card**, and has to explain why he/she doesn't have an invitation card for him and where Mary is.
Beginning 2

**The security guy is not a gatekeeper:**
- story, not game
- gatekeeper has no more influence on the story once passed
- used to stress the fact that the user is in a weird situation

**If the user can't really convince him, the security guy will warn his colleagues inside**

**FOR INSTANCE:** if the user keep on looking suspicious, they may decide to bounce him outside
Meet Some Characters 1

• **George**, surfing mate
  ➔ he sees Peter in a really positive way, but also describes him as a playboy

• **Martha**, ex-girlfriend
  ➔ they split up because Peter cheated on her.

• **Mark**, former Peter's associate
  ➔ he describes him as a crook who just try to have the most money he can
Meet Some Characters 2

- **Julie**, Peter's brother girlfriend
  - she says Peter is not collecting money for charity, but to build his own surfing centre on a remote island

- **Brenda**, Peter's neighbour
  - lately she saw Peter with a weird guy, playing with explosive

- **Joel**, surfing mate
  - lately he saw Peter with a weird guy preaching we're all doomed
Possible Ending 1

- Peter comes, the user can talk a little with him
- explosion in the dance hall
- the bomber is the weird guy Brenda and Joel were talking about
- BUT the user looked suspicious and is taken into custody by the security guys
- the user's cell phone rings: it's Mary, impatiently asking for comments about Peter.
Possible Ending 2

- Peter comes, the user can talk a little with him
- It's now clear that money won't go to charity but to Peter for his private surfing centre
- Peter impudently thanks everyone for their support for a good cause
- The user's cell phone rings: it's Mary, impatiently asking for comments about Peter.
Possible Ending 3

- Peter comes, the user can talk a little with him.
- It's now clear that Peter is seeing his relationship with Mary not as a serious one.
- Peter begins to flirt with the user.
- The user's cell phone rings: it's Mary, impatiently asking for comments about Peter.