

Hanging Parliament

A Setting for Skulduggery

The Setting

In the aftermath of a confusing election, the party leaders of the United Kingdom are trying to form a government. Locked in a Whitehall building, they have been told not to come out until they agree a Prime Minister.

Meanwhile, the Queen has announced that, unless the Party Leaders reach an agreement by 2pm, she will abolish Parliament (who clearly can't do their job) and re-establish direct rule. The clock is ticking.

Collective Goal

Agree who will form the next government of the United Kingdom.

Character Tracker

Character	Party	Personal Goal
George Green	Labour	Remain Prime Minister at all costs.
Dave Eaton	Conservative	Gain as much power as humanely possible.
Rick Clogg	Liberal Democrat	Get as much power as your small party can command, while appearing not to negotiate shady deals.
Alec Fish	Cornwall National Party	Ensure that, whatever deal is made, Cornwall gets the best deal possible.
Mick Unicorn	English Bigot Alliance	Make your unpleasant mob of street fighters appear to be a respectable political party.
Catherine Local	Bioparty	Gain a commitment to rebuild the entire economy according to environmentally sound principles.

Possible governments

- Any government must include either the Labour or Conservative Party.
- Labour + Liberal Democrats + one other party = Government.
- Conservative + Liberal Democrats = Government.
- Labour + Cornwall National Party + English Bigot Alliance + Bioparty = Government.

- More parties = Stronger Government.

The Characters

George Green (Labour)

You were the Prime Minister before the election and *technically* still are, although you were roundly defeated in the election. A working-class boy at heart, you are happiest at union conferences, where you can rabble-rouse with the best of them.

Although you consider yourself principled, you would deal with anyone to remain in power (except that unspeakable posh boy, Eaton). The difficulty is selling it to the public: they like Clegg, but Unicorn, Fish and Local are dangerous radicals.

You are easily angered and not averse to bullying people to get what you want. Although you will not start a fight, you could easily beat anyone here (except Unicorn) and will let them know it.

Persuade (Obfuscatory): 7

Rebuff (Lawyerly): 7

Taglines:

"Step outside, posh boy"

"We must work for the national good"

Dave Eaton (Conservative)

You were at bloody Oxford and bloody well deserve to run this country. Quite frankly, the rest of these lower class oiks don't have a brain cell between them. Nevertheless, you must *appear* nice to them, providing you don't have to *touch* them. No, really. You absolutely will not touch them, even to shake hands.

You happen to agree with Unicorn, although the public must never know. Clegg is a lightweight, who, quite frankly, copies your hairstyle and clothing. Everyone else is a bloody nutter, especially Fish, whom you literally cannot understand. No, really. Whenever he speaks to you, you have *no idea* what he is saying.

Persuade (Glib): 5

Rebuff (Obtuse): 5

Taglines:

"Do keep quiet, you unspeakable oik"

"I went to Oxford and I think I know about this a little better than you."

Rick Clegg (Liberal Democrat)

It is *not fair!* The public *said* they liked you but then they *didn't vote for you!* You even got the same hairstyle as Eaton and *still*. And you spoke *really well* in that debate! You are finding it hard not to cry.

Still, you must be a brave boy. If Green talks to you, you mustn't be frightened. And if Eaton talks to you, you mustn't appear too eager (although you *would* like to be shown around his gentleman's club). As for

the others, Unicorn is a thug, Fish is a decent sort and Local's ideas about the environment are really rather sweet.

Persuade (Charming): 6

Rebuff (Pure Hearted): 5

Tagline:

"Why? Why did they say they liked me and then ignore me?"

"Just give me proportional representation. I'll do anything. Anything."

Alec Fish (Cornwall National Party)

Screw the lot of them. They've ignored you for years and now is your chance.

Whoever is best for Cornwall, you'll go with them. You're going to demand the impossible. Your list of demands includes:

- Prime Minister must chew a piece of straw, at all times, when appearing in public.
- Ban all other alcohol apart from cider.
- Move the United Kingdom Parliament to Truro.

And if they go for all of that, you'll make up some more stuff, too.

Persuade (Eloquent): 10

Rebuff (Wary): 1

Tagline:

"I have a brand new combine harvester. I'm prepared to consider giving you the key."

"I am a cider drinker and so are many of the people I represent."

Mick Unicorn (English Bigot Alliance)

In a fair world, you'd beat the crap out of everyone in this room until they agreed with you. You control a loose alliance of thugs and street-fighters, representing their interests.

For some reason, the British public have not taken you to their hearts. This is despite your new haircut, which almost covers your squiffy eye. Deep down, you want them to love you. You want everyone in this room to love you, too. And, if they don't, you've got an army of street-fighting bruisers who will beat the crap out of them until they love you.

Your demands include:

- An urgent inquiry to find where all the Eastern Europeans are coming from.
- Everyone who cannot trace their ancestry back to William the Conqueror to be deported.
- Police to be replaced with your army of street-fighting thugs, who will be much more effective at enforcing justice.

Persuade (Intimidating): 10

Rebuff (Penetrating): 10

Taglines:

"You know, you and me are very alike, aren't we?"

"We all love our country. Anyone not love their country?"

Catherine Local

Holy crap! You got in. This signifies the British people want environmental action and they want it now! You are prepared to do whatever it takes to get that.

You'll deal with anyone, but you must be persuaded they *believe* in the environment. That they really *care* about the world. Specifically, they must agree to the following:

- All cars to be destroyed.
- Cornwall to be bulldozed and allowed to grow wild, as a nature reserve.
- The dismantling of the Bank of England and the stock market, to be replaced with an environmentally-conscious Group Therapy Session, to heal the economy and the environment.

Persuade (Forthright): 10

Rebuff (Contrary): 10

Taglines:

"But what about the trees? Doesn't anybody care about the trees?"

"Why does any of this matter, when the world's about to end?"

Unpersuadable

If you have promised to deliver two things that a Party Leader wants, you may then persuade that Party Leader to join your government. Until then, they cannot be persuaded to join your government.

For example, let's say Rick Clogg persuades David Eaton to reform the electoral system. Later, Rick persuades David to buy champagne. David has now agreed to two things that Rick wants: hence, he can now attempt to persuade Rick to join his government.

Rules

This setting is designed for Skulduggery, which will be released later in the year. Until then, use the Dying Earth rules, if you have them.