

## V. Jantemen®

Even if we can't fully understand the Swedish God Alla, we can still approach her through her prophets and priests, the *Jantemen*, and the teachings of these noble men and women, commonly known as the *Jante Laws*.

### ***Jante Law:***

- 1. Don't think you are anything.***
- 2. Don't think you are as good as us.***
- 3. Don't think you are smarter than us.***
- 4. Don't fancy yourself better than us.***
- 5. Don't think you know more than us.***
- 6. Don't think you are greater than us.***
- 7. Don't think you are good for anything.***
- 8. Don't laugh at us.***
- 9. Don't think that anyone cares about you.***
- 10. Don't think you can teach us anything.***



**Aksel Sandemose (1899-1965)**



**Cartoon 26: Jante-law # 1. "Don't think you are anything."**

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The 10 commitments of Jante Law were collected by the Danish-Norwegian writer *Aksel Sandemose* (1899-1965) in his novel *En flyktning krysser sitt spor* ("A fugitive crosses his tracks", 1933).

Jante Law is basically an unwritten and strict code of conduct regulating all fields of life and guaranteeing that no individual will rise above the rest, under the threat of all sorts of social sanctions, communal disapproval and so on. These hierarchies and "pecking orders" ensure that only those members who agree to play by the rules will subsist, and those deviating from the path will be cast aside. Jante Law is considered an especially Scandinavian phenomenon.



### Cartoon 36: Envy

The psychological foundation of Jante Law is **Envy** (also called **invidiousness**), which may be defined as an emotion that "occurs when a person lacks another's [*perceived*] superior quality, achievement, or possession and either desires it or wishes that the other lacked it." It can also derive from a sense of low self-esteem that results from an upward social comparison threatening a person's self image: another person has something that the envier considers important to have. If the other person is perceived to be similar to the envier, the aroused envy will be particularly intense, because it signals to the envier that it could just as well have been him or her who had the desired object.