

Dinner for Amateur Mind Readers by Chad Wolf

Players: 2-20

Pitch: The families of a soon-to-wed couple meet for the first time, but things get awkward because every one of them is secretly a mind reader. While they are all capable of blocking their minds from being read complexly, embarrassing facts about each person inevitably slip.

Tone: Comedic

Equipment needed:

- 1) 10 name tags per person.
- 2) A timer capable of going off every 7 minutes.
- 3) Pens for everyone.
- 4) A copy of the character creation sheet and the helpful questions at the end of this document for every player. The helpful questions are repeated 3 times and should be cut out.

Safety: The facilitator should explain the concepts of larp safety such as cut, brake/largo, the door is always open, and that players are more important than games. If you are unfamiliar with these concepts, consult "A Primer on Safety in Roleplaying Games" by Lizzie Stark:

<http://leavingmundania.com/2014/02/27/primer-safety-in-roleplaying-games/>

Playtime: Around 90-120 minutes.

Pre game:

- 1) Players (or facilitator beforehand if time is precious) should decide, based on the number of players, the nature of the event. Is it a small get together? Is it a fully fledged engagement party? Or is it something in between? (3 minutes).
- 2) Divide the players into two families. Players should decide which family members they are as a group. Names should be decided and a name tag should be made with their name, pronouns, and age. In a 2-4 player game, it is encouraged that everyone play the parents. After that, add in the soon-to-wed children. With more players, feel free to add in any family members you want. It is not necessary to create traditional families, and it may prove more interesting not to do so. (4 minutes).
- 3) Remind players that they are secretly mind readers, and that this is not something they are open about.
- 4) Players should then refer to the character creation sheet and create their characters. (5 minutes)
- 5) Players should attempt to pair off with the person playing their character's romantic partner to work on character backgrounds. Otherwise, players should pair off with whomever makes the most sense. If there is an odd number, the soon-to-wed child should form a triad with their parents, assuming both parents are in the game. Use the helpful questions sheets to guide your

conversation but do not solely rely on them. This game is improvisational so it is not important that every detail is decided. (10 minutes).

- 6) In a game with more than 6 players, players should then meet up again as a family and spend about 1 minute each stating who they are. (3-10 minutes.).
- 7) Players are then to separate and make 9 name tags with embarrassing/awful facts (one on each) that over the course of the game they will place on other players. Examples: Killed a neighbors pet and told no one, makes animal sculptures out of their own boogers, etc. Thought should be given to how this might spur conversation. For example, based on the above facts players might ask: How do you feel about animals? Do you do anything artistic? The reason that players have 9 cards is to give players options based on what's going on, but also in case someone does not want one in the game after seeing it. A safety check should be done before hand for topics that are off limits. Players should be reminded to write neatly. (5 minutes).

Read the following section to players and then begin the game:

Game: The game takes place over a dinner or some kind of party. A timer should be set for seven minutes. After seven minutes, the game freezes and each player sticks one of their facts on another player. Be considerate, and make sure that the player is ok with having that one on them. Each player must get one. Players may need to raise hands to figure out who needs one. After everyone has a fact, set a new timer for 7 minutes and resume the game. After this the game restarts, anything stuck on a player becomes a fact that everyone has read from their mind. Players should start leaning in to the facts that they now know about people. Players should play to make things awkward but not obvious. For example, if a player has been stuck with "likes the smell of garbage", another player might start by asking about smells that character does or doesn't like or by announcing that something nearby smells like garbage. The game should pause a total of 5 times, and players should save their worst fact for last. In the 6th and final 7-minute session, the dinner should start to break down, and everyone should be openly acknowledging the horrible facts that they know about each other. The final buzzer at 42 minutes will mean the game is over and everyone should end the meal.

Debrief:

- 1) Players should derole: removing all of their stickers, say their name and one fact about themselves that no one here knows.
- 2) Everyone should get a minute or two to discuss anything they want related to the game. It could be how they felt during the game, something they thought was funny, themes they thought were interesting, etc.

Character Creation Instructions.

Think of a date that is important to you that is not within your astrological sign (For example, if your birthday is April 19, pick something other than Aries). That date's sign is now your character's. Use the descriptions below and cross off one of the three traits for your character's sign's strengths and weaknesses. That is now your character's personality.

Aquarius: January 20-February 18 | **Strengths:** Progressive, original, humanitarian
Weaknesses: Runs from emotional expression, temperamental, uncompromising

Pisces- February 19-March 20 | **Strengths:** Compassionate, artistic, gentle
Weaknesses: Fearful, overly trusting, sad

Aries- March 21-April 19 | **Strengths:** Courageous, determined, confident
Weaknesses: Impatient, moody, short-tempered

Taurus-April 20-May 20 | **Strengths:** Reliable, patient, devoted
Weaknesses: Stubborn, possessive, uncompromising

Gemini- May 21- June 20| **Strengths:** Gentle, affectionate, curious
Weaknesses: Nervous, inconsistent, indecisive

Cancer- June 21-July 22 | **Strengths:** loyal, emotional, sympathetic
Weaknesses: Moody, pessimistic, suspicious

Leo- June 23-August 22 | **Strengths:** passionate, generous, warm-hearted
Weaknesses: Arrogant, stubborn, self-centered

Virgo - August 23-September 22 | **Strengths:** Loyal, analytical, kind
Weaknesses: worry, overly critical of self and others, all work and no play

Libra - September 23- October 22 | **Strengths:** Cooperative, diplomatic, gracious
Weaknesses: Indecisive, will carry a grudge, self-pity

Scorpio - October 23 - November 21 | **Strengths:** passionate, stubborn, a true friend
Weaknesses: Distrusting, jealous, secretive

Sagittarius - November 22 - December 21 | **Strengths:** Generous, idealistic, great sense of humor
Weaknesses: Promises more than can deliver, very impatient, will say anything even if undiplomatic

Capricorn - December 22 - January 19 | **Strengths:** Responsible, disciplined, self-control
Weaknesses: Know-it-all, condescending, expecting the worst

Some helpful questions:

- 1) What are things that annoy you?
 - 2) What are your jobs?
 - 3) What is your relationship with the soon-to-wed person? What were they like as a kid like growing up? What are they like now?
 - 4) What are some things that you do for fun?
 - 5) What major life changing event happened to you?
 - 6) Where have you recently been on vacation? What's a funny thing that happened to you there?
 - 7) What is your relationship to each other? How is it? What are the sources of problems?
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