



“Such a fun weekend!”

“We're going to the cabin over the weekend, do you want to come with us? Come on, it's going to be fun!” Spoiler alert, it won't be fun. “Such a fun weekend!” is a dramatic game about 6 people who spend an hour locked in a house together and about the conflicts but also the love between them.

Number of participants: 6, alternatively 5.

Time: About 3 hours.

Gamemaster: 1 person who manages everything and plays a small npc role as a locksmith.

Materials: Chairs, masking tape, character notes, relationship notes, something to keep time with, something to play music on and something that the participants can write their character's name on and put on.

Room: You need a secluded room with a reasonably large floor area where you can tape up a rectangle that could fairly realistically represent a very small cabin.

Preparation: Read the material carefully. Make sure you keep track of the 6 x 2 slips that will be distributed and have a way to read these instructions during the actual game. Tape up the house according to the attached drawing (or according to your own imagination) and add windows and furniture with the tape if you want. Put the chairs in the taped up living room.

Music: The game needs two songs that are in the playlist [Ska du med till stugan?](#) on Spotify.

Thanks: To Maja, Erik and Simon for your help as sounding boards and my fantastic playtesters. And to you who found and read my manuscript!

If you run the game: I, Teddy Karlsson, who designed it, will be very happy! Feel free to write to me at evelina.emma.karlsson@gmail.com and tell me how it went!

How to conduct the game

Welcoming the players

Welcome the players and give a brief description of the hours ahead of them. Tell them that firstly they will get information about the game and then discover their characters and their relationships in a workshop. Then they will be led through the event that starts the story and then spend about an hour as their characters locked in the cabin that they see taped to the floor. At the end they will talk about the experience in a debrief. The story takes place in the neutral present and the characters are young adults. Everyone will get to choose a pre-written short character with relationships and get to choose a name and pronoun for them.

The situation for the game is that 6 people gather for a fun weekend of socializing. They are spending time in a cabin that is tiny and badly made, it is not a luxurious country home. The location is in reference to the Swedish “Sommarstuga”, a small cabin that all sorts of people (although not everyone) can have. Instead of having a fun weekend, the six “friends” immediately start arguing, but realize when they try to leave that the door can’t be opened, and they have to wait for the locksmith and thus hang out despite the bad atmosphere. The cabin is in the middle of nowhere but they have cars to leave with, it's the door that is the problem. It's not impossible to get out, but they don't want to break anything in the house, the locksmith will come soon anyway.

Presentation round

Let everyone say their name, their pronoun if they want to and a building that represents their mood right now, the question can be interpreted very freely.

Safety

First of all, the participants are more important than the game. If something feels uncomfortable, say so, the most important thing is that everyone is having fun.

If you get uncomfortable during the game, say the phrase “off game” followed by what you want to say to communicate outside of the game. If it concerns only one other person, tell them directly, if it concerns everyone, say it clearly so that everyone can hear. If you want to be physical with another person, escalate slowly. During the workshop you will have time to calibrate to what degree you are comfortable with physical play with your relationships.

Feel free to speak up if there is something in your characters or their relationships that you are not comfortable with. The game has a chance to become very queer and have any combination of people being in a romantic relationship. It also has a chance to deal with various heavy topics, such as discrimination, but that should only happen if all players want to do it, the focus can definitely be on the relationships between the characters.

Also use this time to talk about whether or not people want transparency. The alternatives are that all players get to know everything about all characters before the game or that you keep

things that are secret to the characters secret from the players as well before the game. Depending on what they answer, you can share different things during the preparations.

Everyone chooses a character and comes up with a name

Now everyone will get to choose a character based on a description of their personality, the relationships will come in the next step. Explain that all characters are written with only one letter as name and neutral pronouns. When the players have chosen a character, they will decide on the character's pronoun and a name starting with the character's letter. The characters also have some themes that describe what their focus will be during the game. Lay out all the character cards in the center of the circle and have the players read all the characters and pick one. Then allow some time for the players to read and think about the characters they have chosen. After choosing a character, they get to choose a name starting with the character's letter and then create a name and pronoun tag and put it on.

With five players, the character H should not be played. Still have their notes available so people are aware of the character. In the game, H will be late and not show up. The game manager could play H via text messages if that is something that would be appreciated.

Character round

Have a round where everyone says their character's name and pronoun and describes the character, preferably in their own words. Any things that a player has already come up with beyond the character description are highly encouraged to mention.

Presentation of the relationships

Then read out what is written below, using the names and pronouns chosen by the players. Feel free to point at and/or move the players to clearly show which characters are being talked about.

“K's family has a cottage. K and E are together. E wants to hang out with people in the cabin this weekend. E invites their bestie R and also H, whom E is becoming friends with. H has in turn invited M, who they have an unclear relationship with and M's best childhood friend P.”
If the participants have said that they would like to have full transparency, you can also mention here that R is in love with K, that M and H have some kind of romantic relationship that H wants to make official, that P is in love with H and that M and K used to be friends.

Then hand out the relationship cards and give the players some time to read through them. Tell them

- That everyone has relationships with at least three other characters and a desire, what the character wishes for the weekend in the cabin.
- That the relationships are written both in a narrative perspective and in the character's perspective.
- That the next step is to talk through the relationships with all the other players.

Calibration of the relationships:

Have everyone calibrate with all the other players, 5 minutes for each pair, tell them all to:

1. Define your characters' relationship, create a common view of it (with or without secrets),
2. Talk about safety: Do you think you will have physical play, if so, what are you comfortable with? Will you be mean to each other, if so what are you comfortable with?
3. In what contexts do the characters meet, do they usually do something in particular together, do they have any particular memories together?

How strict you should be with how much time the players get depends on how much time you have! However, be sure to create structure and make sure all players are talking about safety!

General discussion about group dynamics

Discuss the general group dynamics, has any couple decided something everyone should know, who has been in the cabin before, repeat who knows who.

Break

Give the players about 10 minutes for toilet visits, drinking, etc.

Bomb and Shield

Now it's time to do an exercise to get the character into the players bodies. First you will do the exercise neutrally and then you will put in the characters.

In the exercise, everyone should silently choose one person to represent their bomb and one person to represent their shield. When the exercise is in progress, the participants must ensure that they always have their shield between themselves and their bomb, after a while the leader counts down from five and says that the bomb explodes. Anyone who managed to be protected by their shield may raise their hand. The tricky thing about the exercise is that everyone moves all the time and wants to be positioned in different ways. While the exercise is going on, always play the first song in the playlist - Love will tear us apart again, put it on repeat. Make it clear that the exercise will be good however it turns out and that the most important thing is to warm up and let loose. In the last round, the exercise becomes a kind of meta-scene that describes how the situation in the cabin is emotionally.

The different rounds have different instructions as below:

Round 1: Ask everyone to pick a bomb and a shield without thinking about the characters' relationships.

Round 2: Ask everyone to pick a bomb and a shield without thinking about the relationships but try to move like their character. They may think of it as doing the exercise as their character would have done it. Give everyone a moment to focus on the character, then tell them to start the exercise.

Round 3: Have everyone choose a bomb and a shield based on who has/will have those roles in the character's life. So, who is a safe person for them and who do they want to avoid.

Description of the game itself

Now it's time to prepare the players for the game itself! Start by explaining the different rooms in the house, then explain the following:

- The tape on the floor represents walls, treat them as such! Inside the house there are no doors because it is difficult to keep track of whether they are open or closed.
- The characters can't see through the walls but you as the player can use the information you get from doing so as you play.
- The walls are so thin that your characters hear exactly the same things as you do. However, you can choose what the character hears depending on what suits you best, but remember to whisper if you want to be secretive.
- The game begins with a scene where the leader directs the players by showing who should speak and telling them what kind of thing to say, but the player gets to decide for themselves what to say. When the players get started/when the characters try to exit the cabin, the game leader will stop conducting. However, there are certain things that must happen.
- In the initial argument: H calls M their partner, K talks about how they don't want to hang out with people, E and K question whether they should be together, R argues with H and P, H and M's presence is questioned (and if H is not played, their absence is commented on).
- The most important thing is that someone needs to try to leave and then notices that the door is locked, and that M calls a locksmith. The game master will play the locksmith in the conversation between M and the locksmith and tell M that it will take about 45 minutes for the locksmith to get to the cabin.
- The locksmith will call M again when the game master approximates that half the game has passed. The locksmith will then tell M that it will take longer for them to arrive. In the end, the game will be just over an hour long.
- Ms player is thus responsible for calling the locksmith at the beginning and to react when the game master sounds like a phone.
- The game begins to end with the locksmith knocking and saying that they have arrived. Then the locksmith knocks again when the door is open, and then it's up to the players whether they go/rush out or stay. If they go out, they must be quiet and can start derolling. There is no pressure to leave though, even if others do and some characters may end the game inside the cabin.
- The game is completely over when the music is played, when the music's over everyone sits in a circle for a debrief.

When all is understood and you are ready to start, make sure E, K and R are standing in the taped up hall and H, M and P are standing just outside ready to enter. Then start reading the text below using the names and pronouns that the players decided.

Be mindful of how much the players need to be directed and when you are no longer needed, then get ready to talk on the phone playing a locksmith. If the players start responding to each other on their own initiative, that's great, you can still speak over them to ask for a few more "lines". You can also improvise directions. Don't be afraid to direct the players during the first minutes, the worst thing that can happen is that they ignore you.

Intro scene:

K, E and R are in the cabin.

H comes in followed by M and P.

H introduces P as their friend and M as their partner:

P asks M why H calls them partner:

M also wonders why H said that:

K asks E why M and P are there:

E asks why it is a problem that they are there:

K is tired of E always inviting lots of people:

R accuses H of ruining the whole weekend:

E accuses K of always ruining everything:

K says that E always accuses them of everything:

E says maybe they shouldn't be together:

R says that everything is ruined and that H, M and P must go home:

They try to go home:

The game can also be played with 5 people ,without H, then the intro will be like this:

K, E and R are in the cabin.

M and P enter.

E cautiously asks about H:

R says that it is good that they aren't there:

M explains that H is late and explains their and P's presence:

K, who didn't even want to invite people, meanly tells E:

E answers angrily:

K answers even more angrily:

E questions their relationship with:

R reacts in shock by saying:

P meanly says:

R attacks P with:

P answers:

K attacks R to protect P by saying:

E attacks K to protect R by saying:

M tries to stop the arguments by saying:

R, P, E and K attack M by saying to each other:

K panics and tries to get out of the cabin:

When the door doesn't open, everyone panics and whispers to each other:

M calls a locksmith:

When the conversation between M and the locksmith is over, set a timer to keep track of the time, and then just wait! Be sure to keep track of the players and how much more time they need. When it feels like a midpoint, after half an hour or so, make sounds like a phone to get in touch with M. Tell them that the locksmith had car issues and how much time is left before they arrive. This will be up to you.

When you feel that it is time, knock on the wall and shout as the locksmith that you are there and that the door will soon be open. Feel how much time the players need to finish the game before you knock again and say that the door is open. This depends on how much is resolved and what they are doing, if they are in the middle of something they might need to finish it. Then get ready to put on Understand, the second song on the playlist when it's time for the game to end. When the music ends, gather in a ring on the floor. Go in rounds and have everyone answer all or some of the following questions:

- How is your character feeling now? Has anything in particular changed in them during the game?
- How are you feeling now?
- What was your most memorable moment during the game?
- What are some similarities and differences between you and your character?
- Say something good that the person on your right did during the game!

Give thanks

Thank the players for wanting to play! That's it!

Characters

R - #onlyinsecret

R is usually angry but keeps it inside. They won't say what they feel unnecessarily. They smile most of the time and has a great need for affirmation.

They like gossip.

Themes: In love with the wrong person, worried about losing their best friend.

M: #themomfriend

M is usually calm, they want everyone to be happy and always tries to take responsibility for everything. They have a bad sense of consequences but always good intentions.

Themes: Unclear romantic relationship, problems in friendships.

H: #thetableone

H is charming, orderly, awkward, kind and steadfast. They don't know how to articulate their feelings.

Themes: Others have a lot of feelings about them and they don't know what to believe.

K: #conflictophobe

K is calm until things get too difficult, then their emotions can flare up. They are usually confused about what is happening and has a very hard time dealing with other people's feelings.

Most of all they want stability.

Themes: Getting dumped, being confronted by old sins and other people's feelings.

P: #theannoyingone

P is impulsive, egocentric, “fun!” and alone.

They pretend to not care that people doesn't like them.

Themes: In love with what turns out to be the wrong person.

E: #knowswhattheywant

E is determined, only nice when they feel like it and pragmatic. They are very afraid of being alone and wants people around them all the time.

Themes: Breaking up, relationships that change.

Relationships

R's relations

E - R and E really are besties. In many ways E is the cooler friend but R has no problem with that. However, R is very afraid of losing E, especially since E might find out that R is in love with their partner.

K - The most secret thing in the whole world is that R is in love with K. They have been for quite some time now. But, perhaps there is one thing that is more secret. That thing that happened on New Years when E was busy getting to know H. R and K ended up on a couch and both were drunk and they started making out, but just a little bit, really.

H - E has started hanging out with H and even though R knows that one can have several close friends, R feels like they are losing their best friend. R does not like that H is invited.

P - R thinks that P is incredibly annoying, maybe they are jealous that P dares to express what they feel in a way that R doesn't.

Desire: R wants to hang out with K and E, in that order.

Ms relations

H - Almost a year ago, M and H met in a bar. They started talking and when the morning came it felt like only a minute had passed. Since then, they have hung out a lot. There is definitely a lot of romance in their relationship, but M doesn't want to put a label on it. Since H and P are now the most important people in M's life, all three of them hang out a lot but M doesn't think they need to talk to anyone else about the romantic aspects of M and H's relationship.

P - M and P have always known each other and M cannot imagine their life without P. M understands why many people have a hard time with P, but M understands them in a different way than others do. P has been behaving a little differently lately, at least when they hang out with H. Hopefully they're okay.

K - M and K were close friends for a long time. Over a year ago, before K and E were together, M began to realize that they were in love with K and finally plucked up the courage to tell them. Since then, K has acted as if M does not exist. M is no longer in love with K, but it's sad that they are not friends anymore, or even acquaintances...

Desire: M wants to talk to K about their friendship.

H's relations

M - Almost a year ago, M and H met in a bar. They started talking and when morning came it felt like only a minute had passed. Since then, they have hung out a lot. There is definitely a lot of romance in their relationship, but M doesn't want to put a label on it. However, H thinks it's time, they're a couple after all, aren't they? Maybe H has to take the initiative?

P - P is M's very best friend, and H thinks it's nice that all three of them can hang out. They have had no reason to talk to P about the romantic aspect of H and Ms's relationship, but P must have noticed. Sometimes P behaves a bit strangely around H, but mostly H thinks they're nice.

E - E and H met on New Years and really clicked. Since then, they have started to hang out with each other from time to time, but they want to hang out more. H would like to get to know E better, and wants to introduce them to M!

R - R is E's best friend and they have met a few times lately through them. R seems more and more angry each time they meet and H doesn't understand why.

Desire: H wants to tell others about their relationship with M.

K's relations

E - E and K are together and have been for a year now. They act overly cute around others but constantly argue behind closed doors. K finds E's constant need to hang out with people annoying, and E thinks K complains too much. K thinks that if they could just hang out just the two of them once in a while, everything would work out.

R - R is K's partner's best friend. They are kind. K ended up on a couch with them on New Year's when E was away talking to some new friend. K doesn't really remember what happened, K was really drunk, but they probably made out, it probably wasn't very good.

M - M and K were close friends for a long time. Over a year ago, before K and E got together, everything changed suddenly. Out of nowhere, M told K that they were in love with K. Since then, K has acted as if M does not exist. That's not very nice, but they don't know what else to do. They don't feel the same and now they have E, or at least had. It's all going to be okay as long as K doesn't have to meet M.

P - K and P are only vaguely familiar with each other. While locked in at the cabin K will feel that P is a safe point in the storm.

Desire: K wants a quiet weekend with their partner (and their partner's best friend).

P's relationships

H - P and H have become friends thanks to M. They have been hanging out more and more all three in the year since M and H met. P is very happy that H has become a part of their life and has started to fall in love with H, they would be so wonderful together. They are just waiting for the right opportunity to tell H.

M - P and M have always known each other and P cannot imagine their life without M. M really understands P and is the nicest person in the world. Soon P will find out that M let them believe that they had a chance to get together with H even though H is already together with M. How could they!?

R - R is always so mean to P, what's their problem?

K - P and K are only vaguely acquainted. While locked in at the cabin P will feel that K is a safe point in the storm.

Desire: P wants to get a chance to hang out more with H one-on-one.

Es relationships

R - E and R really are besties. In many ways, E may be the cooler friend, but E can never agree to that. E is really happy that they have such a nice, stable friendship with R. R has been behaving a little differently lately, hopefully nothing has happened!

K - E and K are together and have been for a year now. They act overly cute around others but constantly argue behind closed doors. K complains all the time about E always hanging out with people, about everything E does really. That's why E more and more often makes sure to avoid hanging out with K alone. Their relationship is moving closer and closer to the breaking point.

H - H and E met on New Years and really clicked. Since then, they have started to hang out with each other from time to time, but they want to hang out more. E would like to get to know H better and is very happy that they could join the hangout in the cabin.

Desire: E wants to have others around to avoid being alone with K and arguing.

Suggestion, the cottage

