

Table for One

A people-watching game
by Luiz Paulo Ferraz



Requirements

To play this game, you'll need something you can write or type on and up to 2 hours.

You can play it as a conventional story game (for which you'll need up to 4 other players) or as an individual game while eating out alone.

The Story Game Version




Your group will take turns playing the Diner, a fictional person who is eating alone at a restaurant. We won't define anything about them except that they have a great imagination and a curious disposition.

First of all, choose a place from the list below where the Diner will be eating.




You can also roll a die to determine at random.

1	Jenna's , a simple 24-hour diner with bright lights. Customers sit at the counter, at tables or at booths.
2	Le Charme , a fancy, dark restaurant. Customers dine at candlelit tables.
3	The Cinnamon Bunny , a cute café. Customers sit at large chairs, at sofas, or at small, high tables.
4	Seashells , a breezy restaurant on a boardwalk. Customers sit at small tables overlooking the beach.
5	Purple Ribbon , a large family restaurant. Customers sit at regular tables or at the bar.
6	Create your own.

Then, the person who last ate out alone will take the role of the Diner for the first time. They will create the first table (Table 1), ask the following questions to the other player(s), trying to distribute them as evenly as possible, and take note of the answers:

-  How many people are sitting at this table?
-  What does this person look like? (ask this again for each person sitting at the table)
-  What is this person's disposition? (ask this again for each person sitting at the table)

Then, the Diner will give each of the people a nickname and write a Profile about them, constructing a little fiction about the customers on the table. The Diner can come up with anything as long as it's sufficiently realistic and not too long. They should think about the following questions when writing Profiles:

-  What is this person's life like?
-  Why are they here?
-  What has been on their mind lately?

When they're done, they will pass the role of the Diner to the player on their left.




Repeat the cycle until every player has had a chance to play the Diner once, and at least 5 tables have been defined. At this point, the customers you've observed will start paying their checks.

Continue taking turns playing the Diner, but this time each player will pick a table that has already been defined and describe the characters' actions as they pay the check and leave, possibly subverting the assumptions that were made when those Profiles were written.

Once everyone they've observed has left, the Diner pays their check and leaves.

The Individual Version

When you go out to eat alone, sit somewhere you can discreetly look at many other tables. Then, start taking note of them, assigning numbers to each one (Table 1, Table 2...). Nickname the people on the table and write a short, fictional Profile about each of them. Make it sufficiently realistic and not too long, and think about the following questions:

-  What is this person's life like?
-  Why are they here?
-  What has been on their mind lately?

When the people at a table leave, update with your Profile with a short sentence about what they're going to do afterwards.

When you finish eating, thank the person who brought you your food and check, pay, and leave. I hope you've enjoyed your meal.