

# Day 180 in Polycule Housing

A ~~participatory shitpost~~ LARP for 6-12 people

## Day 180 In Poly Housing

No one has noticed that I am not in the polycule. I have been dish martyr for months now and my place in the house is all but solidified. I pay no bills, I have no rent to speak of; my only fear is that soon someone will ask "Who are you dating?" and my palace will collapse on my head.

Inspired by an anonymous Lex post that went viral  
(if you are the original shitposter, I will credit you!!!)

*by Jacqui Albin*

## Premise:

The whole polycule has finally managed to find a time that works for everyone to meet for a potluck and board game night! It'll be so nice to finally have the group together after living together for 6 months... but rumor has it that one person here isn't even part of the polycule and is just crashing here! And also, rent is coming up short, and somebody is to blame. Together, you need to figure out who among you isn't paying rent, who isn't part of the polycule, and if the two could be related.

## Vibe:

This is a game about community, belonging, exclusion, family, and relationship dynamics, paired with relatable, low-stakes drama and social deduction. It aims to examine human nature and the nature of relationships, how we define them, and how we value them.

## What:

Ideally, this game is played over a potluck meal with board games, to increase immersion. Can be brunch, can be dinner. As long as any board games involved aren't too "think-y" or involve too much talking about/during the game. So, no Dominion, but Ticket to Ride could work. Choose Monopoly if you want a *very* different vibe and want the whole polycule to hate each other at the end (this is not the original intended tone but I'm here for it and is an Officially Sanctioned Variant™ of *Day 180*). The goal is to mimic an actual "kitchen table polyamory" situation where everyone meets up for games and dinner and catches up with each other.

One character, The Poser, is not part of the polycule, and their ties to other characters are all entirely platonic, without any sexual or romantic elements, **and** their connections to other characters are shorter-term and less intense, especially compared to the more intense platonic connections that some other players have. They kind of just moved in with a few vague-acquaintances-turned-friends over the past few months, but each friend thinks they're *much* closer to the other friends in the house and assumes The Poser is paying rent with one of their other friends/ties/contacts. The Poser wants to keep freeloading off their friends and living here rent-free.

## Who:

Each player plays as an archetype of a person who lives in a shared, communal setting, defined briefly by what they contribute to the house community. Players choose the characters' names, pronouns, and backstories, all they have to go off of is what their character, in particular, contributes to the group. Each character has between 2 and 4 ties to other characters, depending on group size, which are chosen by players collaboratively.

At the start of each game, while picking characters, players (except for the player of The Lease-Signer) will pull slips from a hat saying whether they are or aren't "The Poser." A character who is assigned the role of "The Poser" will have their ties with other players **all** be totally platonic, and during workshoping, they will make their character have a more recent, less intense friendship- not a best friend of years who's their ride-or-die BFF.

Each character is *solely* defined and designated by what/how they contribute to the house community. Any character except the Lease-Signer can be The Poser.

List of archetypes:

Archetype	Description	Ties
The Lease-Signer	You deal with paperwork, legal crap, hassling the landlord, etc. You're the one who found this house for your group and had the great idea to turn it into a collective boarding house.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>You and the Handyperson have a complicated dynamic: yes, they fix stuff and fix it well, but you worry that some of their work may go a but beyond the scope of what's allowed in the lease. They insist that it's an improvement that the landlord should be <i>paying</i> them for, if anything, and that it's all up to code.</li><li>The Artist is going to ruin your security deposit</li><li>The Entertainer is just like... such an annoying theatre kid</li><li>The Healer and Gardener are growing weed, and yeah it's legal, but you don't want trouble</li></ul>

The Handyerson	Plumbing, electrical, flooring, tiling... if something is messed up or broken, you fix it and make it functional. It may not be pretty, but you bet it'll work.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The Lease-Signer is always on your tail about your larger home improvement projects, all worried about your repairs not being allowed in the lease. You're improving the house, it's all up to code, and the landlord would have had to pay thousands for the stuff you're doing for free! It's not like you're rearranging walls... usually...</li> <li>The Artist always complains that your repairs look ugly and that they have to fix your fixes... sometimes clogging stuff up with paint in the process.</li> </ul>
The Gourmande	You love to cook. You cook for your housemates frequently, are always sharing recipes, and try to contribute some funky snacks and ingredients to the kitchen's designated shared communal cabinet. You refuse to apologize for the durian pie.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The Pet Whisperer is mad at you because you kept letting one of the cats sample your meals and you shared some leftovers!</li> <li>The Gardener keeps trying to make the whole kitchen vegan, ugh</li> <li>The Stylist never wants to lend you thinks, it's like, super rude and total favoritism</li> </ul>
The Pet Whisperer	Whether it's dealing with a snake that made its way into the living room, taking care of the cats if they get sick, or petsitting for The Cinephile's very fussy parakeet that screams at everyone except you, you are the one to call for anything animal-related.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The Neat Freak is always frustrated by the pet hair, feathers, and occasional kitty litter that find their way around the house.</li> <li>The Gourmande overfed one of the cats while you were away and now the cat is <i>very round</i></li> <li>The Stylist gets mad that cat hair gets on clothes when they know the house has always had cats here</li> </ul>
The Neat Freak	You've always appreciated a clean, uncluttered space, and this extends to areas that you share with other people. Usually they don't do a <i>terrible</i> job, but you know you can always make it better, so you might as well tidy up a bit more.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The Pet Whisperer and The Gardener could always be more diligent when it comes to bringing dirt into the house</li> <li>The Gourmande never cleans all their dishes!</li> <li>The Artist is always being messy and leaving paint stains everywhere</li> </ul>
The Stylist	You do everyone's hair when they want to change their style or color, and can get anyone's makeup perfected and set to last all the way through a wild night out. You also would never hesitate to let one of your housemates borrow some of your clothes and accessories... as long as the outfit they have planned looks cute with them.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The Handyerson really goes around dressed like <i>that</i>?</li> <li>The Pet Whisperer is always giving back clothes with cat hair all over them</li> <li>The Gourmande has gotten oil stains on way too many of your clothes</li> </ul>
The Cinephile	Streaming services? In this economy?! Well, for you, it's worth it! You have ALL the subscriptions. All of them. And share your passwords to them liberally among your housemates... as long as they take some of your film suggestions every now and then.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The Healer can't appreciate the films you choose that have emotional depth and complexity, whining about how they're all "too depressing" and "lack healing energy"</li> <li>The Entertainer keeps playing music too loud, and keeps requesting Andrew Lloyd Weber musicals</li> <li>Everyone hates your feisty parakeet</li> </ul>
The Gardener	Plants love you, and the feeling is mutual. You always are supplying the house with the	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>You keep hoping that you can convince The Gourmande that fresh-grown vegetables can make veganism easy and</li> </ul>

	extra fruits and veggies you grow in the garden, and do the yardwork to make sure the patio always looks amazing.	<p>delicious, but they keep stinking up the kitchen with nasty animal juices</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>You clean up the outside of the house entirely on your own, but The Neat Freak gets upset if you dare get a speck of dirt inside the house in the process</li> <li>The Lease-Signer is worried that the cannabis plants you and The Healer are growing will get the house in trouble, despite it being legal here</li> </ul>
The Healer	You're the best with a first-aid kit, and are trained in massage and reiki. You aspire to improve the healing aura of the home, and disrupt all negative energies that create dis-ease.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The Cinephile is always playing films with the worst vibes on the communal TV, and it brings down the energy so much</li> <li>The Lease-Signer is worried that the cannabis plants you and The Gardener are growing will get the house in trouble, despite it being legal here</li> <li>The Hacker insists on installing 5G, which gives you such a bad astral headache</li> </ul>
The Artist	You focus on making this space beautiful in every way. You decorate the space and have paintings all over the walls, sharing your flipped-thrifted finds in the communal rooms.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The Lease-Signer keeps making backhanded comments about losing the security deposit due to your decorations</li> <li>The Neat Freak is mad at all the paint stains on the floor, but the floor looks so much more interesting now!</li> </ul>
The Entertainer	Everyone loves music, everyone loves a show, and you always have so much to share! Whether it's giving people recommendations for albums or being in-the-know about nearby concerts, you're the one to have around, and you can get people free tickets to even the most <i>exclusive</i> Broadway shows!	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The Cinephile gets mad at you for playing music too loud for them to watch movies, and hates that you always are trying to get them to play musicals</li> <li>The Lease-Signer really wishes you could stop bursting into song and playing the ukulele all the time</li> <li>The Hacker can never fix your computer right, even if they fix everyone else's!</li> </ul>
The Hacker	Whether it's installing new wifi, debugging peoples' computers, or upgrading the speaker system, you handle all the tech stuff here	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The Entertainer keeps getting viruses from visiting sketchy websites to download free music and bootleg recordings of musicals</li> <li>The Healer keeps claiming that the 5G is giving them "astral headaches" whatever that means</li> </ul>

Players each pick their archetype and between 2 and 4 players they want to have established ties to (2 minimum for smaller games, up to 4 for larger ones).

They pair up and for each pairing, they decide **together** what they want the nature of their relationship is: Platonic, Romantic, or Fuck Buddies. Not all of them need to be super intense, or intense at all! You could just both like to watch the same movies.

Any player can choose to have *only* platonic ties! But! At least one of those ties needs to be *particularly* intense and long-lasting if they're not The Poser.

See: [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Queerplatonic\\_relationship](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Queerplatonic_relationship)

The player pairs then workshop their relationship together by discussing these 4 topics for about 3 minutes each (note, for larger games, you can make the workshop time for each question shorter, and you can make it longer for smaller games with fewer ties per character):

- How you two met, if it was prior to moving into the house
- The nature of your interactions in the house/what other people would see you two doing

- 1 thing one of you has done in the past/has the habit of doing that you like and/or appreciate OR a fond memory you share
- 1 thing one of you has done in the past/has the habit of doing that you find/found frustrating OR a bad memory you share

Then, one last optional workshop bit where people meet up with whoever they want briefly, if anyone. This is not considered An Official Tie™ for mechanics purposes. Some characters, in their descriptions, have *negative* character dynamics prebuilt into their characters as well! You are allowed to make Official Ties™ with characters your character already has a dynamic with in your character blurbs, get complicated and messy with it!

## How:

The game begins with The Lease-Signer announcing that somebody has been slacking in their contribution to the communal rent envelope.

Characters get together in groups and talk, trying to discern over this fun day of food and games *who among them is The Poser*. There are no formal mechanics for discovering this, like missions or means of sabotage, just *pure* social deduction and conversation.

If somebody accuses somebody of being The Poser, they can confront them, or they can go to The Lease-Signer. Whether The Poser is publicly called out or quietly confronted by a smaller group at the end of game is up to you. The Lease-Signer *must* confront the person accused of being The Poser by game's end though, and will ask them to confirm who they pay their rent with. If they're wrongly accused and somebody can vouch that they're their rent-split buddy, there's no material consequence like elimination, but *boy howdy* is that awkward.

## Notes and tips on running the game:

I recommend specifying the tone and level of severity for your player group- you and your player group may want a darker tone that deals with topics of abusive relationships, classism, and racism and can calibrate/warn for that ahead of time, but the types of conflict that I picture while creating this game are lower-stakes- things like forgetting to pick somebody up once when they were relying on you for a ride, stealing their food from the fridge when it has their name on it, things that are just *plain-old dick moves* without getting too dark. Please tone-calibrate to your own needs!

Name tags with character names (and pronouns) along with the characters' archetype are strongly recommended

Games that could work well as part of this in-game board game night:

- Ticket to Ride
- Left-Right-Center
- Hive
- Tak
- Jenga
- Sushi Go!

## Virtual variant:

This can be played via group text message or video chat on Discord, Whatsapp, FB Messenger, or similar. Scheduling is hard, and instead of an in-person meeting, you've had to do a virtual house meeting instead. The tone will likely be more serious and focused on who's not paying rent, and less of a friendly gathering where the topic of rent comes up.