

DEAR LEADER

“DEAR LEADER,

THE FIELDS PRODUCE LESS

GRAIN THAN THE FIVE-YEAR PLAN TELLS THEM TO.

HOW SHOULD WE CONVINCING THEM TO HONOR

YOU WITH PROPER YIELDS?”

DEAR LEADER

“DEAR LEADER,

THE TRAITOROUS SOLDIERS OF THE PROVINCE BELOW THE 38TH PARALLEL

ARE PLAYING WAR GAMES WITH

THE RUNNING DOGS

OF THE IMPERIALIST YANKEE FORCES.

HOW SHOULD WE SHOW THEM THAT

OUR POWER EXCEEDS THEIRS?”

DEAR LEADER

“DEAR LEADER,

THE PEOPLE ARE REFUSING TO WATCH YOUR

SPEECH OF GREAT PROSPERITY

AND VICTORY. HOW SHALL

WE CONVINCING THEM THAT IT IS A

SOURCE OF GREAT ENJOYMENT

AND ENTERTAINMENT?”

DEAR LEADER

“DEAR LEADER,

YOUR MOST GLORIOUS AND

DISOBEDIENT SON KIM JONG-NAM ATTEMPTED

TO ENTER THE NEST OF IMPERIALIST

PROPAGANDA THAT IS TOKYO DISNEYLAND.

WE SAVED HIM FROM HIS DECISION

BEFORE HE BECAME INFECTED, BUT HOW SHOULD

WE HELP HIM SEE THE ERROR OF HIS WAYS?”

DEAR LEADER RULES SUMMARY

Setup: One player is declared Kim Jong-un and is given a bunch of tokens to use as demerits.

1. **Advice Phase:** A Policy Card is drawn and each Advisor suggests one solution. Play proceeds from the left of Kim Jong-un.

2. **Solution:** Kim Jong-un insults all the Advisors in one sentence, then offers a solution which is completely unique and uses none of the suggestions of the Advisors.

3. **Clap:** All the Advisors clap at the wisdom of Kim Jong-un.

4. **Bootlicking:** Each Advisor then takes a turn praising, exaggerating, and extrapolating the solution offered by Kim Jong-un. After each piece of acclaim is offered Kim Jong-un rebuts it with a single line of criticism.

5. **Awards:** Kim Jong-un then awards the Policy Card to the Advisor who has pleased him the most. That Advisor now becomes Kim Jong-un and we return to Step One.

DEAR LEADER

“DEAR LEADER,

AGENTS OF DECEIT FROM THE WESTERN
POWERS ARE BEAMING RADIO SIGNALS INTO
OUR COASTAL VILLAGES. HOW CAN WE
PROTECT OUR PEOPLE FROM THESE LIES?”

DEAR LEADER

“DEAR LEADER, WE HAVE DISCOVERED

GRAFFITI ON THE STREETS
OF PYONGYANG THAT REPRESENTS
THE DECADENT AND WARPED CAPITALIST
MONSTERS KNOWN AS “POKEMONS.”
HOW CAN WE PURIFY
THE MINDS OF ALL WHO MAY
HAVE SEEN THESE DISTURBING IMAGES?”

DEAR LEADER

“DEAR LEADER,

A VILLAINOUS SPY HAS BEEN CAUGHT AND
WILL NOT DIVULGE HIS SECRETS.

WHAT ADVICE DO
YOU GIVE THE INTERROGATORS?”

DEAR LEADER

“DEAR LEADER,

THE PEOPLE OF THE COAST INSIST
THEY ARE HUNGRY EVEN THOUGH
THEY RECEIVE AMPLE RATIONS.
WHAT CAN WE DO?”

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“DEAR LEADER,

“YOUR AUTOBIOGRAPHERS
ARE DISAGREEING ABOUT

THE CIRCUMSTANCES OF YOUR BIRTH,

COULD YOU PLEASE DESCRIBE THEM?”

“DEAR LEADER,

“SOME TEACHERS REFUSE

TO ACCEPT THE NEW HISTORY TEXTBOOKS.

HOW DO WE CONVINCHE THEM TO DO SO?”

DEAR LEADER

“DEAR LEADER,

“THE ARTISTS AT MANSUDAE
ART STUDIO IN PYONGYANG

ARE FAILING TO MAKE IDEOLOGICALLY

PROPER IMAGES. HOW WILL YOU INSPIRE

THEM TO AESTHETIC GREATNESS?”

ACCLAMATION
PHASE

LET
THEM
SPEAK

CLAP
YOUR
HANDS

ADVICE
PHASE



ON BEING KIM JONG-UN



- A. Give and rescind demerits at any time for any reason.
- B. Keep the game moving. If Advisors are stalling or speaking too long, hurry them up.
- C. You are the dictator. Keep everyone on their toes. Insult them, ignore them, find fault at every turn.

*a game by Tim Hutchings kickstarting July of 2017
this is a playtest version, please let me know what you think! dearleadergame@gmail.com*

Dear Leader is a game about being Kim v, Supreme Leader of the Democratic People's Republic of North Korea. One player at a time takes the role of Kim Jong-un, the other players are his advisors. Each round a Telegram Card will be drawn bearing a policy problem to be posed to Kim Jong-un. The advisors each take a turn suggesting possible solutions which then *cannot* be applied by Kim Jong-un. After each advisor has spoken, Kim Jong-un will insult them as a group and offer up a novel solution of his own. The advisors clap in awe and appreciation, then take turns praising and exaggerating Kim Jong-un's words. As each advisor offers their exaggeration Kim Jong-un must find fault with it. After all the advisors have had a turn exaggerating and being insulted, Kim Jong-un awards his most pleasing advisor the telegram card. That advisor then becomes the new Kim Jong-un.

This is a casual party game for 5-9+ players, conducive for drop-in/drop-out style play. Six players can play a full game in 30-40 minutes. It encourages one-upsmanship, bootlicking, creativity, insults, and clapping. Don't ever stop clapping.

To play this review version you will need to provide a handful of demerit tokens.

Set up:

Shuffle the Telegram Cards. Arrange the demerit tokens in the center of the table. A Kim Jong-un seizes power, or is chosen by the table.

On the role of Kim Jong-un: Punish your advisors, they are fools and bootlickers and are beneath contempt. Punish them for rambling and for being too concise, for talking in an insufficiently respectful tone, or for treating you like a simpleton. If they use big words or simple words punish them, if you are so inclined. Most importantly, punish them for taking too long and being unclear. You may punish with words or demerits or both. Part of the responsibility of being Kim Jong-un is to ensure play doesn't lag.

If play grows confused Kim Jong-un may hold up the phase tracking card to silently guide play.

Kim Jong-un must also work to ensure that play is respectful and fun. Insult the advisor, not the player. Avoid accents, criticize the state not the people.

Demerits: Kim Jong-un may give or rescind demerits for any reason at any time. Advisors should endeavor to avoid demerits!

A Play Round

The Advice Phase

The advisor to the left of Kim Jong-un draws a card and reads it aloud, that advisor then offers up a possible solution to the problem and passes the card to their left. Each advisor then takes a turn offering a solution and passing the card. These suggestions should be concise and clear, and each advisor should offer only one solution. Advisors, remember that this is your opportunity to create problems for Kim Jong-un because whatever idea you offer up he will be forced to reject in favor of something else. Have fun blocking off the easy solutions and forcing Kim Jong-un into ridiculous extremes. Advisors should give their suggestion in a single breath (barring disability, of course).

The Solution Phase

Kim Jong-un begins the solution phase by roundly insulting the advisors for their lack of wisdom and paucity of vision. Kim Jong-un will then offer a solution to the policy problem which is distinct from all the advice he was given. If the advisors have done a good job of making suggestions, this can be quite hard. After Kim Jong-un gives his solution everyone claps in appreciation of his wisdom.

The Bootlicking Phase

Beginning with the advisor to Kim Jong-un's left, each advisor will now get a chance to exaggerate the wisdom and wonderfulness of Kim Jong-un's decision. The advisors should seek to one-up each other in their praise and imaginings, and to extrapolate Kim Jung Un's ideas in different ways, and insult each other. As each advisor offers their piece Kim Jong-un gets one or two sentences with which to find fault with what the advisor said. This criticism may or may not be accompanied by demerits.

Kim Jong-un will then award the advisor who pleased him the most by giving them the original policy problem card. This advisor now takes on the role of Kim Jong-un and a new round begins.

Game End

A good play object is one round for each participant and arranging it so each person be Kim Jong-un at least once. After the last round each player should take a turn reading aloud a factoid from the back of a Telegram Card. *[The playtest cards do not have the factoids on them. A sample factoid is "In North Korea jail punishments are often meted out to the entire family of the criminal!" or "As much as 3.5 million North Koreans may have starved to death during the late 1990s." These factoids are intended to undercut the humor of the game and to remind us that North Korea is a human rights tragedy.]*

The player with the most demerits is then taken out and shot.

Play Example

Advisor 1, to the left of Kim Jong-un: "I see we have a telegram! *(reading aloud)* 'Dear Leader, the fields produce less grain than the Five-Year Plan tells them to. How should we convince them to honor you with proper yields?' Oh my. Well, Dear Leader, your illustrious father addressed this very issue by detailing army units to assist in the fields. For it wasn't the fecundity of our land's farms that was in question, but the manpower needed to cope with the overgrowing lushness."

Advisor 2: "I would recommend that we empty out the prisons and reeducation centers and set the miscreants to work as needed. All must contribute!"

Advisor 3: "Perhaps the fields need more fertilizer? We can siphon off the waste of the cities and carry it to the fields and thus bring about more perfect socialism."

Advisor 4: "Obviously a Five-Year Plan isn't enough. We need a Ten-Year Plan, but will realize it in just three years. Problem solved."

Advisor 5: "Uh... Um..."

Kim Jong-un: "Do not waste our time, cretin!" *(KJU hands out a demerit.)*

Advisor 5: "Thank you, Dear Leader."

Advisor 4: "Ha!"

Kim Jong-un: "Do not mock your betters, for he was wise enough to remain silent rather than show his ignorance!" *(KJU hands out a demerit.)*

Kim Jong-un: "You are all reprobates and your ideas are terrible, I should chop you into meal and feed you to our hungry fields. However, that will not be necessary for I have a very wise plan. It is the fields themselves that need indoctrination. We will set up loudspeakers and bring the word of communism to the farmlands twenty-four hours a

day! My songs shall be recorded and played for the recalcitrant plants, my dances shall be performed for the edification of the soil itself. Thus it shall be!"

Advisors: *(all clap)*

Advisor 1: "Your wisdom exceeds all reason, Dear Leader! The very stones shall echo your lyrical beauty through the Earth itself and the capitalist dogs on the other side of the world shall hear your truthful words in their sleep!"

Kim Jong-un: "Bah, there can be no opposite side of the Earth for Korea is the center of all. You disappoint me."

Advisor 2: "We shall still have reason to march out the prisoners to hear your words and to help harvest the immediate overabundance which will spray forth from the ground. No word shall be wasted in the air if it can come to land in the ears of the captured spies in the reeducation camps!"

Kim Jong-un: "Do you honestly believe that dirt and plants can understand the Korean tongue? No! I shall be singing to them in their secret language which only I understand, no prisoner would benefit from such a concert."

Advisor 3: "As we plow the fields we shall do so in great rings and the furrows in the dirt shall act as a great musical 'long playing record' of your words!"

Kim Jong-un: "Are you suggesting that fertilizer and dirt are a worthy method of recording my patriotic songs? I hereby confiscate your large and fancy hat to chasten you." *(KJL hands out a demerit.)*

Advisor 4: "I can imagine the power of your voice does not even need to be broadcast over loudspeakers, Dear Leader, but your merest whisper as you walk across the fields shall carry across the whole of our land."

Kim Jong-un: "You insult me, advisor, by suggesting I need even walk upon the land to be heard. Should I so choose it my voice might boom unending from one end of the Earth to the other, all without my rising from this chair."

Advisor 5: "It is my earnest hope, Dear Leader, that we are ready for your enterprise for it is my earnest certainty that the very ground and stones themselves will rise up in a patriotic fervor to strike down all the enemies of Korea."

Kim Jong-un: "If that happened then what would we eat? You think I plan so poorly?"

Kim Jong-un: *(KJL grudgingly hands the Telegram Card to his favorite, Advisor 3, who then becomes the new Kim Jong-un. Play continues with the advisor to the left of Kim Jong-un drawing a new Telegram Card.)*

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