Ceremony of Surprise

a performative party game

Before the game

Arrange for a tasty cake.

Ask players to bring party items, one or two each.

Setting up

All players write their name on a name card.

Shuffle the name cards and replace one, without revealing it, with the wild card.

The name of the person on the replaced card remains secret. This is the person who is to be surprised at the end of the game.

Shuffle the name cards and blindly distribute them amongst the players. For the remainder of the game, players may only look at their own name card, unless a played card tells them otherwise.

Give two action cards to each player. Stack the remaining action cards face down.

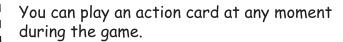The goal of the game is to organise a surprise party for an unknown fellow player.

Find out who has to be surprised, without spoiling the surprise!

Wild card
You can trade this card for another player's name card.

Name card
This is the name of one of the players. This player is not "it".

Show me
Look at another player's name card.
Discard this card after use.

Don't think so
Block the effect of another player's action card.
Discard...

Why thank you
Take a random action card from another player.
Discard this card after use.

Play

Players take turns proposing a party item for inclusion in the coming surprise party. All players (including the proposer) pick voting cards and reveal them simultaneously. If the majority votes in favor, the item is immediately included and these players draw an extra action card. If the majority votes against, the item is out of the game and these players draw an extra action card.

You can play an action card at any moment during the game.

If the action card deck runs out shuffle the discard pile and continue play.

Yea
If the majority also votes in favor, they receive one action card.
This is a...

Nay
If the majority also votes against, they each receive one action card.
This is a vote card.

The surprise

The game ends when all name cards are destroyed by action cards or when the party ingredients have run out. Count down from five to one. On one, point to the person you think is written on the secret name card and shout "surprise!". Then reveal the secret card to all the players.

Everyone who surprised correctly is rewarded with an equal share of cake, unless the person on the secret card correctly guessed itself. In this case it gets all the cake.