

Buddy Movie

This game is for playing out your very own version of a "buddy movie" where two friends go through a lot of hijinks and shenanigans and end up finding out something about themselves and each other in the process.

What you Need to Play

A friend that makes you laugh, a couple of six sided dice, and some paper or note cards and pencil or pen.

Oh yeah, and jokes.

A Quick Overview

If you look at most buddy movies, you have two friends (usually guys, but no need to stick to that for your game) who have something in common but are also very different in some important way. These guys end up pursuing some goal, sometimes totally normal, sometimes totally wacky, and along the way to their goal they have a falling out over their differences before realizing they need their friend's complimentary approach to things, and then they get their goal, but maybe their view of that has changed along the way too.

So, in play, you and your friend will play the roles of two folks who (re)discover the bond of friendship while they recall their wacky adventure, maybe at a holiday party or something (okay, pretty lame and obvious use of the Little Game Chef Ingredients, but work with me here).

The Setup

Okay, you and your friend should each grab a notecard or piece of paper or something. It's not gonna have much on it, you can probably even do without it, but it comes in handy.

Next, both of you should talk about what sort of buddy movie sounds funny: cops, stoners, time travel, high school kids looking to get laid? Whatever it is, you should come up with one "trait" that describes what your two characters have in common, and that you want to focus on (this can be as basic as "best friends" or "cops" or as out there as "Both ride a Delorian into the future"). Both of you should write this trait on your paper. If you wanna get real fancy, you can

even write "traits" somewhere and put this one under it. Whatever.

With that step down, come up with a name. Yeah, you could probably do this before that last one, or after the next one, but I put it here, so it's obviously important. Your guy or gal needs a name, and in comedy, the name is often painfully fitting for the sort of person you are, so this might help you out with the next step.

Now comes the time where you plant the seeds of the funny. If both characters had a major thing in common and had exactly the same personality, there'd be no humor there, no opportunity to get your friend arrested for what you did or help him out of a bind his own extreme personality got him into. So you're going to write one more trait on your character sheet (just one! Don't even think about writing more traits, I'm watching). Each character should have an opposing or complimentary trait here.

This set up worked in the grand daddy of buddy comedy, the Odd Couple, and it'll work for you too. You can pick "neat freak" and "slob" or "straight arrow" and "maverick" or "ladies man" and "family man". Whatever gets your motor going and sounds like a recipe for funny conflicts. Funny conflicts, mind you, not dramatic ones! If you want dramatic conflict, go play Sorcerer or In a Wicked Age or something, damnit.

Even though you want the traits to provide comedic conflict, you're also going to want to make sure each can address or compensate for the other. Figuring out ways to do this shouldn't be too hard, but the point is that neither guy is going to get what he wants by himself and his extreme viewpoint, he needs his broheme to fill in his blind spots.

The last thing each of your character's needs is a "goal". This goal might be a seemingly simple one, like "get to a particular burger joint to cure the munchies", or more involved one like "become a cop like I see in the action movies". Now, this is comedy, not drama, so your character is going to get his goal, or at the very, very least will be presented with the solution to his goal on a silver plate, which he can decide to take or not. Your character might feel differently about the goal when he does finally get to it, but if he turns it down or otherwise doesn't get it, it will be because he has a more satisfying or hopeful resolution in front of him. Both

characters can have the same goal or different ones, but don't make them diametrically opposed, as you're both going to get them, right?

Okay, with that, you're done setting up, you're ready to play!

Rules of Play

First off, the most important rule of the game: make with the funny. Ironically enough, I'm not kidding here. I told you to play with a friend who makes you laugh, right? Then y'all should have no trouble making jokes that you both find funny, especially with the help I give you. So, if you're not being funny, you're breaking the rules, and basically you're a cheater. Don't do it.

Anyway, with that out of the way, let me explain the basic way a scene works out, and then I'll tell you about the 4 special scenes (opening, falling out, climax, denouement).

Scenes

So, throughout the game, you're going to trade back and forth with your friend being the "conflict player" and the "resolution player". The resolution player picks one of the conflict player's character's traits (either his shared trait or his unique one is fine) and introduces a scene where that trait is going to bring the conflict player into some kind of, well, conflict related to that trait. The resolution player will set the scene, describing where they are, who else is there, and so forth. He'll also play any characters talking to the conflict player (and the conflict player will play any characters talking to the resolution player, makes sense, yeah?). But most of the good interaction is going to be between the two player characters, so keep the focus there, it's y'all's movie!

Remember when setting up and playing the conflicts that the goal is wacky hijinks, not soul searing difficult choices or intense moral quandaries. Unless they are funny soul searing choices or moral quandaries, you're cheating, remember that.

Now, this division of "resolution character" and "conflict character" implies a much clearer distinction between what each player is doing than is really there. You should both constantly be suggesting funny ways for stuff to go, awful but hilarious things that can befall your own character, and so forth. Just work with each other to keep it amusing to you two.

Anyway, both of you play through the scene until you get to a point where the chosen trait really

comes into focus as what the scene is revolving around. This might be right at the beginning of the scene, but not necessarily. At this point, the resolution player is going to roll a d6 (that's a six sided die, the regular kind you get in Monopoly or Yahtzee, if you're a normal person).

If he rolls a 5 or 6, then the conflict player decides how his trait actually helps him out in the awkward situation/conflict, he puts a tick mark next to that trait, and the roles of "conflict player" and "resolution player" flip flop. The new resolution player can continue the existing scene, but now focused on one of the other guy's traits, or he can start a new scene. As described above, the resolution character picks a trait from the conflict character and frames the scene to revolve around that.

But if he rolls a 1 to 4, then somehow his trait fails to get him through the conflict or even makes it worse (making it worse is almost always better). You should play through how this awkwardness happens, or else you're not going to get much funny out of it. Do not mark a tick mark, but do reverse the roles of resolution character and conflict character. In this situation, the new conflict described has to lead directly from the flub up from the failed conflict roll. So, it can be a new scene, but it has to be related (like you're both in jail now because of the last scene or something). Just like before, the new resolution character picks a trait from the new conflict player's two traits.

Optional Rule: The Fail Die

If you're having trouble coming up with funny ways for the conflict character's trait to fail, or if you just like randomness, or heck, if you feel like this is a roleplaying game and it needs more dice, damnit, then this rule is for you.

When a resolution roll fails (1-4) then you roll the Fail Die to see what sort of problem to describe. It should still be linked to the failed trait, but this gives you some further constraints to spur on your creativity:

1-2: Slapstick

3-4: Mistaken Identity

5-6: Comic Misunderstanding

Special Scenes

There are four special scenes in the game: *the opening, falling out, climax, and denouement/epilogue.*

Opening

In the opening scene, the trait for the scene is automatically the shared trait, and no resolution rolls are made. Just play through the scene setting up the starting relationship of your characters and establishing what their goals are. Don't rush through this scene just because there's no rolling, and don't think you can't have anything funny just because there's no "conflict". Take turns describing what's going on and playing the non player characters. Once you've got a good stage set to introduce some zaniness, then you're ready to move onto the regular scenes. Y'all can decide who is the first resolution character and who the first conflict character anyway y'all want, but just flip a coin or roll a die if you can't decide.

Falling Out

It's gonna happen. Your characters' critical differences are going to come to a head, and they're going to fight and call each other out on the problems with their unique trait. Once each trait on both character sheets has at least two tick marks next to it, the next scene is going to be the falling out scene. This should build on all of the failures and humiliations and frustrations of the prior scenes. In this scene, at minimum, play out a conflict with an automatic failure for each character's unique trait. You can get into as much depth with these failures as you like, even keep flip-flopping from one failure to another as long as you feel like it takes to set up the situation properly. Because, of course, y'all are going to make up. It's a comedy!

Climax/Make Up

Okay, this scene is where your characters realize that the other character actually compliments him and brings something necessary to the table, and their friendship is renewed. Depending on the sort of movie you're doing, this relationship climax may also be the climax in the action towards your goals. Like in a cop buddy movie, the straight laced cop saves his friend through careful police work, but then his friend saves him with his wild card actions, all during the big fight to get the bad guy. In other movies, you're gonna sort out the goals in a somewhat low key way after the friends make up. Like if two best friends realize they need each other in their lives, and then one of them happily gets married with his friend as the best man afterwards.

To play the climax, play out a normal scene, but be sure to give it the significance it deserves. The

wackiness should be at its wackiest, the unique traits should be at their most extreme. Keep playing the same scene until both characters have successfully resolved a situation related to their unique traits.

Denouement/Epilogue

Finally, you should play out and narrate a scene with no conflict rolls that shows all three traits being used in a happy and successful way. Stress how the character's friendship is stronger and better for their adventure, and how they appreciate their friend and his unique outlook all the more, and tie it together with their common trait. Make sure you describe how each character's goal worked out, if that wasn't described in the climax. You can also narrate as much of an epilogue as both of you think is appropriate and funny. Personally, I love the end of movie mini-bios, like in *Animal House* or *Can't Hardly Wait*.

Another Optional Rule

So, if you're an astute observer of American comedic movies, you probably realized that the formula I laid out here for a Buddy Movie is shockingly similar to the general storyline of a romantic comedy. Heck, that similarity is what drives pretty much all of the humor in "I Love You Man". So, with the right choices of goals and traits (and with the right other player, if you catch my meaning) this game would work pretty great as a romantic comedy game as well. If you're into that.

And that's all there is to it, folks! Have fun and make with the funny!