


# THE LOVE BALLON

The title 'THE LOVE BALLON' is written in a large, bold, black, sans-serif font. The word 'LOVE' is on the second line, and 'BALLON' is on the third line. The letter 'O' in 'LOVE' and the first 'O' in 'BALLON' are stylized with a diagonal line. To the right of the word 'BALLON', there are two hot air balloons. The balloons are drawn with simple lines, showing the basket and the ropes. The entire title and illustration are centered within a decorative border.

*a story game of...   
hijinks, humor & romance*

*By Ray Chou & Vincenzo Ferriero*

Mythopoeia™

Story RPG

## **The Love Balloon**



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*Blades in the Dark, Fiasco,*  
*The Love Boat, & Ainori Love Bus*

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# WELCOME ABOARD!

*The Love Balloon* is a light roleplaying story game inspired by the wholesome yet innuendo-laden sitcoms of the late 70's and early 80's - shows like *The Love Boat*, *Fantasy Island*, and *Three's Company*.

In order to play, you will need the following:

- ♥ 2-6 players.
- ♥ 1-2 hours.
- ♥ A handful of six-sided dice.
- ♥ A Benny, which can be anything (think dealer chip).
- ♥ Some notecards and pencils.
- ♥ Your imaginations!

## THE GAME

In *The Love Balloon*, you collaborate with the other players to create a story. Each of you invents a different character informed by a **backstory** and **motivation**. You then play through a set number of scenes prompted by **story beats** that will generate conflict.

Each of the bolded terms is generated by the *game*\* while the players fill in the rest of the details.

\* tables located in the back.

# STYLE

**FANTASY - ROMANCE - QUIRKY  
EPISODIC - SILLY - WHOLESOME**

The game is a mix between acting and conversation. You might hop into your character to address another character directly, only to later hop out and describe their actions. That's okay! That's how we play.

## THE ENSEMBLE

*The Love Balloon* is played with an **Ensemble** cast of six characters. Ideally, there will be one player for each character, but if not, players may have to embody multiple characters.

Everyone can discuss and pitch in ideas on where the story should go, but it's up to the players acting in the scene to determine what happens.

Sometimes you may bring in more characters, either in a love triangle, or just as a presence in the scene. That's okay, but try to key the scene around two characters for best results.

## RATING

*The Love Balloon* is strictly a PG-13 fantasy. The game is about love - any character can fall in love with any other character. We as players have some say over who the characters fall in love with, but so does the roll of the dice! *If compelled, love cannot be denied.*

If a child falls for an adult, it's an innocent type of puppy love. If an adult falls for a child, it's a platonic type of love fueled by admiration, mentorship, or sympathy. Otherwise, all love in the game is romantic love.

A kiss is the ultimate expression of love in the game. Anything further is implied.

As with all roleplaying games, playing *The Love Balloon* implies a social contract between all participants to respect each other and embody the principles and spirit of the game.

You may want to implement some sort of safety system to abide by, especially when playing with strangers or acquaintances.

Always remember that *The Love Balloon* is about matters of the heart. Hate has no place here.

## THE CHARACTERS

The Ensemble consists of six characters: one **Crew Member**, a pair of Guests in a **Relationship**, and a trio of Guests who are strangers.

Crew Members are **typecast** and are a little more one-dimensional.

Guests have both a **backstory** and **motivation** that drives their involvement in the story.



# HOW TO PLAY

Each game of *The Love Balloon* follows the same structure of play.

## ***I. Casting***

The Ensemble consists of one Crew Member, a pair of Guests in a Relationship, and three Guests who are strangers. Players flesh out the details of their characters after picking a crew role or backstory and motivation. Spend a couple of minutes thinking about who you are and how you got here. *Guests who are a Couple should craft their characters together.*

Casting is also a good place to take a look at the Hijinks and discuss which look appealing. After all characters are created, the Ensemble may want to introduce their characters in conversation before moving on to Embarkment.

## ***II. Embarkment***

The characters embark on *The Love Balloon* by playing three scenes that *explore backstories and motivation*:

1. The Crew introduces a Stranger to the ship. One shows interest in the other.
2. The Guest Couple settles in.
3. A pair of Strangers meet.

Though the order is fixed, the acting players determine where the scene takes place. Remember that it's okay to talk about the scene before it happens and to hop between acting and conversation when needed.

Afterwards, one player grabs the Benny and begins the next phase of play.

### **The Cycle of Play**

1. **PLAYER WITH THE BENNY...**
2. **PICKS ANOTHER CHARACTER** to enact a scene with. That player gets to...
3. **CHOOSE THE LOCATION.**
4. **ROLL FOR A STORY BEAT** to determine the premise of the scene.
5. **APPLY KARMA** to determine how it ends.
6. **PLAY THE SCENE** until it comes to a natural conclusion .
7. **PASS THE BENNY** to the next nearest player who was not in the scene.

### **III. Day in the Clouds**

Time to float! Characters *scope out prospects while playing into their role, backstory, or motivation.* Use the **Cycle of Play** to enact three scenes with two characters each. Each character must feature in a scene.

### **IV. Port of Call**

The ship stops at an exotic locale\* as *romantic intentions are made known while others come into conflict with others.*

Use the **Cycle of Play** to enact different scenes on or off the ship featuring at least two characters each. Build plotlines using story beats and karma as prompts! Develop the story together using “Yes, and...” improvisational principles.

*\* Port of Call table located in the back.*

### **V. Night with the Stars**

Each **Cycle of Play** corresponds with one day on the Float. Play as many cycles as you need to develop a rich and intriguing story. Then when all players are ready, the characters gather for one last soiree where they confront each other and make hard choices: *the Night with the Stars.* *The Night with the Stars* is an additive scene that begins with two characters and expands to include the entire ensemble.

***During the scene, all characters confront each other and face the consequences.***

## ***VI. Under the Moonlight***

After the *Night with the Stars*, the characters break off with each other and confess their feelings under the moonlight, perhaps sharing in a first or final kiss. The scene order and location should be foregone conclusions at this point in the game.



*Before Disembarkment, the players vote on who takes home the **Benny**™, the player they feel contributed most to the story. The winner of the **Benny**™ has the privilege of encompassing the message of the episode at the end of the game and singing us out.*

## ***VII. Disembarkment***

The game ends with the characters leaving *The Love Balloon* and saying goodbye to the Crew Member one by one or in pairs.

When the last Guest leaves, we fade to black as the winner of the **Benny**™ codifies the theme of the episode and sings us out.

## **ENDING THE GAME**

At a certain point it should become obvious to the players where the story is going. When this happens don't fight it! That means the rules have done their job. If you haven't reached this point after Port of Call, add another Cycle of Play! Keep the story moving and perhaps suggest some Hijinks to create interesting scenarios.

If your ensemble knows how to bring it home, just bring it home. If you think you have an idea, pause and pitch your solution to others when appropriate. Usually this point happens around the *Night with the Stars*. Use that scene's story beat as a guide to come to a satisfying ending.

## SETTING

The **Love Balloon** takes place in a world where airships have become the dominant means of transport, commerce, and war. Nevermind all that though! Come embark on the finest and most magical love balloon in all of Aventine!

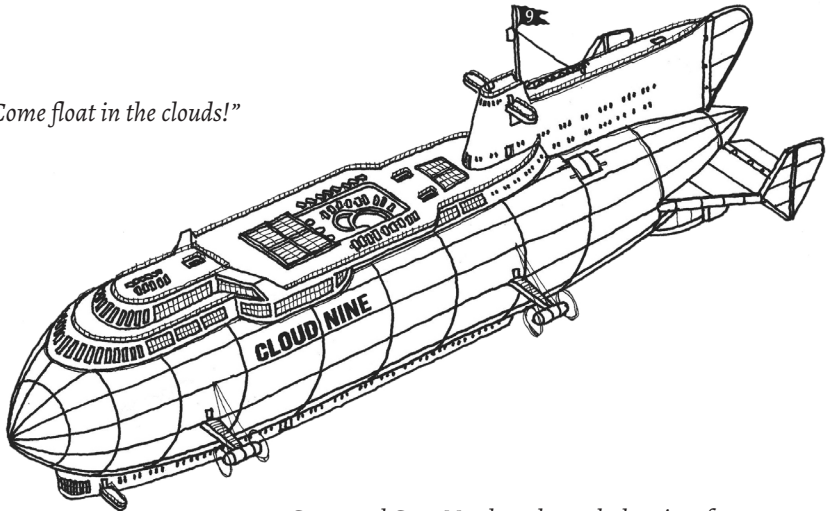
## THE SHIP

No other airship has sailed the winds more than the magnificent *Cloud Nine*. Welcome at any port, its guests - from Kings and Presidents to Celebrities and Commoners - have attested to the ship's magical voyages of the heart.

## LOCATIONS

**LOUNGE - CASINO - BAR - BALLROOM - POOL - DECK - QUARTERS - DINING ROOM  
BUFFET - THEATER - HANGAR - GYM - LIBRARY - CABINS  
HALLWAY - STAIRS - CARGO - PLANES**

*"Come float in the clouds!"*



*Guests and Crew Members choose the location of a scene.*

## STORY BEATS

The **Story Beat** helps set a premise and purpose for scenes. Roll a die randomly for a Story Beat using the table to the right when prompted to find out what a scene is about.

Story Beats are not suggestions but *compulsions* for the characters. Before acting, the players in the scene should discuss how they are interpreting the Scene Beat to set up the scene.

If the characters are lost on how to setup a scene they can ask observing players or reroll.

## KARMA

**Karma** helps indicate to the players when and how to end a scene. Before a scene is played, the observing player to the left of the Benny chooses someone in the scene to either succeed or fail.

Note that the rule explicitly denotes just one character. Karma is not zero sum: *in order for someone to succeed, the other person does not need to fail*, and vice versa. It can play out like that sometimes, but shouldn't always.

When players are working out a scene, they should use karma to drive towards a conclusion that advances the story. When a scene ends, one or more players may indicate so with their hands or calling "scene!"

### Story Beats

1. **ROMANCE** - one character woos another.
2. **CROSSING** - two characters come into conflict over motivation or backgrounds.
3. **HELPING** - one character tries to help another with romance or motivations.
4. **MYSTERY** - two characters investigate something.
5. **BACKSTORY** - the backstory of the characters guide the scene.
6. **MOTIVATION** - one character's motivation guides the scene.

# HIJINKS

**Hijinks\*** are powerful ways to heighten or hijack the drama in an episode of *The Love Balloon*. Some are presented as scene suggestions, others modify motivations, while many more are entire shark jumping premises. Use hijinks to spice up your game in fun and flavorful ways.

All players have to agree to enact a hijink. Hijinks work best during *Day in the Clouds* and *Port of Call*. The presence of a hijink may warrant an additional **Cycle of Plays** before the *Night with the Stars* to reach a satisfying ending.

Use Hijinks sparingly: we recommend 0-2 per episode.

*\* Hijinks table located in the back.*

## THE CREW MEMBER

When playing as the **Crew Member**, roll 1d6 and use the table to the right. That's your motivation. The rest of the character is up to you!

Play into the typecast as much as possible.



### Introducing...

1. **THE CAPTAIN** - *mentors others.*
2. **THE BARTENDER** - *acts silly.*
3. **THE ENTERTAINER** - *plays hard to get.*
4. **THE DIRECTOR** - *brings people together.*
5. **THE GOPHER** - *misreads situations.*
6. **THE MCLOVIN** - *always shoots their shot.*

# RELATIONSHIP

Two Guests start out in a **Relationship**. Roll 2d6. Use the first die for the first number and the second die for the second. *For example, a die roll of 6 and 5 would result in 65. Twins!*

- |                      |                     |                   |
|----------------------|---------------------|-------------------|
| 11. COUPLE           | 21. REUNITED        | 31. TEAMMATES     |
| 12. SIBLINGS         | 22. FORMER          | 32. RELIGIOUS     |
| 13. RIVALS           | 23. HONEYMOONERS    | 33. CLUB          |
| 14. FRIENDS          | 24. ACQUAINTANCES   | 34. CULTISTS      |
| 15. COLLEAGUES       | 25. RETIREES        | 35. CRIMINALS     |
| 16. EXES             | 26. UNHAPPY         | 36. CODEPENDENTS  |
| 41. BIG / LITTLE     | 51. BACHELORS       | 61. LIFELONG      |
| 42. BRASH / QUIET    | 52. SPRINGBREAKERS  | 62. BEDBUDDIES    |
| 43. YOUNG / OLD      | 53. ANNIVERSARY     | 63. LONG DISTANCE |
| 44. BOLD / MEEK      | 54. REVOLUTIONARIES | 64. SWINGERS      |
| 45. MENTOR / MENTEE  | 55. ESTRANGED       | 65. TWINS         |
| 46. CRUSH / CLUELESS | 56. CARETAKER       | 66. ON A WHIM     |

# BACKSTORY

Every Guest has a **backstory**. Roll 2d6. se the first die for the first number and the second die for the second. *For example, a roll of 1 and 2 would mean you are a 12. Stowaway!*

11. A SALESPERSON  
12. A STOWAWAY  
13. A CELEBRITY  
14. A JOKER  
15. A THIEF  
16. A CHEERLEADER

21. A CELEBRITY  
22. A CHILD  
23. A HOLY PERSON  
24. A GAZILLIONAIRE  
25. A DENTIST  
26. A DEBUTANTE

31. A SOCIALITE  
32. A WIDOWER  
33. A WRITER  
34. A DETECTIVE  
35. A MUSICIAN  
36. A BOMBSHELL

41. A BOOKWORM  
42. A HITMAN  
43. A WORRYWART  
44. A BACHELOR  
45. A MATCHMAKER  
46. A PETOWNER

51. A MOGUL  
52. A NERD  
53. A SLIMEBALL  
54. AN ATHLETE  
55. A PERFORMER  
56. A DIPLOMAT

61. A SCION  
62. A NIGHTMARE  
63. NEWLY RICH  
64. DIVORCEE  
65. A CURMUDGEON  
66. AN ARTIST

# MOTIVATION

Every Guest starts with a **motivation**. Roll 2d6. Use the first die for the first number and the second die for the second. *For example, a roll of 5 and 4 would mean you are 54. ...secretly inspecting the ship!*

- |   |   |   |
|---|---|---|
| 11. ... <i>dealing with a divorce.</i>        | 21. ... <i>avoiding commitment.</i>           | 31. ... <i>a chronic liar.</i>            |
| 12. .... <i>running away from home.</i>       | 22. ... <i>not who they say they are.</i>     | 32. ... <i>losing their memory.</i>       |
| 13. ... <i>out for a grand old time.</i>      | 23. ... <i>consumed by jealousy.</i>          | 33. ... <i>living a double life.</i>      |
| 14. .... <i>wants to be alone.</i>            | 24. ... <i>with a heart of gold.</i>          | 34. ... <i>looking for romance.</i>       |
| 15. .... <i>madly in love with someone.</i>   | 25. ... <i>looking for commitment.</i>        | 35. ... <i>has an addiction.</i>          |
| 16. ... <i>afraid of their true feelings.</i> | 26. ... <i>is dying.</i>                      | 36. ... <i>is terrified of strangers.</i> |
| 41. ... <i>has lost passion.</i>              | 51. ... <i>holding on to old grudges.</i>     | 61. ... <i>a hard time getting up.</i>    |
| 42. ... <i>just wants to be accepted.</i>     | 52. ... <i>looking for revenge.</i>           | 62. ... <i>oblivious to someone else.</i> |
| 43. ... <i>has no respect.</i>                | 53. ... <i>infatuated with someone.</i>       | 63. ... <i>wants to break free.</i>       |
| 44. ... <i>is looking for someone.</i>        | 54. ... <i>secretly inspecting the ship.</i>  | 64. ... <i>feels destined by fate.</i>    |
| 45. ... <i>feels misunderstood.</i>           | 55. ... <i>pretending to be someone else.</i> | 65. ... <i>has a terrible secret.</i>     |
| 46. ... <i>needs a break.</i>                 | 56. ... <i>invited by the crew.</i>           | 66. ... <i>wants open relationships.</i>  |

## PORT OF CALLS

Characters can also choose to stay on the ship during **Port of Call**. Choose from below or use the first die for the first number and the second die for the second. This phase can be played any time of the day. *For example, a roll of 4 and 3 would set the scene on a 43. Boardwalk.*

- 11. WONDER
- 12. PLANE RIDE
- 13. WATER
- 14. MOUNTAINS
- 15. SKY
- 16. CITY

- 21. BAZAAR
- 22. SOUVENIR SHOP
- 23. EXPENSIVE
- 24. LEISURE
- 25. CULTURAL
- 26. BACCHANAL

- 31. BEACH
- 32. SNOW
- 33. DESERT
- 34. FOREST
- 35. VALLEY
- 36. CAVE

- 41. MUSEUM
- 42. MAIN STREET
- 43. BOARDWALK
- 44. PARK
- 45. CAFE
- 46. RESTAURANT

- 51. CONCERT
- 52. MARKET
- 53. SPORT
- 54. TEMPLE
- 55. CASTLE
- 56. DUNGEON

- 61. ZOO
- 62. RUINS
- 63. OASIS
- 64. JUNGLE
- 65. GEYSER
- 66. GLACIER



# HJINKS

All players must agree before enacting a **Hijink**. They are best used early in the game. You may want to add another Cycle of Play when in effect. Arranged in order of absurdity. Pick your flavor and don't overseason!

11. **TRIANGLE** - *Uh oh, it's a love triangle!*
12. **SECRET** - *Compel a character to roll or pick a secret motivation.*
13. **INEBRIATED** - *One or more characters feels looser than normal.*
14. **SONG** - *The scene must feature song.*
15. **DANCE** - *The scene must feature dance.*
16. **FIGHT** - *The characters must fight.*
  
21. **CRIMINALS** - *bad guys come on board the ship.*
22. **CASTAWAY** - *a castaway with a secret motivation is found.*
23. **MURDER** - *someone on board is murdered and everyone is a suspect.*
24. **DISASTER** - *an iceberg appears in the clouds.*
25. **CHEKOV** - *plant an object in the scene.*
26. **SUPERNATURAL** - *something weird happens on the ship.*
  
31. **MISTAKEN IDENTITY** - *the scene must have a case of mistaken identity.*
32. **ACCIDENT** - *the scene features an accident*
33. **BOTTLE** - *two characters get stranded with only a bottle between them.*
34. **CELEBRITY** - *invoke a real life celebrity to guest star in your episode.*
35. **CLIPS** - *the characters all know each other and every scene invokes a flashback.*
36. **ABED** - *one of the players plays themselves and provides commentary.*

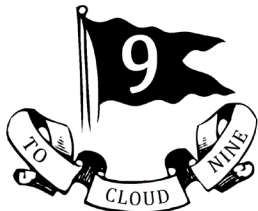
## **JUMP THE SHARK!**



The following page contains more powerful hijinks that will jump the shark and take over the entire premise of your game. For fans of genre silliness. You have been warned!

41. **BABY** - *a baby must be handed off between characters at the beginning or end of each scene.*
42. **MASKS** - *one of the characters decides to don a mask to express themselves.*
43. **FREAKY FRIDAY** - *two of the characters swap bodies!*
44. **STAR KILLER**- *one of the characters reveals they are secret relatives to another.*
45. **HALLUCINATIONS** - *one of the characters starts seeing things.*
  
51. **GENIE** - *someone finds a strange bottle.*
52. **MONKEY PAW** - *a wish is twisted into something dark.*
53. **DREAM** - *one of the characters is convinced they're in a dream.*
54. **UNDERCOVER** - *one of the characters has actually been undercover this whole time.*
55. **EXOTIC ANIMAL** - *use it like a prop darling.*
56. **JADE BAMBOOZLE**- *a mesmer on board hypnotizes the guests.*
  
61. **MIRROR MIRROR** - *the ship enters a strange place that inverts personalities, darkly.*
62. **LIAR LIAR** - *a character is compelled to tell the truth.*
63. **MIMES & RHYMES** - *the scene features silent mimes and rhyming bards.*
64. **SPIN THE BOTTLE** - *the cast of characters reverts to teenagers.*
65. **GROUNDHOG** - *the day repeats itself for one character.*
66. **THE PLAGUE** - *it boards the ship!*





# B O A R D I N G P A S S

WELCOME ABOARD THE LOVE BALLOON

NAME : \_\_\_\_\_ PRONOUNS : \_\_\_\_\_

AGE : \_\_\_\_\_ WEIGHT : \_\_\_\_\_ HEIGHT : \_\_\_\_\_

BACKSTORY :

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MOTIVATION :

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DESCRIPTION :

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## I Should...

- ♥ *Lean into backstory or motivation.*
- ♥ *Connect or express feelings.*
- ♥ *Help others or ask for help.*
- ♥ *Try a zinger to make people laugh.*
- ♥ *Try to or resist change.*
- ♥ *Experience heartache or romance.*
- ♥ *Resolve or come to a revelation.*
- ♥ *Confess my true feelings.*

# REFERENCE SHEET

## Game Structure

- I. CASTING** - One Crew Member, A Couple, 3 Strangers
- II. EMBARKMENT** - Crew Member + Stranger / Couple / Strangers Meet
- III. DAY IN THE CLOUDS** - Pairs: **Cycle of Play** on Ship.
- IV. PORT OF CALLS** - Pairs+: **Cycle of Play** on Ship or Shore. Play as many as cycle of plays as needed to develop story.
- V. NIGHT WITH THE STARS** - When Ready, Everyone: Confronts One Another.
- VI. UNDER THE MOONLIGHT** - Pairs: Confess Feelings to Revelations
- VII. DISEMBARKMENT** - Crew Member bids adieu to Guests: **Benny™** winner last.

## The Cycle of Play

1. **PLAYER WITH THE BENNY...**
2. **PICKS ANOTHER CHARACTER**  
to enact a scene with. That player gets to...
3. **CHOOSE THE LOCATION.**
4. **ROLL FOR A STORY BEAT** to determine the premise of the scene.
5. **APPLY KARMA** to determine how it ends.
6. **PLAY THE SCENE** until it comes to a natural conclusion .
7. **PASS THE BENNY** to the next nearest player not in the scene.

## Story Beats

1. **ROMANCE** - one character woos another.
2. **CROSSING** - two character's come into conflict over motivation or backgrounds.
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4. **MYSTERY** - two characters investigate something.
5. **BACKSTORY** - the backstory of the characters guides the scene.
6. **MOTIVATION** - one character's motivation guides the scene.

**OH THE LOVE BALLOON...**  
ON THE SKIES YOU SOON WILL SWOON,  
  
TALES OF HEART AND ROMANCE LOOM,  
SO COME AND FLOAT ON THE LOVE  
BALLOON!

**LOVE, LOVE, BALLOON!** 



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**RPG**

2-6 Players

1-2 Hours

Ages 15+



**US:** \$9.99

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