

A Death in the forest!

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AN ADVENTURE FOR DUNGEON WORLD

This is a one-off adventure designed for use with Dungeon World. Whether you've never run a game before or you're a veteran GM, I hope this book provides plenty of ideas to kick-start your game.

Before the game

Read through this book and familiarise yourself with the background, NPCs, items and locations. Use what you like, replace what you don't.

Prep your stuff. My personal checklist is: printed (or hastily scribbled) monster stats; lots of paper; at least 5 pens (in case I lose the first 4) and a beer. Amend this checklist to suit!

Try and relax for about 20 minutes before the game starts. Have a glance over the *impressions* to give yourself a feel for the type of adventure you're about to run.

At the table

Remind everyone of the basic rules: "When you do something, you roll 2 dice and add a stat. On a 10+ you do it; on a 7-9 you do it with caveats; on a 6- you mark XP and something happens which you probably won't like." Explain anything else as it comes up in play.

Start by reading the *introduction* aloud and asking the players *questions*. Try to ensure each player answers at least one. Focus on throwing the players into the action.

If the players go off on a tangent, do your best to roll with it. Use the NPCs' instincts as a guide, then present the situation to the players and ask "what do you do?" Don't be afraid to ask for a moment to consider what happens next.

After the game

Thank everyone for playing and make it clear the game is over. I normally say something like: "Good game, all. Any comments, concerns, questions, witty limericks..?" (No-one's offered a limerick... yet.)

If there are concerns, try and discuss what could be done better next time there and then.

Pat yourself on the back for a job well done!

DOCUMENT REFERENCE

You'll see the following icons throughout this book:

This is something to be **read aloud** to the players - usually an introduction of some kind. "You" means "you, the player" in this context.

👁️ This is something **interesting or useful**. If your players are spouting lore, discerning realities, or otherwise investigating, this highlights something they might find out.

⚠️ This is a **custom move**. Custom moves work the same way as any other move - they're just designed for a specific adventure. Custom moves might be in relation to a specific area, situation, creature, item - practically anything.

Introduction

Adventurers! *You stand beside a pleasant, bubbling brook at twilight. The scent of pine needles and fresh moss lies heavy on the air. A chill wind scatters leaves around your feet. A bloated corpse is lying face-down in the water. He seems to have been drained of all his blood.*

QUESTIONS

- ▶ Who or what do you believe killed this man?
- ▶ On whose behalf are you investigating his murder?
- ▶ What did the witch say would happen here, in ten days?
- ▶ What did the cultists in town need you for?
- ▶ And, as always, *what do you do?*

DUNGEON MOVES

- ▶ Night falls, or the moon is obscured by clouds
- ▶ The ghost-stones whisper secrets
- ▶ You stumble into bear territory
- ▶ The cult won't take no for an answer
- ▶ You find yourself back at last night's camp
- ▶ The door to the witches' hut is open
- ▶ A hunter is caught in his own bear-trap, vulnerable
- ▶ The murder victims' spirit will not stay quiet!
- ▶ The witches' prophecy is early

IMPRESSIONS

- ▶ Dimly glowing ghost-stones, scattered everywhere
- ▶ A shadow across the branches
- ▶ The last rays of sunlight filtering through the trees
- ▶ An owlbear's deserted nest
- ▶ The still-warm ashes from a recent camp
- ▶ The entrance to an old cave, studded with bones
- ▶ The jangle of a peddler's cart, travelling the forest road
- ▶ Chilling winds when the sun goes down
- ▶ A carpet of pine needles, softening yours and others' footsteps
- ▶ A few wizened goats in a clearing, talking to themselves
- ▶ An old stone bridge, studded with ancient heraldry
- ▶ A witches' hut with a surprising tenant
- ▶ A depressing drizzle
- ▶ A bush filled with delicious ripe berries
- ▶ The husk of a dead tree struck by lightning

▲ When you find yourself in the forest after dark, roll+WIS. On a 10+, the GM holds 1. On a 7-9, the GM holds 2. On a 6-, the GM holds 3. The GM may spend 1 hold at any point before sunrise to do one of the following:

- ▶ Make your torch go out
- ▶ Lose track of something useful in the undergrowth
- ▶ Announce that you think you're being watched

▲ When you trust the ghost-stones to lead you home, roll+WIS. On a 10+, a friendly spirit will help and answer a question to the best of it's ability along the way. On a 7-9, a spirit answers the call, unwillingly. On a miss, a malicious spirit takes advantage of your confusion.

Background

WHO ACTUALLY DID THE DEED?

Choose one of the following, or let your players' rolls dictate who the real culprit was. It can be assumed that one or more of the following creatures is also in the forest - possibly within earshot of the party at the beginning of the adventure!

The beast that did the deedSolitary

♥ 15 HP 0 Armour Irregular talons (d10+2 damage, close)

Instinct: Protect it's kin

The man that did the deedSolitary

♥ 12 HP 1 Armour Foreign blade (b[d10] damage, close)

Instinct: To avoid getting caught

The cult that did the deedHorde

♥ 6 HP 1 Armour Ceremonial dagger (d6 damage, messy)

Instinct: Appease their god

The fiends that did the deed Group, Large

♥ 10 HP 1 Armour Slathering maw (d8+2 damage, close, 2-piercing)

Instinct: Revel in the chaos left by their powers

Moves

- ▶ Put on an innocent face
- ▶ Implicate the PCs in the murder
- ▶ Attempt to strike again before dawn

ITEMS

Pine-soaked Wakizashi (close, precise, 1 weight)

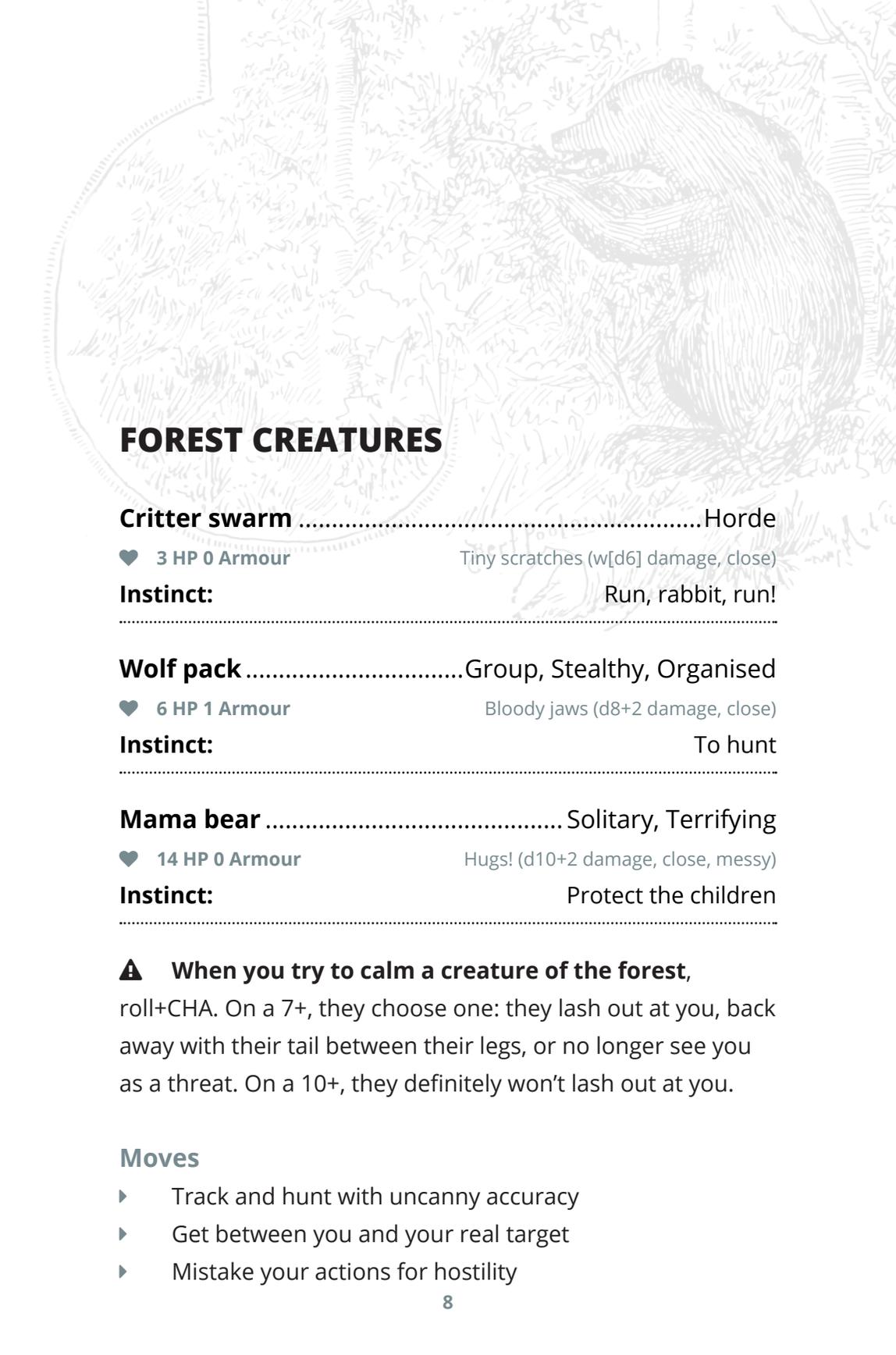
An elf sword, glossy with layers of resin, buried to the hilt in a very old tree. Gods know how long it has lain here, but in the manner of all elf things, it has absorbed some strength of the forest during its long rest.

⚠ When the blade is struck against natural ground, the hilt elongates turning the weapon into more of a polearm or glaive. (This looks really impressive to most common folk, except elves who've seen it all before.) As a glaive, the weapon gains the *reach* tag and glows with the light of a dozen fireflies, but doubles in weight and requires two hands to use. Speaking of fire, the weapon is particularly susceptible to it. If ever brought into contact with flame, even for a moment, it will burn up faster than dry leaves.

The deed that's on the man (0 weight)

Hidden in the dead man's jerkin is some kind of legal document, meticulously scrawled in dense script.

⚠ When you spend time (hours) deciphering the legalese, roll+INT. (If you get a solicitor to do it for you, roll+hundreds of coin spent.) On a 10+, you discover a loophole that means you, as the bearer of this document, have a legal claim to inherit all the man's previous possessions. On a 7-9, you also inherit his debts.



FOREST CREATURES

Critter swarm Horde

♥ 3 HP 0 Armour

Tiny scratches (w[d6] damage, close)

Instinct:

Run, rabbit, run!

Wolf pack Group, Stealthy, Organised

♥ 6 HP 1 Armour

Bloody jaws (d8+2 damage, close)

Instinct:

To hunt

Mama bear Solitary, Terrifying

♥ 14 HP 0 Armour

Hugs! (d10+2 damage, close, messy)

Instinct:

Protect the children

⚠ When you try to calm a creature of the forest, roll+CHA. On a 7+, they choose one: they lash out at you, back away with their tail between their legs, or no longer see you as a threat. On a 10+, they definitely won't lash out at you.

Moves

- ▶ Track and hunt with uncanny accuracy
- ▶ Get between you and your real target
- ▶ Mistake your actions for hostility