

A Stench in Nosjad

by Joe Banner, February 2014

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Dungeon World

Dungeon World created by Sage LaTorra and Adam Koebel.

Thank you to...

My playtesters, who all take +1 ongoing to awesome.

Everyone at the G+ Dungeon World Tavern.

Comments & Questions?

Send me an email! online@jbinc.co.uk



Introduction

If you've never played a game like Dungeon World before, you're in for a lot of fun. Before you start, read the Dungeon World rulebook - especially the chapter called "The GM". That's you!

Using this book

I've seen a lot of confusion as to how much a Dungeon World GM should plan their game in advance. In my opinion, the answer is **you should have as much or as little prep as you need to feel comfortable running a game.**

☰ *Follow your agenda*

Be sure to take the ideas in the GM section to heart. A Dungeon World GM should always be trying to accomplish their *agenda*, and this book is designed to help you fulfil this.

- ▶ The tales of heroism and adventure help you **portray a fantastic world;**
- ▶ Every creature has their own schemes, fair or foul. Finding, interacting and trying to stop these plots will **fill your characters' lives with adventure;**
- ▶ When the party manages to kill that "invincible" evil wizard in session one, you have enough spare prep to keep going and **play to find out what happens.**

Set things in motion, but nothing is precious

I aim to provide enough prep to get you playing right away, so you can focus on playing more games. But if you're playing and **your players go in a different direction to your prep, the player's actions always take precedence**. Never railroad the group or belittle their actions - but don't be afraid to show them the full consequences either. Always describe the situation their new choices have created, ask what they do, and build off the answers.

Fill in the blanks

You'll find lots of questions in this book. An important part of playing Dungeon World is to **draw maps and leave blanks**, so when a blank needs filling, it's up to you to either provide an appropriate response (something that relates to their characters or the group) or ask the players for suggestions for you to build off. A lot of the fun of Dungeon World comes from uncovering the unknown as a group - encourage this!

Need more help?

If you like more advice or need questions answered, I recommend checking out the Dungeon World tavern on Google+. There's a lot of friendly, knowledgeable people there who'd be more than happy to help you get started (including myself!)

Like what you've read?

You can find more and send feedback at joebanner.co.uk. If you want to help me write more adventures, you can also join my patreon campaign: patreon.com/jbinc.

A STENCH IN NOSJAD

The City of Nosjad

Standing on Mirkasa's eastern shore, Nosjad is a sprawling city and the countries' biggest port. Until a few decades ago, you would have called Nosjad one of the most fiercely traditional cities in the free world - but the efforts of it's new gnome population (whose exodus from their mountain homes is still a topic of great debate) have brought this realm of zealous witch hunters and dour-faced lumberjacks kicking and screaming into the modern age.



Tell the players this...

You are in Nosjad to earn your fortune, the same as most of this cities' million residents. To that end, you have come at the request of your sponsor - more on them shortly - to investigate a spate of missing persons in the shipping district. People have been going missing in the area around Remly Powersplurt's workshop for the last 3 weeks. There seems to be no pattern to the dates or victims, and no ransom has been posted. Uncovering the mystery of these disappearances alone will improve your reputation - but what your sponsor has to offer is even more enticing...



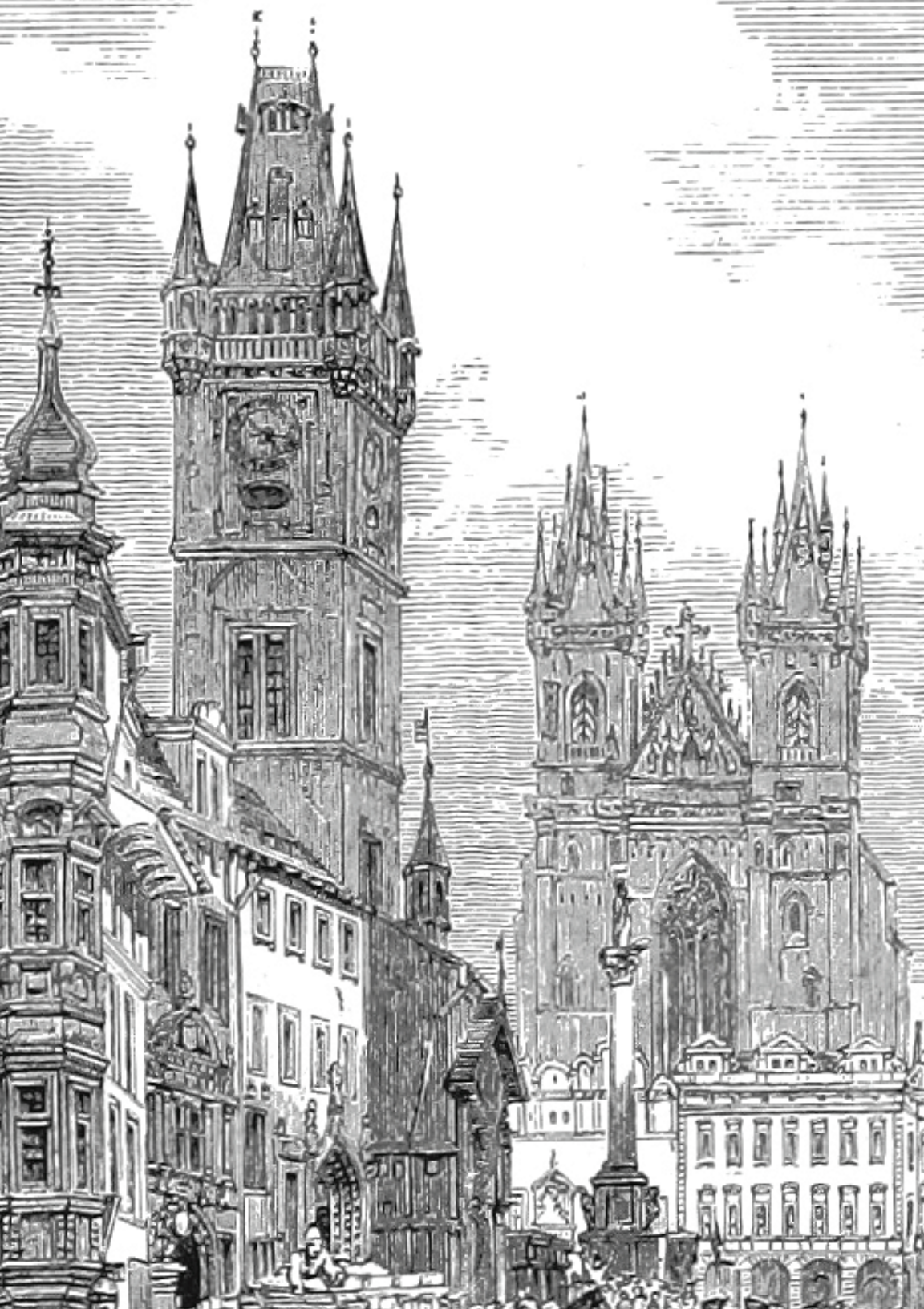
Don't tell the players this...

Remly Powersplurt is young and impulsive, but a brilliant engineer. His father was an engineer too, but made the mistake of dabbling with sorcery. Gnomes can handle their own magic (colloquially known as “elektrikery”) pretty well, but other magics tend to be more than they can handle. That was certainly the case with Powersplurt senior, who managed to bungle a spell of transmutation and turn himself into a mass of acidic ooze.

Nobody learned the truth - to everyone else, Powersplurt senior simply disappeared. Young Remly never believed it though and after graduating with honours from Bronzehand artificer's college, dedicated his life to finding out what really happened.

Three weeks ago, Remly stumbled on the hidden passages below his father's workshop and the elvish spells he'd attempted to decipher. At the same time he unwittingly released the ooze (formerly known as dad) from it's prison and it's been feeding on random victims in the neighbourhood ever since. After each feed, it's snuck back to it's lair, but thus far retains enough humanity to avoid revealing itself to it's son.

Remly suspects a connection between the missing people and his father's work, but his personal involvement has blinded him to the truth. Remly is as keen as anyone to close the book on these kidnappings and is worried that anyone sneaking about will uncover his father's work too.



Who's your sponsor?

Roll a d6 (or GM, choose one that appeals to you) to establish who is sponsoring the parties' actions in the shipping district.

1. **Trannis Maloy**, the highest-ranking human in customs and a former blacksmith who wants to beat the gnome bureaucrats at their own game.
2. **Parsons Cooman**, a lowly acolyte dedicated to spreading the good word, who sees the truth of things.
3. **Cassandra Stoneglave**, a dwarf shieldmaiden who longs to die gloriously in battle despite the wishes of her father: one of the richest dwarves in Nosjad.
4. **Remly Powersplurt**, a gnomish engineer with a lot of pent-up guilt. He's been pegged for success by his colleagues.
5. **Audrey Gable**, wife of a missing noble (and secret mistress of cantrips and curses), who *knows* her husband is still alive no matter what the templars say!
6. **Thessaly**, who isn't actually a witch (though everyone believes she is one) with a plan for the perfect crime and a need to stay alive for just long enough to see it done.

(Note: Most of these sponsors were randomly generated from the tables in the back of the DW rulebook. Never forget about these tables, they're extremely useful!)

! **When you accept the job to discover the fate of the missing people, choose a reward and roll+CHA:**

- ▶ A great big bag of money
- ▶ The respect of the common folk
- ▶ A favour owed from an influential politician
- ▶ A rumour of greater riches or power

On a 10+ you will also receive a lesser version of the reward up-front, as a show of good faith.



The Workshop

The Powersplurt workshop is an unassuming two-floor house on a quiet street in the gnomish quarter. To a casual observer, Remly's abode and habits don't drastically differ from any of the other hundreds of gnomish engineers in the city.

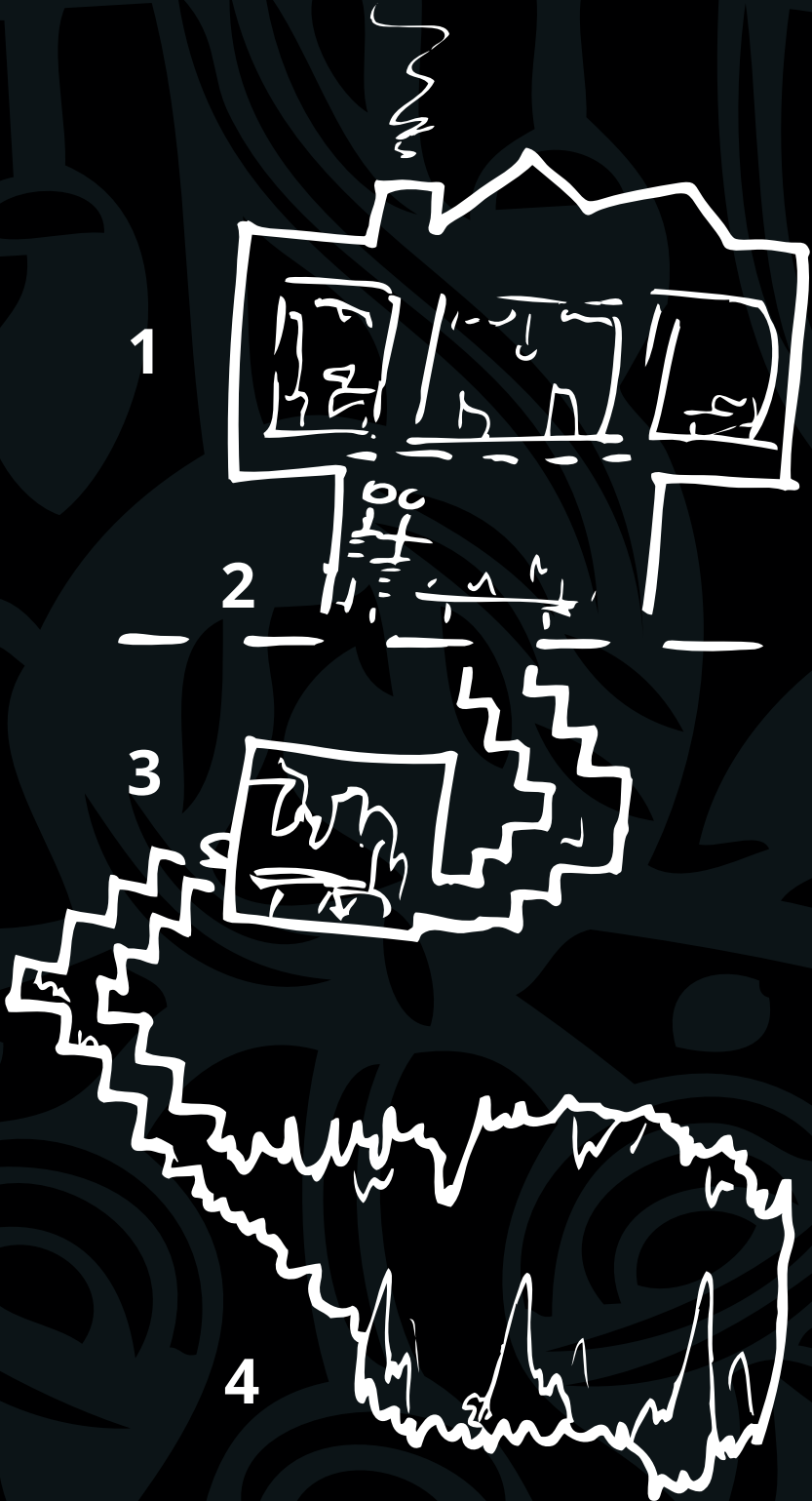
The lower floor is given over to workshop space, while the first floor is Remly's living quarters. Remly runs the workshop (open to his customers) by day, and usually retires upstairs to study and sleep by night. Below the workshop lies a semi-hidden generator room, and below *that* lies the true secret - access to an underground cavern where Remly's father now lurks.

Dealing with Remly Directly

Remly's an engineer by trade - he provides freelance technical support and maintenance for gnomish contraptions. If the players wish to question him, they can approach him any day of the week in his workshop (if he hasn't approached them already.) He will claim (truthfully) to know nothing about the disappearances and, as a respected member of society, will react poorly to threats or violence to his person.

An interesting fact about Remly is he works for several local companies and is generally well-regarded.

An interesting and useful fact about Remly is although he is *generally* well-regarded, businesses affiliated with the templars don't trust him. The templars suspect he and his father (now missing) secretly dabble in sorceries beyond their control.



Exploring

1. *The first floor (living space)*

The first floor consists of a spartan bedroom, bathroom and kitchen area, scaled for gnomish living. Research papers and books cover every surface. If it's late at night, Remly will likely be sleeping up here.

- ❓ What literature from the templar's "forbidden lore" list do you spot amidst the research papers?
- ❓ There's a photo of Remly and an older gnome - his father - on the wall. They look happy. What are they doing?

⚠️ **When you spend a few minutes investigating the books**, roll+INT. On a 7+ you discover a range of books from gnomish electrickery to elvish spell-lore. On a 10+, also choose one:

- ▶ You pocket a copy of this year's *encyclopaedia gnomica*: gain d3+1 uses of *bag of books*;
- ▶ You uncover a *Tenso's floating disc* with one charge

2. *The ground floor (workshop)*

Filling most of the sizable workshop floor is the gnome's worktable, strewn with semi-assembled gadgets. There's a front and back door (both locked after hours with a simple deadlock.) The front is mostly glass windows. At night, a heavy tarp covers the table and anything on it.

Under the table lies a silvered chain attached to a pulley system that opens the trapdoor to the basement. (Anyone with an eye for

magic or elekctrickery may also spot the fine copper wire, charged with elektrik energy, leading from the tesla coils in the corner of the room to under the table.) The chain is trapped under a heavy table leg; while the table can be moved fairly easily, it might be difficult to do so quickly and/or quietly.

- ❓ What gizmos are on the table? Are they of any use?
- ❓ What are the tesla coils in the corner used for?

3. *The basement (generator room)*

The L-shaped basement is cramped even by gnomish standards. Technical manuals and more books fill the shelves. The walls are cold flagstone, but the air is warm and has a definite tang of ozone. A generator fills most of the room, humming with power. (It might be **interesting and useful** to note the generator is oversized, even by a typical engineer's standards.)

Behind the generator, the far wall is mostly obscured behind a curtain of copper wires. Careful examination will reveal the flagstones behind the wires have been removed and a secondary passage heads downwards. At the bottom of this passage stands a heavy door, also made from copper.

- ⚠️ **When you touch the copper (wires or door) without proper insulation**, you're elektrocutted! Roll+CON. On a 10+, you take d4 damage (ignoring armour) and the generator unfolds into a *generator gnomem*. On a 7-9, you take d8 damage instead. On a miss, the shock fries your nervous system - in addition to the damage, you'll feel *shaky* (-1 DEX) until you take a few days to recover.

4. *The cave complex*

The stairs behind the copper door wind down for some time, becoming more roughly cut and slimy (with moss?) the further the party ventures. Eventually the stairs open into a natural cave complex somewhere below Nosjad's sewer system. Water flows out of several sewage pipes in area.

A wooden desk has been set up near the door as some kind of study, but is curiously devoid of books or other implements. (Some copper components have been set up here, but look curiously "corroded" - or half-digested!)

Every surface is picked clean and bone dry - odd given the obvious damp of the sewage pipes. They may also hear the sounds of dripping and splashing getting louder - until eventually the ooze coalesces and gets the drop on them!

- ❓ Where do the outflow pipes eventually lead? Are there any other exits?
- ❓ What kind of treasures lie half-absorbed in the ooze?
- ❓ Are Remly's notes and the parties' intellect enough to restore his father's original form?

⚠️ When you try and appeal to what's left of the ooze's emotions (like fear, respect, or love for his son) roll+CHA. On a 10+, it retains enough to parley with, though it cannot speak. On a 7-9, it pauses for a moment, as though it were considering your words - but doesn't change it's behaviour.



*"The only thing more dangerous than an inventive
gnome is a gnome's invention."*

POPULAR NOSJAD SAYING

Creatures

Powersplurt Ooze (*Solitary, Large, Amorphous, Stealthy*)

⚔ Gelatinous hug (d10+2 damage, close, ignores armour)

♥ 21 HP 1 Armor

Special Qualities: It's all sticky!

When it escaped three weeks ago, it was the size of a rat. Now it's the size of a horse and growing every time it feeds. If this thing isn't stopped, we're going to have a B-movie on our hands.

Instinct: To absorb

- ▶ Digest anything but wood and leather
- ▶ Stick to things (your blade, your equipment)
- ▶ Emit a horrifying stench
- ▶ Grow bigger with every meal
- ▶ Protect it's son with it's last shred of humanity

⚠ **If the ooze is burned (by flame, elecktrickery or magic)** it takes double damage.

⚠ **If the ooze is exposed to water** (from the sewer outflow pipes, for example) it will lose it's armour and some of it's stickyness.

Generator Gnolem (*Solitary, Huge, Construct, Stealthy*)

⚔ Static gauntlets (d8 damage, ignores armour)

♥ 18 hp 3 Armour

Special Qualities: Robot in disguise

These robotic minions are frequently used to guard gnomish secrets such as this. To an outsider, these things look like hunks of gnomish technology... until it's too late. **Instinct:** to protect

- ▶ Hide as a miscellaneous piece of technology
- ▶ Self-destruct explosively


Loot

-  **Tenso's floating disc**
(1 weight, d10x[charges] coin) Tenso's disc will float once activated and can carry up to 10 weight for a number of hours equal to it's current charge. When it's charge is depleted the disc drops to the ground (along with whatever it's carrying.) The disk can be switched off, conserving any remaining charges (rounding down.)

-  **Anti-static gloves**
(1 weight, touch, 4 coin) Another mainstay of gnomish technology, these jet-black gloves absorb electrickery harmlessly. Someone wearing them can muck about with uninsulated copper wire as much as they like.

-  **Sonic Screwdriver**
(1 weight, touch, 20 coin) When you try and unlock a door with the sonic screwdriver, if you've opened a door of the same material (wood, stone, metal, glass, etc.) it opens! Otherwise, roll+INT. On a 10+, it's open! On a 7-9, it doesn't work on whatever you just tried to open. On a miss, it doesn't work on whatever you just tried to open and something else (the GM will say what.)

-  **A piston-driven jackhammer (with broken pistons)**
(close, 1 coin, 2 weight)

-  **A "high templar Logan" gnomish action figure**
(0 weight, D6 coin)