

# KHELUZ-GUND

***A Dungeon World adventure by Joe Banner***

Built by the dwarves long ago, the *Kheluz-Gund* is a transport - a towering convoy of earth elementals. You were hired to ride the convoy and guard a particular piece of cargo. Right now, you and the cargo are secured in the middle carriage. The other passengers are going about their business while outside you hear the dull booms of the elementals on their passage through the deep dark.

One of you *organised this gig*, against their better judgement. One of you *just realised your ticket is missing* and the inspector is fast approaching. One of you *just noticed Shrikebats flittering outside the carriage window*, and you're not sure whether that's a problem yet. Decide who's done what, now.



# THE ONLY WAY TO TRAVEL!

## **If you organised this gig...**

...The cargo is a heavy locked chest (5 weight) lashed securely and sealed with expensive locks. Why did you take the job, against your better judgement? Who is the client? Who's waiting for the cargo at the end of the line?

## **If your ticket's missing...**

...When did you realise it was gone? The burly dwarf conductor is checking the ticket of someone you saw earlier... someone who, now you think about it, bumped into you "by accident" earlier. [GM - roll randomly on the table below.] The person is handing "their" ticket to the inspector right now. What do you do?

## **If you just heard the Shrikebats...**

...You're the first to notice a furred, man-sized shadow sweep past the window. Shrikebats usually keep a wide berth of these convoys - what might be drawing them closer? You hear a thump from on top of the carriage, just above your seat. What do you do?

## **Who else is on board?**

1. Nomud-khaz, a former rival of one of the players who just wants to retire in peace
2. Firis Atoll, a nymph travelling in disguise looking for her lost love
3. Cassandra Stoneglave (formerly of Nosjad) a young dwarf with little knowledge of battle who wishes for a glorious death
4. Pretta Mongrish, a recovering Bloom addict with a powerful sponsor
5. Rubi Kickskirts, a dangerously sexy woman spoiling for a good fight
6. Epicharmus of Kos, world-renowned bard and last of his bloodline.

## Other Questions

- ▶ Are the earth elementals enslaved or willing?
- ▶ How do you get from one cabin to another? Something as crude as rope bridges, or a technological/magic solution? Are you (as passengers) supposed to leave your cabins mid-ride?
- ▶ **For the cleric:** Under or through which god's domain does the convoy pass? Where (which location, or which part of their runes) are the dwarves' defences against the god's wrath most vulnerable?
- ▶ **For the wizard:** How are the cabins kept stable? What happens to the passengers in the event of an emergency?
- ▶ **For the fighter:** The convoy is a difficult target to raid, but not impossible. Where's the most likely place on the route for an ambush?
- ▶ **For the thief:** What's the easiest way to the (your choice) cargo cabin/guard's room/dining cart? What risk does this easy route involve?

# IMPRESSIONS

## The convoy

- ▶ Elementals with rough-hewn bodies, but dwarven-cut heads
- ▶ A dining cart, filled with the best of dwarven food and drink and *even some elvish wine!*
- ▶ The cargo hold, slung beneath an elemental's arm
- ▶ The guard's cabin, slung over the last elemental's back
- ▶ The navigator's cabin, lashed to the foremost elementals' chest
- ▶ The dwarven conductors: equal parts miner, abseiler and ticket inspector
- ▶ Rich travellers suffering from motion sickness

## The path

- ▶ A winding dark passage as tall as a mountain, carved from the caves by erosion and titanic hands
- ▶ Underground lakes, at least a dozen feet deep, the elementals must wade through
- ▶ A detour around a greatwurm den, being dealt with by Dwarf sappers
- ▶ A rockfall, requiring the elementals to raise their arms to protect the carriages
- ▶ Areas of absolute darkness beyond the conductors' lamps
- ▶ Areas of brilliant light, lit up by bioluminescent fungus

## Where does the line end?

- ▶ Walad-luum, the sea beneath the mountain
- ▶ The Yellow nest, a former dwarf holding now captured by orcs
- ▶ The surface, and the human town of Earthsend
- ▶ It doesn't - it's a circular route around the greatest dwarf enclaves

# PORTENTS AND DOOMS

## Danger: the thieves' agenda

**Impulse:** to steal their macguffin

- ▶ The person evades detection or capture
- ▶ The person gets into the navigator's carriage
- ▶ The convoy is stopped or re-routed

**Doom - impoverishment** | The person gains what they intended to find; denying it to the people who wanted it (and denying the players their reward.)

## Danger: the Dragonbrood ambush

**Impulse:** to stop the convoy

- ▶ The shrikebats disrupt a carriage or elemental
- ▶ The kobolds make their move
- ▶ The kobolds summon their deep-dragon patron
- ▶ The dragon takes down one of the elementals

**Doom - Destruction** | The convoy is either broken up during the fight, or destroyed altogether

## Dungeon Moves

- ▶ An elemental goes berserk or is wounded
- ▶ A link between carriages or elementals is broken
- ▶ Your ticket is refused
- ▶ You earn the enmity of another passenger
- ▶ The convoy is forced to stop
- ▶ An important cabin has an unexpected guard

# CUSTOM MOVES

**▲ When you hold on to the roof of a moving carriage, roll+CON.** On a 10+, your grip is firm but something you're carrying isn't - the GM will say what. On a 7-9, your grip isn't firm - say what you do to improve your position (and face the consequences the GM describes) or drop right now and take your chances. On a miss, you fall into the clutches of something or someone unwanted.

**▲ When you try to talk to the grumpy conductor, roll+CHA.** On a 10+, hold 3. On a 7-9, hold 2. On a miss, hold 1 in addition to whatever the GM says. Spend hold 1-for-1 to do one of the following:

- ▶ Avoid taking you to the guardroom
- ▶ Follow a simple command that's in their best interests
- ▶ Take your advice against their better judgement

**▲ When you try to make out what's approaching in the gloom, roll+WIS.** On a 10+, the GM will give a clear idea of what's coming towards you. On a 7-9, the GM will give a clear idea of either the number of creatures approaching or their appearance, not both. On a miss, whatever's approaching gets the drop on you instead.

**▲ When you attempt to disconnect or reconnect a carriage, roll+INT.** On a 10+, you do so quickly and easily. On a 7-9, unless you have a conductor to help, it either takes longer or is less safe than you wanted (your choice.)

# ITEMS OF INTEREST

👁 The dining cart is the oldest carriage still in service and is known to include rare and otherwise lost examples of magical architecture. In particular, the runes on the underside are designed to slow the carriage's descent and protect the occupants in the event of a drop.

👁 The chests of the elementals are embedded with dozens of mithril nails (see *Terra's Nail*, in items.) It looks like the dwarves use these nails to control the elementals - whether by coercion or force, it's hard to say.

👁 The vast underground lake of Guzuz-ziram (the Iron lake) is said to get it's luminescence from the glimmering metal deposits that lie below the surface. Others insist the glow comes from the half-hidden treasure haul of Axterox, the great cave drake.

# ITEMS

## Cache of Bloom (1 weight)

Three doses of an illegal, opiate-like drug distilled from the spores of cave fungus. If you sell the drug, roll+CHA. On a 10+, choose two and earn d6x10 coin, or take the 7-9 result (your choice). On a 7-9, choose one and earn d4x15 coin. On a miss, earn d6x5 coin and the GM chooses one.

- ▶ The authorities don't find out
- ▶ You don't get someone addicted
- ▶ You aren't seen as a rival by the other pushers

Every time you take a dose, mark XP and become addicted! From now on, if you don't take a dose at the start of a session, the GM holds 1. The GM may spend hold to do one of the following:

- ▶ You lash out at someone because of your withdrawal
- ▶ Your addiction puts you in a tricky position
- ▶ You start 'blooming' - the GM will describe what happens next.

If you go three or more sessions without taking the drug, you're no longer addicted.

*GMs: I leave to you what beneficial effects, if any, bloom endows.*

## The flute of Kos (1 weight)

The last heirloom of Epicharmus' bloodline, a well-used and chipped ivory flute. When you play the flute to an audience, roll+CHA. On a 10+, you may ask a question of anyone who can hear you, they must answer honestly. On a 7-9, the GM will reveal something to you from an NPC, but it's up to you to make it useful. On a miss, your playing irritates or infuriates a listener, possibly to the point of violence.

## Terra's Nail (2 weight, close, ignores armour)

A sharp spike as long as your forearm, made from mithril. The length is traced with delicate runes. The conductors use nails like these to communicate with their elementals. **When you hammer the nail into the body of a sentient creature**, the creature (if it survives) will be able to communicate with you telepathically. Once embedded in a creature's flesh, the nail cannot be removed.

# CREATURES

**Conductor** ..... Group, Intelligent, Organised, Cautious

♥ **6 HP 1 Armour** Giant ticket stamp (d8 damage, close)

**Instinct:** to ensure the safety of the convoy and it's passengers

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- ▶ Hold a fare-dodger captive
- ▶ Travel quickly from one cart to the next

**Shrikebats** ..... Horde, Small

♥ **3 HP 0 Armour** Shrieking wings (d6 damage, close)

**Instinct:** to react to sudden light or movement

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- ▶ Flutter and surround someone
- ▶ Carry someone away

**Earth Elemental (unchained)** ..... Solitary, Huge

♥ **27 HP 4 Armour** Smash! (d10+5 damage, reach, forceful)

**Instinct:** to show the strength of earth

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- ▶ Turn the ground into a weapon
- ▶ Meld into stone
- ▶ Rip the convoy apart

**Dragonwhelp Kobold ambushers** ..... Horde, Intelligent, Organised

♥ **4 HP 0 Armour** Burning brands (d6 damages) close

**Instinct:** lure something home for their draconic patron


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- ▶ Drop down from above
- ▶ Call on their bigger, meaner patrons for help

**GÜRN,**  
BARBARIAN  
OF THE  
UPPER  
REACHES







One day, Gürn looked at his people - once hunters and plunderers, now little more than farmers - and declared he was not content. Leaving meant missing his brother's rite of succession, but this was a small price to pay to bring blood, gold and glory to the mountain tribes once more.

Thanks to his efforts, when his soft cousins under the mountain think of the dwarves of the peaks, they shudder in fear. It is a life of death and destruction, that may yet lead to a messy end... but Gurn would have it no other way.

## GURN THE MONSTER

Gürn's instinct is always **to seek blood, gold and glory**. He should be treated as a solitary monster with the *intelligent, organised and hoarder* tags.

Whether with his axe or bare hands, Gürn's blows deal d10+2 damage. He has 12 HP, and a thick mountain bear-hide (killed with his bare hands for his rite of succession) grants him 1 armour.

Gurn is rarely anything but a whirling dervish of destruction. When he makes a move, it's usually something greedy or messy (or even better, both!) **Taking his right of salvage** for example, or **splitting something asunder with a death-blow**.

## GURN THE HIRELING

Though proud, Gürn is not beyond working with others, if they can pay his cost: **blood, gold and glory**.

As a hireling, Gürn starts with loyalty+0 and 4 points distributed among the following skills:

Loyalty (-1 to +3): ○○○○○○

**Barbarian:** When you deal damage while Gurn aids you, add his skill to the damage done. If your attack results in consequences (like a counter attack) Gurn takes the brunt of it: reduce his skill by 1.

Skill: ○○

**Mountain man:** When Gurn leads the way across the cold mountains, you succeed any Perilous Journey of a distance (in rations) lower than the tracker's skill automatically.

Skill: ○○

**Fearsome reputation:** While you are in Gurn's company in a place of food, drink or entertainment, everyone present treats you with fear or grudging respect. You also subtract Gurn's skill from the cost of weapons and adventuring gear.

Skill: ○○



## Using this PDF

*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 kickstart your game.*

### Icon reference

👁️ This is something **interesting or useful**. When your players spout lore or discern realities, suggest this to them.

⚠️ This is a **custom move**. When the trigger occurs, describe the effects and make the players roll to find out what happens.

## Playing for the first time?

### Before the game:

Get familiar with this book. Have dice, pens, paper & rules to hand. Go through your impressions, thoughts and ideas as everyone gets settled. Relax! You're gonna do just fine.

### At the table

Remind everyone of the basic rules. Start the players in the middle of the action. Explain how they're in a tricky position, ask questions to work out how they got there, then ask "what do you do?" Don't be afraid to stop to consider what happens next.

### After the game

Thank everyone for playing. Ask what they liked or disliked so you know for next time. Pat yourself on the back for a job well done!



## Kheluz-Gund

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