

# ROBIN D LAWS' ADVENTURE IDEAS

ROBIN D LAWS IS ONE OF MY FAVOURITE GAMES DESIGNERS, having turned out some genre-defining works over the last twenty or so years and generally shaping the face of the industry wherever he went. Here, because I can, I got him to write adventure ideas about lighting your farts.

**CHICKEN DREAM** — The rule in a goblin warren is that if you dream you are a chicken, everyone in the group can hunt and try to eat you, because maybe you taste like chicken. They get the right to do this until the next time you sleep. But of course if you lie down to try to fall asleep, that makes you easy pickings. Last night you all dreamt you were chickens. Why, oh why, did you tell everybody else that?

**GREAT GRAUK** — Other goblins fear and respect you if you have a bright blue tail feather from a great grauk to stick in your hat. That's because the grauk is a vicious bird, with a long, stabby beak specially designed for pecking out goblin eyes. You hear its distinctive cluck coming from the forest right now, taunting you.

**MEAN STATUE** — You found a stone statue of a nasty-looking human deep in the woods. It wears a crown and has a big flowing stone beard. It called you a bunch of mean names but also promises you one wish apiece if you go into the human town and set it on fire.

**MUSHROOM CIRCLE** — You fell asleep in a ring of mushrooms, which now that you think of it is faerie magic. When you woke up, all the boy goblins had turned into girl goblins and all the girls into boys. You maybe want to change back later, but in the meantime there's got to be a way to use this to play mean tricks on somebody.





**POISON MICE** — You just found a big pile of dead mice left behind by a human rat catcher. Dead mice is tasty, but when you ate these you puked real bad. The human killed them with poison! Good thing you didn't eat too many. Maybe you can sell them to the big mean hobgoblins in the neighboring gulley, and get away before they eat the mice and start puking their guts out, or dying, or whatever happens to hobgoblins when they eat a bunch of poison.

**POOL OF SNOT** — The chieftain commands you: "Deep in the Forest of Grue bubbles a great pool of green snot. This is either the original spawning ground of all goblinkind, or a just a pool of green snot. Go find out which."

**SCARY SCARY KNIGHT** — A human knight in black metal armor, covered in spikes, has fallen into quicksand in the ravine nearby. He probably has all kinds of shiny treasures on him. How do you get them from the quicksand, without letting him free? Because he'd kill you all without hardly looking at you if you gave him half the chance.

**SIX FEET DOWN** — The other day you saw the big scary humans hold a funeral for one of their own, with plenty of crying and weeping. You crept up close and saw one of them drop a gleaming thing in the coffin before it was buried. The dead can't use glittering jewels, so surely no one will mind if you go dig up the old lady and get it.

**SPIDER BELLY** — Your chieftain woke up this morning with a big welt on his gut, which has swollen up something fierce. The shaman says a giant spider laid eggs in his belly when he was dead drunk. (The spider pierces your stomach with a sharp egg-laying thingy, and shoots the eggs inside. Ew!) The shaman can't cure this, but the faeries who live in a nearby field of wildflowers can. Trouble is, faeries hate goblins, because you catch and eat them whenever you can. How can you trick them into curing the chieftain?

**WHO FIRE FARTED?** — Someone burned down the hut containing all the wooden spears and bows and arrows, too. To find out who did it, the chieftain has summoned a Truth-Seeker, a scary wise goblin woman who talks to spirits. She can tell when you're lying. The problem is, you did, when you were having fun lighting your farts on fire. How can you blame it on someone else?



# MERRITT KOPAS' ADVENTURE IDEAS

**MERRITT MAKES THOUGHT-PROVOKING COMPUTER GAMES** (for grown-ups) and curates Forest Ambassador, an ongoing collection of excellent indie videogame entertainment. Here are some adventures she would like you to undertake, if you please:

**TAKE BOAT** — You've got your grubby little hands on a ship! Well, it's really more of a dinghy. "Dinghy" might even be too generous, actually. Anyway, you've somehow got your hands on a somehow-seaworthy pile of wood and the ocean is your oyster. At the very least, it's full of delicious oysters. What will you do? Who will you rob? How much loot can you pile into your boat before it inevitably sinks to the bottom of the sea?

**PUTTING THE BAND BACK TOGETHER** — When Boss Bluggasnik demands to be entertained, you'd better be entertaining — unless you want to end up like the last unlucky gobs whose comedy routine didn't go over so well with him. There's only one thing Bluggasnik loves as much as thrashing goblins and that's the sound of a full zorbler band. Guess you'd better beg, borrow, and steal as many instruments as you can and get practising!

**AN ENCHANTED EVENING** — You heard something called the Wizards' Ball had the best grub around, so you whipped up the perfect disguise and swiped an invitation from some unlucky schmuck. Now you're inside, and as long as nobody can tell that Wizard E. Wizzing is really just a bunch of goblins standing on each other's shoulders under a big robe and a mask, you're about to eat of the finest meals you've ever eaten.

**THE DIRTY DOZEN** — Grizzo the bugbear's cadre of elite goblin bodyguards and lackeys has been taunting and jeering at you all day. Well, you're not gonna take it anymore. You've pinched a clutch of the smelliest eggs you could find, waited until just the perfect moment, and now they're gonna be the ones with egg on their faces. Assuming you don't just lose patience and eat them first, that is.

**STEWED GOONS** — You've finally got the last ingredient for Nabgrub's famous 'filth belcher' stew: a rare mushroom that only grows deep underground. Now you've just gotta bring it back and you'll get all the stew you can eat. The only catch is, the mushrooms are just a little — a little — explosively volatile, and the cave's full of goblin-eating Things.



*A Crustacean Shepherd  
tends to her clackety flock*

**DENTAL PLAN** — *You need yer ears checked? You 'erd me. Get out there and don't come back until you've got a dragin toof!* Probably you should have thought twice about messing around with old Lugrot's tent. Now it's just you, these absurdly large pliers, and a firebreathing mass of cantankerous scales that's none too likely to willingly give up one of its pearly whites.

**STOP THE PIGEON** — Someone's been sending messages with some kind of magic bird through the Great Battle Camp, and guess what? You got picked to catch it and figure out what it's up to. Finally, an easy gig — it's just one enchanted bird, how tough can it be to grab?

**THE BIG GREEN** — Goblinball is a messy, dangerous sport. Nobody's exactly clear on the rules, but they seem to involve a big, heavy spiked ball stuck on the end of a chain and a number of very upset boars. You never had a shot before, but everything's different since you swiped that strength-enhancing potion from that shady alchemist. This year, when the dust settles, it's your bloody carcasses they're gonna be cheering for.

**YOU'VE BEAN HAD** — You had to steal an awful lot, but it was worth it to finally get your hands on that mysterious stranger's magical beans. Who knows what's gonna happen when you plant them? Hopefully you'll find out before Biggarm realizes it was you who pinched his lucky ring to pay for them.

**THE BOAR PRIZE** — Every month there's a goblin lottery. The good news is, you finally won! The bad news is that the prize is giving the boss' prize boar, Foulswiller, a bath. You're gonna have to wheedle your way out of it or else hope Foulswiller's in an uncharacteristically good mood if you're gonna get out of this in one piece.



# JAMES WALLIS' ADVENTURE IDEAS

JAMES WALLIS HAS PUBLISHED MORE BOOKS than you've read. He also designed *Once Upon A Time* and *The Extraordinary Adventures of Baron Munchausen*, which both do interesting things with storytelling and are definitely worth your time.

His adventure ideas are very brief, which gives them the impression that the goblins are shouting them aloud in the back of a pub, which is an image I quite enjoy.

I wanna know who made (makes expansive gesture) ALL THIS. The world. Us. The sky. Stones. Food. Poo. Who done all that? Why they done that? We should find out.

What happens when we die?

Where did the sun go?

Make it stop raining.

Targ and me stole a shiny thing from humans, and then a lizard ate Targ and the thing. We should get it. Maybe Targ too.

The humans are building something big. We must see what it is, and maybe steal it. Or eat it.

The humans have fire! We must steal fire from the humans and bring it to goblins!

The humans make booze! We must make booze too!

*Kathrik, who is as  
hungry as she is fighty*



I heard a human tell a story! Goblins need stories too! We must get stories!

So many half-human creatures like satyrs and centaurs and harpies and stuff. Why no half-goblin creatures? We should make some!

Jib ate a fairy. Now the fairies are mad and say we must send a dip-loom-attic ee-mission-ary to be sorry. That's you.

Facial hair. Goblins are falling behind in facial hair. We must get facial hair or people will think we're elves.

It's Wib's birthday! Let's throw her a surprise party!

What does this wand do?

What does this key open?

What can we do with all this poo?

# MEGUEY BAKER'S ADVENTURE IDEAS

MEG BAKER WROTE 1,001 NIGHTS AND PSI\*RUN, both wonderful indie games designed to be played in a single sitting – and both definitely inspirations for Goblin Quest. Her ideas have a kind of rustic charm to them, which distinguishes them from the normal “fashion a moustache out of explosive snot” kind of thing that goblins normally get up to. They’re also proof that, in Goblin Quest, washing a shirt can be as dangerous as fighting a bear.

For this quest, you must milk a cow and deliver the milk to a dairy. Maybe you will be rewarded with cheese!

It's Granny Goblin's birthday! Find her a proper gift. She likes blue.

You brave adventurers have been selected from among all the goblin hordes to retrieve the ancient lost treasure of the Goblin King. He lost it last month in the back garden and reports are that a squirrel has made a nest in it. Don't kill the squirrel.

A troop of human adventurers has been spotted heading toward the goblin bolt-holes. Head them off. Or off their heads.

One of your number is about to be wed. Your betrothed has a final request: wash the shirt she would like to wear at the wedding.

You have found a cute little kitten. Bring it to the Goblin King and ask if you can keep it as a pet.

A local sorceress of great renown is holding a contest to write a song in honour of the new year. Participation is mandatory. So is singing.

Something is stealing your goblin cheese. Set a trap and discover the thief.

On the edge of town, there lies a large chicken farm. In that farm, there is a large hen-house. In that hen-house, there is a single golden egg. In the golden egg, there is a key. Fetch the key.

Things are getting too silly around here. Sneak into the manor house and steal me a baby.



# NAOMI ALDERMAN'S ADVENTURE IDEAS

**NAOMI IS A CELEBRATED AUTHOR** and lead writer on both *Perplex City* and *Zombies, Run!*. She was the Times Young Novelist of the year in 2007, chosen as one of Granta's 20 best young writers in 2013, and is an Actual Professor of Creative Writing.

She's great. Here are some ideas she wants you to read, and they're all wonderful, as you'd expect:

**HATEY PLOPKINS** — You've heard - somewhere, somehow - that the big thing these days is to be famous. And that the best way to do that is to say really mean things about people. So you're going to have to find some kind of stage to stand on, and some way to broadcast your voice. And once you've insulted everyone you can think of... you're going to need to at least attempt to escape their wrath.

**LIVE IN IDLENESS** — Listen, sometimes wizards brew potions in cauldrons they bought slightly too cheap from a dodgy peddler. And sometimes those cauldrons of potions explode. And sometimes you happen to have been standing right there when a cauldron of potion exploded all over you. This one was a love potion. You've fallen in love with the first thing you saw after you woke up, whether man, goblin, chicken or table. Your goal is to win some expression of their affection in return. Good luck with that.

**YOU'RE DICEY** — There was this goblin, right? They were your sibling in the goblin-vats. Grew up together (for about 20 minutes). You guys were like that. And then they got killed in the war. Well, that's what you're for. The only issue is that you heard some bard singing a song about someone who went back to the underworld to try to get their friend back. So that's what you're going to try. You never know, if you're particularly unlucky, you might even find a mage or a demon who could actually send you to the underworld. Or maybe somewhere that just feels like it.

**THREE GOBLINS AND A BABY HUMAN** — One of these orcs has sired offspring on a demon from the ninth realm. He couldn't really help it, it's not like there are perfectly effective contraceptive charms available practically for nothing from any hedge witch or anything. It's not completely clear he knew the demon was female though, so I guess that's something. Anyway, the demon dropped the baby off with him and he's dropped it off with you. Your major goal is: keep this demi-orc, demi-demon warrior-spawned baby alive until the guy with the big muscles gets back from the battle. Although, given the really weird thing its eyes do when it gets cross, it might be best to also think about how you are going to survive this.



**THE DAILY GOBBIN'** — You heard a herald arriving from a distant land with news of how the battle fares on far shores. Man, was that dame ever treated nicely! They gave her a whole roast chicken, let her sit on something soft, got her mead and all sorts of things. Just imagine what would happen if you started some kind of enterprise to discover and announce new things that have happened. First you'll have to find out some of these 'news' - you might start by listening at doors, stealing some interesting stuff - and then announce what you've found to anyone who seems interested. It can't fail!

**WHAT LIES BENEATH (THE MUD)** — One of the great warriors dropped a very valuable amulet in the midst of the battle the other week. It's fine. They go out to battle draped in those things. But there's a reward for finding this one. And if you keep on digging you'll probably find some other stuff. Or you might find some other way to find out where it is. Can't someone do a spell to find metal on a battlefield? And maybe draw it all toward you? Is there any way this could go wrong? I can't think of one.

**THE TASTIEST GAME** — Serving at those Great Banquets is something, huh? All those amazing jellied knibs and roasted squarls and enormous piles of chocolate buttons. Incredible. You've conceived the ambition to host a banquet like this yourself. You'll have to find some of the raw ingredients — the more raw the better, really — and then find some way to cook them, and some instructions about how you're supposed to cook. And what 'cooking' is.

**I SOLEMNLY SWEAR THAT I DO NOT KNOW WHAT I'M DOING** — You found a weird nose ring. When you put it in, you go invisible. Now this you could have some fun with. You can steal stuff, you can sneak into places, you can overhear conversations, you can look at strange things that no one gets to look at. I mean, is it going to wear away your very soul the more you use it, and put all of the nine realms in dangers from the powers you'll unleash across all of reality? Probably, but you'd be dead anyway by then. More to the point, the owner is going to come back looking for it. So you'd better have a plan.

**I LIKE TO BOGIE** — There's this troubador. And he's sent you to find him some backing dancers for his next performance before the King. They really give the place some atmosphere, he says. Except, you can't find any. So you goblins are going to have to find costumes and firework effects, and plan and rehearse a spectacular dance sequence for a party this evening. Go.

**THE TIME TRAVELLER'S STRIFE** — So there was this wizard (again. There are always wizards). And you only had a tiny sip of her time-travelling potion before she beat you on the head with her magical staff and chased you out of her workshop. And now every time you burp you travel backwards five minutes in time. I mean, you'll barely notice it, except if you're called on to serve at the Great Banquet and keep dropping things because you've travelled backwards in time. I mean if you work it out right you might be able to warn yourself not to drink the potion in the first place, assuming you don't burp yourself to death trying to do so. Or you might just see what else you can do with this interesting 'power'.

# FROG CROAKLEY'S ADVENTURE IDEAS AND GOBLIN CLASSES

FROG CROAKLEY (NOT HIS REAL NAME) IS A GUY I met on Twitter. He's really funny, and he offered to write some stuff for me, so I took him up on it and here we are. It's really wonderful stuff, especially the character classes:

## *Ten Adventures!*

**SPYING ON BEARS** — Bears from the nearby woods have been blundering into the camp and pushing over all the bins. This won't do. Time to sneak in amongst them and take out their leader. The method of infiltration? Loads of goblins inside a dead bear, operating it with sticks and ropes like a sort of furry, rotting tank. What could possibly go wrong?

**ORC LIFE COACHING** — A mighty orc chieftain has lost his nerve and gone to hide in a cave after a particularly harrowing day in The War. Without him, the Army of Evil is suffering even more horrendous losses than usual, and he's just too tough to be convinced back to the front with punching. Do you have what it takes to give him the confidence and self-belief he needs to stop his relentless introspection and get back to the fight?

**THE FOREVER HORN** — A magical drinking horn has fallen from the Black Tower into the Bin District, and whatever the goblins do to drain it, it won't empty — the drink inside just grows more potent. You're going to show the camp that there's a limit to the horn's magic — or die of massive organ failure while trying.

**BENCHPRESSING A HORSE** — Hearing the orcs boast about the livestock they can lift into the air has finally made you snap. You don't care what they say. With the right nutrition, training and sheer determination, a goblin can match even the most gruesome displays of orcish strength. You're going to benchpress a horse.

**ANCIENT GREASE** — The wizards have a problem. The great vault of boiling fat under the Black Tower where the army's daily fry-ups are prepared has been infested with gribby centipede demon things, and the kitchen schedule is being severely disrupted. Take up the task of ridding the vault of pests - while secretly scheming to steal as much meat as possible before the wizards twig that you're doing nothing to address the infestation.





**OBJECTION!** — Tired of being constantly booted around and trodden underfoot by the orcs, you hatch a plan to sneak a stack of fancy legal textbooks from the hobgoblins, learn to read, and become the finest legal minds of your generation. The end goal? Sue every orc in the camp for Being Bad and secure a mountain of gold in compensation.

**BEETLE BATTLES** — It's a dull week at the Dun Inn, and you've decided to use your collection of revolting insects to become a kingpin sports promoter. Win round the bugbears, run a series of thrilling invertebrate deathmatches, and make dizzying profits from illicit betting operations.

**DUTY AND THE FEAST** — The wizards have expended considerable energy in fashioning a golem from the stolen bones of famous chefs, in order to cook them a relentless stream of perfect haute cuisine. And you've accidentally boiled its bits to make a foul goblin soup. Barricaded in the kitchens of the Black Tower, how long can you fool the wizards into thinking their masterpiece is still functioning before they work out what's going on and turn you into hors d'oeuvres?

**A LIFE ON THE OCEAN WAVES** — Tired of the reeking claustrophobia of the Green Pits, you've decided to get together a greasy crew of restless adventure types and set sail for a nautical life. Unfortunately, you're going to have to build a boat out of filthy rubbish and scrounged scrap, and all you have to sail it on is the festering swamp that borders the western wall of the Great Battle Camp.

**BUSINESS TIME** — Having found a ragged, sweat-drenched pinstripe suit in the waste mounds out the back of the Grey Wards, you have decided to make a name for yourself as the shrewdest, most savvy monstrepreneur in the whole camp. Whether by selling cleverly labelled urine to the bugbears, charging orcs to throw your mates into a hole, or providing strategic consultancy to the hobgoblins, you're going to make enough money to buy... another pinstripe suit to wear on top of the first one.