

DYING EARTH_{v1.0c}

A Dungeon Starter by Mark Tygart
For Sage LaTorra and Adam Koebel's

Dungeon World
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AGENDA

- Make the world fantastic
- Fill the characters' lives with adventure
- Play to find out what happens

QUESTIONS

- Why have you come to this Dying Earth?
- How do you hope to return home?
- How did you learn of the Sphere of Solar Renewal?
- What relationship do you have with the Laughing Torturer? The Lord of Melancholy? The Lady Thief of Dreams?
- What experience do you have in this world?

IMPRESSIONS

- The endless red twilight glow of "day"
- The shattered steel ruins of unknown architecture
- The growing cold
- Tiny war drums of the green sprites
- Luminous eyes peering from the gnarled trees
- The howl of a ghoul
- Proud statues of magicians of old
- A cloud of lizard-bats soars and chatters above



GOALS

- Establish details, describe
- Use what they give you
- Ask questions
- Leave blanks
- Look for interesting facts
- Help the players understand the moves
- Give each character a chance to shine
- Introduce NPC's
- Fill out your worksheet

DUNGEON MOVES

- Change the environment
- Point to a looming threat
- Introduce a new faction or type of creature
- Use a threat from an existing faction or type of creature
- Make them backtrack
- Present riches at a price
- Present a challenge to one of the characters

"Jack Vance is the most painful case of all the writers I love who I feel don't get the credit they deserve. If *'The Last Castle'* or *'The Dragon Masters'* had the name Italo Calvino on it, or just a foreign name, it would be received as a profound meditation, but because he's Jack Vance and published in *Amazing Whatever*, there's this insurmountable barrier."

-Michael Chabon, quoted in Carlo Rotella, "The Genre Artist" (New York Times Book Review, 15 July 2009)

CUSTOM MOVES

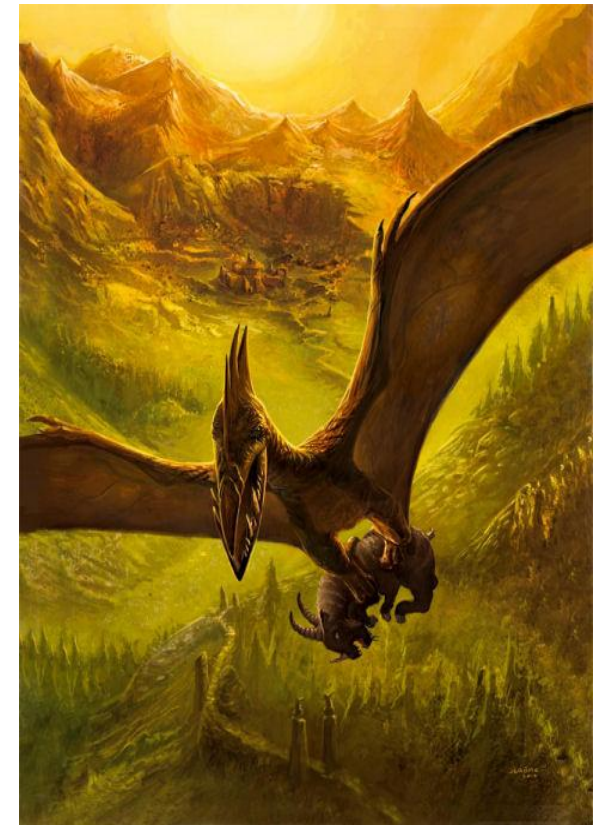
Insult Game

When you meet sentient creatures of the Dying Earth (GM's discretion) you may roll +CHA and offer to play a **game of witty Vancian insults**:

On a **10+** the creature will play the game with and not attack your party unless attacked. It will offer your party a useful piece of information.

On a **7+** or less the creature will play the game and not attack your party unless attacked.

On a **6 or less** the creature will attack once the game is concluded.



THINGS

Ioun Stones

These crystalline stones always float in the air and must be within 3 feet of their owner to be of any use. When a character first acquires a stone, she must hold it and then release it, whereupon it takes up a circling orbit 1d3 feet from her head. Thereafter, a stone must be grasped or netted to separate it from its owner. The owner may voluntarily seize and stow a stone (to keep it safe while she is sleeping, for example), but she loses the benefits of the stone during that time.

Ioun stones have 1 hit point, and an Armor of 5. The powers of each stone vary depending on its color and shape.

Example stones include:

Amber stone: adds 2 to armor class

Crimson spindle: grants user Infravision

Mirror pyramid: immune to petrification

Yellow sphere: sheds light (as per the rote)

Green star: immunity to poison

Green disc: you require no food, water or air

Red cube: immune to normal fire damage

Blue triangle: immune to charm and sleep spells

Dark blue rhomboid: you can never be surprised

Pale orange ellipsoid: feather fall (no damage from falling)

Sphere of Solar Renewal (1 Weight)

Magical sphere if invoked at the proper celestial stellar conjunction and with the proper ritual will restore the Dying Earth's sun to health.

SPELLS

Superb Prismatic Spray (Wizard Level 3)

Eight multicolored rays of light spring forth from the wizard's hand when this infamous spell is cast at any selected target or targets. Each ray is a different color and has a different power and purpose. Each target creature in a 60-foot cone must roll a d8 to determine which color ray affects it.

1-Red: the target is made mute (if applicable).

2-Orange: the target rendered deaf (If applicable).

3-Yellow: the target is blinded (if applicable).

4-Green: the target is changed into a talking frog.

5-Blue: the target is turned to stone.

6-Indigo: the target is restrained in a giant spider's web

7-Violet: the target is teleported away (location GM's discretion)

8-Amber: Target trades places via teleportation with caster.

All of the Prismatic Spray's effects except 5, 6 & 7 last until the wielder next makes camp. Rays 1-4 will not affect the undead.

Monsters

Deodand *Solitary, Stealthy, Intelligent, Hoarder, Construct*
Strangles silently (d10 damage)

Close 12 HP

Special Qualities: Silent

Deodands are intelligent, man-eating humanoids rumored to be borne of a sorcerous experiment. Deodands appear as handsome, muscular men with dull charcoal-black skin, long sharp fangs, and slitted golden or white eyes. The typical deodand prefers to wear a leather harness with bits of velvet or other rich clothes attached. A Deodand prefers to hunt with stealth and strangle its prey quietly. Though vicious and unremitting in his desire to eat other humanoids, the deodand is also cowardly. If obviously overpowered or reduced in hit points it will beg and plead for his life, often offering to guide a party. Adventurers should remain vigilant however if they take the creature up on any offer, as a deodand is not to be trusted.

Instinct: Devours

Green Sprite Horde *Tiny, Intelligent, Swarm*

Multiple tiny lances (w [2d10-2] damage)

Ignores Armor 12 HP

Special Qualities: Flight

These are tiny humanoids with greenish skin. They are commonly discovered riding dragonflies in large swarms. From these insectoid mounts, they flit through their forest

territories in search of information that they might barter for expensive materials precious to them. They carry lances, which, though tiny to the human way of thinking, are twice as long as their own bodies. Each dragonfly mount is equipped with a minuscule tack of unknown derivation, including a saddle and tiny pallets on the fly's underside that carry the substances for which the sprites bargain.

Instinct: Amass treasure

Custom Move: When a Green Sprite Horde first swarms you, ROLL+DEX. On a 10+, you find suitable cover. On a 7-9, you dodged but choose 2 anyway:

- Your weapon is pulled on your hand.
- Your armor is pulled off by the swarm.
- Say goodbye to your backpack.

On a 6-, take full damage from the swarm (d10).

Vat Construct *Horde, Construct, Organized*

Attack with rough-crafted weapons (d6+2 damage)

Close 6 HP, Armor 1

Special Qualities: Produced endlessly by the magical Vat of Alchemical Processes Vast to protect the Sphere of Solar Renewal

A twisted, hairless and genderless clone set on destroying intruders in the Maze Most Difficult.

Instinct: Attack mindlessly

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<http://catsoftindalos.blogspot.com/>



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(Inspired by Jack Vance's *Dying Earth* stories)

Jack Vance (1916-2013) wrote the stories of the first *Dying Earth* book while he served in the United States Merchant Marine during World War II.