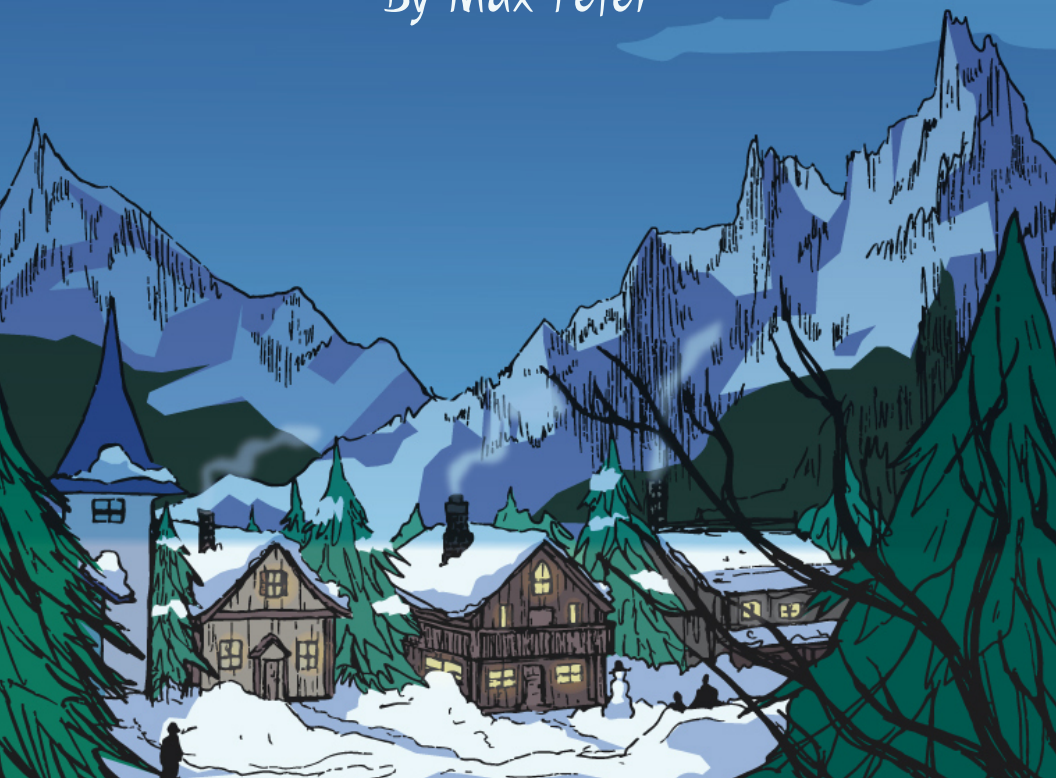
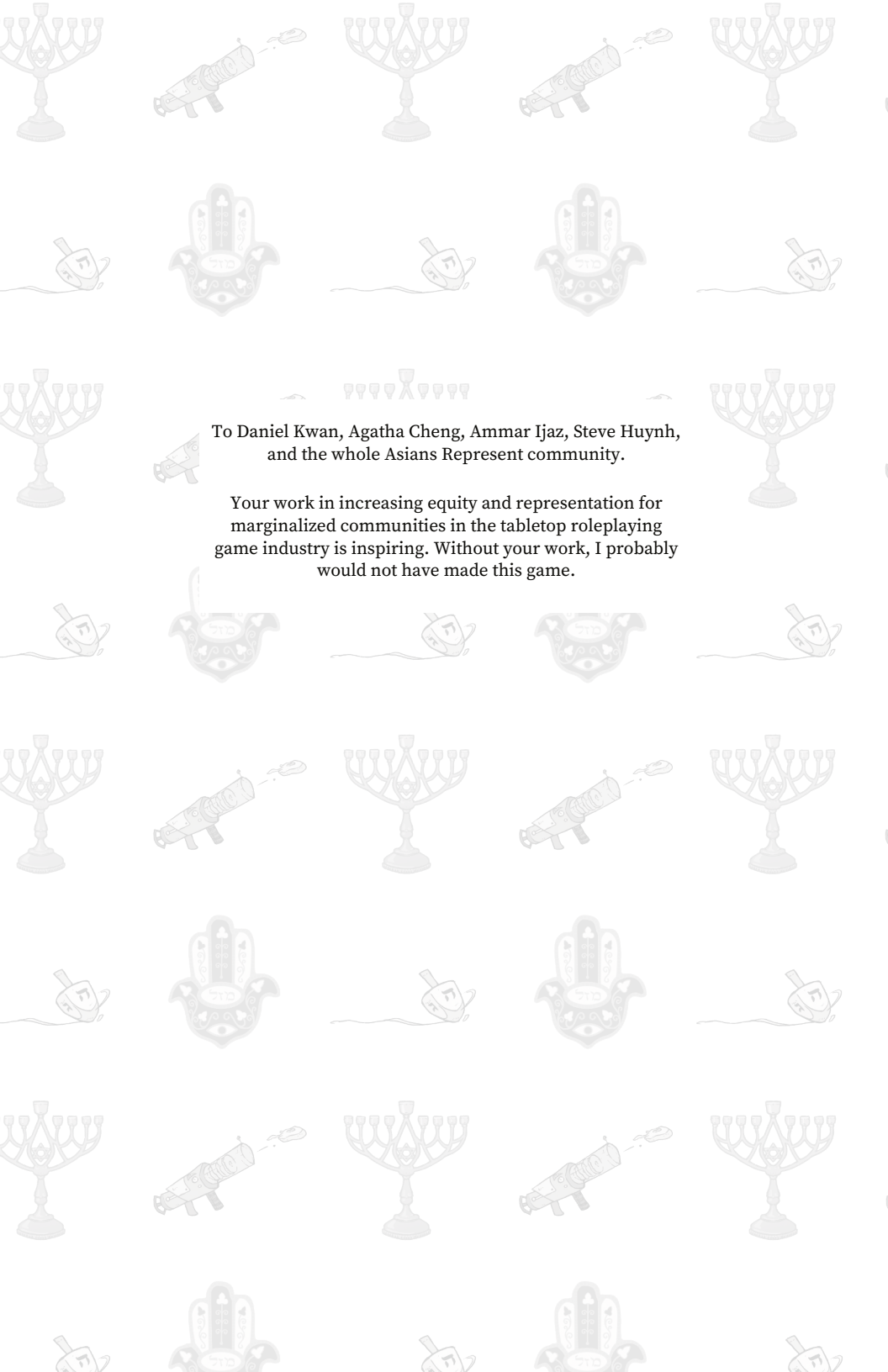




Hanukkah Goblins

By Max Fefer





To Daniel Kwan, Agatha Cheng, Ammar Ijaz, Steve Huynh,
and the whole Asians Represent community.

Your work in increasing equity and representation for
marginalized communities in the tabletop roleplaying
game industry is inspiring. Without your work, I probably
would not have made this game.

Before Starting

This game was inspired by the Hanukkah picture book “Hershel and the Hanukkah Goblins” by Eric Kimmel. If anyone is not familiar with the story, I encourage you to read a copy or find a Youtube video of a read-through so you understand what a Hanukkah goblin is. The Introduction will make much more sense if you know the story that inspired this game. If you are unfamiliar with Hanukkah, read the next section to learn more.

What is Hanukkah?

Hanukkah (חנוכה) is an 8-day Jewish holiday that commemorates the victory of the **Maccabees** over King Antiochus of Syria and the Syrian armies in 165 B.C.E. Hanukkah means “dedication” in Hebrew and is a holiday celebrating religious freedom. Following the Maccabees’ victory, the Temple--the holy place of worship in Jerusalem--was rededicated.

When the Maccabees sought to light the Temple's menorah, they only found enough oil to last one night. Miraculously when they lit the menorah, the one-day supply of oil lasted for eight days. To commemorate and publicize these miracles, the festival of Hanukkah was created.



Content Disclaimer

This game includes themes of anti-semitism, racism, and xenophobia. Specifically, several scenarios in the game include themes of racism within the Jewish community. This game explicitly does not include violence or physical harm. The most combat everyone will see is someone getting hit with a fluffy **sufganiyot**. (**Bolded** terms are defined in the Definitions section.)

Goblins have long been a scapegoat for anti-semitic depictions of Jewish people. Recall how J.R.R. Tolkien’s anti-semitism manifested in the Lord of the Rings series by including Jewish stereotypes in the evil portrayals of dwarves, goblins, and orcs. Even Kimmel portrays goblins as foolish, greedy, stupid, and evil creatures. Hanukkah Goblins seeks to both create a fun and engaging story while subverting anti-semitic stereotypes of Jewish people.

Hanukkah Goblins satirizes the original book by making the goblins Jewish themselves and the heroes of your group’s story.

I unequivocally denounce racism, sexism, and xenophobia of all forms. If you are offended by this, I will happily donate the purchase price of your copy to a charitable

Introduction

You are a Hanukkah goblin. After the Goblin King destroyed the temple, you and the other Hanukkah goblins were left without a home. Although you originally didn't believe in Hanukkah, Hershel taught you the values of Hanukkah: community, survival, and celebrating the small miracles in life. Following Hershel's trials, you now embrace Hanukkah and Jewish culture.

Your goal now is to convince other Hanukkah goblins in neighboring towns to embrace the spirit of Hanukkah. You won't be doing this alone though! You will work together with your goblin friends and have special items to help you! On your adventure, you will meet both other goblins and townsfolk. Your aim is to spread as much Hanukkah cheer as you can before the end of Hanukkah.

Time to go! Let's meet your character.

What You Need

- A group of 2 to 5 goblins, including yourself.
- One six-sided die (d6) If you do not have one, Google has a built in dice roller.
- A wealth of creativity.
- Optional: A Dramatic Manager (DM). See "Using a DM" below.



Playing this game if you aren't Jewish

I encourage you to play this game if you are not Jewish. This will be a learning opportunity for you. Keep the following in mind:

- The first H in Hanukkah (חנוכה) is pronounced with a guttural sound that is similar to the /ch/ sound in loch.)
- Note that Judaism uses a lunar calendar to mark days, so a new day begins when three stars appear in the night sky.
- Everyone is roleplaying as Jewish characters, so take this opportunity to learn about Hanukkah and feel free to consult other sources. One online resource I suggest is chabad.org.
- Hanukkah is not the most important holiday to Jewish people and has been popularized in Western culture due to Christmas. Hanukkah is not the Jewish version of Christmas.
- Do not use stereotypes about Jewish people to tell the story.
- Use the Definitions list at the end. If that does not help, look up more information online. There are many resources out there.
- Ask lots of questions. Nothing is more Jewish than questioning what is happening and learning from it.

Using a DM

If the players are not organized enough to manage a game themselves, consider having an older kid, teen, or adult act as the DM. The DM is in charge of helping the players craft the story. The DM is not dictating the story. The DM should not limit the creativity of the players; rather, the DM should use their creativity to help weave a cohesive and compelling story.

When leading this game for younger kids, consider having only the DM read the rules and let the players immediately start storytelling with the character creation. The DM can weave the Encounters into the story and prompt the players with questions as needed.

Safety Tools

Whenever playing a game as a group, talk as a group on how to create a safe environment. I recommend using safety tools such as the ones presented in the TTRPG Safety Toolkit by Kienna Shaw and Lauren Bryant-Monk (bit.ly/ttrpgsafetytoolkit). It is important that everyone playing the game feels safe and respected. I suggest you use the “Lines and Veils” and “Ask First” policy tools.

Lines: A list of topics created and agreed upon by the group that will not be included in the game. Examples include racism, police brutality, violence, or anything else one of the players chooses not to explore in this game. Players can add or remove Lines at any time.

Veils: A list of topics created and agreed upon by the group that can be included in the game, but only if minimal detail is provided. Examples include personal displays of affection, harm to animals, or anything else one of the players chooses not to explore in this game. Players can add or remove Veils at any time.

“Ask First” Policy: All players agree to ask about any potentially sensitive topic before including it in the game. These topics were created and agreed upon by the group before the game. Players can add or remove topics at any time.

Character Creation

Since you are a Hanukkah goblin, you must look like something! After choosing your Goblin Type and Special Item, describe yourself to the group. Some suggested questions are below:

- What do you look like?
- What is your personality like?
- Do you have a sidekick with you?
- What does your Special Item look like? How did you find your Special Item?
- What is your past experience with Hanukkah and Judaism?

Goblin Type

Roll one six-sided die (abbreviated 1d6) to determine your goblin type. You may also create your own if you don't feel like these suggestions match your vision. Your type will help you when you enter an Encounter with townspeople or other goblin.

1	Stealthy
2	Joyful
3	Approachable
4	Brave
5	Collaborative
6	Mischevious

Special Item

A goblin character is never complete without a special item! Use the list below by rolling 1d6 to choose your special item (or make something up!). Your special item will help you when you enter an Encounter with townspeople or other goblins.

The items do not have a description, so use your imagination on what you think they may do. Also feel free to make up your own! Never forget that you are a goblin, so you don't follow rules. You have always been taught to keep an open mind and question everything.

The items do not have a description, so use your imagination on what you think they may do. Also feel free to make up your own Special Items! Never forget that you are a Jewish goblin, so you don't necessarily follow rules. You have always been taught to keep an open mind and question everything.

1 Dreidel of Power

2 Kippah of Speed

3 Sufganiyot Launcher

4 Wimple of Strength

5 Babka of Persuasion

6 Hamsa of Luck

For those unfamiliar with the items above, here are a few examples of how you might use them. Let your imagination go wild and do not limit yourself to these examples when deciding how to use them.

- Use the Dreidel of Power to offer to play a game with someone or spin it to answer a question that you have.

- When all hope seems lost and you need some protection, use the Hamsa of Luck.
- Offer the Babka of Persuasion as a gift to someone you are trying to convince. Maybe the babka regenerates after every time you use it!
- If you are feeling weak and need to feel the strength of your community, the Wimple of Strength will empower you.



Sufganiyot Launcher



Kippah of Speed



Hamsa of Luck



Dreidel of Power

Getting Started

Your crew of Hanukkah goblins is walking around town, looking to spread some Hanukkah joy. Tonight is the first night of Hanukkah, but you see no menorahs or Hanukkah candles shining in the windows. You know there must be other Hanukkah goblins in this town. But where might they be?

Diverse celebrations of Hanukkah

There are various ways to celebrate Hanukkah across the world. Some may celebrate with candles, others celebrate with dishes of oil instead of a menorah, and others yet. All varieties of Hanukkah celebrations are welcome in this game. Feel free to substitute your own Hanukkah traditions for the ones described here!

Playing the Game

Your group of Hanukkah goblins begin the game on the first night of Hanukkah. You will have 8 nights of Hanukkah to resolve your Scenario (described below). Each Encounter fills one night of Hanukkah. When you reach the last night of Hanukkah (or whenever feels right), you must decide how the story ends and conclude the story.

You may progress through the 8 days as you choose, but you can also use the following mechanic to help pace the game. One day of Hanukkah is measured by every goblin using their item at least one time that day.

Starting Steps

Use the list below to help you create your character:

1. Choose your Goblin Type.
2. Choose your Special Item.
3. Determine the scenario.
4. Become your character. Think about your character's goals, motivations, quirks, and limitations. Start trying to think like them.
5. Introduce yourself as your character. At minimum, tell everyone your name, what you look like, one fun thing about you, and your defining quality.
6. After everyone introduces themselves, decide how you want to begin your story. You may use the provided examples or begin however you want.
7. With your character and initial scene established, get going!

As you go through your story, you can do the following things:

1. Consider what challenges you will encounter during this scenario.
2. Decide what actions you will take to face these challenges and role-play them.
3. Decide how long you want to play for. You can decide to play for a specified amount of time (i.e. 1 hour) and overcome as many challenges as possible, try to role-play all 8 nights of Hanukkah, or overcome a specific number of challenges.
4. Use your Goblin Type and/or Special Item to help you be more successful.
5. Remember that Hanukkah occurs over 8 nights, so consider what happens over all the nights. For a shorter game, consider how you can resolve the scenario before the last night of Hanukkah.

6. When you feel it's right, start a Ritual. Every game should have at least one Ritual. You are welcome to do as many as you want.
7. Create Non-Playing Characters (NPCs) whenever you want to help create a more engaging story. The more NPCs you have, the richer your story will be.
8. When you need help deciding what happens in a situation, refer to the "Resolving Actions" section.
9. Decide when to complete your story.

Reminder

Remember that this game is about encouraging celebration of Hanukkah. You will meet all kinds of goblins and villagers throughout your story. Do not portray any goblin or villager as a purely "good" or "evil" character in your group's story. The absolutes of good or evil is a popular concept from Christianity. In Judaism, nothing is absolutely "good" or "evil" since good and evil are a part of everyone and everything.

Scenario

Use a d6 to select a scenario from the following table, or choose your own!



The King of the Goblins has returned with a vengeance to rid all the towns of Hanukkah. Like last time, the Goblin King will return on the last/eighth night of Hanukkah (see "Hershel and the Hanukkah Goblins").

1 The only way to save Hanukkah is to unite the Villagers and goblins against the Goblin King to vanquish him once and for all. Can you save Hanukkah?

Your group comes across some other goblins and some townsfolk in the town square arguing about missing Hanukkah candles. The townsfolk believe the goblins stole the candles, but the goblins insist they didn't steal the candles. You are asked to help find the Hanukkah candles and determine who stole them. Will you help find the candles?

2

Upon arriving into the town, you and your goblin friends have been captured by the townspeople. They are afraid you will take away Hanukkah! *gasp* You must convince them to let you out so you can convince other goblins to celebrate Hanukkah.

3

You come into town and notice that although the town is full of Hanukkah candles on the first night, you see signs around town saying "NO HANUKKAH GOBLINS ALLOWED. REPORT FOUND GOBLINS TO THE SHERIFF FOR A 50 SHEKEL REWARD." As you sneak over to the sheriff's building, you see other Hanukkah goblins locked up in a cell outside. You know that imprisoning people simply for their identity is wrong, so you decide to convince the town to release the goblins and celebrate Hanukkah together.

4

5 Before entering the town and just before sundown on the first night of Hanukkah, you come across another abandoned synagogue filled with other Hanukkah goblins! However, they are planning to raid the town to take the dreidels and chocolate gelt from the children. How do you convince the goblins to not raid? If you aren't successful, what happens?

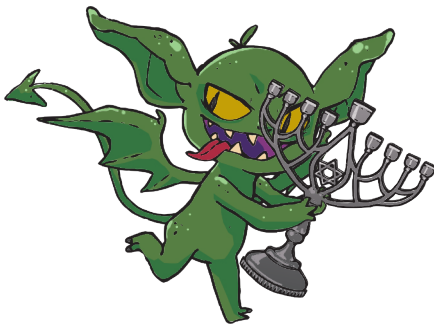
6 As your group arrives into town, you all see that the town looks completely normal, but that is odd since you all expected there to be a joyous celebration since tonight is the first night of Hanukkah. When you all speak to people in the town square, everyone seems sad, tired, and unexcited about Hanukkah. Even the other goblins in town seem bored and lazy. As you all walk past the synagogue, you all see bird-like footprints leading into the temple. You all think there is a Sheyd in this town depressing the Hanukkah spirit. How will your group save the town?

Sheydim/Sheyd

Sheydim (singular: **Sheyd**) are Jewish mystical entities, most often serving “wicked” purposes. While “demon” is the most common English translation, Judaism has a different relationship with its “evil” creatures and spirits. Everything serves a purpose in our universe and everything is made/connected to the divine.

Sheydim have wings like angels, are able to fly, and obtain secret knowledge. They eat, sleep, and procreate like humans. They are not immortal, but are long lived. Sheydim are known for their bird-like feet and being invisible to most humans.

Sheydim are vulnerable to iron. Amulets like hamsas, relevant biblical verses, numeric codes, and the names of the divine are also used to defend against Sheydim. Pious behavior and safety in groups (3 or more at night) is usually the best defense.



Setting Elements

As you progress through your story, you will go to various places and meet other Hanukkah goblins and townsfolk! When you arrive at a new location, describe what it looks like. When you meet someone new, describe them! The setting elements and the NPCs you meet are core to your story, so make sure to spend ample time describing and tying them into your story.

Non Playing Characters (NPCs)

You will primarily meet two kinds of people as you play this game: goblins and townspeople.

Goblins

Although you are a goblin, not all goblins are like you! Many goblins are still against Hanukkah, but will welcome any being into their group as long as they help out and don't mind the chaos of being in a goblin group. Some may choose to live in town with the villagers and others may choose to find abandoned buildings. Many goblins are chaotic beings who enjoy games, exploring, solving puzzles, and thinking a little outside the box! When interacting with other goblins, keep this in mind.

Villagers

Unlike the goblins, the villagers are not all welcoming to new people. Following the destruction of the synagogue by the Goblin King, many villagers do not trust goblins. However, there are still villagers who are willing to give your group a chance.

As you go through your journey, you will meet both reluctant villagers and villagers who welcome you. The villagers have town leadership, which may include people such as the rabbi, sheriff, and town elders. Include leadership figures when needed in your group's story.

If you need help creating NPCs, consider using the list below. Remember that any of these NPCs can be goblins or villagers.

- The babka-loving goblin rabbi of your town.
- The town's innkeeper who has a big family and bountiful community garden.
- A new arrival in town who is a scholar from a nearby university.
- A group of children who seem like nice Jewish kids, but who are obviously up to something their parents wouldn't approve of.

Starting Your Story

Here are some ideas to begin your game with:

- See if any of the townspeople are willing to have your party over for dinner and talk about what's going on in the town.
- Go searching for other goblins. Maybe you convince a goblin to play a game. If you win, maybe the goblin will lead you to their home to meet other goblins.
- You see a group of kids playing Dreidel at a table inside a bakery. Do you join them?
- The town elders have called an emergency town meeting and you see everyone filing into the synagogue. Do you want to attend so you can hear what's happening?

Resolving Actions

As you role-play, you will have various situations where a decision needs to be made. For example, you may need to decide if you were persuasive enough to convince a fellow goblin to accept Hanukkah or a townsperson to accept a Hanukkah goblin. You may resolve situations narratively as a group by acting out the scene or use the mechanic below. Do what feels right for your story.

To use the following mechanic to resolve a situation, you will roll a die and add a bonus if your Goblin Type and/or Special Item are helpful in any way. Start by rolling 1d6 and if your Goblin Type and/or Special Item are helpful in any way, add 1 to the number you rolled (up to +2 if both Ability and Item bonus apply). Look up this combined number using the table below to determine the outcome.

For example, if the dice roll is a 3 and your Goblin Type and Special Item are both helpful in the situation, the combined number is a 5, so you will look up 5 in the table below to figure out what happens.

1	You failed. Badly. Consider what goes wrong and the impact. You should be significantly disadvantaged after this roll.
2-3	You aren't able to do what you want and there will be a minor consequence to your actions! Decide how your story is altered. Is someone now upset with you, have you temporarily lost an item, or does an NPC act to sabotage your plan?
4-5	You were mostly successful, but you had to change your plan a little bit to succeed.
6-7	Success! You are able to do what you want.
8	You were extremely successful! You are able to do what you want, plus a little more.

The player gets to decide what the success or consequence looks like, not the DM. However, the DM and other players can make suggestions. When deciding your success or consequence, think about how the other players would react and keep in mind that you are creating a story together, not as individuals.

Questions to ask during play

As every Jew knows, questions are integral to our storytelling. Don't be afraid to question everything as you go through your story! If you can't successfully convince someone, keep asking questions. Ask yourself the following questions as you go through the story to help keep it exciting and engaging:

What does the town look like?

When you first meet the other goblins, what do they look like? Characters should role-play as the other goblins to give them personality and maybe something fun about them! Remember, goblins love to have fun and cause mischief.

Important: Are you all contributing to the story equally? If not, check in with the other players and see if anyone wants to contribute more than they have.



Rituals

If you find yourself getting into trouble or need an influx of creativity, consider starting one of the following rituals. The rituals presented in this section are real Jewish prayers and traditions, so proceed with care as you role-play.

You may start a ritual at any time as a way to diffuse tension or build goodwill; however, make sure the ritual makes sense in context. If you're in the middle of an argument with some other goblins, you may need to offer some explanation to the other players on how you will transition into one of the following rituals.

Reciting the Prayers

The first three rituals are Jewish prayers. Typically they are spoken or sung to a melody. If you choose to sing, look up a Youtube video to hear the prayer's melody. When you see a "ch" in the prayers, pronounce it with a guttural sound that is similar to the /ch/ sound in loch.

If your group is using video conferencing software like Zoom or Google Meet, consider choosing one person to say or sing the prayer instead of the whole group.

Lighting the Candles

Caution: The ritual of lighting the Hanukkah candles is a very important Hanukkah tradition for Jewish people. Lighting the Hanukkah candles is a special time for Jewish people to gather with friends, family, and members of their temple to celebrate the holiday. When performing this ritual, recognize that this ritual is a real Jewish tradition. Role-play the ritual as a meaningful experience. I encourage non-Jewish people to perform this ritual and

understand its significance, even if you are initially hesitant to perform it given its significance.

This prayer is performed as you light the Hanukkah candles each night. To perform this ritual, use the following steps:

1. Place candles from right to left on the menorah for the number of nights of Hanukkah. When placing the candles, skip the middle slot since this will be used for the Shamash candle. For example, if tonight is the 6th night of Hanukkah, place six candles and leave the middle slot empty for the Shamash candle.
2. Hold an additional candle in your hand. This candle will be your Shamash candle. Only the Shamash candle can light the rest of the candles. The Shamash candle does not count as one of the candles you placed in the previous step.
3. Light the Shamash candle and light the rest of the candles from left to right (note the difference from Step 1).
4. As you are lighting the other candles with the Shamash candle, speak the Hebrew prayer below using the Hebrew or the English Pronunciation.

If you want a more Jewish experience, look up a Youtube video and learn how to sing along. After you finish reading or singing the words, the ritual is complete and you will receive +1 on your next roll that you collaborate with another goblin on.

Hebrew:

ברוך אתה יי,
אלהינו מלך העולם,
אשר קדשנו במצותיו,
וצונו להדליק נר של חנוכה.

English Pronunciation:

Barukh atah Adonai,
Eloheinu Melekh ha'olam,
asher kid'shanu b'mitzvotav,
v'tzivanu l'hadlik ner shel Hanukkah.

English Translation:

Blessed are you Adonai our G-d, Ruler of the universe, who has made us holy through G-d's commandments, and commanded us to light the Hanukkah candles.

Maoz Tzur

Maoz Tzur means "Stronghold of Rock" in Hebrew as a reference to G-d. This prayer describes the various oppressors who have risen against the Jewish people and how they have ultimately all been defeated. To perform this ritual, you will speak the words below (likely using the English Pronunciation). If you want a more Jewish experience, look up a Youtube video and learn how to sing along.

After you finish reading or singing the words, the ritual is complete and you will receive +1 on your next roll where you are protecting someone from harm.

Hebrew:

מְעוֹז צוֹר יְשׁוּעָתִי,
לְךָ נָאָה לְשִׁבְחִי
תִּכּוֹן בֵּית תְּפִלָּתִי,
וְשֵׁם תְּדוּדָה נִזְבַּח
לְעֵת תִּכְיֶין מִטְּבַח מִצָּר הַמְּנַבֵּחַ
אֲז אֲגַמּוֹר בְּשִׁיר מְזֻמּוֹר חֲנֻכַּת הַמְּזַבֵּחַ
אֲז אֲגַמּוֹר בְּשִׁיר מְזֻמּוֹר חֲנֻכַּת הַמְּזַבֵּחַ.

English Pronunciation:

Ma'oz tzur yeshu'ati,
lecha na'eh leshabe'ach,
tikon beit tefilati,
vesham todah nezabe'ach.
Le'et tachin matbe'ach
mitzar hamenabe'ach.
Az egmor
beshir mizmor
chanukat hamizbe'ach.
Az egmor
beshir mizmor
chanukat hamizbe'ach.

English Lyrics (not a direct translation):

Rock of Ages let our song,
Praise thy saving power;
Thou amidst the raging foes,
Wast our sheltering tower.

Furiously they assailed us,
But Thine arm availed us
And Thy word broke their sword,
When our own strength failed us.
And Thy word broke their sword,
When our own strength failed us.



Shehecheyanu

Shehecheyanu is a prayer used to celebrate the first time something is happening. To perform this ritual, you will speak the words below (likely using the English Pronunciation). If you want a more Jewish experience, look up a Youtube video and learn how to sing along. After you finish reading or singing the words for the first time in this game, once during the remainder of the game, you may roll a second die during an Encounter roll and select the higher number of the two dice.

Hebrew:

בָּרוּךְ אַתָּה יי,
אֱלֹהֵינוּ מֶלֶךְ הָעוֹלָם,
שְׁהַחֵינּוּ וְקִיַּמְנוּ וְהִגִּיעֵנוּ לְזִמּוֹ הַזֶּה.

English Pronunciation:

Barukh atah Adonai,
Eloheinu Melekh ha'olam,
shehekheyanu v'kiy'manu v'higiyanu
laz'man hazeh.

English Translation:

Blessed are you Adonai our God, Ruler of the universe, who gave us life, sustains us, and enabled us to reach this season.

Oneg

Have an oneg, a casual festive Jewish gathering which usually involves food, singing, dancing, and casual Torah study! Jews love food and sharing that food with others. Onegs typically occur on Shabbat. Traditional foods you would find at a Hanukkah oneg are cooked in oil to celebrate the miracle of the oil found in the Temple.

During the oneg, use the following questions to help you describe the setting. Add as much detail as you like.

- What kind of food did you bring? What about other people? Who brought the **kugel**? Did someone bring **neyyappam**? How about **buñuelos**? I bet someone brought **laziji**. Someone might have brought **Sanbat Wat** and **injera**.
- What smells are filling the air?
- What is the general mood? Examples: happy, somber, raucous, etc.
- Are any important people not joining the oneg?

After completing this ritual, you will get +1 on your next Encounter roll if you are trying to convince someone. Since their belly is full of good food and you shared a meal/nosh together, they are a bit easier to convince.





Dreidel Game

Dreidels are typically used to play a popular gambling game in modern Judaism. The game is usually called “Dreidel” even though Dreidel is the name of the top used in the game.

Any number of characters (yourselves and NPCs included) can play Dreidel. To start, each goblin or townsfolk will begin with an equal amount of gelt (Example: Start with 10 pieces of gelt). Gelt could be real money, foil-covered chocolate disks (i.e. chocolate gelt), or other items you can easily find. You can also play Dreidel without gelt and just have fun.

Dreidel is played in a series of rounds where everyone will take turns spinning the Dreidel and resolving what happens based on what side the Dreidel lands on. The game ends when one player is left with all the gelt.

At the beginning of the round, all players place one piece of gelt into a center pot. After everyone pays into the center pot, a player will spin the Dreidel and wait for it to land. To determine what side the Dreidel lands on, roll a d4 and use the list below to determine what the player should do after they spin the Dreidel:

1		Nun means “nisht” or “nothing.” The player who spun the Dreidel does nothing and leaves all the money in the center pot.
2		Gimel means “gantz” or “everything.” The player who spun the Dreidel gets all the gelt in the pot.
3		Hey means “halb” or “half.” The player who spun the Dreidel gets half the gelt in the pot. If there is an odd number of pieces in the pot, the player takes half of the total plus one.
4		Shin (outside of Israel) means “shtel” or “put in.” Peh (in Israel) also means “put in.” The player who spun the Dreidel adds a piece of gelt to the pot.

If someone in your group wins Dreidel, you can ask one favor of an NPC and they will help you. Maybe they will help you find information or give you something useful!



Disagreements

Since you all are normal goblins with normal feelings, sometimes your group may disagree on where the story should go. That's fine! If your group has a disagreement and you all cannot resolve it, use the dice to determine where the story goes. If the dice rolls a 1-3, the story follows Person A's idea. If the dice rolls 4-6, the story follows Person B's idea. Be a good sport and don't get upset. Be open to new ideas and enjoy where the story goes!

Ending The Game

This game is heavily focused on storytelling, so end the game when it feels right for your group. If playing with a DM, the DM can decide when a good stopping place would be. If no DM, players should end when it feels right, but keep in mind playing for a long time can get boring or tiring. You all have your own Hanukkah celebrations to go save!

If your group needs a mechanic to help end the game, consider 5 successful challenges as the ending point (or a few more or fewer, if that feels right). When you hit the maximum, play out one final scene so you all can decide how the story ends.

Post Game Questions

A core value of Judaism is to constantly ask questions, so we continue this practice in our post game questions!

After the game has concluded, everyone should consider the following and have a discussion with the group:

- Were you able to save Hanukkah?
- If yes, how did you succeed? Was it through teamwork, individual actions, or maybe luck?
- If not, what do you think went wrong?
- Who was your favorite character you created in this game? Why did you like them?
- Did you ever feel uncomfortable during the game? If so, consider sharing with the group if you feel comfortable.

Definitions

Ashkenazi: Jews of central or eastern European descent.

Babka: A braided yeast-leavened dough that is typically filled with chocolate and cinnamon, fruit, or cheese.

Buñuelos: A fried dough fritter covered in cinnamon sugar typically eaten by Sephardic Jews who reside in Southwest Europe, Latin America, and parts of Africa and Asia.

Chamsa: An amulet symbolizing the Hand of G-d which brings its owner happiness,

luck, health, and good fortune. Hamsas are also used in other cultures. Jewish hamsas typically are inscribed with *Chai* (חַי, meaning "life"), the Evil Eye (believed to give the owner success, harmony, and protection), or *Mazal* (מזל, meaning "good luck").

Dreidel: A four-sided spinning top, played during the Jewish holiday of Hanukkah. Each side of the dreidel bears a letter of the Hebrew alphabet: נ (nun), ג (gimel), ה (hei), ש (shin). These letters are translated in Yiddish to a mnemonic for the rules of a gambling game played with a dreidel: Nun stands for the Yiddish word *nisht* ("nothing"), Gimel for *gantz* ("all"), Hei for *halb* ("half"), and Shin for *shtetl arayn* ("put in"). However, together they represent the Hebrew phrase *nes gadol hayah sham* ("a great miracle happened there"), referring to the miracle of the oil lasting eight days.

G-d: Many Jews remove the "o" in God as a religious custom.

Gelt: Money used for gambling in a dreidel game. "Chocolate gelt" are foil-covered chocolate coins that are common in America today. Chocolate gelt began being manufactured in the 1900s as an overall effort to make Hanukkah more fun and accessible.

Injera: A sour and leavened Ethiopian flatbread made from teff flour. Unlike other breads, injera has a sponge-like texture and is cooked similar to a crêpe on a large flat griddle.

Kippah: A small cloth cap worn by Jewish people typically within a synagogue since covering your head is required when praying inside a synagogue.

Kugel: A sweet, egg noodle casserole popular among Ashkenazi Jews. The noodles are boiled and then baked with some sugar, eggs, sour cream and cottage cheese. Kugels can also be made with potatoes.

Laziji: A stir-fried dish from the Sichuan Province of China, which consists of marinated then deep-fried pieces of chicken, dried Sichuan chili peppers, spicy bean paste, Sichuan peppers, garlic, and ginger.

Maccabees: A group of Jewish people who led a revolt over religious persecution.

Menorah: A candelabrum used in Jewish worship, especially one with eight branches and a central socket used at Hanukkah (also known as a Hanukkah). Candles are placed into eight sockets for each night of Hanukkah. There is an additional socket in the center of the Menorah which is for the Shamash candle and is typically higher or lower than the other sockets.

Mitzvah: Literally translates to “commandment.” Jewish tradition recognizes 613 mitzvot (plural of mitzvah) from the Torah. An alternate use of mitzvah is to describe a good deed such as an act of human kindness.

Neyyappam: A sweet rice-based fritter fried in ghee. Neyyappam has its origins in the southern Indian state of Kerala.

Sanbat Wat: A traditional Ethiopian stew that is popular among Ethiopian Jews which translates to “Sabbath stew”. Sanbat Wat is typically flavored with berbere (an Ethiopian spice mix which typically includes, but not limited to, chili peppers, cloves, coriander, garlic, ginger, basil, ajwain, nigella, and fenugreek), onions, tomato sauce, and other savory ingredients. The stew is typically eaten by scooping the stew by hand using a piece of injera.

Sephardic: Jews of Iberian Peninsula, modern Spain, Portugal, and North African descent.

Shabbat or Sabbath: Jewish day of rest. Since Jews use the lunar calendar, the Sabbath begins on Friday night and lasts until Saturday night.

Shamash: Translates to “helper” and is the center-most candle on the menorah that is used to light the other candles on the menorah.

Shekel: Generally means “money” or “wealth”. Shekels are the currency used in Israel. Historically, shekels were silver coins and a unit of weight used in ancient Israel and the Middle East.

Sheyd/Sheydim: A Jewish “demon”. See Sheyd/Sheydim section on page 7.

Sufganiyot: A Jewish jelly filled donut that is typically covered in powdered sugar.

Torah: The first five books of the Jewish Hebrew Bible (Genesis, Exodus, Leviticus, Numbers, and Deuteronomy, also known collectively as the Five Books of Moses) that is typically a handwritten scroll on parchment and wrapped on two scroll handles. The scroll must be written entirely in Hebrew with no vowels or indication of how the words are pronounced.

Wimple: Traditionally a decorated ritual cloth that binds Torah scrolls. In modern tradition, wimples are built using fabric squares from a collection of people to build a quilt that represents the communities. Wimples can be made to celebrate significant life events such as a b'nai mitzvah (the Jewish coming of age ceremony when a child turns 13).



Drawings and Notes

Credits

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Special thanks to Adira Slattery for cultural consulting and Ezra Rose for the information on Sheyd/Sheydim. Ezra has zines for sale about various Jewish creatures at ezrarose.itch.io.



Hanukkah Goblins

You are a Hanukkah goblin. After the Goblin King destroyed the temple, you and the other Hanukkah goblins were left without a home. Although you originally didn't believe in Hanukkah, Hershel taught you the values of Hanukkah: community, survival, and celebrating the small miracles in life. With Hershel's trials, you now embrace Hanukkah and the Jewish culture.

Your goal now is to convince the other Hanukkah goblins in the neighboring towns to embrace the spirit of Hanukkah. You won't be doing this alone though! You will work together with your goblin friends and have special items. On your adventure, you will meet townsfolk and other goblins. It is your job to spread as much Hanukkah cheer as you can before the end of Hanukkah.

About the Author



Hanukkah Goblins was written by **Max Fefer**, a queer non-binary Jewish indie TTRPG designer in Oakland, CA. Thanks for playing my game.

You can find more about my work at hydroforge.github.io and purchase my games at hydroforge.itch.io.

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