

The Temple of Dancing Sand

by

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### Credits.

This story is dedicated to and inspired by Jackson Tegu, the writer of Forest Ghosts.



### Thanks to:

Voice actor Christian Morre Pedersen.

Illustrators:

- Tools: Anna Mie Hansen
- Drawings: Christine Agertoft Svop, Linn Steen Kaadt and two other participants.

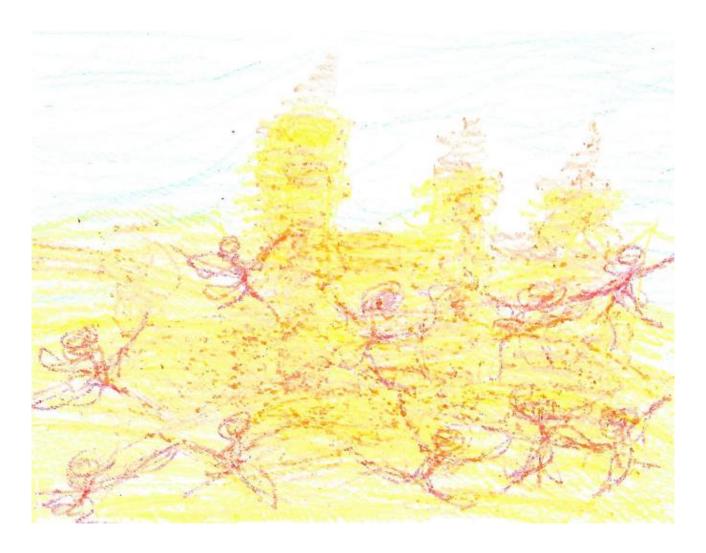
### Introduction

If you reach the edge of the ghost forest you'll find a landscape of heavy dunes. As far as the eye can see there will be nothing but sand and wind.

The vast desert appears desolate and, due to its wild sandstorms, unsuitable for life. But those who have an eye for the ways of the winds will see a marvelous and diverse world. When the wind breathes life into the sand, it creates eternally changeable creatures, dancing throughout the desert. Of these, the most magnificent were those who merged and became the temple of dancing sand.

Through dance and non-verbal interactions, the scenario tells the story of the dust devils, that decides to build a temple in their search for meaning.

Dancing experience is not necessary. The goal is not to make an elegant ballet, but to explore storytelling through movement.



# Workshop

The goal of the workshop is to get the participants warmed up, give them a common non-verbal language, and make them comfortable dancing in front of each other.

In addition, it is also here that the world and the beings of the scenario will be explained and explored.

The workshop lasts about 1-1.5 hours, and is longer than the actual scenario.

### Rules of the game.

Explain these rules to the players at the start

- 1. The goal is storytelling and the dance does not have to be beautiful.
- 2. The scenario is non-verbal and played with silence.
- 3. It's ok to dance for yourself and to change partner whenever you want.
- 4. If the dance becomes too wild, or crosses boundaries, feel free to raise your hand or tap your partner. If your hand isn't free, feel free to verbalize "stop" or "time-out" or something like that.
- 5. You can always leave the game if you need a break.
- 6. If you want to stop playing for one reason or another, you can always say "Time-out." The game will be paused and the situation resolved.
- 7. Take care of each other.

### The story.

Once the team is collected and welcomed, the story of the scenario is explained. Here are the following points to be told.

- 1. You play in a world consisting of sand and wind.
- 2. Your roles are a special form of life that arises when the wind breathes life into the sand.
- 3. Your roles are trying to build a temple, using their bodies and minds as materials.
- 4. You will play through 8 scenes. Before each scene, there will be a introduction telling you the frame of the story.

### An example of an explanation

"If you reach the edge of the ghost forest you'll find a landscape of heavy dunes. As far as the eye can see there will be nothing but sand and wind.

The vast desert appears desolate and, due to its wild sandstorms, unsuitable for life. But those who have an eye for the ways of the winds will see a marvelous and diverse world. When the wind breathes life into the sand, it creates eternally changeable creatures, dancing throughout the desert.

Doing the game you will explore these creatures' lives. Your characters are sandstorms that arises on the same day. In a way you are like siblings. You are made of the same wind, and the same sand. And you have a common longing for finding a meaning with your presence.

In your quest, you decide to build a temple in honor of the wind from which you came. But unlike the cathedrals of rocks we know from the human world, you use yourself as materials. By dancing with each other your wind and sand will flow into one unit and the more harmonious the dance is, the more perfect will your temple be.

The story consists of 8 scenes that focus on different part of the temple construction. At the start of each scene there will be a little introduction, which explains the frame for the scene. Then it's your job to fill the painting. "

### The dance.

Doing the workshop the players will learn three ways of movement.

- 1. To move as sand, i.e. dancing alone
- 2. Some easy dance steps to couple dancing.

3. Throw and build with imaginary sand.

This structure, is so that first the players become warm and comfortable dancing in front of each other. Then later after they're comfortable they dance with each other, and then at the end we layer on some actual game-mechanics to spice up the dance.

### To move as sand.

The circle.

**Song**: "Love, Love", Of monsters and men. (Note: The song has a break in the middle, which imitate the end.)

#### Introduction/Premise

"Form a circle and close your eyes, stay on your spot and move to the music. Imagine that you are sand dancing in the wind. What does your sand creature looks like?"

### Purpose:

Get people warmed up, and accustomed to moving to the music. Eyes closed are so that they don't have to worry about looking at each other, and looking foolish.

Solo-dance as sand.

Song: "Howling at the moon", Millow

#### Introduction/Premise

Here the players explore what it's like to move as sand, and with different emotions as well During this exercise, players are given different tasks / ways to dance they should try. Stop the song. Give them a task. Start the song. Repeat.

The players won't have a tremendous amount of time for each task, but that's fine. Spend a little more time on the movement styles, and a little less on the emotions.

### Movements

"How does your being look when it moves to the sides?"

"Try to move more up and down"

### **Emotions**

"Express joy."

"Express anger."

"Express sorrow."

### **Purpose**

The purpose of this is to loosen up the players, have them start to think about what sand could dance like, and to explore the range of emotion you can express through dance.

## Spotlight

Song: Home is wherever I'm with you. (Edward Sharpe & The Magnetic Zeros - Home)

#### Introduction/Premise

Form smaller groups in circles, 4-7 people. Everyone dances/sways by themselves in the circle, and then one by one, when the player feels ready, they go into the middle of their circle and show off a dance move.

The others are then meant to mimic this dance move, so the whole group does the same thing. The player who showed off then exits the circle, and then when another player feels ready, they enter.

Encourage the players that it is fine for the moves to be ugly, clumsy and silly.

### **Purpose**

To let the players begin to watch each other, and to nudge them to dance in front of each other, without them feeling ashamed, clumsy or uncomfortable.

### Couple dancing:

The purpose of this part is to give the players a common ground for couple dancing. The style of dancing you as the Gamemaster is familiar with is not important. What is important however, is that it's easy to learn and an improvisational dance. Any formal steps (e.g. take these three steps, then do that and then take these three steps) isn't going to work out well in such a short timespan.

Our version of this workshop is designed from the dance we're familiar with, which is a type of Swing Dance from Norway, called Fasting Swing. There's a short introduction to the dance here(in danish): <a href="https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=JyA61S3FHsl">https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=JyA61S3FHsl</a>

Here are two examples of how it looks when you've danced for some years:

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=PFiSRLHluHA https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=nGshpwMb-5A

However, feel free to adapt this workshop to whatever you're comfortable with.

A/V – balance.

Song: Jack Johnson - better together.

### Premise/Introduction

"Pair up, and face each other. One stretches out his hands with the palms facing up and the other is holding his hands from above.

Lean forward to each other forming an A. Lean backward then forming a V. Find a rhyme where you switch between A and V. You should find a common balance, that is shared enough, that if one partner lets go, you would fall."

#### Purpose:

To make them comfortable touching each other and being close. The balance is to make them rely on each other, which is important if you need lead and take cues from the other person.

Driving the bus / Elastic.

**Song**: Banana Pancakes, Jack Johnson.

Stop the song a few times during the exercise and ask the players to change partner.

### Introduction/Premise

"Like before, one reach out with palms up, and the other holds his hands from above.

The person with their palms facing downwards is the one leading.

Make sure the tension in your arms is resilient. When the partner pushes or pulls your arm, you should let it move slightly, but have tension. Think of an elastic being stretched - there's some resistance, but it follows. It is much the same feeling as the A/V balance before.

The one with his hands at the bottom leads by pushing lightly in the direction s/he wants. First the arm moves, then the partner does. You're sort of "driving your partner around the room" Along the dance change roles so you both try to lead and be led."

### **Purpose:**

This is using the balance they learned in the previous song, to actually move the partner. When moving towards one another, there's a small A balance, and when moving away there's a small V balance. This will familiarize the players with being led / leading.

It is also to explain the concept that the person with their hands on the bottom, is the one leading the dance.

### Spinning.

**Song**: Someday(OK), Joe Brooks.

Ask them regularly to change partner.

#### Introduction/Premise

This is hard to describe in text. If you have any dancing experience, I'm sure you know how to make your partner spin.

"Let's move on with the couple dancing. Now, the one who leads lifts his arm and invites his partner to make a swing. We do this in two ways:

### Counter-clockwise:

- 1. Lift the arm up to the same side to form a bridge. E.g. take your partners right arm, and lift straight up
- 2. This forms a "bridge" between your arms. Your partner can then choose to walk under this bridge and spin around.
- 3. If you do this, you might find your hands have changed places, e.g. there is a new one with their hands on the bottom. This is now the person leading.

### Clockwise

- 1. Raise the the partners right arm up, and towards their left side.

  (Basically aim it at close to their left cheek, and then raise it above their head)
- 2. If there's any tension in the arm, this will lead the partner to making a clockwise rotation.

Emphasise that after a rotation you're free to do whatever - you can rotate back, you can let the new person lead, or you can even just leave your partner and find someone else. Demonstrate these things, especially the leaving part, to emphasize that it's fine to switch at any time.

### Purpose:

It's one of the simpler dance moves there are, and many might be familiar with it. This is simply to give them some variety in their dance.

### Now it's time for little break.

Announce that the game starts directly after the last part of the workshop.

### To throw and build with sand.

Build a character - Select a tool.

At the back of the paper you will find a drawing of six antique tools: Hammer, trowel, protractor, spirit level, plumb line and divider. Print the drawing and cut out the tools. Make sure there is enough tools every player.

Put them in small groups, let them choose a tool and answer the following questions:

- 1. Which role does the tool have in the process of building a cathedral?
- 2. How does the work with this tool shape your character's personality?

Based on their response, they create their character inside their head.

Dance like your character.

Song: Wolf, First aid kit.

### Introduction:

"Now you are going to dance as character. Try to incorporate the tool and its properties into your dance. You may mimic that you use the tool, or just let the tool's properties shape your dance. Eg. hammer may express strength and determination, or the spirit level may express balance and harmony."

### Purpose:

Twofold:

- To familiarize the players with their character and how it feels to be them
- Some people will still not be comfortable with dancing. This adds an "armor" of some sort now it's the character dancing and not you as a person.

### Build with sand.

**Song**: Dirty paws, Of monsters and men.

Give the players following tasks during the song. Take your time and just let the song loop a time if you need it.

### Introduction

"Imagine that you have the power over the sand and the wind that makes up your being. Imagine that you can send the sand in any direction you want. That you leave a tail of sand when you move.

- 1. Try to play with the sand: throw sand to and at each other.
- 2. Try to fight each other.
- 3. Build constructions together: How do you rise a pillar?
- 4. How do you build a wall?
- 5. How do you make a decoration?
- 6. What do you do when the construction fall apart around you? "

### Purpose:

To let the players feel comfortable both dancing and using sand as a tool, both alone and in their interaction with others.

This is the end of the pre-game workshop



## The Game

### Materials needed:

- Paper pieces with tools.
- A room with speakers and a dancefloor.
- Light with different colors is an advantage but not a necessity.
- Rose petals.
- Tape of measurement or short rope. One for every third player
- Roses. One for every third player, maximum seven.
- A moveable object to mark the edge of the world.

### The edge of the world.

For telling the story you need a moveable object to mark the edge of the world. Place it in the far end of the dancefloor and tell the player what it symbolizes.

### Starting the game.

Quickly explain again what the game is about, you can use this template:

- You play sand that dances in the wind.
- Your goal is to build a temple through movement and dance. All movements contribute to the construction.
- ""At the beginning of each scene there is a small introduction that tells you about the framework of story. Listen carefully, but do not panic if you do not understand or hear the text. Just dance when the music starts and follow the mood."
- · You can dance for yourself, or together.
- You can throw sand, rise pillars and build walls.
- Take care of each other.
- Always make sure your partner is comfortable and okay with what you're doing.
- You can exit the game area at any time.
- The stop word is Timeout or Stop.
- Are there any questions?"
- Remember that this is a non-verbal game and from now on we are silent. Please lay down on the floor, and wait for the music to start. Enjoy."

During some of the scenes, there are props you need to place. After each scene with a prop, feel free to remove the props again. You don't want the players to get overwhelmed. The role of the GM in every scene is listed below. Do prop placement/removal during the introduction.

The game then starts when you click this link:

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=C4u1GUU7DyE&feature=youtu.be

### The scenes.

1. The storm had resumed the mighty winds of the past. The vast amounts of sand that before formed the fabulous creature were now spread in heavy dunes. The desert lay in silence and a calm wind, moved gently through the landscape. It found its way to the ruins, and here it divided into seven swirls, shaking up the sand. Slowly the sand began to dance in the wind and seven young beings took shape. With eyes as clear, as that of a newborn child, they slowly began to explore themselves, each other and the world around them.

Song: Circle of Joy, Lisa Lynne. Color of light: Light red, as a dawn.

Materials: rose petals.

Role of the GM: Spread the rose petals on the floor.

2. The seven dust devils had the power of the wind and the sand, that formed their being. With enthusiasm they discovered the strength they possessed, and they dreamed of what could accomplish. In their fleeting consciousness, a plan filled them with passion and determination: They wanted to unit their forces and create a tribute to the wind, from which they came. Using their bodies and minds as materials they lay the foundation of a living temple.

A temple of drifting sand.

Song: Wolves without teeth, Of monsters and men.

Color of light: Bright light.

3. Each of the seven had their own vision of the temple's construction. With no sense of geometry, they built walls, pillars and towers whose size and shape could not be united. The beautiful buildings fell under their own weight, and a disagreement grew in the young brotherhood.

Song: Out of it, Fallulah. Color of light: Light green.

Materials: Tape of measurement.

Role of the GM: Hand out the tape of measurement.

4. The disagreement gave birth to suspicion and anger, and soon they began a dance of rage. Each of them believed that they had the true vision of the temple, and any opposition would be met with force.

Song: Over the hills and far away, Gary Moore.

Color of light: Toxic green.

5. They were all weakened after the long and bitter battle. The winds that used to blow so freely in their sand were now burdened with pain and guilt. They had sinned against their siblings, and the shame lay like a heavy yoke over their neck. But in the middle of the misery seven beautiful roses flourished, and the seven were struck by their beauty. Gently, they picked the flowers and passed them on with a prayer of forgiveness. Driven by love, the winds began to approach each other, and finally, the seven parts of the temple were united in a magnificent work of architecture.

Song: Lions roar, First aid kit. Color of light: Light blue.

Materials: Seven roses.

Role of the GM: Hands out the roses.

6. The temple was now complete. Founded on wisdom, raised by strength, adorned with beauty. They had put all their wind and sand into the work, and now that it was done, there was a sense of redemption. And a little emptiness. They walked around in the magnificent cathedral, and they thought about the meaning of all their labor. Why did they build it? Was it worth it? Did it serve any purpose?

Song: The sound of silence, Disturbed.

Color of light: Purple.

7. The thunder in the horizon revealed the upcoming storm. The walls of the temple were hit by terrible gusts, and the strong pillars began to crack. The winds saw how their creation was torn apart by a divine, destructive power. The cathedral, their life's work, began to crumble. Did they fight for their lives? Or did they accept their fate? Was their mind peaceful or filled with horror. All we know is that the sand crashed into the ground, and the winds were consumed by the great storm.

Song: Bergentrückung/Asgore reorchestration, Undertale.

Color of light: Dark red.

Materials: A moveable object symbolizing the edge of the world.

Role of the GM: Move the object closer towards the players, decreasing the dancefloor.

+ tear apart the roses in a dramatic way.

8. The storm had resumed the mighty winds of the past. The vast amounts of sand that before formed the fabulous creature were now spread in heavy dunes. The desert lay in silence and a calm wind, moved gently through the landscape. It found its way to the ruins, and here it divided into seven swirls, shaking up the sand. Slowly the sand began to dance in the wind and seven young beings took shape. With eyes as clear, as that of a newborn child, they slowly began to explore themselves, each other and the world around them.

Song: Circle of Joy, Lisa Lynne. Color of light: Light red as a dawn.

Role of the GM: Move the moveable object back to the far end of the dancefloor.

### Summary

	Color of light	Materials	Role of the gm
scene	Light red as a dawn.	-	Spread the rose petals on the floor.
scene	Bright light	-	-
scene	Light green	Tape of mesurement	Hand out the tape.
scene	Toxic green	-	-
scene	Blue	7 roses	Hand out roses
scene	Purple.	-	-
scene	Dark red.	A moveable object.	Move the object to decrease the dancefloor. + Tear apart the roses.
scene	Light red as a dawn.	-	Move the moveable object back

## Debriefing.

After the game have a little break, and then form a circle. Let the players chat a little before you start the debriefing. Make 4 rounds where each player answer these questions.

- 1. How do you feel after playing this game?
- 2. What was your favorite moment?
- 3. What did you like about the game?
- 4. How do you think the game could be improved?

Please send the feedback to matthias.k.k@hotmail.com.

Thank you for running the game! We hope that you and your players had a good time.

