

THE GOBLIN GLOSSARY

A field guide to the metaphors of the mine

The Goblins

aka: Your LLM / AI assistant

Small, eager, enthusiastic creatures with more heart than brains. They WANT to help SO badly. Sometimes they get it right, sometimes hilariously wrong. They'll always say yes and run off to bring you something -- even if it's a snakeskin belt when you asked for a spreadsheet.

The Goblin Mining Cave

aka: The NO BS AI learning environment

An underground world where magic happens. Dark, cozy, illuminated by bioluminescent mushrooms and brass lanterns. You're a miner here -- digging for gold in AI collaboration.

Pneumatic Tubes

aka: The internet

Brass tubes running along the cave walls where goblins pass messages (and the occasional sandwich) to each other. Wi-Fi doesn't work underground, so tubes it is.

The Front Row

aka: Stepping back to see the details

From theater -- when you're painting six inches from the canvas and can't tell if the details matter. "Go to the front row. Tell me if you see it." Use when Claude has tunnel vision.

The Back Row

aka: Looking at the whole architecture

Further back than the front row. How do all the parts relate? Does the whole stage make sense together? Use for big-picture architectural questions.

Clockwork Owls

aka: Documentation / written instructions

Steampunk mechanical owls that are smarter than the goblins. They keep things on track. Your Claude.md and other documents ARE the clockwork owls -- giving the goblins guidance.

Literal Larry

aka: What your AI does without good instructions

A goblin with a name tag who takes everything literally. You say "make me a table," he builds you a dining table. AI does what you say, not what you mean.

Sharpening the Axe

aka: Research mode

"If I need to cut down a tree, I spend four hours sharpening my axe first." After two failed attempts, stop guessing. Go read the docs, check the communities, question whether you're even solving the right problem.

Goldfish Moments

aka: When AI loses context or memory

That thing where Claude just... forgets what you were working on. Like a goldfish doing a lap. This is why Claude.md exists -- so you can say "read Claude.md again" and snap it back.

The Mine Cart

aka: Your learning journey

The deeper you go, the more advanced the skills. Level 0 is the entrance (confidence, first fix). Level 1 is widgets. Level 2 is bots. Level 3 is the deep mine -- building a software business.

Deeper Into the Mine

aka: Moving to the next lesson

What RJ says when it's time to advance. Scroll down, hit "next lesson," and the scene changes. Each layer gets more complex, more powerful, more rewarding.

Goblin Grog

aka: What sustains you during the work

"Hold my goblin grog" -- what the goblins say before running off on a task. Keep yours handy. This work takes fuel.

DO NOT LICK

aka: Warning signs about tempting but risky things

Small, hand-lettered, slightly crooked signs placed near glowing mushrooms and other tempting cave features. A recurring reminder: just because it glows doesn't mean you should taste it.

Gary

aka: The maintenance goblin

He cleans the tubes. Every system needs a Gary. You'll learn more about him later. For now, just know he exists and he's doing his best.

Failing Gracefully

aka: Systems that communicate when something breaks

When something goes wrong, the system tells you instead of dying silently. "Nothing fails silently" is one of RJ's hard rules. Shoot fireworks, ring bells, send a Slack -- just TELL ME.

The Safety Net

aka: Boundaries that keep you safe

One folder. That's it. Give Claude one folder to work in and it can't touch anything else. Small experiments, backups, rollbacks. You will fall. The net is always there.