

*The Nations of Théah: Book One*

# *Pirate Nations*

by John Wick and Kevin Wilson



T. Nielsen



~ 1668 ~

Roleplaying Game



# *The Pirate Nations*

"Now and then we had a hope that if we were good,

God would permit us to be pirates."

- Mark Twain







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*This book owes a great deal to the singin' sailors of the Guild of St. Dymphna. Almost all my knowledge of sailors, their lives, songs and legends comes from the many years I traveled, sang and told stories with those bully boys. For that reason - and so many more - my part in this book is dedicated to them.*

*-John*



<i>Introduction:</i>	<i>Last Stand</i>	<i>Chapter Three: Drarna</i>
<i>Episode One</i>	8	<i>The Destiny Spread</i> 88
<i>Chapter One:</i>		<i>Hero Options</i> 94
<i>Ports of Call</i>	14	<i>Rogers Swordsman School</i> 94
<i>The Straits of Blood</i>	16	<i>New Advantages</i> 95
<i>La Bucca</i>	20	<i>New Backgrounds</i> 97
<i>Canguine</i>	23	<i>New Rules for Languages</i> 98
<i>Legends of the Seven Seas</i>	29	<i>New Skills</i> 99
		<i>New Items</i> 100
		<i>New Combat Rules</i> 102
		<i>Other New Rules</i> 102
		<i>Advanced Sailing Rules</i>
		<i>Advanced Naval Battles</i> 105
<i>Chapter Two: Pirate</i>	32	<i>Chapter Four: Sailor</i>
<i>Brotherhood of the Coast</i>	34	<i>Sourcehook</i> 108
<i>Captain Allende</i>	36	<i>A Different Kind of Honor</i> 110
<i>The Sea Dogs</i>	46	<i>Navigation in Theah</i> 115
<i>Captain Jeremiah Berek</i>	49	<i>Gambling on the Seven Seas</i> 117
<i>The Corsairs</i>	56	<i>What's In the Hold?</i> 118
<i>Captain Khcired-Din</i>	58	<i>Last Stand, Episode Two</i> 120
<i>The Vestenmannavnjar Raiders</i>	65	<i>Appendix: Ships of the</i>
<i>Captain Yngvild Olafssdottir</i>	67	<i>Pirates</i> 124
<i>The Crimson Roger</i>	75	<i>The Hanged Man</i> 124
<i>Captain Reis</i>	77	<i>The Black Dawn</i> 125
		<i>The Strange Skies</i> 126
		<i>The Revensj</i> 127
		<i>The Crimson Roger</i> 128







The background of the page is a faded, sepia-toned map. It features a grid of latitude and longitude lines. Two prominent compass roses are visible: one in the upper right quadrant and another in the lower left quadrant. The map also shows some landmasses and various navigational markings.

# *Introduction*





# *Last Stand*

## *Episode One*

by John Wick

### **Part One**

Berek felt the cool wind against his skin and smiled. Above him, the sky was clear enough to count stars and when he bit into the orange in his hand, the taste danced on his tongue. He walked over to his boots, feeling the green grass between his toes, and realized how easy it was to forget the feel of the earth under his feet

He looked out at the small cove and the sight evoked another of his smiles. There she was, the *Black Dawn*, sitting quietly in the cove under the midnight sky, resting from her long voyage. The men moved along her yards and sheets like ants moving across an abandoned piece of cake after a picnic. This time, a smile wasn't enough: he had to laugh.

"An' what's so funny, Cap'n?" asked the voice behind him. Berek turned and saw a small red-headed woman walking from the shadows of the forest.

"Nothing at all, bosun," he said, suddenly very aware of the difference in their voices in the open air.

"You Avalons are all the same. You're laughin' and cryin' at the drop of a hat at nothin' at all but what's in your head." She took off her hat and ran a hand through her red, red hair.

"A Highlander couldn't find a laugh in his belly to save his life." He nodded to the ship. "How are the repairs going, McGee?"

She pointed back to the woods. "The last wood crews are on their way back now. We patched up all the holes, stitched up the sails and managed to salvage three of the damaged cannons."

"Half our guns gone doesn't make me happy, bosun."

She shook her head. "Ain't nothin' we can do about it. We need a blacksmith. Gotta get back home as fast as we can and hope we don't bumble into any trouble." She took a look around the cove and grinned. "Although, I must admit, this little island ain't a bad place to retire."

Berek took another bite of the orange and nodded. "Well said, McGee."

"That's what I'm here for. Talkin'." She gave him a salute and marched toward the beach. A dinghy was there and in the small boat, three sleeping sailors snored softly. She kicked one of them and screamed the other two awake. Berek laughed again, a little softer this time. If anyone ever saw little Bonnie McGee on the street, they'd never know she was one of the most feared sailors on his ship. Not because of what the sailors knew she was capable of doing, but because they didn't know what she *wouldn't* do.



Berek took another bite of his orange when he saw a gun flash out of the corner of his eye. His head popped up and the orange fell to the ground as his hand reached for his spyglass. On the deck, Lady Celedoine held a pistol, looking up to the sails. Berek adjusted his glass, lifting it to see who was in the tops.





It was Harry, looking down, making gestures to the first mate, Berek recognized enough of them to know the problem. He shoved his glass back into his belt and looked to the dinghy. McGee was looking through her own glass and cursing. She looked to Berek. He was already at the beach.



"Montaignes, Cap'n," she said.

"I know."

"Ten of them, looks like."

"I know."

"The General's flag is on the lead ship."

That stopped him. His mind raced through options.  
"How many men are on the island?"

"A score, maybe."

Berek looked back at the forest. Then looked at the ship.  
Back to the forest.

"Twenty. Damn."

"Cap'n, we have to leave 'em. They'll be smart. They'll stay quiet and low."

"The Montaignes will hunt them down and hang every last one of them."

She shook her head. "If we don't leave now, he'll hang *the entire crew.*"

Berek looked at the cove. Looked at the ship. Looked at the woods.

McGee looked at him, her eyes wide with disbelief.  
"Cap'n, we have to go. We'll come back..."

Berek pulled out his pistol, held it high and pulled the trigger. McGee stopped. "What are you doin'?"

The captain began re-loading his pistol, keeping his eyes low. "Tell them to bring up the keel and take the ship into the cove."

McGee's jaw dropped. "Cap'n?"

His head shot up and his gaze met hers. "Tell them! There's no time to lose."

"Aye, sir." She paused, giving time for the ship to find her with the spyglass, and made the gestures. Within moments, the crew raised anchor, the topsmen dropped the sheets and the ship began to move into the cove.

"Yur gonna get us all killed, Cap'n."

He smiled. "Everybody dies, McGee. Sooner or later, everybody dies."

She shook her head. "A pity it's gotta be today."

Berek finished re-loading his pistol and stuck it back in his belt. "Not today. Tomorrow maybe, but not today."





## Part Two

The General looked out over the waves at the tiny island. He shrugged the weight of the heavy pistols in his belt to his left.

He turned to his first mate. "Tell them to turn into the bay," he said in his native Eisen.

"Seven degrees to starboard!" the first mate translated. Just below the General, the bosun repeated the order. He felt his ship shift under him as it turned toward the island.

Behind him, he heard more captains gave the same order, turning their ships toward the cove where the *Black Dawn* waited. She was wounded; lost half her guns. Many of the crewmen would not be able to man their stations. The General smiled. Berek was his at last.

His ship moved slowly around the island. Just a few more moments and the cove would be in sight. He wished he could see Berek's face when he realized he was outgunned — even if it was twenty Montaigne ships — twenty to one. At last. *At last.*

The cove came into sight slowly. Greenery hung low over their line of sight.

"Ready cannons!" he shouted. Again, the order echoed across the deck.

Then, another voice sounded out, giving the order to fire. The General spun about, looking to see who had shouted the premature order.

Shots fired out. Sailors fell to the decks. A bullet whizzed passed his head, clipping his hat, knocking it off his head. The General blinked twice and looked down at his blue hat resting on the deck.



"Fire!" the voice called again. More rounds whizzed by his head, but he stood still, reaching for his pistols, peering into the jungle green to spot the snipers. He fired twice and two bodies fell from the branches to the water below.

"Snipers!" someone called out from the deck below.

The General winced. 'Just how long did it take you to figure that out?' he mumbled to himself. "Bloody Montaignes."

Smoke from the jungle shifted as the hidden gunners moved their positions. The General reached out and picked up his hat.

"Berek..." he grumbled. Somewhere, he could hear the Avalon dog laughing. Laughing over the screams of the dying Montaigne sailors.

"Herbert!" he shouted through the gunfire. His first mate crawled across the deck as the General stood still, shots firing all around him.

Herbert crawled along the deck, looking up at the General. "Mon General!" he shouted. "You must take cover!"







The General reached down to Herbert's belt and took the pistol there. "That will be all, Herbert," he said and took aim at another sniper.

Suddenly, the shots stopped. Then, as they passed a particularly ugly tree, he saw it. Resting in a cove was the *Black Dawn*.

Berek chose his position well. Only one ship at a time would make it into that cove, and as they sailed in, the Avalons could fire upon her at will.

"It doesn't matter," the General whispered. "No trick will save you this time, Berek," he whispered. "No man can stand against twenty ships."



### Part Three

"Cannons ready!" Berek cried out, pacing the deck with deliberation.

"Load, Cap'n?" the master gunner asked.

"No chain, no grape. And fire low." He put his hand on the big man's shoulders. "We want to sink her fast, before she can get into the bay."

McGee moved by him, her arms full with pistols. "We'll cut off the entrance. Very clever, Cap'n."

He nodded. "Let's just hope it works."

From high above him, he heard his topsman shout down. "Snipers shot out the first one, Cap'n. She turned back, lettin' the other ships go on ahead."

Berek slapped his hands together. *We turned back the General. This might work after all.*

He moved by the gunners to where McGee and her marines waited. Each of them was armed with a sword, pistols and muskets. "You know what to do."

"As soon as the ship is disabled, we'll row out and steal what supplies they have."

"Give them no quarter, McGee. We can't afford to lose a single one of you." McGee's smile always gave him a quiet shiver. She didn't need any reminders or orders. "Off with you, then."

She gave the order and her men dropped over the side to their small boats. In moments, they were headed for the opening to the bay. He sent a small prayer behind them.

"Cap'n! Montaignes in sight!"

"You know the range!" he shouted. "Fire at will and don't stop until the cannons've melted down through the hull!"



A moment passed. The fuses touched down on the powder pans and fire jumped from the tops of the cannons. Half a heartbeat later, lead flew through the air toward the Montaigne ship entering the bay.

"Topsman!" Berek shouted. "Get ready to move if she turns!"

"Aye, sir!" the topsman shouted down.





Berek turned back to the Montaigne ship. Three shots hit solidly, crunching her bow like a fist. Berek suddenly found himself laughing. "Rogers' blood, lads, I think we broke her nose!"

The crew roared with laughter as more cannons fired. The ship was hit again, this time lower. The whole of her tilted forward and McGee's dinghies moved in.

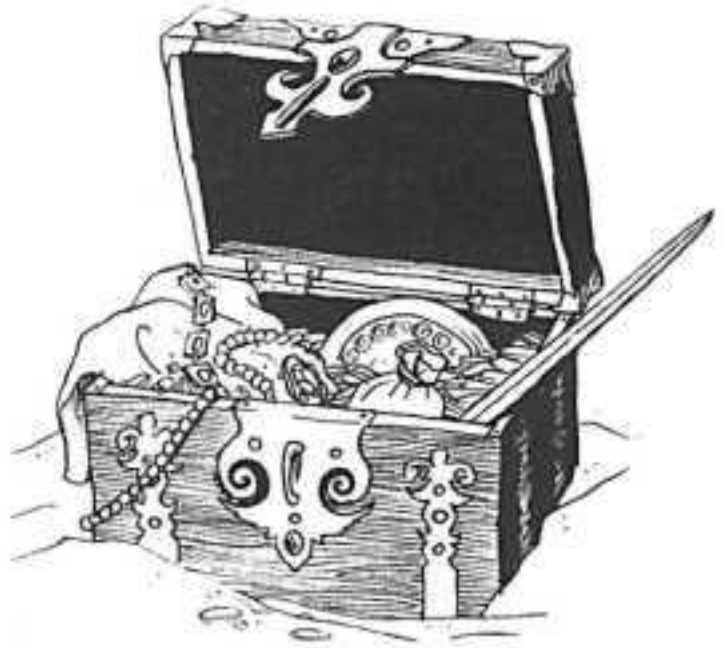
"Cease fire! Cease fire!" Berek called. The order echoed down the gunline. He looked up to the tops. "Harry! Get us back in position! We've got to give her cover fire!"

The long, lanky captain of the tops touched his fingers to his brow and moved up the rigging with the certainty of a spider. A moment later, the entire rigging changed and the ship began to move. McGee's marines fired on the Montaigne ship and the Montaignes returned fire. Two of them fell from the dinghy into the bay.

"Fire! Fire! Fire!" Berek screamed. The cannons spit fire and shot toward the wounded ship, shattering the main mast and forecastle. Seconds later, another explosion blew the ship to splinters and McGee and her marines were lost in the fire and smoke.

Berek looked at the explosion with disbelief. His marines were gone. The ruined ship would not keep more ships from entering as he had hoped. His position was off; he wouldn't be able to keep more ships from entering. Berek's advantage was lost

To be continued...



## *The Pirate Nations*

A little over two centuries ago, the United States of America was born. It was a country united by a common cause: freedom. The Constitution spoke of many freedoms, including freedom of religion, freedom of speech, and freedom of press. It was "the Great Experiment", a nation ruled by its people. Every (land-owning white male) citizen got a vote in the matters of state and the men put in charge were accountable to the electors for their actions. It was a brave, bold and completely new idea.

Or was it?

In the seventeenth century, the concept of a free, independent state where every citizen received a vote in almost every matter was being bandied about... by pirates. They conceived of an independent nation of men



## Introduction

united not by skin color or religion, but by a solemn vow. A nation that provided equal rights to every citizen. A nation that rewarded those who were wounded in the line of duty. This is what those men devised. And it worked.

In Theah, almost every ship flying a Jolly Roger can be considered to be its own "nation." It has its own laws, mores and social structure. Many even have their own version of a Constitution, an agreement among the men of the ship to serve the ship's needs over their own, to reward those who demonstrate particular bravery and those who are wounded serving their fellow citizens.

Also, many of Theah's pirates recognize that they are a part of something that is much bigger than themselves; they are a part of a single "pirate nation." They are a brotherhood, almost a race unto themselves. They have their own language, beliefs, legends and myths, their own code of conduct and their own bizarre sense of honor. The sense of brotherhood that one ship holds extends over to the men of other ships. They are brothers, no matter what flag they serve under.

This book is about that nation of pirates, their brothers and sisters, beliefs, customs, legends and myths, the places they call their own, their language and just about anything else you ever wanted to know about the robbers of the waves.

We'll start with **Ports** and look at some cities that are part of the pirate nation. Then, in **Pirate**, we'll take a look at the ships and crews of five of the most notorious pirates on the Seven Seas. Next, **Drama** teaches you some new game mechanics and additional rules to make pirate Heroes. Finally, **Sourcebook** is a cornucopia of information on sailors, pirates and privateers, and an essay for GMs and players on how to run and play a pirate campaign.









# *Ports of Call*



## *Introduction*

Seedy taverns filled with shady characters are the bread and butter of pirate myth, and listed below are some of the most popular (and infamous) pirate locales. We'll look at a city that was built from the ground up by a man who loved his dog, a prison island converted into a nation of free men and a city under an ancient curse.

## *The Straits of Blood*

Lying 600 miles to the southeast of Buche, the Straits of Blood are a small chain of islands surrounded by some of the deadliest waters around. The waters are swimming with sharks and far deadlier creatures, and the islands are almost completely encircled with a jagged reef. There's only one break large enough for a ship to enter, and it's only navigable by night, thanks to the Bloody Lighthouse (see below).

Pirates of all nationalities and affiliations make port here to relax and spend their plunder. It also serves as a neutral meeting place for pirate Captains who wish to discuss treaties and alliances. Anyone who draws a weapon here is immediately set upon by everyone, put back on their ship, and banned from the Straits of Blood forever. As this is one of the few places a pirate can relax in safety, anyone who gets his crewmates banned from this port can expect an early retirement on a deserted island.

## *The Bloody Lighthouse*

Standing three stories high, the lighthouse is made from wood chopped from the nearby jungles. It has two lamps atop it, one of which is tinted red. The normal lamp is visible in all directions, but the red lamp is shuttered so

that only ships directly in line with the safe break in the reef can see it. Ships who see the white light circle the island until they see the red light, then sail directly towards it (Wits + Piloting at a TN of 15) until they reach port in Bilgewater. Two capable guards watch the lighthouse to make sure the lights don't go out or get moved.

## *The Legend of Captain Guivere*

The Montaigne pirate who discovered the break in the reef, Captain Guivere, used the Straits of Blood as his personal hideout for years before vanishing at sea. He told his daughter, Annabelle, how to find the entry, and she later founded the town of Bilgewater and opened it up to others.

It is said that Captain Guivere left a cache of treasure hidden somewhere in the Straits of Blood. He was a wealthy man, so if it really exists, it's probably a sizeable sum.

## *Bilgewater*

Bilgewater is the larger of the two towns in the Straits. It serves as the main port and place of entertainment. Residents and pirates who want a quiet rest have to go to Tumbledown. They certainly won't find any peace in this town, which is filled with drunken singing and yelling until well into the morning. The residents use the morning hours, when most of the pirates are passed out, to restock their food stores, relax, or get some sleep themselves.

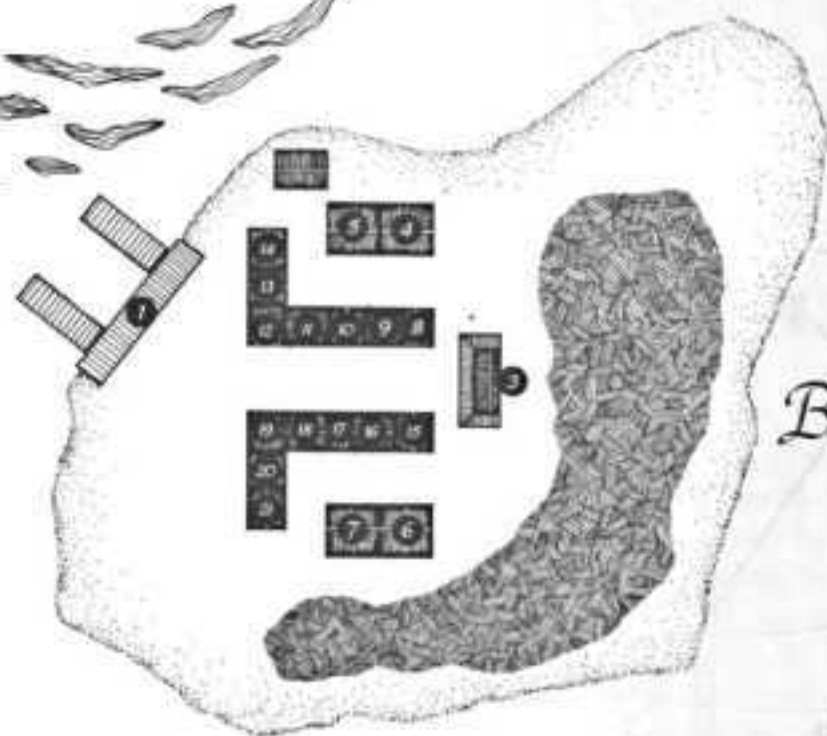
The main part of town is shaped like two back-to-back "L"s. This area is mostly taverns, gambling dens, and houses of ill repute. There are a few communal storehouses behind the "L"s in addition to a shipwright and a large Meeting Hall that was originally the home of Captain Guivere.





*The Straits of Blood*

*Tumbledown*



*Bilgewater*



To the east of the town is a thick jungle known as Caruther's Last Home. Caruther was a well-liked pirate who frequented Bilgewater, and sported a shiny hook on his right arm. One night he had a bit too much to drink and wandered out into the jungle, unnoticed by his friends. They found his pistols, his hook, and his skeleton, but the rest of him had been eaten. Since then, the pirates have avoided the jungle, especially at night.

### **7. *The Docks of Bilgewater***

The docks are located in a deep, sheltered bay with enough space for fifteen ships to dock. Another twenty or so can easily anchor within the bay.

### **2. *The West Wind Shipwright***

The shipwright is a Vestenmannavnjär named Kjorik Sveldsson. He charges high prices for his work (200% normal cost), but he's a skilled craftsman, and can install any of the Ship Modifications described in this book all the way up to Difficulty 6.

### **3. *The Meeting Hall***

When there's trouble, or cause for a town meeting, the permanent residents of Bilgewater gather here in the Meeting Hall. It is well-fortified and built from thick lumber imported from Montaigne. It also has a cellar with a large cistern and a supply of food. Forty people could hole up inside the Meeting Hall for six months if they had to.

### **4-21. *The Ls***

This is where the pirates hang out when they're in town. There are 14 places of business, including four taverns, three inns, two gambling dens, and five houses of ill-repute. There are also four storehouses behind the Ls.

### **4-7. *Storehouses***

These communal storehouses contain food, drink, and other supplies for the entire town. They are guarded by

two men at all times, with rooms for rent to the permanent residents of Bilgewater attached to the rear of the buildings.

### **8. *Dane's Dancing House***

This quaintly named house of ill-repute is where shy men go for a bit of company. The phrase used by the patrons is "I'm going dancing, boys."

### **9. *Vie Scurvy Dog***

This inn is named after Captain Guivere's dog, Jackie. Newcomers often confuse it with the Lucky Dog.

### **10. *The Sailor's Hammock***

This house of ill-repute features large hammocks.

### **11. *The Bells and Whistles***

At this tavern, pirates whistle for a pint of beer, and ring a bell for a quart.

### **12. *Rosewater Place***

Known for the sweet-smelling bowls of rosewater strategically placed around the building, this house of ill-repute is one of the busiest in the town.

### **13. *The Lucky Dog***

Like the Scurvy Dog, the Lucky Dog is named for Captain Guivere's dog. It offers dice and card games as well as cheap beer to the pirates that frequent it.

### **14. *The Smiling Chambermaid***

This tavern boasts the prettiest barmaids in town.

### **15. *The Teeth and Ankles***

The ladies at this house of ill-repute all wear long skirts to hide their ankles. They are hired for their pretty smiles and gentle manners.





### **16. *Guivere's Resting Place***

The owner of this inn, Jacques du Charouse, occasionally sells a map to Captain Guivere's treasure to a gullible pirate. Typically, the poor soul is mocked mercilessly by his fellows. Jacques is a large, burly man capable of handling poor sports, and he always offers a free beer to anyone he tricks.

### **17. *The Coffin***

This tavern is usually avoided by the superstitious pirates of the town, unless they need to clandestinely meet for some reason. Captains know that having their crewmen gather at the Coffin spells trouble.

### **18. *The Captain's Daughter***

This tavern features a tall rope leading up to a platform where a pretty lass sits. Any man can try and climb up to kiss her, but if he falls, he gets razed by the staff, and has a bucket of wash water dumped on him.

### **19. *The Silk Sheets***

This house of ill-repute is famous as the only place in town with real silk sheets.

### **20. *The Ante***

This gambling house is the roughest place in town. Knife fights are not uncommon, and daggers are not considered to violate the "no weapons" rule in this building.

### **21. *The Bosun's Pipe***

This inn is particularly clean and well-maintained.

## **Tumbledown**

Less rowdy and dangerous than Bilgewater, Tumbledown mostly consists of the homes of pirate Captains who frequent the Straits. There is one quiet tavern, but crewmen are not allowed inside.

As for the jungle surrounding the town, it seems perfectly safe. There are no large predators on the island, and no one has ever disappeared while walking along its picturesque paths.

### **1. *The Docks***

The docks are less sheltered than those by Bilgewater, but still relatively safe. There is enough space for five ships to dock, and another eight or so can easily anchor within the bay.

### **2. *The Captain's Hat***

This quiet tavern is run by a retired pirate captain by the name of Morgan Feder. He only does it as a hobby, and only allows captains and first mates inside. He keeps a much finer stock of wines and liquors than the taverns in Bilgewater, and his portly wife Veronica serves the drinks. Morgan usually spends his time swapping stories with the other captains while he rinses glasses.

### **3. *Morgan Feder's House***

Morgan lives in this opulent house with his wife, Veronica. They frequently invite visiting Captains to stay at their house and sip brandy late into the night with them. Morgan owns a large mastiff named Red who is trained to attack uninvited guests.

### **4. *Captain Wayfarer Smith's House***

Captain Smith lives in this small house along with Gayle, his live-in maid and cook. There are no romantic ties between the two — Gayle is thirty years older than Smith — but he sometimes playfully refers to her as "Milady." Sadly, Wayfarer really is his first name. He likes to tell his friends that he was five days old when he first heard his name. As he would have you believe it, he began crying, and didn't stop until he was three years old, by which point his parents were ready to ship him off to sea. Captain Smith is known for his comical tall tales.







### 5. *Captain Auguste d'Alroux's House*

Captain d'Alroux lives alone in this house by the docks. He is something of a hermit, and disappears into his house for days at a time when he's in port. He lost his true love to marauding soldiers at the age of twenty, and he's never gotten close to another person since. He is **known** to be obsessed with finding a safe course to Cathay, to which he hopes to set up a trade route.

### 6. *Captain Thomas Launds' House*

Captain Launds is a hefty Avalon pirate. He insists that his ship be kept well-provisioned (in order to maintain his substantial girth). He is best known for his booming laugh, his wide belly, and his fierce temper when anyone mentions his wide belly.

### 7. *Captain Grey Jackson's House*

Captain Jackson, or Captain Grey as he prefers to be called, considers himself a ladies' man. He is seldom found without a barmaid on his arm. He lives alone in his little house near the docks, if you don't count his frequent overnight visitors from Bilgewater.

### **Pebble Beach**

This island is uninhabited because of its rocky composition. Most large ships can't get close to it, and even rowboats are likely to have their bottoms torn out on the rocky shore. Although no people live on the island, it is a haven for sea birds of every sort. It is possible that Captain Guivere hid his treasure here.

### **Jackie's Rock**

Jackie was the name of Captain Guivere's dog. She served as the mascot and the model for the figurehead of his ship, the *Terrier*. When Guivere vanished, his daughter waited two months to come look for him in the Straits. She found no sign of him or his ship, but she did find Jackie on this island. Apparently, the little dog had survived by eating birds and eggs. When she died, Jackie

was buried here with a glossy black stone to mark her grave. It reads, "Here lies Jackie. May she set a course for Paradise."

## **Coldwater Isle**

The pirates of the Straits avoid this island with superstitious terror. The water surrounding it is icy cold, unlike the surrounding water, which is warm or tepid. The pirates believe that Captain Guivere and his crew sank near the island, and that their ghosts haunt the water there, chilling it with their unholy touch.

## ***La Bucca***

*"No king. No Church. A nation of equals is what I offer you. Join me and we shad sail the waves, united and free."*

The most notorious prison in Theah's history, *la Bucca* is also the staging point for a bold experiment: A nation of free men, unbound by status, culture, race or religion. An interesting paradox, considering the island once held the most notorious prison in all of Theah.

### **The Great Experiment**

In 1552, Cardinal Alfonso Ordunez made a report on the state of prisons in Castille. He observed they were overcrowded and — in his mind, at least — inhumane. He offered a suggestion that he felt would solve the problem: a new prison, a single prison for all of Theah.

Ordunez's prison had no bars and no guards. He would build it on an island, far enough from civilization to protect its citizens. The Hierophant approved the plan in the spring of 1561 and that winter, planning began.

Two years later, in 1563, the island of *la Palabra de Dios* was transformed into Ordunez's vision of the perfect



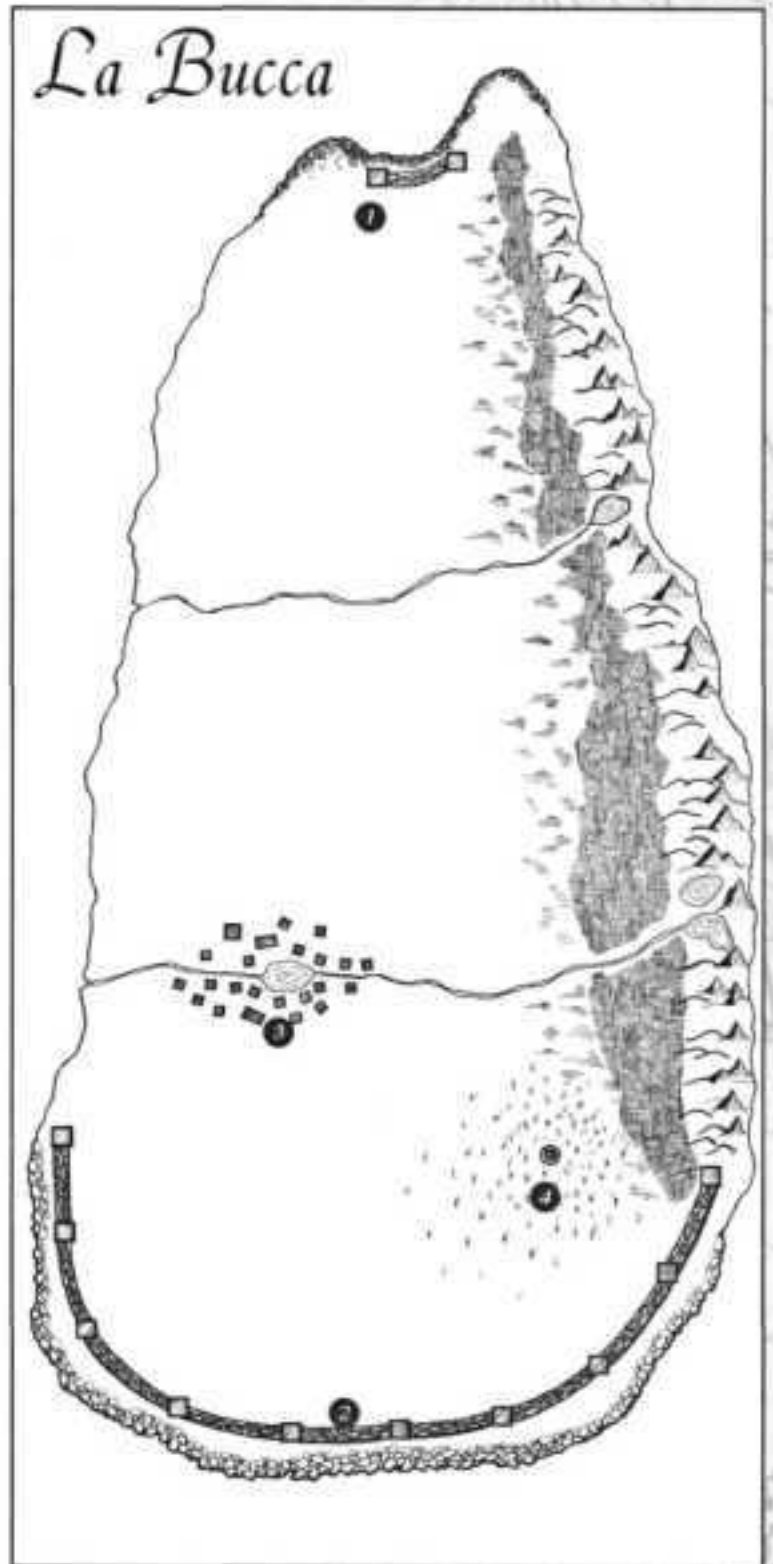
prison. There were no walls and no guards, Prisoners on the island were left to their own devices. The island provided them with fresh water, wood, stone, fish, wildlife and anything else they required to make their own buildings and build their own society, "Perhaps if they are forced to build their own civilization," Ordunez reasoned, "they will grow to appreciate its blessings."

Within the first month, half of the prisoners on the island were rescued by pirates looking for new recruits.

In 1571, Ordunez built walls around his prison. "Not to keep the prisoners in," he said, "but to keep civilization out." The east side of the island had a natural wall in the shape of an immense mountain range, while a coral reef off the west coast kept ships from approaching. Walls were erected on the north and south ends, and new fortresses armed with cannons pointed out to the sea. Anyone mounting an escape would now have to face cannons, stone walls reaching over thirty feet, mountains or treacherous coral reefs. As an added benefit, the eastern waters teemed with leviathans. Since 1571, seventeen escapes have been attempted. All of them failed.

For the next twenty-nine years the island slowly deteriorated into the most concentrated source of wickedness in the world. The famous Montaigne poet, Admiral Francois Guy Gaston, dubbed the island "La Bucca" in reference to the smoked pork the prisoners made and exported back to the mainland, and the prisoners known as "Buccaneers." The term soon became a universal catch-phrase for "criminal."

In the winter of 1600, a revolt nearly destroyed Ordunez's vision. Prisoners built weapons from the wood and stone they found on the island, and stormed the fortresses. The cannons mounted in the stone





buildings only pointed to the sea, and the guards were unprepared to put down an armed revolt. The struggle killed nine-tenths of the inmates and a third of the guards. As far as mainland Théah was concerned, Orduñez's experiment was a failure; the prison was nothing more than a cesspool of evil. The Church no longer looked at *la Bucca* as a place for criminals to learn the value of culture, but as a holding pen for those unfit to live within civilization.

### Plague

Early in the morning of 17 Septimus, 1666, a man was found dead at the gates of the south end of the island. When the guards reported his death to the resident scholar, the man went pale.

The prisoner had died of the White Plague.

The governor of the island isolated anyone who had come into contact with the prisoner or the guards who found him — including the scholar — and reported the incident to Castille. The order of the Hierophant was clear: abandon the island and leave anyone who may be infected behind.

Evacuation began immediately and proceeded with reckless haste. Guards piled into ships as the prisoners screamed for help. As the guard ships left from the south (to avoid the infected prisoners), two monthly supply ships, arriving right on schedule, approached from the north. The guards never saw them until it was too late.

### Escape

Prisoners watched the approaching supply ships from the walls of the abandoned fortresses. Their plan was almost complete. Having faked the outbreak of White Plague, all they needed now was a ship to escape the island. Their timing was perfect.

When the merchant ships docked, prisoners seized the two ships. Unfortunately, the fleeing guard ships spotted the prisoners as they passed the north side of the island. After a quick debate about the proper course of action, they turned into the bay to sink the supply ships. The prisoners opened fire with the fortress guns, sinking two of the three ships and driving the third back to Castille.

Almost fifty percent of the men on the island were pirates (or privateers preying on Castillian treasure ships); within a month the two captured ships were rebuilt as war vessels. One man stood pre-eminent among the prisoners; his name was Allende. He had led the marines who captured the two supply ships and it was his quick thinking that got men up to the fortress walls and behind the cannons that protected their new-found freedom. Now, he would show them the freedom they had never known before.

## A Brotherhood is Born

Allende announced a radical idea to his fellow prisoners. He proposed a nation of men bound by an agreement, free of the fetters of religion, culture or nationality. Those who didn't want a part of this brotherhood could leave in peace, but those who remained found themselves citizens of Théah's newest nation: the Brotherhood of the Coast.

### The Island

The island covers approximately a thousand square miles. Water pours in from the two lakes in the mountains. Charlie River runs directly to the east coast. Oliver River pools into a lake, Gregorlake, near the center of the island before it finishes off on the coast. The rivers and lake gained their names from the first men who drowned in their waters.

The eastern side of the island is green and forested., at least, it used to be. After the riots sixty years ago, most of the trees were uprooted by orders of a shaken





Hierophant. Now the area is mostly scrub and grassland. The stumps shelter new growth, but it will take hundreds of years to restore what was lost.

#### 1) North Beach

North Beach is covered in shells and pebbles that wash in from the ocean. On the south side of the beach, two towering fortresses overlook the bay. Each fortress is armed with ten twenty-pound cannons. Any ships that approach the island get one (and only one) warning shot. After that, all twenty guns open fire.

#### 2) South Beach

The enormous wall spanning the breadth of South Beach is one of the greatest architectural feats in Thean history. The wall has a fortification (with thirty guns) every four miles, giving the guards a wide arc of firepower. Unlike the rest of the island, the south end is almost all rock, which allowed guards to build the massive wall and fortifications. There are no barracks on the island; the guards slept, ate and made merry within the fortresses atop the wall.

#### 3) Shantytown & Rujeaux's Ghost

A small group of huts, hutches and hovels squat along Southlake. This is Shantytown, where the majority of the prisoners made their homes. Some of the structures are up to one hundred years old. The largest structure was built by William "Billy Bilgewater" Rujeaux in 1598 and his gang of "Bilgerats." Rujeaux was a ship's carpenter who happened to be on the wrong ship at the wrong time. He came to the island and spent the rest of his life constructing the building. When "Black Dog" Millford attempted to kill Rujeaux and take his home, the Avalon found himself thrown into a Portal with no way back. The other prisoners stayed away from Rujeaux after that.

On his deathbed, Rujeaux swore that he would haunt his home. That little hint kept people from living in the house

for almost five years. Soon enough, new prisoners began moving in and reports of Rujeaux's ghost began. While no one has *seen* Rujeaux's ghost, everyone who has lived in the structure reports footfalls in the night and moving objects. One foolish young lad carved his initials into a wall. He disappeared the next morning along with his carved initials.

#### 4) The Swamp

Southeast of Shantytown is a dense swamp that has never been properly searched. Many of the inmates (and guards, for *that* matter) believe the swamp is haunted. Others believe beasts too awful to imagine dwell there. Whatever the reason, no one who has gone into the swamp has ever come back. At least, that's what everyone on the island believes, and nobody wants to test the theory.

However, on the far eastern half of the swamp, a strange obelisk rises two feet above the muck and slime. It is neither stone nor mortar, but a material that no Thean could identify. An observer who peeled the sludge off the obelisk would see that it looked like pale gold, but was hard as steel.

The obelisk has an entrance on the east side just big enough for a man to slip into. Unfortunately, only one or two inches of the entrance are above the water level, making it all but impossible to get inside. No Thean has ever seen this obelisk, let alone tried to enter. Yet.

## Canguine

Sometimes when you look under a rock, you find a city. Canguine is a place where the customary Avalon beauty is supplanted by ugliness and brutality thanks to an ancient Sidhe curse. It has become a nest of smugglers

L







and scoundrels, untouched by the law and order surrounding it.

Many years ago, Canguine was a beautiful city, built by Montaigne conquerors. The mayor was a very orderly man Darned le Guerre, whose passion for precision and punctuality showed in the very blueprints of the city. It formed a wheel with the town hall at the hub and major roads extending out like spokes on a wheel. The bay was well protected by its breakwater, and the streets were kept neat and clean.

The mayor's compulsive orderliness brought ruin to the city when he troubled a disguised Sidhe for its papers, and attempted to throw the Sidhe in jail when it could not produce any. The Sidhe threw off its disguise and cursed the city to be chaotic and disorganized until such time as its inhabitants could be polite to one another for an entire day. Its residents, though, have difficulty being polite for an hour, much less an entire day, and the city has since slipped into disrepair.

Canguine lies on the border of the Balig and Percis provinces. Both sides claim the city, but both refuse to accept any responsibility for it, so it has slowly dilapidated over time, with odd buildings springing up and ruining the clean lines of the old Montaigne city.

The fens to the west of the city have never received a name, but the townsfolk usually avoid them. There's no evidence that any unearthly monsters live there, but swamps typically acquire the reputation for being inhospitable places, and this one is no exception.

The forest to the north of the city has been recently untouched by woodsman, thanks to its protector Timberjack (see E4, below). There are still a few ancient trees standing thanks to him. Most of the trees are second and third growth, however.

## Points of Interest in Town

### A. *The Hub*

The exact center of Old Canguine, the Hub was once the administrative core of the city. It consisted of a beautiful Town Hall surrounded by a lush botanical garden. Thanks to the riots that swept the city after the departure of the Montaignes, its days of glory are long past.

#### A1 *The Old Town Hall, or "The Emperor's Stage"*

After the Montaignes left Avalon, an angry mob set fire to the Town Hall and burned it to its stone foundation. The new rulers of the city decided not to build a new Town Hall on the site, since it would remind the people of their long occupation. Thus, the stone foundation has remained exactly as it was; over the years, street performers and acting troupes began to perform there. Now, the people of Canguine refer mockingly to it as "The Emperor's Stage."

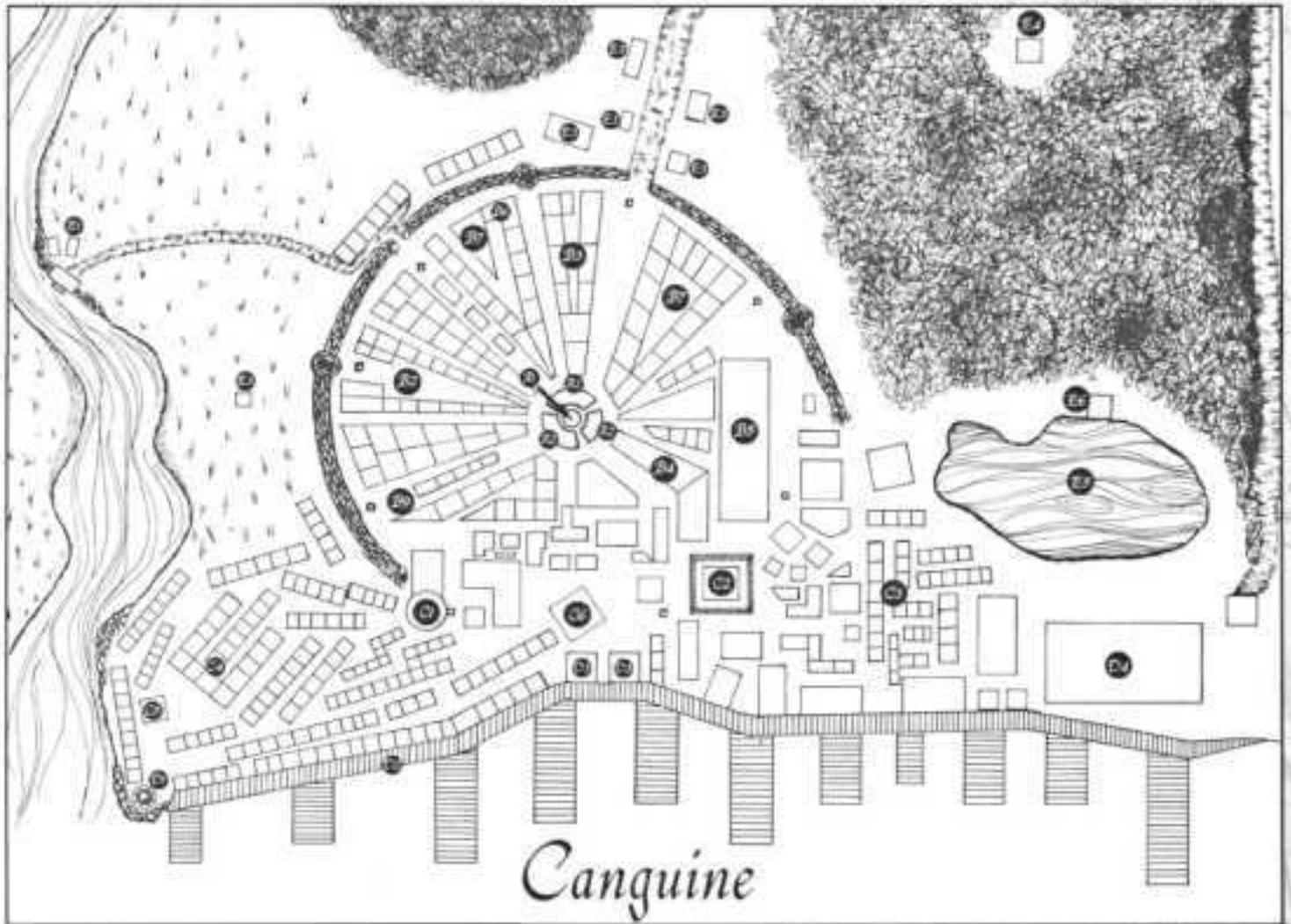
#### A2 *Beggar's Park*

The old botanical garden has been untended so long that it is now weeds, briars, and dirt. The beggars of the city congregate there at night to sleep. Lately they have begun posting a watch at night; over the past three months several of their brethren have been carried off while asleep.

### B. *The Spokes*

Once a masterpiece of city planning with wide cobblestone streets, the Spokes filled the entire city in the days when Canguine was surrounded by a sturdy wail. Half of the wall was torn down when the Montaignes left in order to give the city more room to grow. Since then, Canguine has spread itself along the coast like a plague.





#### *B1 Mrs. Dunningan's Boarding Home*

Mrs. Dunnigan is a nosy old widow who doesn't allow any women in her boarding house. However, room and board is cheap (2G/month), and she's an excellent cook. She's known for her potato soup, and she sells bowls of it to non-residents for 1c. She gets her spices from a small herb garden on the roof of the boarding house, and residents have occasionally wangled an even lower rent by helping her lend it. She makes special meals on request, but charges extra for the service and needs several days' notice.

#### *B2. The Three Fountains*

The three fountains are one of the most obvious remnants of the Montaigne origins of the city. They no longer work, and are full of filth and muck. The fountain to the northwest of the Hub depicts a lovely woman who used to pour water out of a vase. The fountain to the southwest had a statue of the original mayor of the town before rioters destroyed it. Finally, the northeast fountain had two gilded swans in the center of it which were stolen years ago. It is believed that if the fountains ever start working again, it will warn of an impending Montaigne invasion.



*B3. The Broken Compass Inn*

Sitting on the edge of one of the points, the Broken Compass Inn houses some of the most notorious pirates in the northern seas. It is also home to Avalon's Sea Dogs.

The Broken Compass is Berek's favorite resting spot when on his home shore. There's usually a ruckus in the Inn, with sailor songs, dancing on tables, rhyming games and stories that are — at most — half true, all competing to be heard.

The Inn gets its name from a large compass hanging on the south wall. The compass reads — clockwise from the top — North, South, East and West. The owner is Piety Morhead, a tall, pretty blonde widow who inherited the Inn from her deceased husband. She usually makes at least half of her profit each night by drinking naive sailors under the table on a wager.

The Innkeeper's name is Jack Martin, but all the sailors call him "Skipjack." His ten year old son is also a Jack, but everyone calls him "Nipperkin." The two of them sing songs and tell stories together, although Nipperkin usually gets all the ladies' attention... much to his father's chagrin.

*B4. The Home of Magnus Gunnson*

Magnus is a wealthy merchant. Rumors abound that he's deeply entangled in a widespread smuggling operation, but no real proof has surfaced. His house is somewhat ramshackle for such a wealthy man. He's reputed to be

so miserly that he'd rather watch his goods rot than sell them cheaply.

*B5. Red Sky at Night Sail Makers*

The owner of "Red Sky at Night" is a young Avalon woman by the name of Rebecca Howser. Jake the Bank (B6) has offered to buy her building for a princely sum, but her family has owned it for such a long time that she's reluctant to sell even though her business doesn't really need all the space. She has set up cots for her workers at one end of the warehouse, since not all of them have places to sleep. Rebecca is a gentle, kind-hearted woman who seems quite out of place in Canguine.

*B6. The Home of Jake the Bank*

This stone house is fairly new, having been constructed less than three months ago.

Jake, a moneylender feared throughout Canguine, decided that he wanted a home right next to the Pot and the Kettle, so he had some masons who owed him money build a house right onto its side. The neighbors and Cyrus Black (B7) were too frightened of Jake to complain.

**"Did Ya Die?"**

The patrons of the Broken Compass Inn have a very particular taste when it comes to stories. Whenever someone finishes a story, the Sea Dogs call out: "Did ya die?" If the storyteller answers, "Yes, I did!" then the Sea Dogs smile and nod. "Then it must be true," they yell, and buy him a drink. If the storyteller answers, "No, I didn't!" the Sea Dogs frown and shake their heads. "Then yur a liar!" they shout, and throw their drinks at him.

*B7. The Pot and the Kettle*

This tavern boasts some of the best alcohol in Canguine. Cyrus Black, the owner, considers himself a wine connoisseur, and he ships in wines from all over Theah. Jake the Bank, of B6, is having a fling with a barmaid named Ellen who works here.

*B8. Vendor's Row*

This road is now lined with small vendors' carts. Everything from fish to phony love potions can be found

for sale here. There are 30 stalls, and each vendor pays 5G in rent a month to Captain McLaughlin, a grizzled old retired pirate who lives in the large building just up the street from the row of stalls. He can usually be found patrolling the Row, looking for thieves and other troublemakers to thrash with his stout club. He is a popular man in this part of town, and can usually count on some of the burlier inhabitants to come to his aid if he gets in over his head.

### *C. Longfellow's Quarter*

No one is really sure who Longfellow was any more, but the portion of the town between the Docks and the Spokes has borne his name as long as anyone can remember. This part of town is one of the most dangerous places in Avalon, particularly at night.

### *C/. The Work Mule*

Ten years ago, this barn was converted into a tavern by its owner, Daniel

Beacon, a muscular man who turned his attention from farming to bartending. Since then, it has served mostly beggars and down-on-their-luck sailors, but it does appeal to certain wealthier clientele. A number of private rooms can be rented to hold quiet meetings, and privacy is guaranteed. Nobles and captains use the Mule to scheme against each other all the time. While the Mule is usually empty during the day, it gets pretty crowded late at night.

One of its more unusual "features" is the sewer cap planted right in the front entrance. Late at night, Beacon takes the lid off for the patrons who've had a bit too much to drink. Then, right before they close, the staff washes all the mess in the bar down into the sewers and replaces the cap. So far, only two people have fallen in while staggering drunkenly out of the bar.

### **The Curse of Canguine**

The Sidhe's curse affects anyone within two miles of the former site of Town Hall in the following ways:

1. Each Drama die the GM spends to activate a Hero's Hubris counts as two. This makes it twice as hard for the player to prevent his Hero's Hubris from activating, since he must spend two dice for every one the GM spends,
2. Heroes or NPCs with the Scoundrel advantage receive one extra Drama die at the start of each Story.
3. Heroes may not be taken away by the GM until they reach -50 Reputation instead of -30 Reputation.
4. Heroes get Drama dice for arguing with each other and causing public disorder.

### *C2. The Old Mayor's House*

No one goes near this walled-in building, for fear of ghosts and other beasts rumored to live inside. After the Montaignes left, the front gate was found bricked shut one morning. A decaying corpse had its head and hands trapped in the wall, as if it were being displayed in stocks. Recently, strange lights and noises have been reported to be coming from the house, but no one has dared enter it in order to discover their source.

### *C3. Labyrinth Street*

Labyrinth Street isn't really a single road — it's more like a maze of back alleys and run-down residences. Most of the wealthier citizens of Canguine fear to enter this area. It's known for its muggers, bandits, and other even less savory inhabitants. It is even rumored that the ghost of a young woman who was murdered here still walks the streets, leaving bloodstains on everything (and everyone) she touches.





#### *C4. Horseshoe Tenements*

This block of housing is some of the newest construction in the city. These rooms are nice, with very reasonable rental rates. The corner rooms and the buildings overlooking the water are some of the nicest places to live in all of Canguine, and consequently, in high demand.

#### *C5. Warehouse*

It is rumored that the owner of this warehouse rents it out to pirates, who store their plunder there until they can fence it.

#### *C6. Empty Building*

The original owner of this building disappeared under unusual circumstances. The mayor could possibly be bribed to transfer ownership for 1500G. The building needs about 1000G in repairs. No one has yet bothered, as the building is believed to be cursed.

#### *C7. Fence*

The two buildings here are owned by Jeremiah Thrush. He runs a fencing operation out of the smaller building, using the larger one as a warehouse for the stolen goods. The small building contains a table and two chairs. Jeremiah typically invites visitors to have a seat and chat, and then waits for them to bring up their business. He has a great memory for details and objects, but he has trouble remembering faces, so he tends to call everyone "My Lord" or "My Lady." He buys items at 10-25 percent of their normal price.

#### *D. The Docks*

The docks are the center of activity in town; sailors and pirates alike walk the streets looking for food and entertainment, and ships unload their cargo into the area's several warehouses. The docks are mostly sheltered from the weather thanks to a breakwater built long ago through painstaking labor.

#### *D1. The Canguine Lighthouse*

The lighthouse is a six-story monstrosity of bronze and bone, obviously of Syrneth origin. There is no known entrance, but it runs itself, never once failing in all the time Canguine has stood. No one knows how or why it was built; they just hope it keeps operating.

#### *D2. The Promenade*

This area is lined with overpriced taverns and houses of ill repute, as well as several expensive shops. Prices here range from 110-200 percent normal.

#### *D3. The Twin Taverns*

Joseph and Nathan Storm run these two taverns. While the brothers aren't identical, the taverns are. Every detail and every decoration has been duplicated in each of the two taverns. Occasionally the brothers alter a single small detail in one of the taverns, and offer a free beer to whomever finds it first.

#### *D4. Wells and Son Shipwrights*

Although the sign above the door reads "Wells and Son\*<sup>1</sup>", the owner is named Timodiy Brackish and he has no children. He started as "Brackish Shipwrights", but he wasn't getting many customers. Changing the name to something more "homey and honest" doubled his business. Timothy is capable of repairing ships, building ships to suit, or installing most of the Ship Modifications (Difficulty 3 or less) in this book.

#### *E. Other Places of Interest*

Several out of the way locations in Canguine offer something Heroes might want to purchase or investigate. Everything from the mayor's house to the local mill can be found near the town.

#### *E1 Peter's Mill*

Peter Miller is an unfriendly, gruff man. His mill supplies flour to much of Canguine, and his men drive the





carriage into town through the swamp each morning to make deliveries. Peter has one extra room that he rents out to anyone willing to pay 4G/month and put up with the endless grinding of the windmill, but prospective renters should be warned that the last person who took him up on the offer disappeared without a trace. Peter said he'd left in a hurry, taking his possessions with him, but some believe that he killed his renter, burned the body, and ground up the bones in his mill, using them as filler in his flour. Oddly, that hasn't stopped anyone from buying from him.

*E2. The Home of Charles Aaron*

Charles Aaron is an herbalist who lives in the swamp. He has two reasons for this. First, the swamp is a great source of rare herbs and plants. Second, he is afraid of the curse that supposedly lies over Canguine, and he wants nothing to do with it. He knows a great deal about poisons and their antidotes, and people occasionally come to him to purchase antidotes. He does not sell poisons, but knows how to make several exotic varieties.

*E3. Greeter's My*

These pubs, inns, and shops are some of the most expensive in town, along with those on the Promenade. Prices usually run twice normal, as these businesses are the first a newcomer to town sees. Visiting nobles and other uninformed travelers often stay here.

*E4. The Home of Timberjack*

Timberjack is an eccentric man who lives in the nearby forest. He is a very large, burly man with a sloped forehead, and he never uses verbs when he speaks ("You home now. Timberjack axe."). He considers himself the forest's "protector", and has beaten four woodcutters half to death for daring to harm "his trees." Timothy Brackish (D4) needs that lumber for his business, and he isn't too happy about the way his men have been treated. After the second man came back with a broken arm, he put a

bounty of 25G on Timberjack's head; it has since gone up to 50G.

*E5. Lake Frigid*

Lake Frigid is believed by the inhabitants of Canguine to be bottomless. Its extremely cold water is supplied by underground aquifers, and birds shun it. People who fish here never have any luck, and strange webbed footprints occasionally appear on its shores, so the lake has acquired an evil reputation.

*E6. The Mayor's House*

Mayor Wolff lives in this beautiful house on the shores of Lake Frigid. He doesn't believe the stories that circulate about the lake, and he likes to sit on his porch and enjoy its beauty in the mornings while he meets with the people of the town who have business with him. Wolff is friendly, forthright, and openly corrupt. The townsfolk know they have to bribe him to get anything done, and are relieved to have a mayor so honest that he'll admit he takes bribes. While he believes he has nothing to worry about, Wolff has a scarred Avalon bodyguard named Meredith, a Master of the Donovan school.

## Legends of the Seven Seas

The sea is a treasure trove of stories. Some of them have at least a kernel of truth, others are complete fabrications. Listed below are the most famous sailor stories. We won't tell you which ones are true, but we will tell you this: Each of them *might* be true.

**Captain Rogers' Lost Plunder**

Captain Justice Rogers (1312 AV - 1355? AV) was the first pirate to ever gain notoriety. He is the prototypical





pirate, the first name on anyone's lips if you ask them about the subject. He is also the source of one of Theah's greatest mysteries.

Rogers was born in Avalon and fought against the occupying Montaignes. His ship, the *Jolly Rogers*, raided the Montaigne treasure fleet and returned the plunder to the Avalon people. His exploits made him Montaigne's greatest enemy and Avalon's greatest hero.

His luck ran out in 1355. After capturing a particularly bloated treasure ship, Rogers was pursued by a dozen Montaigne war ships. He retreated to a remote island and hid his ship and crew. When the Montaignes arrived, they found his empty ship but could not find him or his crew.

While the Montaigne captains were sailing the captured ship back to their king, a storm fell upon them, destroying every ship and sending them to the bottom of the sea. One man who survived the experience wrote, "It was as if the hand of Theus came out of the sky to smite us."

Even three centuries later, the question of Rogers, his crew and his treasure is on the mind of every sailor and treasure hunter in Theah. But so far no one has found even a trace of the world's most famous pirate or his fabled treasure. They *did* find the ruins of an ancient civilization. Rogers' island was, in fact, the isle of Syrne. Now, in order to preserve the ruins on the island, the Explorer's Society has taken it under their protective wing.

### The Black Freighter

No sailor ever mentions it. Even whispering the name is reason enough to throw a man overboard. The dark ship that supposedly sails in perpetual storms is the bogeyman of the Seven Seas. Few have seen it. Fewer have survived to tell the tale.

The ship's past has been told in many stories, each with a different origin for the ghastly vessel. The one that rings most true involves a captain who conspired with a group of wreckers against his own ship. When the ship smashed into the reefs, the entire crew was killed, except the captain who escaped on a dinghy.

#### Wreckers

The mortal enemies of sailors, wreckers intentionally sink ships to gain their plunder. They knock out lighthouse lights and set up a false light to lure ships into high reefs. When the ship crashes on the reefs, the wreckers scour the ship for valuables.

The captain split the fortune with the wreckers and all the men went their own way. Years later, the ship reappeared, surrounded by mists and storms. Every man that served on her was a walking corpse and the captain was strapped to the front of the ship as her figurehead.

That's just one tale of the ghost ship, but there are others. Listed below are some sailor superstitions regarding the ship. Of course, only the GM knows which are true... if any.

- Some claim the ship is attracted to death. Sailors take pains to never kill anything they don't need to while at sea.
- It is also speculated that the ship hunts wreckers and takes revenge on those who trick sailors to watery graves.
- Having any kind of criminal on your ship is bad luck, but murderers attract the ship like blood attracts sharks.





- Some believe hanging a dead man's shoes on the mast will keep the ship away.

- Other sailors keep a cat on board, believing cats can smell the ship and keep sailors clear of it.

- Mutiny attracts the ship as certainly as murderers and plots of murder do.

- It is said the ship travels in a perpetual storm preceded by a ghostly mist that seems to have a mind of its own.

'Some ships keep a fire burning all night long, thinking that the ghost ship can only travel in complete darkness.

- Some claim that if the ghost ship finds you, giving it one of your own crew will make it go away.

- Whenever a ship enters a storm, sailors blindfold the figurehead. They believe if the figurehead sees the ship, it will sink out of fright.

- At night, the bosun never strikes the sixth bell. Instead, he calls it out. This little custom comes from the belief that the ship struck the reef on the sixth bell.

'Black seems to be an important color when speaking of the ghost ship. Some captains refuse to let anyone wear black on board... just in case. "Makes the ship look like one great funeral dirge, I do think me," said one bosun. Black birds are also bad omens, especially when they land on the figurehead. Many captains refuse to carry a corpse on board for the same reasons.

- If a man dies on board, it is customary to never have another man on the ship with the same name. If a man has the same name as the corpse, he must take a nickname and never be called by his real name.

### **The Queen of the Sea**


Most landlubbers know something about sirens, but few know the awful truth. Even fewer know of the "Queen of the Sea", an enormous siren that has only been seen three times in recorded history. She was first seen by Old Empire sailors, again five hundred years later by Vestenmannavnjar raiders, and most recently only two years ago by Avalon sailors. All three reports tell of her bloated appearance, her unique song (low and booming, rather than high and screeching) and her unquenchable thirst for sailor blood.

Sailors tell many tales about the Queen of the Sea. Some say she was a beautiful Fate Witch who took her sorcery a bit too far. Others say she was a wrecker cursed by the sea. Whatever the truth may be, she threatens every sailor — man or woman — who sails the Seven Seas.







A decorative horizontal scroll with ornate, twisted metal end caps. The scroll has a central rectangular section with the word "Pirates" written in a cursive font.

*Pirates*

The background of the page is a faded, light gray illustration of a nautical chart or map. It features a compass rose in the upper right corner with lines radiating outwards, and various geographical outlines and markings across the page.

# *Pirate*



## Introduction

For as long as Thean history records, pirates have sailed the seas. Even in ancient times, Crescent pirates raided Old Empire shipping lanes for treasure, supplies, spices and slaves. Recent developments in naval technology, noble crowns' issuance of letters of marque and reprisal, the popularity of (and demand for) Syrneath artifacts and the people's fascination with jolly robbers have made this time the golden age of piracy.

While many pirates sail Theah's seas, the six most famous are listed below. Along with them are their crews, ships and a little bit of history to give you a perspective on just what drove five men and one woman to turn to a life of piracy.

# The Brotherhood of the Coast

The scourge of the southern seas, the Brotherhood of the Coast preys on shipping near Montaigne and Vodacce (and, to a lesser extent, Avalon). Their captain, Allende, out-thinks his opponents rather than sending them to the bottom of the sea. Every ship they capture adds to their ever-growing treasure horde, shared by all who participate in its acquisition. The Brotherhood is just that: an alliance of sailors dedicated to living on their own terms, free from the constraints of crown, country and religion.

### Birth of *La Buccaneer*

Located on *la Palabra de Dios*, a large island just south of Casn'lle, *la Bucca* was one of Theah's most infamous prisons. Now it serves as home to Allende's pirate nation,

the Brotherhood of the Coast. *La Bucca* was captured during a simulated outbreak of the White Plague; see Chapter One for the details. Their leader called himself "Allende." Now they call him "the Pirate King."

The Brotherhood has eight ships, each with its own captain. Allende's ship, the *Hanged Man*, is responsible for most of the pillaging off the coast of Montaigne, while his Brethren prey upon ships sailing by Vodacce and (occasionally) Castille.

When it comes to organization, the Brotherhood are an odd paradox. On one hand, their credo is all about freedom, but on the other, they are bound by a promise that none of them dares break.

Their charter, written by Allende and signed by every member of the Brotherhood, is a strict code of conduct followed by every man aboard a Brotherhood ship. Sailors who meet a ship flying a Brotherhood flag know that if they give up without a fight, they will not be harmed; so when they see the flag of the *Hanged Man*, they often surrender. Those who do not surrender face ships manned by some of the most experienced seamen on the waves.

### The Charter

Every Brotherhood ship carries a copy of the original Charter written by Allende. Every man wanting to serve on a Brotherhood ship must sign the Charter... with his own blood. Every ship's Charter contains the primary articles, but each ship may add articles if the crew votes them in. Almost every question of conduct (for both officers and sailors) can be answered by the charter. It contains an order of list (the length of watches), forbids gambling on the ship, orders the men to clean their weapons regularly, and even gives a method for solving quarrels between crew members.



Perhaps the most important article is the one that dictates payment. Members of a Brotherhood ship may not disband their agreement until each crewman earns himself 1000 Guilders worth of plunder. It also gives recompense for those who are injured or maimed in the line of duty.

## Tactics

Allende's tactics are fairly straightforward: Find a merchant ship, fly his colors and expect surrender. In addition to having one of the most skilled crews on the Seven Seas, Allende is a natural leader who inspires men to perform acts they never believed possible. His leadership combined with the crew's ability makes the *Hanged Man* a dangerous opponent

## Initiation Ceremony

All those who serve on a Brotherhood ship must read the charter out loud before the entire crew. Those who cannot read recite it. Then, every man on the ship slices his hand and the recruit clasps hands with his fellow crewmen, saying "So I swear."

## Ranks and Structure

Each Brotherhood ship has its own command structure and ranks, depending on the crew at hand. Some Brotherhood ships have no surgeon on board, while others have two or three.

Despite the structure, each man is allowed to vote on any decision made — except during combat, when the captain takes complete control of the ship. The crew votes on the ship's course, on which navies to terrorize, and on where to rest and recuperate. Once the vote is cast, the men take their positions and the traditional command structure falls into place.

## The Brotherhood of the Coast Charter

**I.** Every man to have a vote in affairs of moment; equal title to the fresh provisions, or strong liquors, and may use them at pleasure, unless scarcity makes it necessary, for the good of all, to vote a rationing.

**II.** Every man to be called fairly in turn, by list, on board for duty. They shall be allowed a shift of clothes: but if they defrauded the company to the value of a guilder in plate, jewels, or money, marooning shall be their punishment. If the robbery was only betwixt one another, they content themselves with slitting the ears and nose of him that was guilty, and set him on shore, not in an uninhabited place, but somewhere where he is sure to encounter hardship.

**III.** No person to game at cards or dice for money.

**IV.** The lights and candles to be put out at eight o'clock at night: if any of the crew after that hour still remain, they are to do it on the open deck.

**V.** Every man to keep his piece, pistols and cutlass clean and fit for service.

**VI.** To desert the ship or their quarters in battle is punished with death or marooning.

**VII.** No striking one another on board, but every man's quarrels to be ended on shore, at sword and pistol.

**VIII.** No man to talk of breaking up their way of living till each had shared 1,000 guilders. If in order to this, any man should lose a limb, or become a cripple in their service, he should have 600 guilders, out of the public stock, and for lesser hurts proportionately. 600 guilders for the loss of the right arm; 500 guilders for the left arm and right leg, 400 guilders for the left leg. Injury to the eye or finger will be rewarded with 100 guilders.

**IX.** The captain and quartermaster to receive two shares of a prize, the master, boatswain and gunner, one share and a half and other officers one and a quarter.





### **Punishment**

Punishment on a Brotherhood ship is rarely necessary; Brethren are motivated by personal profit rather than fear of the bosun's monkey.



### **Brotherhood Colors**

The colors of the Brotherhood of the Coast show three skeletal arms, each with a knife in their fists, thrusting them down into a common cup.

When punishment becomes necessary, Sean McCorley usually carries it out, and it often involves extra duties rather than physical injury. Swabbing the deck, standing the dog watch and cleaning the head of the ship are common punishments. Other Brotherhood bosuns are similarly inclined when distributing punishments.

### **Allies**

The Brotherhood has few allies, although someone in Castille is looking out for them; Verdugo has his suspicions as to whom. One of his most trusted guards reported seeing Allende in conversation with *El Vago*, which makes him think there is more to the Pirate King than is immediately evident.

Some Brotherhood ships have also taken commissions against Montaigne from Queen Elaine (in the legal form of "salvage rights for sinking ships"). The Queen demands ten percent of all captured loot and provides a safe port for any ships under her contract.

### **Flag**

Brotherhood ships may sail whatever flag they wish, but under their own colors they must also fly the colors of the

Brotherhood. Usually, personal colors are flown above the Brotherhood colors.

### **The Crew**

The Pirate King's ship is crewed by some of Theah's most (in)famous scoundrels and knaves. Many of Allende's officers have retired in luxury, but after years of successful piracy, the fact that the captain of the *Hanged Man* has not suggests that the Pirate King may have some motivation other than simple greed.

Almost all of Allende's crew (and all of his officers) are ex-convicts from *La Bucca*, the prison on la Palabra de Dios.

### **Captain Allende**

The man known to his crew as "Allende" is actually Prince Javier, the older brother of Good King Sandoval and (in many people's eyes) the rightful King of Castille. Javier was the head of Castille's navy, one of her finest admirals. As the crown prince, he was entrusted with many state secrets, including information about *la Bucca*. He also made many friends who happened to be members of the Rilasriare. Sandoval never officially joined the organization, but he maintained contact with his college friends after graduation and even privately supported a few of their "pranks." When the war between Castille and Montaigne erupted, he alone was able to compete with the sorcery and skill of the Montaigne admirals.

Soon after the war broke out, the King of Castille grew deathly ill and many assumed Javier would claim the throne. For many weeks, he served as regent on an informal basis as his father lay unconscious. While his actions made him popular in the court, they made him unpopular with many members of the Church, particularly the Inquisition. One night five men with Inquisition hoods dragged Javier from his bed and threw





him into prison. No explanation was given for his arrest. Days later, a public hearing was held to pass judgment on the crown prince of Castille. He was found guilty of heresy and exiled to the prison island of *la Bucca* to live the rest of his life in quiet contemplation of his sin.

Javier was no fool. He knew he had been framed and also knew that the party responsible never intended for him to reach *la Bucca*. As he climbed aboard the prison ship, the bosun asked his name. "Allende," he replied, and he hasn't spoken his given name since that rainy day.

Allende spent almost a decade on the island working fourteen hours a day. He lived a farmer's life, rising at sunrise and working until sunset. He spent every waking moment looking for assassins and even found a few. Somehow, despite the brutal conditions and attempts on his life, he managed to survive. Later, he would learn he had a bit of supernatural aid (see below).

The eventual coup, escape and establishment of the Brotherhood were all orchestrated by Allende. At first, he did so to earn the respect of the convicts in order to get back home. However, when he returned to discover his father dead and his young brother on the throne, he knew he could not claim his heritage; challenging his brother's authority would bring Castille more harm. Therefore, he established the Brotherhood of the Coast and dedicated himself to protecting Castille's shores.

*Captain Allende: Hero*

*Brawn 3, Finesse 4, Wits 5, Resolve 4, Panache 4*

*Reputation: 122*

*Arcana: Altruistic*

*Advantages: Castille (R/W), Avalon (R/W), Montaigne (R/W), Vendel, Crescent (ACQ), Castillian Education, Connections (Rilasciare), Noble*

*Background: True Identity 3*

*Courtier: Dancing 3, Etiquette 4, Fashion 4, Oratory 5, Diplomacy 4, Politics 5, Scheming 2, Sincerity 3*

*Sailor: Balance 4, Climbing 4, Knotwork 3, Rigging 3, Cartography 4, Leaping 3, Navigation 5, Pilot 4, Swimming 3*

*Scholar: History 3, Mathematics 3, Philosophy 4, Research 2, Law 4, Occult 3, Theology 2*

*Aldana (Master): Feint (Fencing) 5, Riposte (Fencing) 5, Tagging (Fencing) 5, Exploit Weakness (Aldana) 5*

*Athlete: Climbing 4, Footwork 4, Sprinting 3, Throwing 3, Rolling 3, Swinging 4*

*Captain: Strategy 5, Tactics 5, Gunnery 3, Incitation 5, Leadership 5, Logistics 3*

*Fencing: Attack (Fencing) 5, Parry (Fencing) 5*

*Firearms: Attack (Firearms) 3, Reload (Firearms) 3*

*Alesio*

Alesio was once Alesia, a daughter of Vodacce and a notable Fate Witch. Although assigned to observe one of Vodacce's arch-bishops, she spent most of her time watching die handsome young son of the King of Castille;



not because of his looks, but because of his almost blinding Hanged Man Arcana. The more she watched him, the more fascinated she became. One day, she watched him walking through a garden with the woman who was to become his wife, and noticed the emotional Cups Strand between the couple fray and become a Rods Strand of authority between herself and the prince.

When Prince Javier was betrayed, Alesia made a decision. She cut her hair, put on a pair of trousers, took a man's name - "Alesio" - and joined the group of prisoners headed for *la Bucca*. She twisted and pulled the Strands to get herself on the ship, and once there, made certain that the Prince survived the voyage.

Over the years, she watched the man now known as Allende, while using her abilities to keep both of them out of harm's way. Eventually, she revealed her identity and her intentions. She had no romantic interest in the

young prince, and while she wasn't sure what he was destined for, she wanted to be there when it happened.

Alesio helped put the coup in motion. Without her help, it would have failed miserably. In recognition, Allende made her his second-in-command. While the men respect and admire their captain, they initially kept their distance from his Fate Witch. However, they've noticed the absence of common seafaring misfortunes, and so have grown to respect Alesio's powers and even her company.

*Alesio: Hero*

*Brawn 2, Finesse 2, Wits 4, Resolve 2, Panache 3*

*Reputation: 21*

*Advantages:* Vodacce (R/W), Castille (R/W), Crescent (ACQ), Montaigne (ACQ), Noble

*Arcana:* Loyal

*Courtier:* Dancing 1, Etiquette 4, Fashion 2, Oratory 3, Diplomacy 4, Lip Reading 2, Politics 4, Scheming 4, Sincerity 2

*Scholar:* History 3, Mathematics 2, Philosophy 2, Research 2, Astronomy 3, Occult 4, Theology 3

*Sailor:* Balance 3, Climbing 4, Knotwork 1, Rigging 1, Navigation 3, Cartography 3

*Sorte (Adept):* Arcana 5, Coins 4, Cups 4, Staves 4, Swords 4

*Firearms:* Attack (Firearms) 3, Reload (Firearms) 2

*Knife:* Attack (Knife) 2, Parry (Knife) 4

*Dirty Fighting:* Attack (Dirty Fighting) 4, Throat Strike 3

*Sean McCorley*

Sean McCorley was born into a fisherman's family. Living half his life on the water and half on the land, it only seemed natural to sign up for duty on one of Elaine's mercenary ships. He served as a marine for seven years until his ship was captured by a Castillian admiral; he was sent to *la Bucca* to serve a life sentence for espionage against the Castillian crown.



McCorley met Allende on the prison ship and the two became fast allies, more out of necessity than compatible personality. Allende's keen mind and McCorley's fierce fighting style complemented each other perfectly.

Since the coup, McCorley has served as Allende's sergeant at arms and as his bosun. On the rare occasions when McCorley must mete out serious discipline, he does so unflinchingly. More often than not, though, the Inish is drinking with his men rather than flogging them.

*Sean McCorley: Hero*

*Brawn 3, Finesse 3, Wits 2, Resolve 4, Panache 2*

*Reputation: 13*

*Arcana: Victorious*

*Advantages: AvaJon (R/W), Crescent (ACQ), Castille, Able Drinker, Swordsman's Guild, Toughness*

*Sailor: Balance 4, Climbing 3, Knotwork 3, Rigging 3, Swimming 2*

*Captain: Strategy 2, Tactics 3, Incitation 3, Leadership 3*

*Donovan (Journeyman): Bind (Buckler) 4, Disarm (Fencing)*

*4, Riposte (Fencing) 4, Exploit Weakness (Donovan) 4*

*Fencing: Attack (Fencing) 4, Parry (Fencing) 2*

*Buckler: Parry (Buckler), 4*

*Crossbow: Attack (Crossbow) 4, Fletcher 2, Reload (Crossbow) 2*

*Polearm: Attack (Polearm) 2, Parry (Polearm) 1*

*Reggie Wilcox*

All his life, Reggie Wilcox has been a thief. His mother died at birth, leaving him and his brother with their less-than-responsible father. Reggie and Willy turned to a life of crime. When they wore out their welcome in Avalon, they crossed to the continent and made themselves famous with Montaigne law enforcers: Reggie became known as "the cat who can climb glass." Finally, they moved to Castille where they were captured and sent to *la Bucca*.

When the prisoners overthrew the warders, Reggie was the one who climbed the great north wall, snuck down to





the front door and let Allende and his fellow conspirators in. These days, he usually acts as an advance scout, sabotaging enemy ships the night before Allende's planned attack.

*Reggie Wilcox: Henchman*

*Brawn 2, Finesse 4, Wits 3, Resolve 2, Panache 3*

*Reputation: -12*

*Background: Hunted*

*Advantages: Avalon, Montaigne, Castille, Crescent (ACQ), Eagle Eyes, Scoundrel*

*Criminal: Gambling 3, Quack 3, Shadowing 4, Stealth 5, Cheating 4, Ambush 3, Lockpicking 4, Pickpocket 3, Prestidigitation 2, Scrounging 4*

*Sailor: Balance 2, Climbing 3, Knotwork 2, Rigging 3, Leaping 2, Swimming 3*

*Streetwise: Socializing 4, Street Navigation 3, Underworld Lore 4*

*Athlete: Climbing 3, Footwork 4, Sprinting 3, Throwing 4, Leaping 3*

*Spy: Shadowing 4, Stealth 5, Disguise 3, Hand Signs 2, Lip Reading 3, Poison 2*

*Knife: Attack (Knife) 3, Parry (Knife) 2, Throw (Knife) 4*

**Willie Wilcox**

Willie is bigger than his brother Reggie. When they were boys, Willie smashed anyone who threatened his tiny brother, while Reggie provided anything they needed. While Willie is very good at hurting people, he doesn't like doing it. He has no reservations, however, about pounding those who threaten his brother. Willie's temper is not easily roused. He's got a great deal of willpower and gives people fair warning before he smashes them.

*Willie Wilcox: Henchman*

*Brawn 4, Finesse 2, Wits 2, Resolve 3, Panache 2*

*Reputation: -10*

*Background: Hunted*



*Advantages: Avalon, Montaigne (ACQ), Castille, Crescent (ACQ), Scoundrel, Large*

*Sailor: Balance 2, Climbing 3, Knotwork 4, Rigging 3, Swimming 2*

*Athlete: Climbing 3, Footwork 2, Sprinting 3, Throwing 2, Lifting 4, Break Fall 2*

*Dirty Fighting: Attack (Dirty Fighting) 4, Attack (Improvised Weapon) 3, Kick 3, Throat Strike 4*

*Heavy Weapon: Attack (Heavy Weapon) 4, Parry (Heavy Weapon) 3*

*Wrestling: Grapple 5, Bear Hug 3, Break 4, Head Butt 4*

**Thorn Brunner**

Two years ago, Thom Brunner was the master gunner on an Eisen river-runner. The Castillians captured his ship and sent him to *la Bucca*, where he earned the nickname "that Eisen bastard." Despite his disposition, Brunner earned a position on his ship as Master Gunner.

Brunner is always shouting, even when he's in conversation. Years of standing next to cannon lines have stolen almost all his hearing. It could be said that Brunner has a personal vendetta against Death. During battles, his men can hear him shouting — not at opposing navies, but at the Enemy ("*der Feind*"). He saw hundreds of boys killed during the War of the Cross because of inexperience and carelessness. Every man he loses is another victory for Death. It's a war Brunner can't win, but he'll die trying.

## *Thorn Brunner: Henchman*

*Brawn 3, Finesse 3, Wits 4, Resolve 3, Panache 3*

*Reputation: 18*

*Advantages: Eisen (R/W), Castille, Montaigne (ACQ), Crescent (ACQ), Academy*

*Sailor: Balance 3, Climbing 3, Knotwork 2, Rigging 3, Navigation 2, Pilot 3, Sea Lore 2*

*Athlete: Climbing 3, Footwork 4, Sprinting 2, Throwing 3, Lifting 3, Side-step 2*



*Captain: Strategy 2, Tactics 3, Ambush 4, Gunnery 5, Incitation 4, Leadership 3*

*Firearms: Attack (Firearms) 5, Reload (Firearms) 5*

*Heavy Weapon: Attack (Heavy Weapon) 4, Parry(Heavy Weapon) 2*

*Knife: Attack (Knife) 3, Parry (Knife) 4*

*Pugilism: Attack (Pugilism) 2, Footwork 4, Jab 3, Earclap 4, Uppercut 3*

## *Fyodor Zastienchivy*

Fyodor, an Ussuran Orthodox priest, is the largest man on the *Hanged Man*. He is also its most soft-spoken, kind-hearted and forgiving. Fyodor does not drink, gamble or swear and blushes in the presence of Jennys. One day, McCorley called him "the Bashful Bear" and the nickname stuck.

Years ago, the First Prophet appeared to him in a dream, telling him to go to *la Bucca* and "fulfill your destiny there." Fyodor traveled across country to the Mirror and boarded a merchant ship for the prison island.



Once he arrived, he set up a small mission, hoping to further the prisoners' spirituality. He spent most of his time fishing rather than saving souls, but earned a reputation among the prisoners as a trustworthy man.

Fyodor had no prior knowledge of the coup, but when it happened, the prisoners spared his life. Allende recognized the man's good heart and also recognized the need for a chaplain aboard his ship. He offered the position to Fyodor, and the Ussuran accepted.

*Fyodor Zaslienchivy: Hero*

*Brawn 5, Finesse 2, Wits 3, Resolve 4, Panache 3*

*Reputation: 12*

*Arcana: Comforting*

*Advantages: Ussuran (R/W), Thean (R/W), Montaigne (R/W), Vendel, Avalon (ACQ), Castille (ACQ), Crescent (ACQ), linguist, Ordained, Faiddi, Large*

*Hunter: Fishing 3, Skinning 2, Survival 2*

*Doctor: Diagnosis 3, First Aid 4, Quack 1, Dentist 2, Surgery 3*

*Merchant: Scribe 3, Calligraphy 2*

*Sailor: Balance 3, Climbing 1, Knotwork 3, Rigging 1*

*Scholar: History 5, Mathematics 3, Philosophy 4, Research 3, Law 3, Natural Philosophy 2, Occult 3, Theology 5*

*Pugilism: Attack (Pugilism) 3, Footwork 4, Jab 2, Uppercut 2*

*Bjorn Brind*

Bjorn is a tall, well-dressed, handsome fellow. He speaks and reads every Thean language (although his Vodacce is a little rusty) and loves good wine. It was that last part that got him sent to *la Bucca*: he was smuggling Castillian wine to Vendel. When the authorities caught him, he demanded to speak with the Vendel ambassador. They shook their heads and sent him away, telling the Vendel ambassador he had disappeared.

For ten years, Bjorn slaved on the island and the "care packages" his contacts smuggled onto the island kept him



alive far longer than he deserved. Those very same contacts allowed Allende to put his plan into motion, providing the necessary supplies to bring it off perfectly.

Now, Bjorn uses his extensive contacts to maintain the *Hanged Man's* supplies and provide her with safe harbors. He is also Allende's direct line into the underworld, providing him with buyers for his ill-gotten gains.

*Bjorn Brind: Hero*

*Brawn 2, Finesse 3, Wits 4, Resolve 2, Panache 3*

*Reputation: -11*

*Arcana: Friendly*

*Advantages: Speaks and reads all known languages. Appearance (Above Average), linguist, Swordsman's Guild*

*Courtier: Dancing 1, Etiquette 2, Fashion 3, Oratory 2, Diplomacy 2, Mooch 4, Scheming 4, Sincerity 3*

*Sailor: Balance 3, Climbing 3, Knotwork 3, Rigging 2, Navigation 2, Pilot 2, Cartography 3*

*Streetwise:* Socializing 4, Street Navigation 3, Scrounging 5, Shopping 4, Underworld Lore 5

*Rogers (Apprentice):* Bind (Fencing) 3, Corps-a-corps 2, Disarm (Fencing) 2, Exploit Weakness (Rogers) 1

*Fencing:* Attack (Fencing) 3, Parry (Fencing) 1

*Dirty Fighting:* Attack (Dirty Fighting) 4, Eye-gouge 2, Kick 3

*Pirate Tricks:* Kick up

## *Velih Galecatcher*

Barnard du Ganador was standing in the middle of a field in Vestenmannavnjar when his life changed forever. He was a merchant visiting the north country, hoping to trade for some Crescent chocolates, when he stopped his caravan and leapt from the carriage to pick up a small silver object that had caught his eye. He pocketed his treasure and forgot about it. Later that night, a storm fell on the town where he was staying. While he ran through the rain, he was struck by lightning and knocked unconscious for days. When he awoke, he discovered that he could smell storms. He could smell a storm brewing from dozens of miles away, and even guess at its intensity.

Intrigued by his discovery, Barnard sent his chocolate home to his father and stayed behind in the northlands. His inquiries led him to an old Vestenmannavnjar woman who called him "Velik." Barnard noticed that *all* the Vestenmannavnjar called him Velik. He decided to keep the name. Over the years, his sympathy for the Vestenmannavnjar grew. Eventually, he began helping raiders smuggle weapons and supplies in from Montaigne and Castille. The Castillian authorities caught up with him and sentenced him to *la Bucca*.

On the island, he met Bjorn Brind and the two became fast friends. When Allende's coup raged across the island, Velik's silver tongue helped Allende convince the merchant ships to land, giving the prisoners a means of escape. Now he serves on Allende's ship as

quartermaster. Of course, his "storm nose" (as Bjorn calls it) also comes in handy from time to time.

## *Velik Galecatcher: Henchman*

*Brawn* 2, *Finesse* 4, *Wits* 3, *Resolve* 3, *Panache* 3

*Reputation:* 15

*Advantages:* Avalon (R/W), Vendel (R/W), Montaigne, Crescent (ACQ), Keen Senses, Swordsman's Guild

*Sailor:* Balance 4, Climbing 5, Knotwork 5, Rigging 4, Cartography 3, Leaping 2, Navigation 4, Pilot 5, Sea Lore 2, Swimming 3, Weather 3

*Streetwise:* Socializing 3, Street Navigation 2, Shopping 4

*Athlete:* Climbing 5, Footwork 4, Sprinting 2, Throwing 2, Break Fall 4, Rolling 4, Swinging 4

*Captain:* Strategy 3, Tactics 3, Diplomacy 4, Bribery 4, Gunnery 2, Incitation 3, Leadership 3, Logistics 2

*Rogers (Apprentice):* Bind (Fencing) 3, Corps-a-corps 4, Disarm (Fencing) 2, Exploit Weakness (Rogers) 2

*Fencing:* Attack (Fencing) 4, Parry (Fencing) 2

*Dirty Fighting:* Attack (Dirty Fighting) 3, Eye-gouge 3, Throat Strike 2

*Pirate Tricks:* Death From Above

## *Delaina Darling*

The only child of a poor Avalon family, young Delaina was orphaned at the age of eleven when her parents died of the White Plague. She had to survive as best she could on her own; the charity of strangers only went so far, especially as she grew older. Some suggested joining the Jennys' Guild, but instead, she turned to the furtive life of a pickpocket. She wasn't very good at it

She was caught and taken to *la Bucca* at the age of thirteen. A year and a half later, Allende arrived and befriended the young woman. He called her "D.D." and, sensing her keen intelligence, taught her to read.

D.D. learned quickly and devoured every book on the island. She could quote entire passages after a single





reading and remembered every detail. Her incredible memory applied to other observations as well. D.D. could flawlessly repeat overheard conversations, instantly learn the lyrics to songs and faithfully describe anyone she saw. She also proved to be a skilled mimic, fooling even Allende on a few occasions.

When Allende assembled the *Hanged Man's* crew, he made D.D. a topman with an additional position as his personal spy; her innocent appearance and small size are excellent assets. She is completely devoted to Allende, who has shown her more kindness and respect than anyone else she's ever met. She understands the risk of her position and gladly accepts it — she would die for Allende without hesitation if needed.

*Delaina Darling: Henchman*

*Brawn 2, Finesse 3, Wits 2, Resolve 2, Panache 2*

*Reputation: 0*

*Advantages:* Castille, Montaigne (ACQJ, Crescent (ACQ)  
*Artist:* Drawing 2, Musician (Flute) 2, Musician (Stringed Instrument) 2, Singing 4

*Performer:* Acting 2, Dancing 3, Oratory 2, Singing 4, Storytelling 3

*Sailor:* Balance 3, Climbing 4, Knotwork 3, Rigging 4, Leaping 2

*Athlete:* Climbing 4, Footwork 3, Sprinting 4, Throwing 2, Break Fall 2, Swinging 3

*Firearms:* Attack (Firearms) 2

*Dirty Fighting:* Attack (Dirty Fighting) 2, Attack (Improvised Weapon) 3, Parry (Improvised Weapon) 2

#### *Jean-Paul*

Once upon a time, Jean-Paul was an outstanding Swordsman, one of the most feared men in Charouse. He was hired by a courtier to accompany him to Castillo, but the trip turned out to be a trap. A romantic rival arranged for the half-drunk Jean-Paul to kill a fellow Swordsman, ruining his reputation and his career. He was found guilty of murder and sent to *la Bucca* for a life sentence.

In the prison, many of the other prisoners stayed away from the Swordsman. Not only was it rumored Jean-Paul was a sorcerer, but a Swordsman who kills one of his own is regarded as bad luck. He found a friend in the Ussuran missionary Fyodor and regained his confidence through a new-found faith in the Prophets.

Now, Jean-Paul serves as a marine on Allende's ship, but also serves as a bodyguard for the Ussuran priest. Since his return to civilization, his love for the bottle has returned. While he hasn't allowed it to cloud his judgment as it did before, Fyodor watches him carefully, just in case.

*Jean-Paul: Henchman*

*Brawn 3, Finesse 4, Wits 3, Resolve 3, Panache 4*



The Vodacce was dead before he hit the ground and Donna was in the stockades for a month.

No one ever told him he had a woman's name again.

No one's really sure where Donna comes from, how old he is or what he did to get sentenced to *la Bucca*. No one bothered to ask. Not until Allende did.

Donna now serves as a marine on Allende's ship. No one's really sure how he won the tattooed man's favor, and no one's asking.

*Donna: Hero*

*Brawn 5, Finesse 3, Wits 3, Resolve 4, Panache 3*

*Reputation: -7*

*Arcana: Hot-Headed*

*Advantages: Avalon, Castille, Crescent (ACQ), Combat Reflexes, Large*

*Reputation: -16*

*Background: Rival*

*Advantages: Montaigne (R/W), Castille (ACQ), Avalon (ACQ), Crescent (ACQ), Able Drinker*

*Courtier: Dancing 2, Etiquette 3, Fashion 3, Oratory 2, Diplomacy 2, Politics 3*

*Sailor: Balance 3, Climbing 2, Knotwork 2, Rigging 1*

*Valroux (Journeyman): Double Parry (Fencing / Knife) 4, Feint (Fencing) 4, Tagging (Fencing) 4, Exploit Weakness (Valroux) 4*

*Fencing: Attack (Fencing) 5, Parry (Fencing) 4*

*Knife: Attack (Knife) 3, Parry (Knife) 3, Throw (Knife) 2*

*Donna*

On *la Bucca*, a Vodacce pilot once asked this huge, tattooed fellow what his name was. He replied, "Donna."

The Vodacce pilot replied: "That's a woman's name!"





*Criminal:* Gambling 3, Quack I, Shadowing 2, Stealth 3, Ambush 4, Cheating 2

*Sailor:* Balance 3, Climbing 2, Knotwork 3, Rigging 4

*Dirty Fighting:* Attack (Dirty Fighting) 4, Eye-gouge 3, Kick 4, Throat Strike 5

*Firearms:* Attack (Firearms) 4, Reload (Firearms) 3

*Heavy Weapon:* Attack (Heavy Weapon) 4, Parry (Heavy Weapon) 3

*Pugilism:* Attack (Pugilism) 3, Footwork 4, Jab 2, Uppercut 4

#### *The Black Dawn's Glamour*

*The Black Dawn* collects Reputation and Glamour just as a Hero does, but for different reasons, of course. The *Black Dawn* has a number of Reputation Points equal to the total Reputation Ranks of her crew. Just like a Hero with Glamour, the ship can spend her Reputation Dice as Drama Dice... which makes her a very lucky ship!

ambassador. "This is the captain. You have to surrender to him."

The name "Sea Dog" has been with Berek and the other Avalon privateers ever since.

#### *A Mercenary Navy*

Jeremiah Berek stood in Elaine's court when she made the announcement that she needed a navy. She offered any noble the opportunity to join her navy, and any plunder he acquired would belong to him (after a generous donation to the Avalon treasury, of course). Berek rode home and hired a shipwright to turn his merchant vessel *Glorianna* into a fighting ship, the *Black Dawn*. All across Avalon, nobles followed his example. The opportunities waiting on the waves could not be ignored.



#### *The "Captain" of the Black Dawn*

The *Black Dawn's* mascot is a little terrier named "Captain." Whenever a crew give up their ship, Berek makes certain they surrender it to "the Captain of the ship." While Berek's joke makes the Sea Dogs laugh and increases his reputation across the waves, it also makes him one of the most hated captains on the Seven Seas.

## *The Sea Dogs*

The Casullian ambassador to Avalon stormed into Elaine's court one bright morning and demanded Captain Jeremiah Berek's head. "That dog of the seas will pay for his crimes against the Castillian throne!" he declared.

"Oh, will I?" said a voice from behind him. The ambassador turned and found Berek leaning against a wall, wearing a solid gold Prophet's Cross.

"That cross was meant for his majesty the King of Casu'lle and not for a dog such as yourself!"

Berek smirked. "That is the second time you've used that word, sir. You should be more careful with your vocabulary." The pirate laughed and the Castillian — convinced there was no justice in Avalon — stormed out. Three days later, his ship was attacked by pirates bearing the flag of a grinning dog. The Castillian ambassador demanded that he only surrender to the captain of the ship. When Berek stepped forward, he was incensed, but said, "For the lives of my crew, I will surrender this ship to you."

Berek shook his head, "Oh no. I'm not the captain." Then, he produced a small puppy and put him before the



## Tactics

For years, Berek has raided the Castillian coast, captured treasure fleets bringing back Surneth artifacts, and otherwise harassed the Castillian fleet. While his antics reveal a cunning wit, his tactics make him a deadly adversary. When outnumbered, he always escapes at the last minute; when attacking, he always shows up when his opponent least expects him.

The key to Berek's tactics lie in his daring. Many look at his exploits and call him lucky, but the reason Berek's tactics work so well is because no-one can anticipate his next move. He looks at a situation, finds the least likely method of accomplishing it, and sets his mind in that direction.

An example of Berek's unorthodox tactics can be found in the keel of his ship. *Black Dawn's* keel can retract by fifteen feet, allowing the ship to sail in waters that are otherwise much too shallow. When racing away from a better armed enemy, Berek simply sails into waters he knows are too shallow, pulls up his keel and waits to see if his enemy chases him. If they do ("If his ship can sail through it, then *our* ship can sail through it!"), he waits for the ship to bottom out, turns the *Black Dawn* around, and attacks the immobile ship.

## Initiation Ceremony

Anyone who signs aboard Berek's ship must first declare complete loyalty to Queen Elaine and all those who serve her before the entire crew. He must also swear to serve the ship and her captain: not Berek, but "Captain", the ship's canine mascot.

## Ranks and Structure

While Berek almost always plans the *Black Dawn's* strategy, he allows his officers to run the ship. The captain has no delusions — he knows he is no sailor. He holds frequent meetings with his chief officers and listens carefully to their

## Elaine's Letter of Marque

Whereas, by Her Majesty's Commission under the Great Seal of Avalon, the Queen's Commission for executing the office of the High Admiral are required and authorized to issue forth and grant Letters of Marque and Reprisal to any of Her Majesty's Subjects or others, whom we shall deem fitly qualified in that Behalf for apprehending, seizing and taking the Ships, Vessels and Goods belonging to those who are acknowledged enemies of the Queen and Crown of Avalon or to any persons whom the bearer of this document has judged to be enemies of the Queen and Crown of Avalon; and that these persons shall be brought to Justice within Her Majesty's Courts, or if such a order cannot be carried out with due swiftness, that the bearer of this document shall render his Judgement within the jurisdiction of the Queen's Good Name, according to the Laws of Admiralty and the Laws of Nations.

This document transfers these powers to Jeremiah Berek, Commander of the Ship *Slack Dawn*. This ship shall be mounted with guns and cannons, armed with marines and shall defend the ports and cities of Avalon. She shall capture any Goods and Belongings held by pirates and return them to Avalon's shores; those ships who do not fly the Avalon flag and seek the downfall of Her Majesty the Queen are, under the laws of Admiralty, guilty of treason against the Avalon Crown and shall be treated accordingly as prescribed by the bearer of this document Any man who serves the bearer of this document shall receive a Commission to which the Captain of the Vessel and the Crown see fit and shall henceforth be given the title "Noble Sailor" and shall be treated as the Laws of the Land prescribe.

We do ask that all those who consider themselves friends of the Crown of Avalon and Her Majesty do recognize the bearer of this document and all who serve him as official representatives of Her Majesty the Queen and afford them every favor, courtesy, accommodation and service with the understanding that they shall receive like treatment in return for their inconvenience.

The bearer of this document shall keep a Journal of Proceedings and document all Prizes taken, the time and place of capture of such Prizes, the value of such Prizes and from what flag the Prizes were taken.

This Letter of Marque and Reprisal shall expire exactly \_\_\_\_\_ days from its date of issue.

This agreement is blessed by Her Majesty the Queen, and is bound by her Great Seal on this day, \_\_\_\_\_.



advice. He allows them to run his ship and watches what they do. Over the years, he's learned a lot from his crew, but still allows them to make the most important decisions. At first, the sailors were skeptical of the landlubber, but when they saw he was willing to let them do their jobs, respect grew between crew and captain.

### **Punishment**

Like the Brotherhood of the Coast, almost all the men on the ship are driven by personal gain; there is little need for discipline on a Sea Dog ship. But when there is, the crew knows that Bonnie McGee is not a forgiving bosun. On McGee's watch, no man makes a mistake twice. She carries a monkey's paw and a cat-of-nine-tails and isn't afraid to use them.

A Sea Dog who needs discipline typically finds himself "walking the line." The crew members line up in two columns with the offending sailor standing at one end and Bonnie standing before him with a sword at his chest. The sailor is ordered to walk forward, but McGee dictates the speed. If he walks too quickly, he'll impale himself on her sword. As he walks slowly through the line, each of the sailors takes a whack or two at him with their belaying pins. Most men can't make it through the line, but those who do gain themselves high regard in their fellows' eyes.

### **Allies**

Berek's most important ally is Queen Elaine. All Avalon ports give safe harbor to the Sea Dogs and even treat them as heroes. Songs and stories of noble sailors resound through the hills of Avalon.

Another ally of the Sea Dogs is Vendel, Avalon's eastern neighbor. Many Vendel merchants have hired Berek and his crew to plunder Vodacce ships in the Trade Sea, offering them the same terms as their Queen. However, Vodacce merchants have noticed that Berek is very reluctant to attack

any ship with a Fate Witch on board, so a *Sorte Strega* is almost always a Vodacce crew member these days.

### **Flag**

Berek's flag is the notorious Sea Dog, a sly looking pooch with a knife stuck between his teeth. Berek didn't ask for the nickname, but after his escapade with the Castillian ambassador, he had little choice.

### **The Black Dawn's Crew**

#### **Captain Jeremiah Berek**

Born into a wealthy noble family (his father married the daughter of a successful cloth merchant), the young Berek jumped at the opportunity to sail for Avalon. He hired the best men he could find to refit the ship and prepare it for battle.

When Castille sent its navy against Avalon, Elaine put Berek in the unenviable position of admiral. Some quick planning — and a healthy share of good luck — allowed him to defeat the Castillians before they could even see Avalon's shores.

Berek is a resourceful captain. In addition to his retractable keel, he's also responsible for bringing "fire ships" back into vogue. Before attacking a town or settlement, Berek captures a few enemy ships, sets them on fire and sails them into the port. The confusion and damage caused allows him to capture more than his fair share of plunder.

Never much of a ladies' man, Berek has discovered that fame and fortune brings more sensual rewards. The ladies of Elaine's court swoon whenever the "cunning knave" passes by. The captain is trying not to become overwhelmed by his newfound fame, but the temptations are not easy to overcome. Things were easier when the ladies only wanted him for his money.

Despite the women in the court, Berek is solemnly devoted to one woman: Queen Elaine. He is genuinely





enraptured, fascinated by her intelligence and willpower. While he knows that no man could ever possess her (and understands what it would mean to Avalon if any man did), he cannot help but flirt with the beautiful Queen. Elaine "tolerates" his boyish advances in the court with gentle warnings, but when no-one is looking, she sends the Sea Dog a smile: a quiet appreciation for his affections.



*Jeremiah Beret Hero*

*Brawn 2, Finesse 4, Wits 5, Resolve 3, Panache 5*

*Reputation: 144*

*Arcana: Creative*

*Advantages: Avalon (R/W), Castille, Montaigne, Vendel, Indomitable Will, Noble, Swordsman's Guild*

*Courtier: Dancing 3, Etiquette 4, Fashion 3, Oratory 5. Diplomacy 4, Politics 3, Scheming 4, Sincerity 5*

*Sailor: Balance 3, Climbing 4, Knotwork 1, Rigging 1*

*Scholar: History 4, Mathematics 2, Philosophy 3, Research 3, Law 2, Occult 2*

*Athlete: Climbing 4, Footwork 4, Sprinting 2, Throwing 2, Leaping 4, Rolling 4, Swimming 3, Swinging 4*

*Captain Strategy 5, Tactics 4, Ambush 4, Incitation 4, Leadership 5*

*Donovan (Master): Bind (Buckler) 5, Disarm (Fencing) 5, Riposte (Fencing) 5, Exploit Weakness (Donovan) 5*

*Buckler: Parry (Buckler) 5, Attack (Buckler) 4*

*Fencing: Attack (Fencing) 5, Parry (Fencing) 3*

*Firearms: Attack (Firearms) 4, Reload (Firearms) 3*

## *"Bloody" Bonnie McGee*

Many years ago, a ship was attacked by Captain Reis' *Bloody Roger*. The captain of the ship, a Highlander woman named McGee, fought valiantly against the pirate, but his ship and crew were too strong for her. As her burning ship began to sink beneath the waves, she gathered a small boarding party and steered her blazing ship toward the *Bloody Roger*. The captain and remaining crew leapt over to Reis' ship and fought until only McGee remained alive.

"What a bloody bonnie lass," Reis commented as he looked upon the rival captain. Alone and outnumbered, McGee had no choice. Instead of facing the infamous captain, she threw herself overboard. Out of sight of the *Bloody Roger*, she managed to swim to her blazing ship, cut down a lifeboat and row herself to safety.

Now, "Bloody Bonnie" McGee serves as bosun aboard the *Black Dawn*. She hasn't let her experience with Reis get her spirits down, and while she pushes the men hard, she always does it with a smile on her face. Her disciplinary measures are harsh, but never unwarranted, and she's endeared herself to the crew by never holding a grudge. She speaks her mind and acts as she sees fit, with no hidden agendas beneath her mischievous grin. Bonnie is fascinated by Reis, and by the fact that she actually *survived* their first encounter. She eventually hopes to get a ship of her own back, and seek him out again — to find out if dumb luck kept her alive, or if there was something else...



*Bloody Bonnie McGee: Hero*

*Brawn 3, Finesse 3, Wits 3, Resolve 4, Panache 4*

*Reputation: 32*

*Background: Defeated*

*Advantages: AvaJon (R/W), Vendel, Montaigne, Combat Reflexes, Swordsman's Guild*

*Arcana: Courageous*

*Sailor: Balance 5, Climbing 4, Knotwork 4, Rigging 3, Swimming 4, Pilot 3, Navigation 3, Weather 4*

*Donovan (Journeyman): Bind (Buckler) 4, Disarm (Fencing) 4, Riposte (Fencing) 4, Exploit Weakness (Donovan) 4*

*Buckler: Parry (Buckler) 5, Attack (Buckler) 2*

*Captain: Strategy 3, Tactics 4, Gunnery 3, Incitan'on 4, Leadership 4, Logistics 5*

*Fencing: Attack (Fencing) 5, Parry (Fencing) 1*

*Firearms: Attack (Firearms) 3, Reload (Firearms) 2*

*Dirty Fighting: Attack (Dirty Fighting) 3, Eye Gouge 4, Kick 3*

*Streetwise: Socializing 3, Street Navigation 3, Scrounging 4*

*The Beast*

The ship's carpenter is a large half-Castillian man with thick, curly black hair and a full black beard. For as long as anyone can remember, there's only been one name for him: "The Beast." Of course, his nickname has nothing to do with his nature; he's one of the kindest men on the Seven Seas. He got it when his mother, a tiny Castillian woman, met him on the pier and told Berek, "Thank you for bringing back my little beast." Berek didn't stop laughing for a week.

The Beast and his carpenter crew keep Berek's ship afloat during storms and battles, and he helps McGee train the marines during doldrums. He's a highly skilled swordsman, and a journeyman in the Aldana style. He also speaks fluent Castillian, which helps the *Black Dawn* slip unnoticed into Castillian ports.

*The Beast: Hero*

*Brawn 4, Finesse 2, Wits 3, Resolve 3, Panache 3*

*Reputation: If*

*Advantages: Avalon (R/W), Castille, Montaigne, Toughness, Swordsman's Guild, Merchant's Guild*



*Arcana:* Friendly

*Sailor:* Balance 3, Climbing 3, Knotwork 5, Rigging 3, Swimming 2, Sea Lore 3,

*Merchant:* Carpenter 5, Sail maker 4, Hagglng 4

*Aidana (Journeyman):* Feint (Fencing) 4, Riposte (Fencing) 4, Tagging (Fencing) 4, Exploit Weakness (Aidana) 4

*Fencing:* Attack (Fencing) 5, Perry (Fencing) 3

*Courtier:* Dancing 1, Etiquette 1, Fashion 1, Oratory 2, Gossip 3, Gaming 2

*Streetwise:* Socializing 4, Street Navigation 2, Shopping 4

## "Long Tall" Harry

One of the *Black Dawn's* most experienced crewmen, Harry is over six and a half feet tall and slender as a rope. By the way he moves, it is evident that the man has not a single bone in his body. Harry is one of the quickest men on the rigging and has absolutely no sense of self-preservation.

Harry is also a tinkerer. His father and mother are both scholars and long-standing members of the Explorer's

Society, and provided him with all sorts of wonderful toys when he was younger. Harry fiddles with Syrneth artifacts with the same reckless joy that he finds climbing in the rigging. He has a small collection of baubles "salvaged" from sinking ships and he's even managed to make a few of them work.

Harry's position on the ship is Master of the Tops, a status he is very proud of. Of course, he's willing to hand it over to anyone who can do his job better than he can. Unfortunately, that means that they have to climb up the rigging and work the sails with one hand and foot tied behind their back during a lightning storm. He's also been known to leap from the *Black Dawn's* rigging to the rigging of another ship, cause a little damage, then leap back. In his seven years as Captain of the Tops, Harry hasn't had anyone challenge his position.

## "Long Tall" Harry: Henchman

*Brawn* 2, *Finesse* 6, *Wits* 3, *Resolve* 2, *Panache* 3  
*Reputation:* 8

*Background:* Lost Relative

*Advantages:* Avalon (R/W), Castille, Thean (ACQ), Legendary Trait, Large

*Skills:* *Sailor:* Balance 4, Climbing 5, Knotwork 4, Rigging 5, Swimming 2, Leaping 5,

*Performer:* Acting 3, Dancing 1, Oratory 1, Singing 2, Cold Read 3, Storytelling 4

*Firearms:* Attack (Firearms) 3, Reload (Firearms) 3

*Scholar:* History 2, Math 1, Philosophy 2, Research 3, Occult 3

*Fencing:* Attack (Fencing) 3, Perry (Fencing) 3,

*Athlete:* Climbing 5, Footwork 4, Sprinting 3, Throwing 2, Swinging 4, Break Fall 4, Sidestep 3

"Lyin'" John Fox

"I wouldn't even trust John Fox to lie to me."

- J. Berek



John Fox is Berek's paymaster and one of the slickest shysters that ever walked on two legs. His amazing ability to keep his face straight has earned the Sea Dogs more profit on their captured plunder than they ever would have made on their own.

But Fox is not just a compulsive liar, he's a damn creative one. His most famous exploit was convincing one of the King of Castille's advisors that a set of antique dental instruments was actually a Surneth artifact... and sold them (reluctantly, of course) for a thousand Guilders.

However deceitful Fox may be, he's also one of the most loyal men Berek has ever met. "I'm a liar," he once told the captain, "but I'm no cheat"

So far, Fox hasn't betrayed Berek's trust and he doesn't plan to any time soon.

"Lyn" John Fox: Hero



*Brawn 2, Finesse 2, Wits 4, Resolve 3, Panache 4*

*Reputation: 10*

*Advantages:* Avalon (R/W), Montaigne, Vendel, Appearance (Above Average), Keen Senses

*Arcana:* Loyal

*Courtier:* Etiquette 2, Fashion 2, Oratory 5, Sincerity 5, Scheming 3, Diplomacy 5

*Criminal:* Gambling 3, Quack 4, Shadowing 2, Stealth 2, Scrounging 4, Pickpocket 2

*Performer:* Acting 4, Dancing 1, Oratory 5, Singing 1, Cold Read 4

*Sailor:* Balance 3, Climbing 2, Knotwork 1, Rigging 1, Pilot 3, Navigation 4, Cartography 3

*Streetwise:* Socializing 4, Street Navigation 4, Under World Lore 3

*Firearms:* Attack (Firearms) 4, Reload (Firearms) 3

*"Brother" Mattias Brewer*

With his shoulders, many sailors suspect that Mattias Brewer is at least half-Eisen, or perhaps even half-Ussuran, but the truth is that he is all Avalon. Brewer's family has always been involved with the Avalon Church, and Mattias is no exception. He devoted nearly a decade to the Church, but when he heard Elaine was actually *paying* ships to go out and raid the Castillian treasure fleets, he packed his bags and signed up on the first ship he could find. That ship was the *Black Dawn*,

Having spent almost half his life in a monastery, Brewer is a font of information ("He's a font that won't shut up," complains McGee). His knowledge of natural philosophy, astronomy, geography and any other subject you can think of have pulled Berek's fat out of the fire on too many occasions to count.

In addition to serving as Berek's chief counselor and the ship's chaplain, Brewer's chief preoccupation is with alcohol. He's devoted entire journals to his experiments, using rare Surneth herbs and Crescent spices to brew the





world's most perfect beer. So far, he isn't satisfied with the results, but failure hasn't dissuaded him yet.

*Brother Mattias Brewer: Hero*

*Brawn 4, Finesse 3, Wits 3, Resolve 4, Panache 2*

*Reputation: 0*

*Arcana: Worldly*

*Advantages:* Able Drinker, linguist, Avalon (R/W), Thean, Montaigne, Eisen, Crescent, Faith, Ordained, University

*Skills:* Scholar: History 5, Math 2, Philosophy 3, Research 4, Natural Philosophy 4, Theology 5, Occult 3

*Merchant:* Brewing 3, Scribe 3, Hagglng 4

*Sailor:* Balance 3, Climbing 2, Knotwork 1, Rigging 1, Sea Lore 5

*Doctor:* Diagnosis 3, First aid 3, Quack 1, Surgery 3

*Pugilism:* Attack (Pugilism) 4, Footwork 3, Jab 2, Uppercut 2

*Firearms:* Attack (Firearms) 3, Reload (Firearms) 2

*Tom Toblin*

The youngest member of the crew, Tom Toblin is one of the *Black Dawn's* best marines. He's not much of a sailor,

but his skill with blades more than makes up for his nautical deficiencies. Tom refuses to talk about his past to anyone, even the Captain. "My skills are all the talkin' I need to do," he says. Many on the *Black Dawn* suspect that Tom was a Swordsman before he joined the crew, but the truth is darker than even Berek may suspect.

Tom Toblin was born Nicole Cowbey, daughter of Nicholas Cowbey, the renowned Swordsman. Unfortunately for him and his daughter, Nicholas was also a drunkard and a gambler who let his vices mingle a bit too often for his own good. When she was seventeen, Nicole told her father the man that she loved had asked her hand in marriage. Her father rejoiced at the good news and took out a loan to cover her dowry. A year after the happy day, she discovered that the man who had loaned her father the money had put a sword through his eye. She went looking to avenge her father's murder, but came home unsuccessful a month later. She returned to find the man had not only taken her father from her, but her new husband as well.

Nicole knew that he would come looking for her as well, and she also knew she would be no match for him when he found her. So, she cut off her hair, put on a pair of trousers and joined up on the *Black Dawn*, calling herself "Tom Toblin." The disguise would buy her enough time to train herself in the ways of the sword and also let her keep an eye on the man who killed her father and her husband. After two years behind the mast, she's almost ready. Almost

*Tom Toblin: Henchman*

*Brawn 2, Finesse 4, Wits 3, Resolve 2, Panache 3*

*Reputation: 0*

*Advantages:* Avalon (R/W), Montaigne, Combat Reflexes

*Courtier:* Dancing 2, Etiquette 1, Fashion 2, Oratory 1, Sincerity 3

*Sailor:* Balancing 3, Climbing 3, Knotwork 1, Rigging 1





rigging. In fact, Harry often brings his meals up to him. If the Captain of the Tops ever retires, Phalen will be the first in line for the position.

His quiet nature makes him a deadly asset in combat. Typically, Phalen remains in the rigging during a fight, tossing knives down onto the heads of the *Black Dawn's* enemies.

*Phalen Cole: Henchman*

*Brawn 2, Finesse 3, Wits 3, Resolve 2, Panache 3*

*Reputation: 0*

*Advantages:* Avalon(R/W), Montaigne, Able Drinker, Eagle Eyes, Syrneath Artifact Ornate Glove and Throwing Knife

*Artist: Singing 3*

*Sailor: Balance 3, Climbing 4, Knotwork 3, Rigging 4, Leaping 4, Swimming 2*

*Streetwise: Socializing 1, Street Navigation 4, Scrounging 4*

*Athlete: Climbing 3, Footwork 4, Sprinting 3, Throwing 1, Leaping 3*

*Scholar: History 3, Math 1, Philosophy 2, Research 1*

*Donovan: (Journeyman): Bind (Buckler) 4, Disarm (Fencing) 4, Riposte (Fencing) 4, Exploit Weakness (Donovan) 4*

*Buckler: Parry (Buckler) 3*

*Fencing: Attack (Fencing) 4, Parry (Fencing) 2*

*Firearms: Attack (Firearms) 3, Reload (Firearms) 3*

### **Phalen Cole**

The crew's quietest member is a young man they call "Phalen." The only reason they know his name is because that's what McGee calls him. He is quiet but diligent, working in the rigging day in and day out. He seldom sleeps and never rests.

Phalen is Harry's second in all matters involving the sails and rigging and has no desire to replace the daring Captain of the Tops. He keeps to himself, up high in the



*Athlete:* Climbing 4, Fooiwork 3, Sprinting 1, Throwing 3, Swinging 3, Break Fall 2

*Knife:* Attack (Knife) 3, Parry (Knife) 3, Throwing (Knife) 4

*Dirty Fighting:* Attack (Dirty Fighting) 3, Attack (Improvised Weapon) 2, Throw (Improvised Weapon) 4

## Celedoine

Also known as Celedoine the Seven-Blessed, she is the bastard child of a young noble woman and a Sidhe lord, raised by her mortal grandfather as his own daughter.

Her grandfather hired tutors to instruct the young girl, and soon enough, she showed talent for Glamour. But on Celedoine's tenth birthday, her mother was found drowned in a lake on her grandfather's lands. This event would mark Celedoine for the rest of her life. She grew to resent the Sidhe and her own talents. Her grandfather died when she was sixteen and left all his lands to his young granddaughter. Celedoine was now a Lady. She cut her ties with the Sidhe and focused her attentions on more mundane activities. Lady Celedoine proved a much better seneschal than sorcerer, and her father's lands soon blossomed with unprecedented profit.

She met Jeremiah Berek in the Queen's court and admired his quick wit. The two were lovers for a short time, but while their passion burned brightly, it faded quickly. Their affair ended, but their friendship continued to grow.

When the Queen announced her need for ships, Berek came to her with a proposition. "Where would I be without my Lady Celedoine?" he asked her with his rakish smile. She agreed and joined him aboard his newly re-fitted ship.

Once aboard the ship, Celedoine's demeanor began to shift. She listened to the sailors singing their songs and telling stories of leviathans and the Queen of the Sea and

surrounded by their tales, the Glamour she denied for so long began to boil in her blood.

After spending many years on Berek's ship, Celedoine has come to terms with her Sidhe heritage. She has powers most Glamour mages only dream of mastering, including making the *Black Dawn* a powerful source of Glamour for Berek and the Sea Dogs.

*Celedoine: Hero*

*Brawn* 2, *Finesse* 2, *Wits* 4, *Resolve* 3, *Panache* 3

*Reputation*- 0

*Advantages:* Avalon (R/W), Thean, Montaigne, Inheritance, Noble, University

*Courtier:* Dancing 4, Etiquette 4, Fashion 3, Oratory 2, Sincerity 4, Politics 3, Diplomacy 2, Seduction 3

*Scholar:* History 3, Math 3, Philosophy 1, Research 1, Law 3, Theology 3

*Glamour: (Adept):* Jack 4, Greenman 4, Thomas 4, Robin Goodfellow 4, Archer: Attack 3, Fletcher 2



*Athlete:* Climbing 2, Footwork 3, Sprinting 4, Throwing 2,  
Break Fall 3, Swimming 3

*Rider:* Ride 3, Trick Riding 4

### **Roger Gaffrin**

Roger Gaffrin is a small, thin fellow with a voice that's ten times as big as he is. He's been the ship's shanty man for almost a decade now, which also makes him the man who has been with Berek the longest. Gaffrin learns to play any instrument he gets his hands on and can compose complete arrangements at the drop of a hat. Like any other bard, he also produces colorful and biting insults with keen alacrity.

While crews from other nations wonder why Berek has a shanty man on board, anyone who knows anything about Glamour knows why. Gaffrin is a skilled songwriter and performs regularly before the Queen. Every song he writes about the Sea Dogs adds to their Reputation, which also adds to their Glamour.



*Roger Gaffrin: Henchman*

*Brawn* 2, *Finesse* 3, *Wits* 5, *Resolve* 2, *Panache* 4

*Reputation:* 0

*Advantage:* Avalon, Montaigne, Castillian, Vendel, Small,  
Pirate Trick (Belay That)

*Artist:* Composer 5, Musician (Lute) 3, (Flute) 4,  
(Bodhran) 2, Singing 5, Writing 3

*Performer:* Acting 3, Dancing 2, Oratory 4, Singing 5,  
Storytelling 4, Prestidigitation 2, Cold Read 2

*Sailor:* Balance 4, Climbing 3, Knotwork 2, Rigging 4,  
Cartography 3, Navigation 4, Pilot 4, Swimming 2

*Dirty Fighting:* Attack (Dirty Fighting) 2, Attack  
(Improvised Weapon) 4, Eye-gouge 3, Parry (Improvised  
Weapon) 3

*Firearms:* Attack (Firearms) 4, Reload (Firearms) 3

## *The Corsairs*

It is often said that the Crescents have a far greater grasp of the occult than the Theans. This is perhaps best illustrated by the Crescent corsair Kheired-Din. Somehow he easily avoids the Church garrisons that guard the Vodacce Keys. In addition, his flagship, the *Strange Skies*, has some sort of device bolted to its deck that spits "living fire" at his enemies. It seems likely that he has Synchroneth knowledge that has been lost to the rest of the world.

### **Kheired-Din's Navy**

Over the twenty years he's been in operation, Kheired-Din has kidnapped hundreds of Theans, never to be heard from again. He has amassed a navy of sixty ships with the following method. First, those he kidnaps are forced to help build a galley (it takes about eight months using unwilling labor). Then the kidnapped person fulfills his second purpose - as a rower on the ship he helped to build.



### **Kheired-Din's Goals**

Once, when speaking to his Captains, Kheired-Din told them what his ultimate goal was. He said, "I will bring about the next age of the world. The angels shall rise into the skies and move among us once more. I, and all of you, shall be their agents, chosen of all men, to make their will known."

### **Tactics**

While Kheired-Din dislikes naval battles, since they do little to further his goals, he loads his ships with cannons and less savory devices in order to protect them. He attempts to use the wind against his enemies, rowing directly into it, since his ships aren't driven by sails. Then, once he has a chance to outmaneuver the enemy, he fires a full broadside into them. If possible, he tries to avoid boarding actions, since his rowers are likely to turn against him if freed.

### **Initiation Ceremony**

While he doesn't really have an initiation ceremony for new crews, Kheired-Din makes sure that a priest of the Second Prophet blesses each new galley before its maiden voyage.

### **Ranks and Structure**

Kheired-Din is obviously the final word of authority in his navy, but each ship has a Captain that carries out his orders. Edahgo is considered the second-in-command of the navy, and gives orders when Kheired-Din is indisposed.

### **Punishment**

Kheired-Din's proclamations detail the only official Corsair punishments, but galley masters often mete out lashes to shirkers or smart-mouthed rowers as they see fit.

### **Allies**

Kheired-Din is shunned by all Theans, both for religious and practical reasons. Even his own people want little to do with him, since many of them disagree with his beliefs. He is by no means a typical Crescent.

### **Kheired-Din's Colors**

Kheired-Din's flag depicts a tattooed skull with two crossed scimitars underneath.



### **Kheired-Din's Charter**

Kheired-Din has made several proclamations that apply to all his crews, including the rowers:

I. Any man who partakes of alcohol while aboard ship shall be denied food and water for three days, and the offending alcohol shall be destroyed.

II. Any man who strikes a superior shall have the offending hand stricken off at the wrist, or if he is a rower, he shall have his head removed at the neck.

III. Any man who disobeys an order from a superior shall receive thirty lashes, and be deprived of food and water for three days.

IV. Any man who blasphemes against the Second Prophet shall be tied to the anchor and dropped overboard.

V. Any man who speaks of any Prophet other than the Second shall have his tongue cut out

VI. Any man practicing or possessing sorcery in violation of the Second Prophet's teachings will be publicly tortured unto death, and his remains fed to the fish.



**Flag**

All of Kheired-Din's ships fly his colors underneath the flag of the Empire of the Crescent Moon.

**The *Strange Skies'* Crew**

Kheired-Din's crew (loyal and otherwise) are usually ill-trained and surly. On the other hand, his officers and Captains are highly disciplined and skilled at their jobs. Through their ruthless enforcement of Kheired-Din's proclamations they maintain order aboard ship.

***Kheired-Din***

Squat, powerful, and distinguished by a red beard unique among all of his countrymen, Kheired-Din is a devout follower of the Second Prophet. He hates sorcery as practiced by men, but he sees the Syrneth artifacts as blessings left by the Prophets. He claims to have a purpose in life delivered by the angels of Theus, and he works towards it with the singlemindedness of a lemming. For the last twenty years he has built an impressive navy, and exploring every inch of the Forbidden Sea. His motives are as yet unknown, but he seems willing to go to any extremes to fulfill his mission.

Several Theans have claimed that they slew him in the past, but he keeps turning up again. One of them watched him fall into a pool of lava, but he still showed up three months later, raiding cities once again.

This is due to his rather unusual tattoo, which he claims to have received from his angels. Whatever its source, in *7th Sea* terms, it heals him of one Dramatic Wound every hour, even if he has been killed and his body destroyed (in which case he reappears in his quarters aboard the *Strange Skies*). A magical Cross of the Prophets linked to the tattoo is hidden somewhere in the Empire of the Crescent Moon. Only by finding and destroying it can Kheired-Din finally be killed.

*Kheired-Din:* Villain

*Brawn* 4, *Finesse* 4, *Wits* 3, *Resolve* 4, *Panache* 3

*Reputation:* -44

*Arcana:* Focused

*Advantages:* Crescent (R/W), Montaigne, Castille, Vodacce, Faith

*Sailor:* Balance 4, Climbing 3, Knotwork 2, Rigging 2, Cartography 3, Navigation 4, Pilot 4

*Scholar:* History 2, Mathematics 2, Philosophy 4, Research 3, Occult 5, Theology 3

*Athlete:* Climbing 3, Footwork 4, Sprinting 3, Throwing 3, Leaping 3, lifting 4, Swinging 3, Swimming 3

*Captain:* Strategy S, Tactics 4, Ambush 4, Gunnery 4, Incitation 4, Leadership 4, Logistics 3

*Daphan (Master):* Beat (Fencing) 5, Lunge (Fencing) 5, Pommel Strike (Fencing) 5, Exploit Weakness (Daphan) .5

*Apprentice:* May attack one phase earlier than the Action Phase shown on the die.

*Journeyman* When your opponent makes a successful Active Defense using Parry, you may choose to spend a drama die to attempt to break opponent's weapon. You





must make a successful brawn test against the TN of the weapon you are trying to break. See Eisenfaust

*Master:* You may raise and spend a Drama Die to keep an extra die of damage.

*Dirty Fighting:* Attack (Dirty Fighting) 5, Kick 4, Throat Strike 4

*Wrestling:* Grapple 4, Break 5, Head Butt 4

### Edahgo

Edahgo is the galley master of the *Strange Skies*. He is a large hunchbacked man with powerful muscles and a permanent hatred for all things, man or beast. He drives the rowers harder than necessary, and possesses a wicked cat o' nine tails with small metal barbs embedded in the tips of the each lash. He only serves Kheired-Din because he fears him, and believes that he's a demon.

The only time that a rower dared attack him, Edahgo grabbed the man's fist in his enormous hand and squeezed until every bone in it popped. While the rower was screaming, Edahgo unlocked his chains and carried him off to his chambers. No one knows what he did to that man, but his screams didn't stop until he went hoarse; eight days later, Edahgo carried a bloody sack that couldn't possibly have contained an entire person to the deck, and threw it overboard.

### Edahgo: Henchman

*Brawn 4, Finesse 3, Wits 3, Resolve 4, Panache 3*

*Reputation:* -11

*Advantages:* Castille (R/W), Montaigne, Crescent

*Sailor:* Balance 4, Climbing 2, Knotwork 3, Rigging 2, Swimming 3

*Spy:* Shadowing 2, Stealth 3, Bribery 4, Conceal 3, Forgery 2, Interrogation 4, Lip Reading 3

*Streetwise:* Socializing 3, Street Navigation 2, Scrounging 3, Underworld Lore 4

*Rogers (Apprentice):* Bind (Fencing) 2, Corps-a-corps 4, Disarm (Fencing) 2, Exploit Weakness (Rogers) 3



*Fencing:* Attack (Fencing) 3, Parry (Fencing) 1

*Dirty Fighting:* Attack (Dirty Fighting) 4, Attack (Improvised Weapon) 5, Kick 4, Parry (Improvised Weapon) 2, Throat Strike 4

*Pirate Trick:* Kick up

### Shala

Where Edahgo keeps discipline among the rowers, Shala disciplines Kheired-Din's more loyal crew. She received this position because, of all the crew, she probably believes the most fervently in Kheired-Din's mission. She is a tall, beautiful woman with short dark hair and a feral smile. She is never seen without her lash, a small leadier whip with a wooden Prophet's Cross on the handle which she wields with the reverence of a zealot. She bears a torch for Kheired-Din, and although he is aware of her infatuation and returns her affection privately, his mission must come first.

*Skala: Villain*

*Brawn 2, Finesse 4, Wits 3, Resolve 2, Panache 4*

*Reputation: -14*

*Arcana: Ruthless*

*Advantages: Crescent (R/W), Montaigne, Dangerous Beauty, Faith*

*Courtier: Dancing 2, Etiquette 2, Fashion 1, Oratory 3, Seduction 4, Sincerity 3*

*Captain: Strategy 2, Tactics 4, Ambush 3, Bribery 2, Diplomacy 3, Incitation 4, Leadership 4, Logistics 2*

*Sailor: Balance 4, Climbing % Knotwork 3, Rigging 2, Navigation 1, Pilot 2, Swimming 3*

*Rogers (Journeyman): Bind (Fencing) 5, Corps-a-corps 4, Disarm (Fencing) 4, Exploit Weakness (Rogers) 4*

*Fencing: Attack (Fencing) 4, Parry (Fencing) 3*

*Dirty Fighting: Attack (Dirty Fighting) 3, Attack (Improvised Weapon) 4, Eye-gouge 3, Parry (Improvised Weapon) 1, Throat Strike 5*

*Firearms: Attack (Firearms) 3*



*Dunti*

Dunn' joined the crew after spending twenty years of his life in a monastery deep within the Crescent Empire. He had devoted his life to peace and charity until, one morning, he woke up and walked out of the monastery, stealing enough food and water to get him to the sea, where he joined Kheired-Din's crew. He has never explained his extraordinary behavior, nor does he seem likely to do so.



While he isn't a terrific swordsman, Dunti proved a master marksman with the pistol, and he carries at least six of them on his person. He charges into battle, guns down tough-looking opponents until he's fired all his pistols, and then drops back to reload, only using his sword to defend himself if hard-pressed.

*Dunti: Villain*

*Brawn 2, Finesse 3, Wits 3, Resolve 3, Panache 4*

*Reputation*'0

*Arcana*: Self-Controlled

*Advantages*: Crescent (R/W), Montaigne, Castille (ACQ), Faith, Pirate Trick (Quick Draw)

*Merchant*: Gardener 3, Scribe 2

*Sailor*: Balance 3, Climbing 4, Knotwork 1, Rigging 1, Leaping 4

*Scholar*: History 3, Mathematics 1, Philosophy 5, Research 1, Astronomy 3, Occult 4, Theology 5

*Athlete*: Climbing 4, Footwork 3, Sprinting 4, Throwing 2, Swinging 4, Side-step 3

*Heavy Weapon*: Attack (Heavy Weapon) 1, Parry (Heavy Weapon) 1

*Firearms*: Attack (Firearms) 5, Reload (Firearms) 5

*Imshi*

Imshi is the only man Kheired-Din trusts to touch the device that fires the living fire. His job is to scoop up a bucket of sand from the bottom of the sea (or a nearby bin, if the water is too deep), dump it into the artifact, and manipulate the complicated controls to make it fire.

Aside from that, he spends most of his time trying hard not to be noticed by the rest of the crew. They envy the status that Kheired-Din has given him, since he is a small, weedy man with little or no worth in combat, and they torment him mercilessly whenever they get the chance.

*Imshi Henchman*

*Brawn* 2, *Finesse* 2, *Wits* 4, *Resolve* 2, *Panache* 3

*Reputation*: 0

*Advantages*: Avalon (R/W), Montaigne, Crescent, Small

*Sailor*: Balance 3, Climbing 2, Knotwork 3, Rigging 1, Pilot 1, Sea Lore 3

*Scholar*: History 2, Mathematics 4, Philosophy 3, Research 4, Natural Philosophy 3, Occult 4

*Athlete*: Climbing 2, Footwork 3, Sprinting 3, Throwing 4, lifting 4, Rolling 3



*Captain*: Strategy 2, Tactics 3, Ambush 4, Briber)' 2, Gunnery 5

*Knife*: Attack (Knife) 2, Parry (Knife) 2

*Dalia*

Dalia has been trained in an obscure fighting style called Yael, taught only in the Empire of the Crescent Moon, like the Aldana style, it combines dance with the art of the sword, but it uses the flowing, twirling dances of the East instead of the leaping, bobbing dances of the West.

Her body is perhaps as big a distraction to her opponents as her unusual fighting technique. Dressed in silk scarves that scarcely cover her curves, Dalia reveals enough to make her enemy stare at the parts of her that aren't holding scimitars.

In *7th Sea* terms, Dalia can spend two Actions to make two Attacks at the same time, but only one of the Action

dice need to be showing this Phase. Her second Action die can be showing a later Phase. Thus, in Phase 4, if she has a 4, a 7, and a 0, she can spend the 4 and either the 7 or the 0 in order to attack an opponent twice.



*Dalia: Villain*

*Brawn 2, Finesse 5, Wits 3, Resolve 2, Panache 4*

*Reputation: -8*

*Arcana: Adaptable*

*Advantages: Crescent (R/W), Montaigne, Castille (ACQ), Combat Reflexes, Dangerous Beauty*

*Courtier: Dancing 5, Etiquette 3, Fashion 3, Oratory 2, Seduction 5*

*Performer: Acting 2, Dancing 5, Oratory 2, Singing 3, Cold Read 4*

*Sailor: Balance 4, Climbing 3, Knotwork 2, Rigging 1, Leaping 4, Swimming 2*

*Athlete: Climbing 3, Footwork 5, Sprinting 2, Throwing 2, Leaping 3, Side-step 4*

*Yael (Apprentice): Disarm (Fencing) 3, Double Parry (Fencing) 4, Feint (Fencing) 3, Exploit Weakness (Yael) 2*  
*Fencing: Attack (Fencing) 5, Parry (Fencing) 4*

*Espera*

Espera is not the pilot's real name. When Kheired-Din captured him two years ago, he gave this obvious pseudonym ("Waiting"), and refused to speak of his past at all; not that his captors particularly cared. When Kheired-Din found that he was a skilled pilot, he ordered Espera chained to the wheel of the ship and given a full crewman's rations. Espera knew better than to complain. He only had one ankle chained up, after all, and he didn't have to row. In addition, he found something to keep his mind off his plight: Dalia. He was immediately taken with her beauty and grace, and started flirting with her. She gave him a scar on his throat to remind him of his place, but it didn't deter him. He hopes to win her someday, despite all odds.

*Espera: Henchman*

*Brawn 2, Finesse 4, Wits 4, Resolve 3, Panache 2*

*Reputation: 0*

*Advantages: Castille (R/W), Thean (R/W), Montaigne (R/W), Avalon (ACQ), Crescent (ACQ), Castilhan Education*

*Backgrounds: Pressed Into Service, True Identity*

*Courtier: Dancing 3, Etiquette 4, Fashion 3, Oratory 3, Diplomacy 4, Politics 3, Sincerity 4*

*Sailor Balance 4, Climbing 3, Knotwork 2, Rigging 2, Cartography 4, Navigation .5, Pilot .5, Swimming 3*

*Scholar: History 4, Mathematics 3, Philosophy 2, Research 2, Astronomy 5, Law 2, Occult 2, Theology 4*

*Athlete: Climbing 3, Footwork 4, Sprinting 3, Throwing, Rolling 3*

*Aldana (Apprentice): Feint (Fencing) 4, Riposte (Fencing) 4, Tagging (Fencing) 3, Exploit Weakness (Aldana) 3*

*Fencing: Attack (Fencing) 4, Parry (Fencing) 3*





*Andres Donovan*

An Ussuran by birth, Andres was stolen away at a young age, and has served on Kheired-Din's ship ever since. Over time, he came to believe the Captain's tales of a holy quest. He's proud to be a part of such a grand enterprise; he will make no efforts to escape, and would forcibly resist a rescue attempt. He hates his benchmate, Mike Fitzpatrick, and takes every opportunity to make his life even more miserable.

*Andres Donovan: Henchman*

*Brawn 4, Finesse 2, Wits 3, Resolve 3, Panache 2*

*Reputation 0*

*Advantages:* Ussuran (R/W), Casfille (PG), Avalon (PG), Crescent

*Hunter:* Skinning 4, Survival 4, Tracking 3

*Merchant:* Furrier 4, Appraising 2, Hagglng 2

*Sailor:* Balance 3, Climbing 3, Knotwork 1, Rigging 1

*Streetwise:* Socializing 3, Street Navigation 2, Shopping 3

*Archer:* Attack (Bow) 4, Fletcher 4, SnapShot 3

*Athlete:* Climbing 3, Footwork 3, Sprinting 4, Throwing 2, Lifting 5, Rolling 2

*Knife:* Attack (Knife) 3, Parry (Knife) 2, Throw (Knife) 4

*Mike Fitzpatrick*

A short, scrappy Inish man, Mike served in the Avalon navy before being captured. Despite everything, they haven't broken his spirit. He still mouths off to Edahgo, knowing that he'll get a few lashes. He's careful never to cross the line, however, as he wants to escape and get revenge upon Khetred-Din someday.

The worst thing that's ever happened to him is being chained to the same oar as Andres Donovan. Listening to Andres prattle on endlessly about the "glories of serving Theus" has nearly driven him mad. Nearly as bad, Edahgo has chained two burly rowers right behind him, and every time he gets a lash, they both get a lash





as well. Needless to say, this has resulted in a number of bruises, broken bones, and near-death incidents. So, he waits, and he bides his time. After all, if they haven't broken him yet, then there's always hope.

*Mike Fitzpatrick Henchman*

*Brawn 3, Finesse 3, Wits 3, Resolve 4, Panache 3*

*Reputation: 0*

*Advantages: Avalon (R/W), Ussuran (ACQ), Montaigne, Crescent, Commission (Mate)*

*Sailor: Balance 4, Climbing 3, Knotwork 4, Rigging 4, Cartography 2, Navigation 2, Pilot 3, Sea Lore 3*

*Streetwise: Socialization 4, Street Navigation 3, Scrounging 4, Underworld Lore 2*

*Athlete: Climbing 3, Footwork 3, Sprinting 3, Throwing 2, Break Fall 3, Leaping 4, Swinging 3, Swimming 2*

*Captain: Strategy 2, Tactics 4, Ambush 3, Gunnery 2, Incitation 4, Leadership 3*

*Fencing: Attack (Fencing) 4, Parry (Fencing) 3*

*Firearms: Attack (Firearms) 3, Reload (Firearms) 3*

*Inil*

Inil is a skilled crossbowman who snipes at enemy officers from the rigging on the *Strange Skies*. He's been known to put a bolt through a man's eye at up to fifty feet away. Besides his extraordinary marksmanship, he is also an excellent navigator. He learned the art of determining latitude using only a crossbow from his grandfather, who was considered a sorcerer among his people. His grandfather also gave him an alchemical compass, which he has worn around his neck ever since.

*Inil: Henchman*

*Brawn 2, Finesse 4, Wits 3, Resolve 2, Panache 2*

*Reputation: 0*

*Advantages: Crescent (R/W), Montaigne (PD), Castille (PD), Eagle Eyes*

*Sailor: Balance 4, Climbing 4, Knotwork 3, Rigging 3, Navigation 4, Pilot 2, Swimming 3*



*Scholar: History 2, Mathematics 4, Philosophy 3, Research 2, Astronomy 4, Natural Philosophy 2*

*Athlete: Climbing 4, Footwork 4, Sprinting 2, Throwing 2, Break Fall 3, Swinging 3*

*Crossbow: Attack (Crossbow) 5, Fletcher 4, Reload (Crossbow) 5*

*Hamish*

It is whispered among the crew that Hamish was once perfectly sane. Then his ship stumbled upon the 7th Sea. While they sailed under its sun and moon, strange winged creatures with fiery eyes and talons as long as a man's arm attacked the ship. Hamish was knocked overboard into the silvery water just as the last of the flying creatures were driven away. He choked and opened his mouth, swallowing some of the filthy brine.



He went under while the crew of his ship watched in horror, and they assumed he was dead. They began to row away, but Hamish thrust his hands out of the water and hauled himself back onto the ship using his fingernails.

He had undergone a sea change. He was half a foot taller, and much more muscular than before. The whites of his eyes had been washed away, leaving inky blackness that reflected only living creatures in its depths. Lastly, his mind was gone, replaced with that of a savage beast. They subdued him and brought him home, since it is a sin to kill a man whose mind has been touched by the Second Prophet. Even so, Hamish would have ended his days as a dangerous beggar if it weren't for Kheired-Din, who befriended him with gentle words and gifts of food.

Although Hamish has had to be kept in chains aboard ship since the time he slaughtered six men while they slept, he makes an effective boarding party all by himself. They simply unhook his chains and drive him forward onto the

other ship using a lash, and he unleashes his savagery on the enemy crew, tearing them to bits with his hands and teeth. That's the plan, at least. Hamish will turn against anyone he can get his claws on except Kheired-Din, who is *the* closest thing to a friend such a monster can have.

*Hamish: Henchman*

*Brawn 7, Finesse 4, Wits 2, Resolve 6, Panache 4*

*Reputation: 0*

*Advantages: Combat Reflexes, Large, Toughness*

*Athlete: Climbing 4, Footwork 5, Sprinting 4, Throwing 4, Leaping 4, Lifting 5, Side-step 4*

*Dirty Fighting: Attack (Dirty Fighting) 5, Eye Gouge 5, Kick 4, Throat Strike 5*

*Wrestling: Grapple 5, Bearhug 4, Break 5, Escape 3, Head Butt 5*

*Note: Hamish's barehanded damage is 0k2.*



## *The Vestenmannavnjar Raiders*

She is young, beautiful and mesmerizing. Her ice-cold eyes can pierce the soul of any man. Yngvild Olafsdottir may look like an angel, but she is merciless and bloodthirsty, with a heart as cold as her eyes.

At least, that's what the stories say. The truth of the matter is a little more complicated. Yngvild is a woman torn by desires. More than anything else, she wants to hurt the Vendel for what they've done to her nation; on the other hand, she knows the dark temptations of revenge and the scars they leave on the human soul.

*The Revensj*

Yngvild Olafsdottir was born to Olaf Arninbjornson and his wife Sigrid in a small fishing village. Her first five





years were quiet and blissful, until her father refused to sell his farm to a Vendel merchant. They found him face-down in a lake, his throat cut ear-to-ear. Her father's death ruined Yngvild's mother. She did not speak, eat, drink or move for three days. By the end of the week, she was gone. A Vendel merchant purchased the land from her mother's father and the little girl went to live with her father's parents.

Over the course of fifteen years, Yngvild watched the Vendel continue to purchase land. Those who would not sell turned up dead, their farms burned to the ground. Those years taught the young girl the true meaning of hatred. During that time, she also learned the art of Laerdom from her grandmother. She showed great promise with the runes and her grandmother marveled at how quickly she learned.

When she was twenty, a Vendel merchant came to her grandfather's farm nine months after the old man had passed away and offered to purchase the land for a healthy sum of money. Yngvild told him she would sell, but only if he doubled his offer. The merchant smiled, they bargained, and they settled on a price. He told her he would be back in one week to purchase the property.

When he returned, seven of Yngvild's massive cousins beat the merchant within an inch of his life, threw him in a fishing boat and pushed the boat into the center of a lake. The young Vestenmannavnjar maiden took the merchant's money and used it to purchase the *Revensj*.

Since that day, Yngvild has captured seven merchant ships, each of them either belonging to the Vendel or commissioned by the League.

### **The Charter**

Yngvild has no charter, but does force any who join her ship to swear fealty to Vestenmannavnjar upon the Rune of Truth (see *Initiation Ritual* below).

### **Tactics**

Yngvild's tactics are simple. When she targets a ship, she disguises her approach by changing the weather. She also uses storms to hammer the ship to pieces long before she makes her presence known. Finally, when the ship is bartered and the crew waterlogged and exhausted, she fills her sails with witch-wind and comes alongside the ship with no warning. Her men leap onto the merchant vessel, kill any resisters (usually there are none) and capture the ship.

She escapes under cover of weather when her opposition is too mighty to face one-on-one. When she's out of range of their weapons, she sends lightning and wind to snap their masts, burn their sails and fry the crewmen, then turns about and captures the ship.

### **Initiation Ceremony**

Yngvild is highly suspicious of anyone joining her ship. She forces them to recite their lineage and swear fealty to the ship on Kjatt, the Flesh Rune. If they survive the **ordeal**, they're allowed to join the crew. If they don't, they're mermaid lunch.

### **Ranks and Structure**

The structure of command aboard the *Revensj* differs from almost every other pirate ship. The entire crew hangs on Yngvild's every word; she is more than just a captain, she is their direct link to the gods. Her crew would throw away their lives to protect her — and often do. Her word is final.

While Yngvild serves as a spiritual leader, Thorfild, the ship's first mate, directs the officers. As the most





experienced sailor on board, Bosun Hoskuld usually directs the crew in their duties.

#### **Punishment**

Punishment on the *Revensj* is merciless; showing disrespect to the ship's officers is showing disrespect to her cause. Those who do have their wrists slashed open and are tossed overboard, left to the sirens that haunt the northern seas.

#### **Allies**

Yngvild has few allies and many enemies.

A few Avalon ports will give her shelter, but Queen Elaine's stance on the pirates is vague at best. Berek has fought along side her on a few occasions and the Inish King O'Bannon has also proven to be a valuable ally.

Her most important enemy is the Vendel League. With their resources, anyone with a desire for Guilders suddenly becomes an enemy as well. There is a large price on Yngvild's head, and there are many bounty hunters looking to collect.

#### **Flag**

Yngvild flies the Vestenmannavnjar flag upside down, symbolizing the peril their nation is in. After capturing a Vendel flag, she sets it on the deck, where all the men spit and stomp on it; then she sets the flag on fire and flies it until it burns completely away.

#### **The Crew**

##### ***Yngvild Olafssdottir***

The Valkyrie's reputation often exceeds her. She is not the seven-foot warrior-woman of which the folk tales tell; she's only five and a half feet tall with slender shoulders and small hands. Raised by her grandfather, a fisherman,

the ocean and its mysteries do not intimidate her; the brutal life of a pirate has hardened her deep blue eyes.

She's seen ships burning in the night and heard the screams of the crewmen as they drowned or burned to death, watched schools of mermaids eat men alive and ordered Vendel merchants to be tortured within an inch of their lives. She maintained her composure through each of these horrors by remembering her mother's face as she slowly slipped into madness, her father's bloated corpse as it washed up on the shore and the stink on the man who came to buy her grandfather's farm... and his screams when her cousins beat him to a bloody pulp.

Yngvild is not a violent woman, nor does she relish the sight of blood, but she is a woman bent on revenge. Her people have been victims of Vendel greed for far too long. She doesn't hunt indiscriminately; she only acts if her violence will cause the Vendel harm. However, if she





happens to hurt the Avalons or Montaignes (who support Vendel), that's just too bad.

While she has become accustomed to the violence of a pirate's life, she hasn't become desensitized to it quite yet. After particularly brutal battles, she runs to her private quarters and tries away the pain in her heart. Then, when she's regained her composure, she returns to the deck to reward her men with cheers and toasts.

Yngvild is completely devoted to the men who serve her. She sees the adoration in their eyes and she does her best to return it.

*Yngvild Olafsdottir: Hero*

*Brawn 3, Finesse 3, Wits 4, Resolve 2, Panache 4*

*Reputation: -27*

*Arcana: Focused*

*Advantages: Vendel (R/W), Montaigne, Vodacce, Avalon (ACQ)*

*Courtier: Dancing 2, Etiquette 2, Fashion 2, Oratory 4, Sincerity 4*

*Hunting: Fishing 3, Skinning 2, Survival 4*

*Sailor: Balance 4, Climbing 3, Knotwork 4, Rigging 2, Cartography 5, Navigation 4, Pilot 4, Swimming 3*

*Captain: Strategy 4, Tactics 5, Ambush 5, Incitation 5, Leadership 4, Logistics 3*

*Lardom. (Master): Stans (Weather) 5, Nod (Weather) 5, Sinne 5, Tungisinn 5, Fortnuft 5*

*Heavy Weapon: Attack (Heavy Weapon) 3, Parry (Heavy Weapon) 3*

### **Red Thorfild**

Yngvild's first mate is tall, handsome as the devil and just as cunning, "Red" Thorfild's thirst for blood may only be bested by Reis himself. Thorfild's blue eyes are always half-covered by his curly red locks that hang down as low as his chin. His full beard also hides his features, making them even more difficult to discern. However, those who

have served with him know it isn't difficult to measure Thorfild's motives: Revenge. Revenge. Revenge.

Thorfild is the ninth son of a farmer. One night, when he was twelve, he snuck out of the house to steal kisses from the pretty blonde girl down the hillside. When he returned, he found his entire family slaughtered. Thorfild doesn't know who killed his family, but he is certain why. Just a week later, Vendel merchants claimed the untenanted land for a penny an acre and turned it into a hot spring resort.

That pretty blonde girl was Yngvild Olafsdottir. Three years later, when the Vendel came to purchase her farm, she turned to Thorfild for help. The Vestenmannavnjar gathered up eight of Yngvild's cousins and when the merchant returned, they pounded him into the ground, stole his money and (at Thorfild's insistence) bought a ship, the *Revensj*.

If Yngvild is the heart of the *Revensj*, Thorfild is its fury. Thorfild is very practical: he wants to exterminate any creature that calls itself Vendel. He also wants to butcher anyone who helps, aids or otherwise supports them. The merchants have sold out his nation and his people, trading their souls for luxury. In his eyes, there is no greater crime, and no punishment that can mete out the proper justice.

He despises the Vendel and urges Yngvild to kill every last man, woman and child she finds on a Vendel ship. "The men will survive to perpetrate further evils," he tells her. "The women carry the seed of Vendel's future; and the children..., if you don't kill them, they will grow up remembering your name, seeking to avenge their fallen fathers."

*Red Thorfild: Henchman*

*Brawn 3, Finesse 4, Wits 4, Resolve 3, Panache 3*

*Reputation: -33*







He is almost six feet tall with blonde hair he keeps in a single long braid down his back. When new recruits ask about him, the old salts say, "When the seas are calm, so is Hoskuld. When they are rough, so is Hoskuld." The *Revensfs* bosun is soft-spoken when the ship has no pressing duties, but when it comes time to fight, his breast swells like it's holding a thunderstorm in check.

Every crewman knows that Hoskuld and Thorfild do not get along. They stand on either side of their captain, each advising her on different courses. Hoskuld encourages her to be merciful toward the women and children she captures, while Thorfild's bloodthirsty rage demands no mercy whatsoever.

Hoskuld is Yngvild's second most important crewman. He is directly responsible for the crew's performance, a fact that Thorfild does not let him forget.

*Advantages:* Vendel (R/W), Montaigne, Castille

*Merchant:* Farmer 3, Hagglng 2

*Sailor:* Balance 3, Climbing 4, Knotwork 3, Rigging 2, Navigation 4, Pilot 5, Sea Lore 4

*Athlete:* Climbing 4, Foot Work 4, Sprinting 3, Throwing 3, Leaping 4, Side-Step 3

*Captain:* Strategy 3, Tactics 3, Ambush 4, Incitation 4, Leadership 2

*Dirty Fighting:* Attack (Dirty Fighting) 4, Kick 4, Throat Strike 3

*Heavy Weapon:* Attack (Heavy Weapon) 4, Parry (Heavy Weapon) 3

## **Hoskuld Hardrada**

Hoskuld doesn't remember which one of the crew gave him his nickname ("Hard-Law") to him ages ago, but it has stuck. As Yngvild's bosun, he has to be a hard man who doesn't tolerate laziness. The enemies they face are too deadly. They cannot afford to be careless.



*Hoskuld Hardrada: Hero**Brawn 4, Finesse 3, Wits 4, Resolve 4, Panache 3**Reputation: 24**Arcana: Commanding**Advantages: Vendel (R/W), Eisen, Castille (ACQJ, Combat Reflexes, Pirate Trick (Belay That)**Sailor: Balance 4, Climbing 3, Knotwork 5, Rigging 4, Cartography 3, Swimming 4, Weather 4**Captain: Strategy 2, Tactics 4, Bribery 4, Diplomacy 4, Gunnery 5, Incitation 3, Leadership 4, Logistics 5**Athlete: Climbing 3, Footwork 4, Sprinting 4, Throwing 2, Break Fall 3, Leaping 5, Swinging 4, Side-step 3**Dirty Fighting: Attack (Dirty Fighting) 4, Attack (Improvised Weapon) 4, Eye-gouge 3, Parry (Improvised Weapon) 4**Firearms: Attack (Firearms) 4, Reload (Firearms) 4**Heavy Weapon: Attack (Heavy Weapon) 4, Parry (Heavy Weapon) 2**Rognvald Brandson*

Rognvald Brandson is a skald — a storyteller, a keeper of history, the Vestenmannavnjar version of the Inish bard. His curly red hair falls over his slender shoulders and his pale skin and clean features make his blue eyes flash in the sunlight. Other sailors only make the mistake of ridiculing his "pretty face" once. Soon enough, the sailor hears the crew being led by Rognvald in a scathing song featuring a character that sounds a little too familiar.

Rognvald is still young, still idealistic. He believes that bloodshed and gore will expel the prissy Vendel and restore Vestenmannavnjar to its former glory.

*Rognvald Brandson: Henchman**Brawn 2, Finesse 2, Wits 4, Resolve 2, Panache 3**Reputation: 0**Advantages: Vendel (R/W), Montaigne (R/W), Thean, Vodacce (ACQ), Appearance (Stunning)**Artist: Musician (Flute) 4, Musician (Lute) 4, Musician (Bodhran) 3**Courtier: Dancing 4, Etiquette 3, Fashion 3, Oratory 4, Diplomacy 3, Sincerity 4**Performer: Acting 3, Dancing 4, Oratory 4, Singing 3, Storytelling 5**Sailor: Balance 3, Climbing 2, Knotwork 2, Rigging 2**Scholar: History 5, Mathematics 2, Philosophy 3, Research 4, Law 2, Occult 1, Theology 1**Heavy Weapon: Attack (Heavy Weapon) 2, Parry (Heavy Weapon) 1**Fid Blue-eye*

Fid never reached full Vestenmannavnjar height, but he was a perfect fit for a sailing ship. He's spent a decade on the waves, but it was his last voyage that marked him forever.



When his ship was attacked by Vendel pirate hunters, one of the marines put a knife into his eye — a knife made of Sryneth steel. Somehow, Fid slew his attacker and claimed the weapon that took his eye. When he rose the next morning, the eye that had sliced in two was healed... and had turned bright blue. No retina, no pupil, just pure blue. Later that night, he also discovered the eye allowed him to see in the dark.

Now serving on the *Revensj*, Fid spends long hours looking at his Sryneth knife, wondering what would happen if he put out his *other* eye with it.

*Fid Blue-eye: Henchman*

*Brawn 3, Finesse 3, Wits 2, Resolve 3, Panache 2*

*Reputation: 0*

*Advantages:* Vendel (R/VV), Montaigne, Avalon (ACQJ), Sryneth Artifact (Knife)

*Sailor:* Balance 4, Climbing 4, Knotwork 2, Rigging 2, Navigation 2, Pilot 3, Swimming 2

*Athlete:* Climbing 2, Footwork 3, Sprinting 3, Throwing 3, Leaping 3, Side-step 4

*Whaler* Balance 4, Knotwork 3, Throw (Harpoon) 5, Poison 4, Sea Lore 4

*Dirty Fighting:* Attack (Dirty Fighting) 4, Attack (Improvised Weapon) 3, Eye-gouge 3, Kick 4

*Heavy Weapon:* Attack (Heavy Weapon) 3, Parry (Heavy Weapon) 3

*Knife:* Attack (Knife) 4, Parry (Knife) 2

### **"Lucky" Vandrad Hallvardson**

Vandrad is a young man, only twenty-two, out on his third voyage. He currently works as the Master of the Tops. Vandrad has never fallen from the rigging. Not once. Not ever.

He attributes his luck to a rune his mother gave him when he left home for the first time. She told him it would protect him, and considering his current lucky streak, he has no reason to doubt her.

Vandrad has other reasons to consider himself lucky. While standing next to two other men during a broadsides, a cannonball flew directly through the group, knocking them to the deck and unconscious to boot. When Vandrad awoke, he discovered the other two men were dead, killed from the concussion of standing so close to the passing cannonball. Vandrad just lost his hearing for a week.

### **"Lucky" Vandrad Hallvardson: Hero**

*Brawn 3, Finesse 4, Wits 3, Resolve 2, Panache 3*

*Reputation: 0*

*Arcana:* Fortunate

*Advantages:* Vendel (R/W), Montaigne, Eagle Eyes

*Sailor:* Balance 3, Climbing 4, Knotwork 4, Rigging 5, Weather 4

*Streetwise:* Socializing 3, Shopping 3





*Athlete:* Climbing 4, Footwork 5, Sprinting 4, Throwing 3, Break Fall 5, Leaping 3, Swinging 4

*Firearms:* Attack (Firearms) 3, Reload {Firearms} 3

*Heavy Weapon:* Attack (Heavy Weapon) 3, Parry (Heavy Weapon) 1

### **Orm Greybeard (Warrior)**

The oldest man on the ship, Orm Greybeard lost his wife and his daughters to a Vendel merchant. The man made advances toward his daughter, the girl refused, the situation got bad when she struck the man and the merchant's Swordsman ran her through. Orm tried to avenge his daughter, failed, and lost everything. His wife died soon after and Orm went to the sea.

Orm is old, but not old enough to forget how to put an axe in someone's head. Having spent the first half of his life as a soldier, wandering the islands and mainlands, he provides Yngvild with a vast knowledge of hiding places and safe ports. He also gives the Valkyrie a devotion that none on the ship can equal. Orm sees his eldest daughter in Yngvild and has almost become a surrogate father.

Orm will throw himself on a sword rather than watch another daughter die.

### *Orm Greybeard: Hero*

*Brawn 4, Finesse 3, Wits 2, Resolve 4, Panache 3*

*Reputation: 0*

*Arcana: Loyal*

*Advantages:* Vendel (R/W), Eisen. Ussuran

*Sailor:* Balance 3, Climbing 2, Knotwork 2, Rigging 2, Swimming 3

*Streetwise:* Socializing 4, Street Navigation 4, Scrounging 3

*Commander:* Strategy 2, Tactics 3, Ambush 3, Gunnery 4, Leadership 2

*Leegstra (Journeyman):* Beat (Heavy Weapon) 4, Corps-a-Corps 4, Lunge (Heavy Weapon) 4, Exploit Weakness (Leegstra) 4

*Firearms:* Attack (Firearms) 3, Reload (Firearms) 1

*Heavy Weapon:* Attack (Heavy Weapon) 4, Parry (Heavy Weapon) 3

*Wrestling:* Grapple 3, Break 4, Bear Hug 4

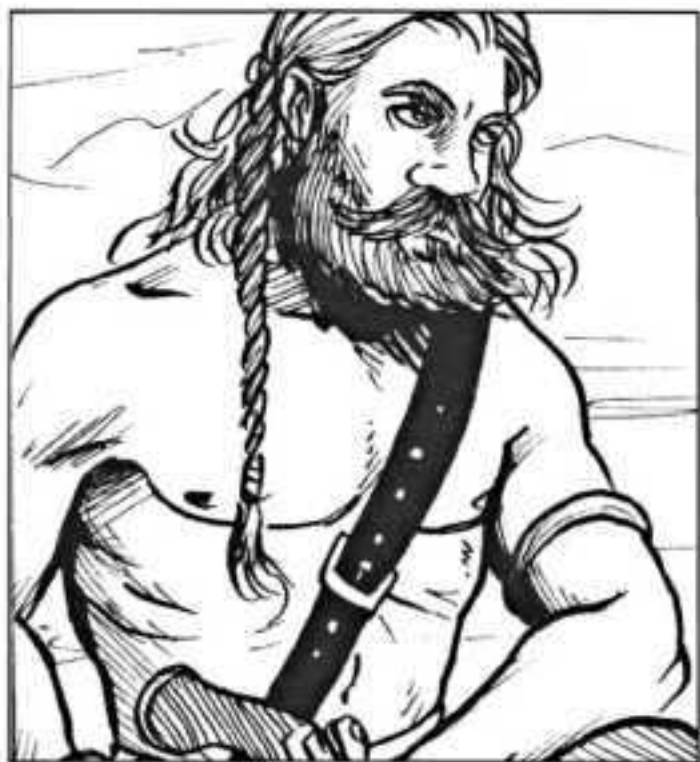




## Jorund Guttormson

Jorund Guttormson is a broad-shouldered new recruit on Yngvild's ship. His huge hands have fought in more than a few battles and he once pulled a fellow crewman out of a siren's arms single-handedly. His courage has earned him the crew's trust. Too bad he doesn't deserve it.

Jorund is a traitor who will sell out the *Revensj* the first chance he gets. He was placed on the ship by the Vendel League to learn as much as he can about the crew, their strategy, and their tactics. As soon as he knows enough, he will betray his comrades and live the rest of his life in luxury.



## Jorund Guttormson: Henchman

*Brawn* 4, *Finesse* 2, *Wits* 2, *Resolve* 3, *Panache* 2

*Reputation*: 0

*Advantages*: Vendel (R/W), Montaigne, Castille

*Courtier*: Dancing 3, Etiquette 3, Fashion 2, Oratory 3, Diplomacy 4, Sincerity 4

*Performer*: Acting 4, Dancing 3, Oratory 3, Singing 2, Cold Read 4

*Sailor*: Balance 2, Climbing 3, Knotwork 2, Rigging 2

*Spy*: Shadowing 3, Stealth 4, Bribery 3, Conceal 2, Cryptography 2, Lip Reading 4

*Dirty Fighting*: Attack (Dirty Fighting) 3, Attack (Improvised Weapon) 3, Throat Strike 4, Kick 2

*Heavy Weapon*: Attack (Heavy Weapon) 4, Parry (Heavy Weapon) 4

## Sigvaldi Sveinson

Those who see him for the first time estimate Sigvaldi's age at fifty or sixty. Actually, he's only about twenty-two.

When Sigvaldi was just a boy, he went to the top of the world (as his father did before him) and spoke with the North Wind. She tested him and made him a berserker. Now, whenever Sigvaldi calls upon his gift, it sends him into a bloody rage that no mortal man can stop. It also ages him every time he uses it.

Sigvaldi has no fear of death. He knows that when his soul leaves his body, he will meet his father and grandfather in Paradise, where he will drink and revel until the end of the world. His eyes show this to the rest of the world and the ship's crew stays well out of his way, especially just before a boarding action when a cold wind from the north spills into the sails and Sigvaldi's lips start spitting froth.

## Sigvaldi Sveinson: Hero

*Brawn* 3, *Finesse* 3, *Wits* 2, *Resolve* 4, *Panache* 3

*Reputation*: 0

*Advantages*: Vendel (R/W), Avalon (ACQ)

*Sailing*: Balance 2, Climbing 3, Knotwork 2, Rigging 3, Swimming 1

*Athlete*: Climbing 3, Footwork 4, Sprinting 5, Throwing 3, Lifting 3, Rolling 4





*Leegstra (Apprentice):* Feint (Heavy Weapon} 3, Disarm (Heavy Weapon} 4, Riposte (Heavy Weapon) 3, Exploit Weakness (Leegstra} 1

*Heavy Weapon:* Attack (Heavy Weapon} 4, Parry (Heavy Weapon) 4

*Wrestling:* Grapple 4, Bear Hug 3, Break 4

*Dirty Fighting:* Attack (Dirty Fighting) 3, Eye-gouge 3, Throat Strike 4

Note: Sveinson is immune to Fear.

### ***Gris Hallisdottir (Half-Blood Sorcerer)***

Gris is a tall blonde woman, nearly thirty. She spent the first half of her life learning rune magic, but could never quite master it. Ten years ago, her husband and children died of a fever. She sold her land and wandered Vestenmannavnjar, seeking the path to gain mastery over her art. She traveled for twelve years, finding no answers to her questions. The runes never gave her the solace her

soul sought, so if she couldn't ease her pain with sorcery, perhaps the bottle would suffice.

She was lost for five years before Yngvild found her. The young girl gave Gris new hope, a chance for redemption. She now serves as Yngvild's apprentice, and for the first time in her life, she doesn't feel the weight of her limitations on her shoulders. She has learned to accept that her gift is not as great as others, but still must be cherished.

*Gris Hallisdottir: Hero*

*Brawn 3, Finesse 2, Wits 3, Resolve 4, Panache 2*

*Reputation: 0*

*Arcana: Misfortunate*

*Advantages:* Vcndel (R/W), Vodacce (ACQ), Avalon (ACQ)

*Merchant:* Weaver 3, Gardener 2, Cooking 4

*Sailor:* Balance 3, Climbing 3, Knotwork 1, Rigging 2, Cartography 4, Swimming 3





*Servant:* Etiquette 2, Fashion 2, Menial Tasks 4, Unobtrusive 3, Gossip 3, Hagglng 2

*Streetwise:* Socializing 3, Street Navigation 3, Scrounging 4, Shopping 4

*Firearms:* Attack (Firearms) 3, Reload (Firearms) 3

*Laerdom (Apprentice):* Velstand (Wisdom}3, Nod (Weather}2, Kjott 3, Sterk 3, Fjell 2

## The Crimson Roger

If there is a name that strikes fear into the most hearts on Theah, it must be "Reis." He and his ship, the *Crimson Roger*, strike at shipping all up and down the western and southern coasts, even venturing into the Forbidden Sea at times. When they attack a ship, they leave no survivors to tell the tale. No one dares surrender to them, but their fearsome reputation causes their prey to make mistakes. Even the men aboard the *Crimson Roger* are terrified of their Captain.

### Legends of Reis

Stories of Captain Reis and his bloodthirsty crew started circulating about ten years ago. Reis was described as a monster - a blood-drinking, soul-stealing demon summoned by rolling the twelve most evil men in the world all together into one body. It was said that he and his crew were beasts walking in the skin of men, and that there was no deed so vile they wouldn't stoop to it. Most of these rumors were started by Reis himself, to create such an atmosphere of fear around his name that no one would be able to put up an effective fight, since they'd be too busy quaking with terror.

Since then, other legends of Reis have started up, some true, some false. Tales about how he takes no prisoners and leaves no one - not man, woman, nor child - alive when he attacks a ship, have circulated all over Theah by now, and

there's scarcely a sailor alive that doesn't start praying when the cry of "The Crimson Roger!" comes from the lookout

Of course, when a man has such a powerful reputation attached to him, ridiculous and exaggerated stories are sure to follow. Sailors say that Reis' flag, the Crimson Roger itself, howls for blood on moonless nights, its bony jaw lifted to the sky. Sailors also say that once Reis has your scent, it's impossible to lose him, no matter how far you run - a statement substantiated by the fact that the solitary survivor of one of Reis' attacks was later found cut in half with the word "Reis" written in blood next to him. But then, sailors say a lot of things.

### Tactics

Reis prefers to blast enemy ships with grape and chain shot until the sails are ripped to shreds and most of the crew are dead before closing for a boarding action. No prisoners are ever taken, although particularly doughty fighters are sometimes asked to join the crew if they survive the battle.

The heads are chopped off all bodies before they are thrown in the sea, to make sure there are no survivors that could finger one of the crew someday down the line.

### Initiation Ceremony

New crewmen are brought on deck before the entire crew. The Captain takes his dagger and makes a small cut in the recruit's chest above his heart. The new crewman then reads the first paragraph of the Pact out loud and dips his thumb in the blood dripping from the wound on his chest. Captain Reis then reads the second paragraph of the Pact out loud and also dips his thumb in the blood. Lastly, the crewman puts his bloody thumbprint on the Pact, while Reis licks his thumb clean of blood. The ceremony is designed to terrify the new crewmen into submission to their new Captain. On the bright side, Reis does pay very good wages.



## Ranks and Structure

On the *Crimson Roger*, Reis is Theus. All orders come from him in some way or another, although he leaves his subordinates to carry them out however they see fit. He decides what ships they attack, where they sail, and whom they ask to join the crew. Just below him is the First Mate, Joern. When Joern gives an order, it is as though Reis himself were speaking. The rest of the crew just do their jobs and try to avoid calling the bosun's attention to themselves.

## Punishment

Disobedient sailors are turned over to the sadistic bosun, Riant Gaucher. Fortunately, he's held somewhat in check by the Pact. He cannot punish a man who has done nothing wrong. Thus, he watches for the slightest infraction of the rules (such as they are) and swoops in like a hawk, calling for the harshest penalty the Captain will allow. More often than not, he gets his way, since Reis feels that the men will turn on him if not kept fearful. Punishments are usually ridiculously out of proportion to their crime. A man was once lashed to death for saying the word "Reis" with less than the utmost respect; as far as the men are concerned, if Reis is Theus, then Riant must surely be Legion itself.



### The Crimson Rogers Charter

The Pact of the Crimson Roger is written in blood upon the back of Robert Langstaff, the first man who ever wounded Reis in a fight. Langstaff himself is long dead, but they kept the skin off his back to use as writing material. It has been covered in bloody thumbprints over the years, and it reads like this:

"We, the men of the Crimson Roger, swear loyalty to Captain Reis till death and beyond. Should we betray or disobey him, may our souls burn in the blackest pits of the Abyss forever. We will do as he commands without hesitation, even if it puts our lives in peril, for such orders will be for the good of the crew."

"In exchange for this, I, Captain Reis, promise a fair share of all plunder taken, that you will not be punished without reason, and that your family shall receive your share of the take should you be killed in die line of duty."

## Allies

While not exactly an ally, Vincenzo Caligari, the Vodacce merchant prince, often purchases Syrneth artifacts from Reis for a handsome price. The two of them signed a contract stating that Reis would not sell artifacts to anyone other than Caligari in exchange for good pay for the artifacts he brought back. Caligari sent along his cousin, Julius, to watch and make sure that Reis honored the contract — but Reis bribes Julius to turn a blind eye, so Reis now sells to whomever he wants, while still bringing the lion's share of artifacts to Caligari.

## Reis' Colors

Reis' flag is black with a red skull and crossbones on it. The skull has a scarf wrapped around its forehead, and the bottom ends of the crossbones are broken and jagged.

The *Crimson Roger* only flies Reis' flag. No other flag has ever been hoisted aboard the Roger - nor will it ever be, if Reis has anything to say about it.

## The Crew

The *Crimson Roger* is crewed by the biggest collection of misfits and cutthroats to ever sail the Seven Seas. Most have no qualms about killing a man in a fair fight, and a lot of them would prefer to shoot him in the back. They all



hope that someday they'll capture the big haul that will enable them to retire in style.

#### *Captain Reis*

Reis is as much a mystery to his own men as he is to the rest of the world. They fear him more than anything else in Thcah, except perhaps the bosun. All they know is that he never smiles or laughs, and he disappears from the ship for months at a time, leaving the men with ample pay to be ready again when he calls for them. Some believe that he's a demon, and he returns to the Abyss every so often, carrying with him the souls of the men he and his crew have slain in battle.

Reis is a quiet commander, rarely speaking in front of the crew. He directs his officers with efficient hand gestures, and the only noise the men usually hear from him is his fierce battle roar. In private, with his officers, he relaxes a bit, and speaks in thin, whispery tones, usually giving them their instructions for the next day's labor.

He is also utterly ruthless. Pleading with him is like trying to talk an avalanche out of falling on you - pointless. The only men he's ever spared are those who fought valiantly in battle, killing at least six of his men, and then survived the experience. He asks these men to join his crew. If they refuse, they join their comrades in the Deep.

Reis fears nothing, and no one, although he does have a faint distaste for the bosun, despite his usefulness. The day the men see Reis panic is the day they know they're all going to die.

He is best known for the odd scythe he wields in battle. It seems to be a Syrneth artifact, carving through even dracheneisen as easily as it cuts through men. In *7th Sea* terms, it ignores the benefits of cover and armor, and is impossible to parry. Only Defense Knacks that involve getting out of the way can be used against it. If it hits, it inflicts 6k6 Wounds, regardless of its wielder's Brawn, and

any 10s rolled in the Damage Roll are treated as automatic Dramatic Wounds instead of being added into the damage total. These automatic Dramatic Wounds do not cause the victim to erase their Flesh Wounds as normal.

*Example: Reis rolls 3, 5, 7, 8, 10, and 10 for damage. The two 10s immediately translate into two Dramatic Wounds, and then the victim still suffers 23 Flesh Wounds on top of that. If the victim had prior Flesh Wounds, the 23 would be added to them and tested against, since the two Dramatic Wounds specifically don't erase prior Flesh Wounds.*

*Captain Reis: Villain*

*Reputation: -132*

*Arcana: Commanding*

*Advantages: Avalon (R/W), Eisen (R/W), Montaigne, Casalle, Crescent, Toughness, Evil Reputation*

Reis's Traits are unknown at the present time, as are his precise skills. He is certain to have Courtier, Performer,





Sailor, Spy, Captain, Heavy Weapon, Firearms, and Dirty Fighting. He is quite likely to have others. The truth about Reis will be made available... in time.

#### *Joern Keitelsson*

"Joern" began life as a shepherd among the Vestenmannavnjar tribes. Mere weeks before his wedding, his fiancée Oera caught the plague and died. The shepherd was devastated, and spent hours each day tending to her grave. After six weeks of mourning, Oera's spirit appeared to him and they spoke until long after the sun went down. He was away visiting Oera's spirit when the Vendel raided his village, killing every man, woman, and child. Joern's memory of Oera was, by itself, not enough to keep her spirit alive, and she faded away into oblivion within a week. The ex-shepherd packed up his few possessions, changed his name to \*Joern Keitelsson", took the best sword he could find in the village, and left to find some Vendel to kill.



His journey took him by ship, as he hoped to find a band of Vestenmannavnjar pirates to join, but Fate played her hand, and the Crimson Roger attacked. Finally Joern had a foe he could fight, and all the hatred he'd been building up spewed forth in a berserk frenzy. He killed twelve men before Reis managed to have him taken alive. When he recovered consciousness, Joern was tied up, Reis standing over him with his scythe. Then, Reis did the last thing Joern expected - he offered to make the trussed man his first mate. Joern accepted on the condition that at least one ship in four that they attacked would be Vendel. Since coming aboard, Joern has lived only for death. He fights like a madman, offering no quarter, and only seldom bothering to protect himself from incoming sword thrusts. His last goal in life is to kill as many Vendel as he can before one of them finally manages to kill him. Joern hopes that by concealing his true name from his crewmates he may be forgotten as soon as he dies, joining his beloved Oera in blessed oblivion.

#### *Joern Keitelsson: Henchman*

*Brawn 3, Finesse 4, Wits 3, Resolve 4, Panache 3*

*Reputation: -20*

*Advantages: Vendel (R/W), Eisen, Crescent, Montaigne (PD), Vodacce (PD)*

*Background: Lost Love, Vendetta*

*Merchant: Shepherd 4, Accounting 1, Haggling 3*

*Sailor: Balance 3, Climbing 4, Knotwork 3, Rigging 3, Leaping 3, Navigation 4, Pilot 4, Swimming 3*

*Athlete: Climbing 4, Footwork 4, Sprinting 2, Throwing 3, Lifting 3, Swinging 4*

*Captain: Strategy 3, Tactics 4, Ambush 3, Bribery 3, Gunnery 2, Incitation 2, Leadership 4*

*Leegstra (Master): Beat (Heavy Weapon) 5, Corps-a-corps 5, Lunge (Heavy Weapon) 5, Exploit Weakness (Leegstra) 5*

*Heavy Weapon: Attack (Heavy Weapon) 5, Parry (Heavy Weapon) 3*

*Wrestling: Grapple 4, Break 4, Escape 3, Head Butt 3*



## Riant Gaucher

Riant is the boatswain of the Crimson Roger. He rules the men with an iron hand, terrifying them into obedience. He is a terrible sadist, looking upon his cat o' nine tails as his artist's brush, and the human back as his canvas.

He was born to a farmer in Montaigne, and raised with twelve older siblings. Being the youngest, he had to learn to defend himself early on. He found that if he took that extra step beyond friendly brotherly fighting into actual pain, he could make his older siblings frightened of him. Eventually, despite his small stature and young age, he effectively led the children in his family.

He has carried that lesson over into his adult life, always looking for an excuse to add another stripe to one of the men's backs. In a fight, he is as cold and calculating as a machine, doing anything necessary to gain the advantage - even firing through one of his own men to hit an enemy officer. Most of the crew hates him, and even Reis himself dislikes watching Riant let the cat out of the bag.



## Riant Gaucher: Villain

*Brawn* 4, *Finesse* 3, *Wits* 3, *Resolve* 4, *Panache* 4

*Reputation*: -39

*Arcana*: Cruel

*Advantages*: Montaigne (R/W), Castille, Crescent  
*Sailor* Balance 4, Climbing 3, Knotwork 4, Rigging 4, Leaping 3, Swimming 3, Sea Lore 2, Weather 3

*Spy*: Shadowing 1, Stealth 1, Bribery 2, Interrogation 4,  
*Captain*: Strategy 2, Tactics 4, Ambush 4, Gunnery 3, Leadership 3, Logistics 4

*Dirty Fighting*: Attack (Dirty Fighting) 5, Attack (Improvised Weapon) 5, Eye-gouge 3, Kick 4, Parry (Improvised Weapon) 3, Throat Strike 5

*Fencing*: Attack (Fencing) 4, Parry (Fencing) 5

*Firearms*: Attack (Firearms) 5, Reload (Firearms) 5

*Wrestling*: Grapple 5, Bear Hug 4, Break 5, Escape 4, Head Butt 5

## Jemy

Jemy is an enigma. His skin is black as coal, unheard-of in Theah. The *Crimson Roger* came upon him floating, half-dead, on a raft in the middle of the Frothing Sea. Why the sirens hadn't eaten him, no one was sure, but they hauled him aboard and nursed him back to health, if only to get to the bottom of the mystery.

When he had recovered his strength, he only said one word, "Jemy." The crew assumed it was his name. Falling easily into the daily roua'ne, Jemy proved as strong as any three men, easily lifting a wet sail by himself and carrying it up the rigging. Unfortunately, much to the Captain's disappointment, Jemy refused to fight when they attacked another ship. He simply stood at the rudder, calmly watching the fight unfold around him, and only defending himself as necessary.

After the fight, the bosun attempted to discipline the disobedient sailor with thirty lashes. Jemy looked on, bemused, as they bound him to the mast. When the first



*Athlete:* Climbing 5, Footwork 3, Sprinting 5, Throwing 3, Break Fall 3, Lifting 5, Rolling 3, Swinging 3, Side-step 1  
*Dirty Fighting:* Attack (Dirty Fighting) 4, Attack (Improvised Weapon) 4, Kick 3, Throat Strike 4  
*Wrestling:* Grapple 4, Bear Hug 3, Break 4, Escape 5

#### **Gerald Hohne**

Originally from Eisen, Gerald was a skilled weaponsmith who fled his ravaged homeland seeking a new hie. Eventually, he signed on with the Explorer's Guild as a Shield Man. However, while exploring the Montaigne sewers with a team of two archaeologists, he stumbled upon a strange jeweled mask. As he picked it up, the filth fell away from it, leaving it perfectly clean. Delighted, he showed it to his team, then, jokingly, pressed it against his face. His vision went grey, and when he recovered his senses, the archaeologists were torn to shreds and his hands and arms were covered in blood. He fled the sewers screaming, and spent six years moving from place to place after each new bout of madness. They seemed to come upon him every six months or so.

lash fell, it failed to leave even a slight mark. Jemy flinched slightly, then easily snapped the ropes binding him. Snatching the lash away from the bosun, he whipped Riant across the deck until he pleaded for mercy. Although the bosun later begged Reis for Jemy's death, the Captain felt that his skills as a topsman (and his usefulness in case Riant ever got out of line) outweighed the bosun's outrage. Although Riant hates him to this day, he is too frightened of Jemy to lift a finger without Reis' backing.

#### **Jemy: Henchman**

*Brawn* 6, *Finesse* 3, *Wits* 3, *Resolve* 5, *Panache* 4

*Reputation:* 15

*Advantages:* Crescent, Toughness, Legendary Trait

*Artist:* Musician (Flute) 4

*Merchant:* Sail Maker 3

*Sailor:* Balance 4, Climbing 5, Knotwork 4, Rigging 5, Leaping 4, Swimming 3, Weather 2

Finally, he wound up in a bar, drunkenly telling his story to a stranger sitting next to him. The stranger smiled and stuck out his hand, saying in a thin whisper, "I think I can help you." It turned out to be Reis, who needed a good weaponsmith for his crew. When it was almost time for Gerald's next bout of madness, the Captain had the men put ashore to a small island. Without warning, the rest of the crew jumped in the longboats and rowed away, leaving Gerald alone on the island with an unlikable sailor who had recently joined the crew. After a few days, they went back and found Gerald, shamefaced and alone on the island. Since then, the Captain always signs on a few new sailors every few months or so, just in case. Naturally, the newcomers never hear about Gerald's "need." As Reis says, "Sailors are a dime a dozen. A good weaponsmith is hard to find." The rest of the crew looks



upon Gerald as a monster, and he has no friends, nor does he want any.



*Gerald Hohne: Henchman*

*Brawn 3, Finesse 3, Wits 3, Resolve 4, Panache 3*

*Reputation: -16*

*Advantages: Eisen (R/W), Montaigne, Castille (PD), Crescent (PD)*

*Merchant: Weaponsmith 4, Appraising 4*

*Sailor: Balance 3, Climbing 4, Knotwork 3, Rigging 2*

*Scholar: History 3, Mathematics 4, Philosophy 2, Research % Law 3*

*Heavy Weapon: Attack (Heavy Weapon) 3, Parry (Heavy Weapon) 2*

*Panzerhand: Attack (Panzerhand) 3, Parry (Panzerhand) 4*

*Firearms: Attack (Firearms) 2, Reload (Firearms) 2*

*Note: During Gerald's bouts of madness, he gains 2 ranks of brawn, 2 ranks of resolve, Attack (Dirty Fighting) 5, and his barehanded damage becomes 0k2.*

### *Julius Caligari*

When Caligari signed his agreement with Reis, he stipulated in the contract that one of his cousins was to serve aboard the *Crimson Roger* in order to keep an eye on his interests. He sent his cousin Julius, a skilled duelist and a member of the Swordsman's Guild.

Julius is tall and slender, with a dancer's build. He is a Journeyman in the Ambrogia school of fighting, and would have made Master were it not for his blind right eye, which has a pale white cataract

Within a month, Julius showed his true colors to the Captain. Approaching him in the night, Julius smiled and said, "For a price, I'll keep my right eye on my cousin's interests instead of my left." Reis, no fool, paid his price and has continued to do so, but has since watched Julius, as he no longer trusts the man. Anyone who would betray his own cousin would turn on his Captain even more easily.





*Julius Caligari Villain*

*Brawn 2, Finesse 4, Wits 4, Resolve 2, Panache 3*

*Reputation: -19*

*Arcana: Greedy*

*Advantages: Vodacce (R/W), Castille (R/W), Montaigne, Swordsman's Guild, Patron (Vincenzo Caligari)*

*Courtier: Dancing 2, Etiquette 4, Fashion 3, Oratory 3, Gaming 3, Mooch 4, Politics 2*

*Spy: Shadowing 3, Stealth 4, Bribery 4, Conceal 3, Forgery 3, Interrogation 2, Sincerity 4*

*Athlete: Climbing 4, Footwork 4, Sprinting 2, Throwing 3, Leaping 4, Swimming 3, Swinging 4, Side-step 3*

*Ambrogia (Journeyman): Feint (Fencing) 5, Pommel Strike (Fencing) 5, Riposte (Fencing) 5, Exploit Weakness (Ambrogia) 4*

*Fencing: Attack (Fencing) 5, Parry (Fencing) 5*

*Dirty Fighting: Attack (Dirty Fighting) 4, Eye-gouge 3, Kick 4, Throat Strike 4*



**Volta**

Standing nearly seven feet tall, this Crescent warrior joined the crew when Reis found him marooned on a tiny island in the Forbidden Sea. His tongue had been cut out many years before, and Volta (the name of the Old Republic god of the underworld) is the nickname that a particularly sharp-witted sailor burdened him with. Not a year after Volta joined the crew, one of the sailors came to the Captain with a tale that he had heard Volta talking in his sleep in a strange language. It was never proven, and the sailor earned twenty lashes for his trouble.

Volta and Jemy have become fast friends because of their shared silence. However, while Jemy is peaceful in his ways, Volta is a terror in a fight, a danger to friend and foe alike with his wildly swinging scimitar.

*Volta: Henchman*

*Brawn 5, Finesse 3, Wits 2, Resolve 4, Panache 2*

*Reputation: 0*

*Advantages: Crescent (R/W), Montaigne, Large*

*Hunter: Fishing 3, Stealth 4, Survival 4, Ambush 3*

*Sailor: Balance 3, Climbing 3, Knotwork 4, Rigging 4, Swimming 3*

*Spy: Shadowing 3, Stealth 4, Conceal 3, Hand Signs 4, Lip Reading 3*

*Athlete: Climbing 3, Footwork 4, Sprinting 3, Throwing 3, Leaping 5, Rolling 4, Side-step 3*

*Fencing: Attack (Fencing) 5, Parry (Fencing) 4*

*Dirty Fighting: Attack 3, Attack (Improvised Weapon) 4, Kick 5*

*Javier de Bejarano*

Once a talented Church scholar, Javier deciphered several Syrneth books - most filled with trivial facts or financial records. One, bound in spun silver, held his downfall. It was filled with several sorcerous incantations, but also hinted at a path to immortality. He piously turned away from its temptation at first, but it weighed upon his mind, and he couldn't bring himself to destroy such an awesome





secret. When the White Plague struck his city he was living in, he grew more and more fearful of death, until finally he began to dream of the book opening before him and showing him the path to immortality. Night after night it showed him its secrets in his dreams, until finally he cast aside his Church vestments and began his quest.

The book spoke of a "land-locked island" which contained two tests for the would-be immortal - one of body, and one of mind. Should the supplicant be found worthy in both tests, immortality would be given to him. While he has a good idea where the land-locked island is, Javier hopes to find more information on the tests before he attempts them. In fact, he was digging through a Syrneath ruin on a small uncharted isle when Reis came across him. Reis offered him first pick of each Syrneath hoard if he'd use his talents to help the crew discover the sweeter caches of treasure more easily. Javier readily

agreed, despite his qualms about the bloodthirsty crew, since he thought they might kill him if he refused.

*Javier de Bejarano: Henchman*

*Brawn 2, Finesse 3, Wits 3, Resolve 2, Panache 3*

*Reputation: 9*

*Advantages: Castille (R/W), Montaigne (R/W), Thean (R/W), Avalon, University*

*Background: Hunting*

*Artist: Drawing 4*

*Courtier: Dancing 2, Etiquette 3, Fashion 3, Oratory 3, Diplomacy 4*

*Doctor: Diagnosis 4, First Aid 3, Examiner 4, Surgery 2*

*Merchant: Scribe 4, Calligrapher 4, Appraising 5*

*Scholar History 5, Mathematics 4, Philosophy 4, Research 5, Natural Philosophy 4, Occult 5, Theology 4*

*Streetwise: Socializing 3, Street Navigation 3, Scrounging 3, Shopping 4*

*Firearms: Attack (Firearms) 3, Reload (Firearms) 1*

*Paule du Paix*

Paule was once a pirate captain himself, elected to the position because of his skill with the sword and pistol. He showed a distinct lack of business sense, however, and his men eventually turned him over to a Castillian man-o'-war in exchange for their freedom. He swore revenge upon his crew, but they just laughed at him as they sailed away.

The man o' war, disguised as a merchant ship, was on its way to deliver him to jail when the *Crimson Roger* attacked it by mistake. It might've been the end of Reis and his crew if not for Paule, who escaped and threw a slow match into the powder room before diving overboard with an empty barrel. The man o' war exploded, and Reis, impressed with Paule's tale, offered him a position on the crew. Paule agreed, provided they sank his old ship. Ten days later, the crew that had laughed as they turned him over to the authorities were floundering in



the water as Paule fired shot after shot into them, laughing the whole time. He is content to serve under Reis now, having had his fill of captaining.

*Paule de Paix: Villain*

*Brawn 3, Finesse 4, Wits 2, Resolve 3, Panache 2*

*Reputation: -6*

*Arcana: Arrogant*

*Advantages: Montaigne (R/W), Castille, Crescent, Able Drinker*

*Criminal: Gambling 3, Quack 2, Shadowing 3, Stealth 3, Cheating 4, Pickpocket 3*

*Sailor: Balance 4, Climbing 3, Knotwork 3, Rigging 2, Cartography 3, Navigation 2, Pilot 3, Swimming 2*

*Athlete: Climbing 3, Footwork 4, Sprinting 3, Throwing 3, Leaping 3, Rolling 3, Swimming 4, Swinging 2*

*Captain: Strategy 1, Tactics 2, Ambush 3, Cannon 4, Leadership 1*

*Fencing: Attack (Fencing) 5, Parry (Fencing) 4*



*Firearms: Attack (Firearms): 4, Reload (Firearms) 4*

*Andrei Levovick*

Andrei truly isn't afraid of anything - not monsters, not Reis, not even the Bosun. In fact, he left his home in Ussura to seek something that could frighten him. Old hands like to tell the story of how he sank a Vendel merchant ship all by himself. He charged straight at the boarding cannons, screaming so loudly that the gunner who was drawing a bead on him dropped his match into a nearby powder keg, which had been carelessly left open. The explosion killed most of the crew and **blew a hole** in the ship, but Andrei was miraculously unhurt. Quickly, he organized the boarding party to start unloading cargo from the ship, and they managed a good haul before the *Roger* had to pull away or risk going down with her.

Andrei's main problem is that although he doesn't feel fear, neither does he feel any sympathy for those who do. Nothing earns his contempt as quickly as a show of terror. The Captain earned his respect by reaching out with his bare hand and crushing a deadly ten-second beetle that had slipped into a load of artifacts. Ever since then, he has served Reis loyally, although that could change if he ever saw the Captain display cowardice - an event which seems unlikely.

*Andrei Levovich: Henchman*

*Brawn 4, Finesse 3, Wits 3, Resolve 4, Panache 2*

*Reputation: 0*

*Advantages: Ussuran (R/W), Castille, Crescent*

*Hunter: Stealth 4, Survival 3, Tracking 4*

*Sailor: Balance 4, Climbing 3, Knotwork 4, Rigging 2, Swimming 3*

*Athlete: Climbing 3, Footwork 3, Sprinting 4, Throwing 4, Leaping 4, Lifting 4, Swinging 3*

*Commander: Strategy 1, Tactics 3, Incitation 3, Leadership 3*

*Heavy Weapon: Attack (Heavy Weapon) 5, Parry (Heavy Weapon) 2*



*Domingo: Henchman*

*Brawn 3, Finesse 2, Wits 3, Resolve 3, Panache 2*

*Reputation -13*

*Advantages: Vodacce (R/W), Montaigne, Castille, Crescent, Keen Senses, Pirate Trick (Quick Draw)*

*Sailor: Balance 4, Climbing 2, Knotwork 2, Rigging 3, Cartography 3, Swimming 3, Weather 2*

*Scholar: History 1, Mathematics 4, Philosophy 2, Research 2, Astronomy 3*

*Athlete: Climbing 3, Footwork 3, Sprinting 2, Throwing 3, lifting 4, Side-step 3*

*Captain: Strategy 3, Tactics 1, Ambush 4, Bribery 2, Gunnery 5, Logistics 3*

*Dirty Fighting: Attack (Dirty Fighting) 3, Attack (Improvised Weapon) 4, Kick 3, Parry (Improvised Weapon) 4, Tiircoat Strike 3*

*Firearms: Attack (Firearms) 5, Reload (Firearms)*

*Firearms: Attack (Firearms) 4, Reload (Firearms) 3*

*Wrestling: Grapple 5, Bearhug 4, Break 5, Head Butt 4*

*Domingo*

A gruff, no-nonsense man, Domingo served in the Vodacce navy for ten years as a gunner. He was possibly the best they ever had, but was passed over again and again for promotion because the officers were too busy promoting their relatives. Finally, he left the navy in disgust, and managed to join up with the *Crimson Roger*, where his talents were more appreciated.

Domingo learned early on to make do with whatever he had at hand - nails, broken bottles, pieces of wood, whatever. He just packs it tightly into the cannon and fires. This has made him extremely popular with the Captain, since proper cannonballs are often in short supply.











# *Drama*



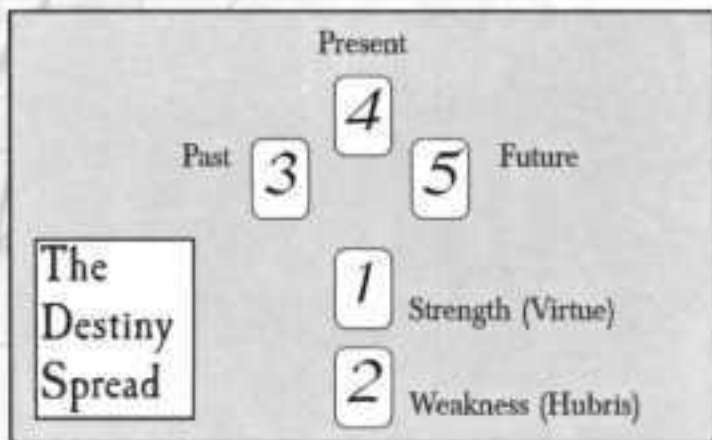


## Introduction

This chapter contains a bunch of new game mechanics including a new Hero Creation option called the "Destiny Spread." Subsequent Nation Sourcebooks (Avalon, Castille, etc.) will have unique Destiny Spreads similar to the one in this book. We'll also talk about Advanced Ship-to-Ship combat, new Advantages, new Skills and Knacks, new Equipment and new Backgrounds.

## The Destiny Spread

Fate Witches have a particular form of reading they use to give their querent a general idea of what their destiny is like. They use a 5-card spread from the Sorte deck in a cross formation to accomplish this.



The first card is the querent's Strength. This embodies their most noble quality.

The second card is the querent's Weakness. This shows their greatest flaw.

The third card is the querent's Past. This shows an important event that helped make them who they are.

The fourth card is the querent's Present. This shows their current situation.

The fifth card is the querent's Future. This shows them an important event that is fast approaching in their life that they should be prepared for.

Normally, the first and second cards are selected from the Greater Arcana, while the other three cards are selected from the two suits from the Minor Arcana that are the most significant to the querent. Fate Witches traditionally leave the Court Cards out of these readings, since they signify events that cannot be controlled.

## The Destiny Spread in Hero Creation

To use this system properly, you need a Tarot deck. Perform this reading right after assigning Traits and Nationality to your Hero, but before assigning anything else. Separate out the Major Arcana, shuffle them, and put them in one pile. Next, pull out the two suits that are most significant to your character — here, Swords and Coins — leaving out the Page, Knight, Queen, and King cards. Pirates have a strong affinity to the suits of Swords and Coins; Swords because of their violent lifestyle, and Coins because of their preoccupation with material possessions.

Shuffle the two suits together into a pile. Next, lay out the Destiny spread as described above. You must choose to focus on either your Strength or your Weakness. If you choose your Strength, your Hero gains the Virtue corresponding to that card, and you pay 10 HP for performing the Destiny spread. If you choose your Weakness, your Hero gains the Hubris corresponding to that card, and you gain 10 extra HP to build your Hero





with. Finally, consult the Past, Present, and Future charts to see what your Hero gained (or lost!) from those draws.

If you don't have a tarot deck, it's hard to determine your Strength or Weakness at random, so have your GM select one. Then roll once each on the Past, Present, and Future charts (odd-Swords/even-Coins, then a die for the card number).

*Mete: In some Tarot decks, Coins are referred to as Pentacles, and Staves are referred to as Wands or Rods.*



#### Past

These are the events that have shaped your Hero and made him who he is. Some of them may still hang over his head.

**Ace of Swords:** When you were young, you were apprenticed to a craftsman and showed great promise. Unfortunately, he went bankrupt, and you were forced to look for other work. You receive the Merchant Skill for free, with a 4 in one Basic Knack.

**2 of Swords:** You once went exploring some ruins with a friend. There was a cave-in, and the two of you were forced down different paths. After three days of wandering in the tunnels, you emerged to discover that he had told everyone that you were dead, and had discovered a fortune in artifacts. You receive a 3-point Vendetta Background with your rich ex-friend for free.

**3 of Swords:** A ship you were sailing on was boarded by pirates. One of them wounded your shoulder and it never healed correctly. That arm was permanently weakened, but the experience of rehabilitation toughened

the rest of your body. Your Brawn is reduced by 1, and your Resolve is increased by 1.

**4 of Swords:** You were once marooned on a peaceful island - almost a paradise. You spent several pleasant months there living off the land, and a ship eventually picked you up. During those months, you became quite a hunter. You receive the Hunter Skill for free, but must choose Survival as one of your Basic Knacks.

**5 of Swords:** You were gambling in a tavern frequented by sailors when a muscular man accused you of cheating and pulled a knife on you. Grabbing a nearby bottle, you broke it over his head, and were shocked to realize you'd killed him. Worse, it turned out that his brother was an infamous pirate, and you've been keeping a wary eye out for him ever since. You receive a 2-point Hunted Background for free.

**6 of Swords:** You traveled quite extensively, and picked up several languages. You receive 3 extra HP that you can only spend on the Language Advantage.

**7 of Swords:** You once came across a lonely cave on an island while out sailing. Entering it, you discovered a cache of pirate loot. Worried about getting caught in their cave, you just grabbed something and ran. The pirates caught a glimpse of you as you were sailing away, and they've been looking for you ever since. You receive a 2-point Synchrony Artifact Advantage and a 1-point Hunted Background for free.

**8 of Swords:** When exploring an island with several members of the crew you were with at the time, you were ambushed by some natives and shot with darts coated in a paralyzing poison. You watched helplessly as the other crewmen died, but when the natives got to you, they saw the strange necklace your grandfather gave to you years ago, and ran screaming into the woods. Eventually, you





made it back to the ship and left the island, but you've always wondered about the significance of the necklace. You receive a 3-point Syrneth Artifact Advantage for free. It is a silver necklace with unknown properties.

**9 of Swords:** When you were five years old, your father took you to a Fate Witch to have your destiny foretold. She said that you would bring death to everyone in your family. Your father called her a liar and stormed out, but you caught the White Plague two months later. Although you survived, the rest of your immediate family died from it. You've lived with the (undeserved) guilt ever since. Someone from your extended family raised you. You are immune to the White Plague, but your immediate family is dead.

**10 of Swords:** Your mother raised you alone, and always claimed that your father was a wealthy noble. When you were eighteen, she became ill and you went to him to ask for money. He refused to acknowledge you as his son, and when you persisted, he hired a press gang to carry you off to sea. By the time you managed to jump ship and return home, your mother had died of her illness, and your father had left town for undisclosed reasons. You receive a 3-point Vendetta Background for free. You are looking for your father. When you find him, it's going to be hard not to kill him.

**Ace of Coins:** An uncle you haven't seen in years died recently, leaving you his sea chest. Opening it, you found a piece of a treasure map inside. You receive a 2-point Treasure Map Background (worth 3 points, but a Villain has a piece of the map) for free.

**2 of Coins:** You have knocked around so many ports that you can't remember all of them. A fortunate side effect of all this travel is that you know how to order a beer in every seaport pub in Theah. You receive Avalon

(ACQJ, Castille (ACQ), Eisen (ACQJ, Montaigne (ACQJ, Vendel (ACQ), and Vodacce (ACQ] (sec p. 98).

**3 of Coins:** Over the years, you've made several connections in the underworld, the most notable of which is a Feme whom you can trust. You receive a 3-point Connection Advantage for free.

**4 of Coins:** You have earned yourself a miserly reputation through careful saving. You receive double your normal starting money, but your starting Reputation is lowered by 5«

**5 of Coins:** Your father was sailing home to bestow the family sword upon you when pirates attacked the ship. 'Iliey didn't hurt anyone, but they took the sword from him by threatening to kill a lady passenger if he didn't hand it over. 'Hie only lead he could give you was the name of their ship, the *Wild Goose*. You receive a 2-point Hunting Background for free. The family sword, if you recover it, is a fencing weapon that adds 1 unkept die to all Damage Rolls.

**6 of Coins:** You have earned a reputation as a generous person through your contributions to charity. You receive half your normal starting money, but your starting Reputation is increased by 5.

**7 of Coins:** A woman's voice yelling for help taught your attention not long ago. Running to her aid, you fought off three muggers who had attacked her. It turned out that she was wealthy, and gave you a healthy reward for your assistance. You start with one item of your choice valued at or under 51K)G.

**8 of Coins:** You **have** thrown yourself into the study of a particular subject and your efforts have paid off. After you buy all your Knacks, choose one of your Civil Knacks. You receive for free a number of experience







points in it equal to half what you need to advance it. These experience points cannot be spent elsewhere.

**9 of Coins:** Throughout all of your travels, you've always had one place you could return to in order to hide out. Your friend, the owner of this safehouse, would never betray you, even on pain of death. You receive a 3-point Connection Advantage for free. The only assistance this Connection can provide is to hide you while you're in town for awhile, but sometimes that's exactly what you need.

**10 of Coins:** Several years ago, a secret society approached you and invited you to join up. Naturally, you accepted. You receive up to 5 points of Membership in a secret society of your choice for free.



#### Present

These events represent situations that your Hero could find himself currently entangled in. They will have to be dealt with soon, whether he likes it or not.

**Ace of Swords:** You seem to have a guardian angel watching over you. You begin your first adventure with 3 additional Drama dice.

**2 of Swords:** You are currently walking a fine line. You've managed to acquire two noble Patrons, neither of which know about the other. As long as you can keep the situation quiet, you can collect money from both of them, but if word gets out, you're in a lot of trouble. You receive two 2-point Patron Advantages for free. If they find out about each other, you lose these Advantages, and gain two 1-point Nemesis Backgrounds for free instead.

**3 of Swords:** An old flame has tracked you down and is dead set on making your life miserable. You receive a 2-point Lost Love Background for free.

**4 of Swords:** Your life has been placid lately. While this is great as far as you're concerned, it's taking the edge off your skills that constant danger provides. Reduce the values of all of your Backgrounds by 1, to a minimum of 1.

**5 of Swords:** You recently offended a powerful noble. It was an accident, to be sure, but the noble has taken the slight on his honor very seriously, and seems out to bring you down now. You receive a 3-point Nemesis Background for free.

**6 of Swords:** While clearing out some of your family's old papers, you ran across an odd document. Upon reading it, you realized that it was signed by the Headmaster of the local Explorer's Society, and was good for one passage anywhere on Theah on one of the Society's ship for the bearer and his companions.

**7 of Swords:** You were recently the victim of a pickpocket. Before purchasing your starting equipment, roll two exploding dice and subtract that many Guilders from your starting money.

**8 of Swords:** Someone has been attacking your good name. Some say that he's a singer, others that he's a famous playwright. You aren't sure which story to believe yet, but you know that you have to put a stop to his activities pretty soon. You're already starting to get odd looks whenever you introduce yourself. You lose 1 Reputation point every two weeks until you deal with the problem.

**9 of Swords:** Through a series of misadventures, you inadvertently insulted a skilled Swordsman. You are





scheduled for a duel to the death with him in exactly one month. It's not a lot of time to prepare for death, but hopefully it'll be enough. If you back out of the duel, your reputation will be ruined forever, and no one will take you seriously ever again (-10 Reputation Points).

10 of Swords: The last ship you served on left port rather suddenly while you were out on the town. They took all your money and possessions with them. You receive no starting money and no possessions, except those you have paid for with Hero Points (such as Syrneath Artifacts, *Dracheneisen*, etc.).

• Ace of Coins: Recently, in return for saving a merchant's life, he gave you a small interest in his shop. Your share of the profits works out to be worth 2 exploding dice of Guilders per month.

2 of Coins: You took out a loan from a powerful merchant, and (perhaps unwisely) invested it in a fairly risky venture. You receive a 2-point Debt Background for free. The profits from the venture are worth 3 exploding dice of Guilders per month, while the noble wants you to pay a minimum of 3 exploding dice of Guilders per month. If Chance works against you, you could be in a lot of trouble,

3 of Coins: You recently did some artisan work for the Church of the Prophets. Whether or not you agree with their religion, they certainly pay well. You receive the Artist Skill for free and 100G extra starting money.

4 of Coins: You've saved your money carefully for years. Unfortunately, a burglar recently stole your savings, leaving a distinctive calling card behind (decide with your GM what it was). Within a month, the trail will be too cold to follow. You receive a 1-point Hunting Background for free.

5 of Coins: When visiting a gambling hall recently, you did very poorly, while your friends all did very well. Take half of your starting money and split it up among the other Heroes in the group. They can give it back to you, if you can talk them into it.

6 of Coins: You recently gave money to a young woman who had obviously fallen on hard times: she turned out to be a Fate Witch. You start the game with two Blessing dice linked to Coins (see p. 222 in the *Players' Guide*).

7 of Coins: Your younger sister was stolen away by pirates as a little girl. After years of searching, you've finally stumbled upon the trail. You receive a 2-point Lost Relative Background for free.

8 of Coins: Thanks to a lucky break, your income is due to increase very soon. After one month, it will go up by 25%.

9 of Coins: An inheritance left to you by your great-aunt is going to be released to you in three months. It is worth 1.500G.

10 of Coins: You recently became reacquainted with your brother after years of absence. While he was gone, he became a member of the Explorer's Society. You receive a 3-point Connection Advantage for free.



### Future

These are events that are looming in your Hero's future. They may have been caused by choices he made in his past, or choices he has yet to make. These predictions are





all purposefully vague. Your GM works out the specifics of how they come into play.

**Ace of Swords:** You will soon meet the love of your life. (Romance 2)

**2 of Swords:** Soon, you will be forced to choose between your loyalties. (Obligation 2)

**3 of Swords:** An ancient ill caused by your family will soon settle upon your shoulders. (Cursed 2)

**4 of Swords:** You will glimpse perfection and spend your whole life seeking it once again. (Moment of Awe 2)

**5 of Swords:** You will form a strong rivalry with a friend. (Rivalry 2)

**6 of Swords:** You will travel widely and meet exotic people. (Pressed Into Service 2)

**7 of Swords:** A past life of yours will soon come to light. (True Identity 2)

**8 of Swords:** A vow you have taken will cause you great harm. (Vow 2)

**9 of Swords:** A dark figure from your past will soon return to face you again. (Defeated 2)

**10 of Swords:** You will soon be betrayed by someone you love. (Lost Love 2)

**Ace of Coins:** Your life will soon take an unexpected turn. (Wanted 2)

**2 of Coins:** A wealthy man will soon pay you a visit (Debt 2)

**3 of Coins:** The efforts of an old acquaintance will soon pay off. (Hunted 2)

**4 of Coins:** Caution is wise, paranoia foolish. (Fear 2)

**5 of Coins:** You can never go home again. (Exiled 2)

**6 of Coins:** Your charity will come back to haunt you. (Nemesis 2)

**7 of Coins:** Persistence will result in great rewards. (Treasure Map 2)

**8 of Coins:** Something you have created will slip from your grasp. (Hunting 2)

**9 of Coins:** You will find acceptance with strangers. (Mistaken Identity 2)

**10 of Coins:** You will soon be reunited with a lost loved one. (Lost Relative 2)





## Hero Options

### New Swordsman School: Rogers

**Country of Origin:** None (Any character may learn it for 25 HP).

**Description:** Rogers is a style of fighting passed down from pirate to pirate over the years. Captain Rogers is rumored to have invented the basic techniques, but it has been added to so much over the years that it no longer resembles the original style. Old tricks get retired and new ones come into their own as time passes.

Rogers relies heavily on the use of tricks to confuse and outmaneuver the enemy, but it also teaches swordsmen how to cope with the rolling of a ship during a fight. While the landlubbers slam up against the railing, the pirates move in for the kill.

The main weakness of the Rogers style is the peculiar balancing technique taught to students. While normally effective, a knowledgeable opponent can watch for a particular flexing of the legs, during which the student cannot dodge effectively. This flex is so ingrained in the student that it even occurs on land.

**Basic Curriculum:** Fencing, Dirty Fighting

**Swordsman Knacks:** Bind (Fencing), Corps-à-corps, Disarm (Fencing), Exploit Weakness (Rogers)

**Apprentice:** You can use your Balance Knack in place of any Parry Knack. In addition, you learn one Pirate Trick.

**Journeyman:** You add +5 to your TN to be hit while aboard ship unless surprised. You also learn one additional Pirate Trick.

**Master:** You gain a bonus of +2 to your Fear Rating (see the *Game Masters' Guide*, p. 175). If you don't already cause Fear, you get a Fear Rating of 2. You also learn two additional Pirate Tricks.

### Pirate Tricks

Those pirates who learn the Rogers fighting style employ all sorts of gimmicks and misdirection to outfox their opponents, and may choose their tricks from the list below:

**Against the Rails:** You receive a Free Raise when you use Corps-à-corps while your target is using Balance as his Defense Knack.

**Belay That!:** You roll and keep one extra die for damage when attacking your opponent with a belaying pin {your attack inflicts 2k2 damage, not including Brawn}. You receive no off-hand penalty when wielding a belaying pin.

**Dagger Ride:** By spending one Action, you can drive a knife into a nearby sail and ride it to the deck, thus avoiding all falling damage. While doing this, you can attack someone below you using Finesse + Balance. If your attack succeeds, you inflict one die of damage for every two Levels you descended, rounding down.

**Death from Above:** If you are at least one Level higher than your target, you may spend one Action to swing down and attack him using Panache + Swinging. If your attack succeeds, it inflicts 3k1 damage, and your opponent becomes prone. If your attack fails, you must roll Panache + Swinging against a TN of 15 or become prone yourself.

**Hold Your Liquor:** You receive the Able Drinker advantage for free. In addition, receive a Free Raise when







attacking with a beer mug {Improvised Weapon: Ok! damage}.

**Kick Up:** You may grab a sword off the ground and attack with it in the same Action, provided you are standing right next to it at the start of your Action.

**Over the Side!:** The Boarding rolls of your side in a Boarding Action are increased by 1. Up to three Rogers swordsmen may modify the Boarding roll of a single side.

**Quick Draw:** You may draw and fire a pistol in one Action.

**Sea Legs:** You may roll and keep an extra die when using your Balance Knack. This does not increase your TN to be hit when using it as your Defense Knack, but it does improve your Active Defense rolls.

**Sidearm:** You receive no off-hand penalty when using a pistol.

#### New Advantages

**Eagle Eyes (2):** The Hero can see further than most people. He receives two Free Raises for Perception Checks involving seeing something far away.

**Evil Reputation (13):** This Advantage is intended for Villain use only, although Heroes may take it with GM permission (and a darn good reason for why they have it). The Villain has built up such a body of myths around his name that mothers tell stories of him to frighten their children into good behavior. Once per Scene, he can use one of the following two abilities:

**No Quarter!:** The Villain may spend one Drama die to gain a Fear Rating of 2 until the end of the current Scene. If he already has a Fear Rating, activating this ability adds •1 to it.



*I've Heard of Him!:* The Villain may spend one Drama die to lower his Reputation by 20 until the end of the Scene. Any Reputation dice that he has already spent are still considered to have been spent.

**Pirate Trick (3):** The Hero has learned one, and only one, of the Pirate Tricks listed for practitioners of the Rogers fighting style. He may never learn another without learning the fighting style itself, in which case he loses this Advantage and it becomes his Apprentice level Pirate Trick. Heroes who have the Rogers style may not take this Advantage.

**Syrneth Artifact (Varies):** The Hero begins the game with a Syrneth artifact in his possession. This Advantage may be purchased multiple times. The player must choose one artifact from the following list:

*Golden Marble (2):* You found this marble in a field near your childhood home. You discovered, quite by accident, that if you tap it with your fingernail, carry it somewhere else, and then drop the marble on the ground, it begins to roll back towards the place where you tapped it. It only "remembers" the last place it was tapped, and the marble never "forgets" a location as long as it isn't tapped again. When rolling, it moves back along the path it has traveled since then at a slow walking rate. It is possible to pick the marble up while it is retracing its path, take a break, and then drop it and have it resume its journey later. If the marble reaches water, it stops at the edge, and if carried across and dropped again, will continue on its way.

*Green Bracelet (3):* You found this bracelet in a net while fishing one day. You put it on, and later, when you were gutting a fish, your knife slipped and cut open your hand. The bracelet flashed a pale green, and the wound closed of its own accord. Once per Scene, this bracelet heals its wearer of 10 Flesh Wounds. These are always the first wounds inflicted on the wearer during the Scene, and

they close instantly, so they are never counted when you make a Wound Check.

*Grinning Armband (2):* This wide golden armband has a small silvered animal skull inset in it. You bought it from a wizened old sailor, who claimed it once belonged to Captain Rogers himself. When you wear it and tense your arm rapidly two times, the skull's mouth opens and a bony hand, trailing a thin silver cable, fires out of it. The hand can extend up to fifty feet, and tightly grabs anything it hits. After the hand has a firm grasp, the cable retracts, swinging you over to where the hand is hooked. This operates like a grappling gun, except that it is simpler to use (TN 10 instead of 15), and you never need to worry about slipping and falling off the rope.

*Heavy Knife (2):* You bought this strange gray knife from a shady man in an alley. You found that cuts inflicted by it are deeper and take longer to heal. The knife inflicts 3 additional Flesh Wounds whenever it hits.

*Mechanical Hand (2):* This hand is composed of a strange reddish metal. When you found it, you had lost your own offhand in a fight. Curious, you pressed it against the stump, and it attached itself to you. It has proven to be no stronger or more dextrous than your normal hand, but it never gets tired. It can be damaged as easily as a real hand, but it repairs itself after a few days, and if it gets cut off, it can be reattached.

*Ornate Glove and Throwing Knife (5):* You received this pair of artifacts as a gift from an archaeologist friend of yours. The silver filigreed glove has a concealed dagger sheath which contains a bluish knife, balanced for throwing. Whenever you pull your gloved hand back as though you were about to throw a knife, the dagger appears in your hand. You can only throw the dagger once per Phase; otherwise it returns to your hand before hitting its target. In addition, the knife must be left in its





sheath at least two hours every day, or it loses its returning property until being recharged in that manner. The glove itself seems to draw its energy from being worn. You must wear it at least ten hours a day, or the dagger stops returning to the glove until it has been worn for ten consecutive hours.

*Reddish Cutlass (2):* This cutlass washed up on the beach one day. Noting its unusual design, you rightly guessed (that it was a Syrneath artifact and kept it. The blade seems to be able to duplicate an earlier move used against an opponent to similar effect. Once per Scene, after you hit and deal damage to an enemy with this cutlass, you may use your next Action (once it's valid) and spend a Drama die to activate the cutlass<sup>1</sup> power. The cutlass imitates the earlier attack exactly, including the Attack Roll and Damage Roll (assuming that Attack Roll hits again).

*Shining Belt (1):* When clasped around your waist, this segmented belt begins to glow with a pale white light that illuminates twenty feet in all directions, and leaves your hands free. Once the belt has been fastened, only the wearer can remove it. The belt stops shining when exposed to direct sunlight or unclasped.

*Silvery Box (3):* When you first picked up this box, it opened at your touch. Since then, you have been the only person able to open it. The box has proven impervious to all ordinary attempts to force it open or destroy it, though perhaps another Syrneath artifact could accomplish the task. The box's inner cavity measures •Tx2"xl", so you only keep your most prized possessions in it

*Tarnished Mug and Tap (2):* You purchased these items from a traveling merchant who didn't realize what he had. The tap is the sort used for tapping a keg of beer. The mug is a tall, narrow vessel, with a handle much too thick for human hands to hold properly. Both it and the tap

seem impervious to ordinary damage. When the tap is in place on a barrel or keg, and opened, nothing comes out. However, if someone then attempts to drink from the mug, liquid from the tapped container appears in the mug. The liquid only flows if someone drinks from the mug; it cannot be spilled out of the mug. The tap only works if it has been inserted in a container. Simply throwing it into a freshwater lake would not guarantee endless drinking water.

## New

## Backgrounds

### Exiled

You used to have a place you called home. Something happened, and you were forbidden to return upon pain of death. You must pick a nation when you take this Background - if you're ever caught there by someone who recognizes and doesn't like you, you'll be executed. The number of points you put into this Background determine how well known your Hero's offense is, and how hard it will be to get the sentence lifted.

### Lost Relative

Years ago, one of your close relatives disappeared or was kidnapped. Up until then, you had a very close relationship with them, and the event was so traumatic that you've dedicated your life to finding them once again. The number of points you put in this Background determine how hard it will be to find your lost relative, and how strongly they will react (either positively or negatively) to you when you finally succeed.

### Moment of Awe

Once, you saw something so beautiful - so moving - that you've spent your life trying to go back and see it again. Perhaps it was the 7th Sea, a beautiful woman on an uncharted island, or a dark and handsome stranger who



breezed through your life one evening. Maybe it was even a golden city sparkling in the distance. Whatever it was, the everyday world has held less allure for you ever since. The number of points you put in this Background determines how hard it will be to recreate that moment of awe, and how much an impact (either positive or negative) the event will have on your life when you finally succeed.

### **Pressed into Service**

You've been carried off by pirates. Right now, you're chained to an oar below decks, or serving the Captain unwillingly and waiting for your chance to mutiny or jump ship. In a worst case scenario, you could even be serving aboard the *Crimson Roger*. This Background can only be taken with GM permission. The number of points you put in this Background determines how hard it will be for you to escape or mutiny, and how dangerous the attempt will be.

### **Treasure Map**

It doesn't matter where you got the map - perhaps you bought it from an old fortune teller, or it was handed down to you from your father — but it definitely leads to something. Several Heroes could all take this Background and have pieces of the same map, with GM permission. If you want, you can pay one fewer point for this Background than you normally would in order for a Villain to have part of the map. The number of points you put in this Background determine how dangerous the map will be to follow, and how big a reward awaits you at its end.

### **Wanted**

There is a price on your head. Bounty hunters, lawmen and Heroes alike are all on the lookout for your face — which is plastered up in every city. The number of points you put into this Background determines how much the

authorities are willing to pay for your head: 1,000 Guilders per Hero Point you invest here.

## ***New Rules for Languages***

### **Language Acquaintance**

A Hero who only wants to learn the basics of a language can become acquainted with it for 2 HP less than normal (minimum cost of 1 HP). The Linguist Advantage is cumulative with this discount. Heroes acquainted with a language understand only the basic concepts of the language, such as common verbs, nouns, etc. If there is any doubt as to whether the Hero could understand what's being said, roll a die. On an 8 or less, he makes out what's being said. On a 9 or 0, he doesn't understand a word. To signify that the Hero is only acquainted with the language, put an (ACQ) next to it on your Hero Sheet.

### **Pidgin**

When two languages are in long-term contact with one another, such as at major ports, a pidgin — an odd mixture of the two languages — often results. A Hero can purchase a pidgin by selecting the two languages to be mixed, and paying 3 HP less for each of them (minimum of 1 HP for both languages together.) A Hero who knows a pidgin understands only the simplest concepts of the two languages. If there is any doubt as to whether the Hero could understand what's being said, roll a die. On an 5 or less, he makes out what's being said. On anything higher, he doesn't understand a word. To signify that the Hero only understands a pidgin of the languages, put a (PD) next to the two languages on your Hero Sheet.



## New Skills

### Captain

Captains are similar to Commanders, except for one very important difference. Instead of learning how to fire artillery, which is useless aboard ship, they learn the art of bribery. Armed with that Knack, they're always ready to handle an unethical harbormaster or a corrupt tariff collector.

### Basic Knacks

*Strategy:* Strategy lets you formulate battle plans and movements on a large scale. You know when to have your ship turn towards the enemy, and what waters are easiest to defend. This Knack is used (mostly) with the mass-combat rules, which your GM has in his Guide.

*Tactics:* Tactics lets you command a group of men in battle, following the orders of your superior (whom you hope has the Strategy Knack). You can get the men to change formation, inspire them to charge the enemy or lead them through firing drills. This Knack is used (mostly) with the mass-combat rules, which your GM has in his Guide.

### Advanced Knacks

*Ambush:* You have learned to spot likely places for an ambush to occur and to watch for signs that people have concealed themselves there. Naturally, this Knack cuts both ways, allowing you to set up an ambush of your own. Rules for the use of this Knack are located in the "Drama" section of the *Players' Guide* (p. 1\*Xi).

*Bribery:* Money, applied properly, can grease the wheels of bureaucracy, open doors, or cause guards to shift their loyalties. You know where, when, and how much to apply.

*Cartography:* You are capable of making reasonably accurate maps using a set of cartographer's tools. Reliable maps can fetch a high price if sold to the right buyer. Success with this Knack results in legible, accurate maps. Failure might send the ship using them hurtling mercilessly into the Seventh Sea...

*Diplomacy:* The art of diplomacy is the art of peace; words have prevented more wars than guns ever caused. Your soothing reassurances can calm any but the most enraged duelist, and keep your blood where it belongs - in your veins.

*Gunnery:* The pitch and roll of a ship takes a lot of getting used to, especially when trying to fire a cannon on board. Sailors using this Knack have worked out the tricks and timing involved. When a cannon fires from on board a ship, the crew commander's Gunnery Knack is used for the Attack Roll.

*Imitation:* You can inspire men to victory. They listen to your words before and during the battle, and they know that they cannot be defeated. They know that you will make the right decisions, and that they won't lay down their lives for nothing. This Knack is used (mostly) with the mass-combat rules, which your GM has in his Guide.

*Leadership:* Once you've used the Incitation Knack to make the men believe in you, this Knack will help you live up to their expectations. You can determine which tasks each man is best capable of, and give them advice on how better to do them without getting in the way. This Knack is used (mostly) with the mass-combat rules, which your GM has in his Guide.

*Logistics:* Wars often come down to who has the best fed and most rested troops. The Logistics Knack lets you determine how much supplies will be consumed, and how best to get them where they're needed. This Knack







is used (mostly) with the mass-combat rules, which your GM has in his Guide.

### **Whaler**

On Theah, whalers have a much more difficult time plying their trade. The whales are guarded by the fearsome leviathans, who attack not only anyone they sense harming a whale, but any ship that smells of whale's blood. Whalers are usually fearsomely strong, completely unafraid of anything, and expert swimmers.

### **Basic Knacks**

*Balance:* When the ship tosses in stormy seas and the Captain tells you to climb the rigging and secure a mast, the Balance Knack will save your life. Quite simply, it's the Knack of not falling down, even under adverse conditions. This is used as the Defense Knack for those fighting aboard a ship at sea, or in situations where the footing is uncertain. The GM will give you the TNs for performing certain actions on board a sailing vessel, or with other circumstances.

*Knotwork* With this Knack you can tie all the essential knots a sailor needs to know, and can tell the difference between a sheepshank and a two-half-hitches knot.

*Throw (Harpoon):* When you throw (or attack with) this weapon, you must use this Knack. The range on a Harpoon is 5, plus two times your Brawn.

### **Advanced Knacks**

*Leaping:* You can jump higher and farther than most people. This often comes in handy when exploring dusty tombs or fleeing across rooftops. In addition, you use this Knack as your Defense Knack while leaping.

*Poison:* Whalers out on the hunt use poison-tipped harpoons to fend off leviathans. This Knack lets you know what poison to use and how much to administer, as

well as how to handle it safely. Your GM has rules for using this Knack in the GMs\* Guide.

*Sea Lore:* You know the legends and stories that sailors tell among themselves. If a particular island is reputed to be haunted, you might know the tale connected to it.

*Swimming:* Provided you aren't too heavily weighed down, you do a nice job of not sinking (stormy seas and sharks notwithstanding). Your GM has rules for swimming (and drowning) in his Guide.

*Weather:* Whether it's because your corns start to hurt, your joints begin to ache, or you've learned to identify the signs, you know when a storm is coming, and you can quickly get an idea just how bad the storm is going to be. Rules for weather can be found in the GMs<sup>1</sup> Guide.

## ***Changes to Skills***

### **Merchant**

#### **Additional Basic Knacks**

*Carpenter:* This Knack is useful when constructing wooden furniture and other structures. The Shipwright Knack must be used when building or modifying ships.

*Shipwright:* This Knack is used to build and modify ships,

## ***New Items***

### **Cannons**

One of the deadliest weapons in the naval arsenal is the cannon. In real life, few people who've been hit with a cannonball (or even had one whiz too close to them) have





lived to tell the tale. In *7th Sea*, we wanted to keep the fear attached to cannons, without making them a "one shot, one kill" weapon. We compromised: a tough Hero might survive a cannon shot, in which case you can assume that it was a glancing blow. On the other hand, a good damage roll will probably result in death.

Cannons deal damage according to their size (see the chart below). A Hero hit by a cannon suffers one Dramatic Wound, plus one more for every 5 by which he fails his Wound Check, rounded down. Thus, a Hero who fails his roll by 25 (not unreasonable, for some of the larger cannon) suffers 6 Dramatic Wounds.

On the good side, it's hard to aim a cannon at a person, and they take a while to load, so Heroes aren't likely to be hit very often by aimed cannon fire.

On the bad side, up to three people can contribute Actions towards loading a cannon, making the process go faster. Worst of all, Heroes in a naval battle are likely to take a certain amount of collateral damage from cannon fire, if only from the splinters that are hurled off of shattering timbers by speeding cannonballs. Historically, more men died because of splinters than being hit by cannonballs. Details on this can be found in *Advanced Naval Battles* (p. 105).

### Cutlass

Cutlasses are Fencing Weapons (2k2). They are weighted like meat cleavers to cut easily into flesh and bone, but at the expense of accuracy. Therefore, a Hero's Attack Roll is at a penalty of one unkept die, while his Damage Roll is at a bonus of one unkept die when using a cutlass.

### Wrapping guns

Grappling guns are normally used to fire a rope across to another ship for boarding purposes. The two ships must be fairly close for the attempt to be successful, and the Hero must make a Finesse + Attack (Firearms) roll. The TN is 5 + any range modifiers. If successful, the rope is hooked in place, and can be used to swing across on. If the roll is a failure, the hook comes loose as soon as the Hero tugs on it.

Damage: 1k1      Range: 40'      Short range: -10 to hit  
Long range: -15 to hit      Reload: 25 Actions

### Grenades

Here's an astonishingly nasty little device. Grenades are basically a wrought iron shell filled with gunpowder, and a piece of cannon fuse to light them with. When the fuse is lit, it burns down to the gunpowder, which explodes, shattering the iron shell into pieces of shrapnel.

Cannons					
Size	Damage	Range	Short Range	Long Range	Reload
Boarding	6k5	200'	+15	+25	30 Actions
6 pounder	7k6	225'	+20	+30	40 Actions
10 pounder	8k7	250'	+20	+30	40 Actions
12 pounder	9k8	275'	+20	+30	40 Actions

This translates into a Rank 4 explosion (see the GMs' Guide, p. 174) and the shrapnel causes Heroes caught by the blast to take one Dramatic Wound, plus one more for every 5 by which they failed their Wound Check. It takes one



Action to light the fuse, and another one to throw the grenade.

Unfortunately, quality control on cannon fuse is rather poor. Some fuses take a long time to burn, and some burn almost instantly. When the Hero lights the fuse of a grenade, have him roll a die. The number showing is the number of Phases before the grenade goes off, and if it's showing a 0, the grenade goes off this Phase. Grenades always go off in a Phase before anything else happens, and a person holding or lying on a grenade gets no chance to avoid the explosion. Feel free to wreak havoc with these new toys, but be careful.

### Harpoon

Whaling is a primitive operation on Theah, thanks to the extreme danger surrounding the endeavor. Typically, whalers attempt to kill any leviathans in the area with cannon volleys and envenomed harpoons, not caring whether or not the animal's body is destroyed. Then they use thrown harpoons to harvest the less dangerous beasts. Harpoons are a 3k2 weapon normally, but against large creatures (such as whales or leviathans) whose flesh they can dig deeply into, they are considered a 3k3 weapon, like other thrown weapons, their range is  $5 + (2 \times \text{Brawn})$ .

## New Combat Rules

### Fighting in Shallow Water

When fighting in shallow water, Heroes use Balance as their Defense Knack. When they attempt to use Active Defense, they roll Brawn + Balance instead of Wits, since moving through water is more dependent upon strength than agility.

### Pirate Duels

The traditional manner of settling heated arguments between pirates is a knife fight in which the left hands of the two duelists are tied together with two feet of rope. Just like ordinary duels, this can be to the death or only to first blood. The following rules also apply:

- 1.) Each duelist's Defense Knack is reduced by 1 because of the rope's constraint.
- 2.) Either duelist can spend one Action to try and yank his opponent off his feet. He makes a Contested Roll of his Brawn + Balance versus his opponent's Finesse + Balance. If the duelist succeeds, his opponent becomes prone.
- 3.) Either duelist can spend one Action to try and reel in the slack in the rope and wrap it around his hand. He makes a Contested Roll of his Brawn + Lifting versus his opponent's Brawn + Lifting. If the duelist succeeds, each duelist's Defense Knack is reduced by an additional 1 for the remainder of the duel, or until he uses one Action to let out the slack.
- 4.) Either duelist can cut the rope (no roll needed), but this indicates that they're throwing in the towel and forfeiting the duel. It also brands them a coward (-3 Reputation Points).

## Other New Rules

### Inebriation Rules

Heroes who partake of alcohol must make a Brawn Test (adding in any dice they get from the Large Advantage) against a TN of  $10 \times$  the number of drinks they've had so far this Scene. A drink is defined as a mug of beer or grog, a glass of wine, or a shot of liquor. Heroes

## Drinking Chart

### Failures      Penalty

- |    |  |
|----|--|
| 1  | Slur: Slight speech impediment.  |
| 2  | Listing to Port: -1 unkept die to all rolls.   |
| 3  | Three Sheets to the Wind: -2 unkept dice to all rolls. Next Scene, this penalty drops to -1 unkept die,  |
| 4+ | Out Cold: Knocked Out until the end of the Scene or until he spends a Drama die. If he wakes up, he's at -3 unkept dice to all rolls, which goes down by 1 every Scene until it reaches 0. |

accumulate failures as they drink; consult the chart below for the penalties they suffer from inebriation. These Failures disappear at the end of the current Scene, as do any penalties that do not explicitly linger further. Able drinkers ignore this rule.

### Taking Advantages Away From Heroes

Certain Advantages (Ship, Inheritance, Synchronicity Artifact, etc.) lend themselves to being stolen and/or destroyed by GMs. As most players will realize, this devalues these Advantages unless the GM can be trusted not to deprive the Hero of his trusty sword every other Story. First, we'll take a look at the argument from both sides, and then there will be some suggested guidelines for taking Advantages away from Heroes.

#### The GM

- "If I let him use that Advantage, he's too powerful."
- "It's a good challenge if he loses it temporarily."
- "He was stupid. He deserved to lose that Advantage."

#### The Player

- "I paid a lot of points for that. I could've had more Skills or Traits instead, and they can't be stolen."
- "My GM picks on me too much. I've never gotten to use that Advantage,"
- Just once, I'd like an ability I paid for to work without a hitch."

The GM's arguments are correct, to a point. However, if a GM feels that a certain Advantage is too powerful, it should be banned from the game and the affected players should be allowed to spend those points in other ways. In addition, temporarily losing an Advantage can be fun once in awhile, but it shouldn't be happening too often. As for stupidity as an excuse, that's only a valid argument if other Heroes also suffer permanent losses of skills or other abilities when they act stupidly. Otherwise, the players simply quit taking any Advantages that can be physically destroyed or stolen. They quickly realize that they are throwing points away, and a lot of the flavor of *7th Sea* is lost

If the GM decides to deprive a Hero of an Advantage, we suggest that he spend a number of Drama dice equal to the Hero points invested in the Advantage. He may borrow these against future Drama dice, but may not spend or borrow additional Drama dice until the debt is completely paid off. Spending these dice cancels the Advantage until the end of the current Story. The GM may return the Advantage before then, but after that, he must return the Advantage, pay the cost to cancel it once again, or give the Hero replacement Advantages of equal or greater worth. This may make players more comfortable taking Advantages that aren't inherent to their Hero.



## Advanced Sailing Rules

The *Game Masters' Guide* (p. 140) mentioned that this book would contain Advanced Sailing rules. These expand upon the earlier Sailing rules, which you will need to reference when using the Advanced rules.

### Sailing Through Storms

The rules for sailing a ship through a storm can be found on p. 202 of the *GMs' Guide*. The ship's Pilot rolls the ship's Panache + his Piloting with a TN of the damage the ship has suffered from the weather. If he succeeds, the ship takes no damage; if not, it loses one die of the pilot's choice, plus one additional die for every 5 the pilot failed his roll by.

### The Ships Draft

A ship's Draft is equal to its Resolve. A ship cannot sail in water shallower than its Draft - it runs aground. When this happens, the ship suffers a number of Critical Hits equal to its Draft minus the Draft of the area it has run aground in.

### Sailing Through Reefs

Reefs and sandbars present hazards to an unwary ship. When one appears, have the ship's Lookout make a Perception Check (TN 20) to see if the Lookout spots it in time. If not, the ship's Pilot gets a Perception Check {TN 30} to spot it at the last minute. If both rolls fail, the ship runs aground (as above). If either roll succeeds, the Pilot must make a roll of the ship's Wits + his Piloting with a TN set by the GM (but usually ranging from 20-30). If he fails, the ship runs aground.

### The Ships Cargo and Provisions

A ship's Cargo is equal to its Resolve. It cannot carry more units of cargo than that.

In order to keep the crew well-fed, a ship must devote some of its Cargo space to provisions. One Cargo will keep six Crew fed for one month (or two Crew fed for three months, etc), barring vermin or provisions going bad. If there are no provisions aboard ship, the Crew mutinies and heads straight for the nearest land, if they can, and the Captain hasn't already made the order. If they cannot replenish their supplies, one Crew dies each week (which, as you can see in the Advanced Naval Battles rules, reduces the ship's chances of survival in a boarding action).

### Spoilage (Optional)

For Game Masters who want a little more detail (and bookkeeping) for their provisions, we suggest this system.

Everything in a ship's hold has a Spoilage TN. At the end of every week at sea, roll one die. If the die rolls equal to or higher than the Spoilage TN, it's gone bad. Each week adds an additional die to the roll, so after two weeks at sea, the GM rolls two dice; at the end of three weeks, the GM rolls three dice, etc.

#### Spoilage Target Numbers

Biscuit . . . . .	TN 20
Water. . . . .	TN 20
Vegetables, Fresh . . . . .	TN 5
Vegetables, Pickled . . . . .	TN 60
Vegetables, Dried . . . . .	TN 30
Meat, Salted . . . . .	TN 50
Meat, Fresh . . . . .	TN 5
Fish, Fresh . . . . .	TN 5
Fish, Salted . . . . .	TN 25
Fish, Smoked . . . . .	TN 25
Alcohol . . . . .	TN 40







Whenever the ship stops for new supplies, the GM begins rolling one die again. Game Masters may want to keep track of individual provisions ("You got new pickles in Freiburg, but you didn't get new salted pork or fresh water\*<sup>1</sup>) if they feel particularly nasty.

### "Random" Encounters

The concept of a random encounter can be disruptive to the pacing of an adventure game. Instead, in *7th Sea*, the GM can spend his Drama dice on the Encounter Chart to produce an encounter he wasn't planning. In this way, the game balance of the adventure is preserved, and the GM still has the ultimate say over the pacing of the scenario.



## Advanced Naval Battles

The *GMs' Guide* has Naval Battle rules on pp. 180-182. These expand upon the earlier Naval Battles rules, and like the Advanced Sailing rules, you can't use them by themselves.

### Movement

To clarify the original movement rules: when a ship spends Action dice to turn, one of them must be a valid Action for this Phase, and all together, the Phases showing on the spent dice must equal or exceed the ship's Resolve.

Example: The *Morning Glory* is a galleon with a Resolve of 6 and a Panache of 3. Her Action dice this Round show 2, 5, and 7. She cannot turn in Phase 1 unless she uses an Interrupt Action to do so. In addition, she cannot turn in Phases 2-6 without spending at least 2 dice (2 and 5, or 2 and 7). Once Phase 7 arrives, however, she may turn by spending only the 7.

### ^ E n c o u n t e r C h a r t

Name	Cost	Details
Sirens	1	6 sirens {p. 161, <i>Game Masters' Guide</i> }
Uncharted Island	1	The ship stumbles across an island that's not on any map.
Church Ship	2	Use the 10 point Explorer's Brigantine (hauling a holy relic).
Merchant Ship	2	10 point Merchant Snow.
Crescent Galley	3	Use the 15 point Pirate Schooner (with a Brawn of 4 and the Oars modification).
Pirates	3	15 point Pirate Schooner.
Navy Ship	4	20 point Naval Man o' War.
7th Sea	4	The ship stumbles onto the 7th Sea.
Doldrums	5	The ship is becalmed.
Provisions go bad	5	1 Cargo of Provisions goes bad.
Leviathan	6	1 leviathan (p. 159, <i>GMs' book</i> ).
Mutiny	6	The crew turns against the Captain.



## Boarding Actions

Follow this sequence for boarding actions.

- 1) A Hero can only board a ship in an adjacent hex.
- 2) A player must spend an Action Die to initiate a boarding action.
- 3) Subtract the Crew of the boarded ship from the Crew of the boarding ship. Roll a non-exploding die and add the roll to the sum; then consult the Boarding Chart.
- 4) Repeat Steps 1—3.

Ships can continue spending Actions to board. Recalculate the modifier to the chart and roll again, once more applying the result, until one side or the other reaches a Crew of 0. Of course, one side may wish to surrender before then, in which case the battle ends immediately.

Alternately, GMs may wish to run the boarding action more like a normal battle; in this case, consider each Crew to be a Threat 2 Brute Squad and set up the battle normally.



## Boarding Chart

Result	Attacker Losses	Defender Losses
9	All	0
7 - 8	4	0
5 - 6	4	1
3 - 4	4	2
1 - 2	3	0
0	3	1
1 - 2	2	0
3 - 4	2	1
5 - 6	1	1
7 - 8	1	2
9 - 10	0	2
11	1	3
12 - 13	0	3
14 - 15	2	4
16 - 17	1	4
18 - 19	0	4
20	0	All

## Inertia

Ships can't turn on a dime - they're big, lumbering brutes. Therefore, every ship must move forward a number of hexes equal to its Resolve at the start of Phase 1 every Round (before any Actions are resolved). In addition, a ship can only turn a number of times per Round equal to its Wits.

## Collisions and Ramming

When a ship rams another ship, take note of the ramming ship's Resolve and the number of hexes it moved during the Action in which it rammed. Add these two numbers together, and then deal a number of Critical Hits equal to the total to both ships. For instance, if a Resolve 3 ship



moves 4 hexes before hitting another ship, both ships take 7 Critical Hits.

Should two ships drift into each other due to the Inertia rule, above, it isn't considered a ram. They may have scraped against each other, or one may have rear-ended the other. In this case, both ships take a number of Critical Hits equal to the higher of their two Resolves.

### Incidental Damage to Heroes

Whenever a ship suffers a Critical Hit to its Crew Skill (Finesse) or Hull (Resolve), all Heroes on board the ship must roll Panache + Balance against a TN of 15 or suffer a single 2k2 hit from splinters, being thrown about, etc.

### Ship Sinking Chart

1: Ship hits bottom. Sits on shallow area without completely submerging.

2: Sinks gently. Takes 5k5 Rounds to submerge.

3-4: lists to port. Takes 3k3 Rounds to submerge, port goes under in half that.

5-6: lists to Starboard. Takes 3k3 Rounds to submerge, Starboard goes under in half that.

7-8: Ship breaks up: pieces submerge in 2k2 Rounds.

9: The ship goes straight down and sinks in 1k1 Phases.

0: Ship goes down immediately, sucking down everything within fifty feet. Make a Brawn + Swimming Test against a TN of 25 to escape. Anyone who fails is dragged under and drowns.

### Special Ammo

There are two distinct types of special cannon ammunition: grapeshot and chainshot. Canister shot is similar to grapeshot in intent, so it works the same way.

**Grapeshot:** Grapeshot (or canister shot) inflicts two fewer Kept dice of damage, but if any Critical Hits are inflicted by Grapeshot, the first die lost must be **from** Crew Skill (Finesse).

**Chainshot:** Chainshot inflicts two fewer Kept dice of damage, but if any Critical Hits are inflicted by Chainshot, the first die lost must be from Sails (Panache).

### Sinking Ships

To reiterate from p. 182 of the *Game Masters' Guide*, when a ship takes twice as many Critical Hits as it has Hull/Resolve, it begins to sink. The GM can either subtract the ship's Resolve from 20 and use the total as the number of Rounds it takes for the ship to go down, or he can roll on the chart below.

### Capsizing a Ship

By spending three drama dice during a storm or other dangerous condition, the GM can force the pilot of a ship to make a capsizing check. The pilot rolls die ship's Draft + his Piloting Knack against a TN of 15. If he fails, the ship overturns, spilling everyone overboard. If not, everything's just fine. The Heroes, if they are aboard the ship, can also opt to cancel the capsizing check entirely by spending three drama dice among them.

### Scuttling a Ship

When a Hero uses a weapon smaller than a cannon to attack a ship, it inflicts two fewer Kept dice of damage. Axes and other handheld weapons designed to cut wood inflict one fewer Kept die of damage.







The background of the cover is a detailed, faded map. It features a grid of latitude and longitude lines. Two prominent compass roses are visible: one in the upper right quadrant and another in the lower left quadrant. The map also shows various geographical features like coastlines and islands, though they are less distinct than the grid lines.

# *Sailor Sourcebook*





## A Different Kind of Honor...

A pirate campaign can be a little tricky. After all, what's there for a pirate to do on shore?

Plenty.

This essay talks about pirates and privateers and how to use them in a *7th Sea* campaign. Pirates don't turn to salt as soon as they step on dry land. The *most* exciting part of a pirate game can, in fact, take place miles away from a ship. First, we'll talk about the pirate campaign from the player's point of view, then we'll take a look at the same thing from the GM's. Before we begin, however, let's pause for a moment and talk about pirates.

### History and Myth

Way back in the day, when pirates still sailed the seas, they were very different from the image most of us hold in our heads. Pirates seldom engaged in real battles when they captured ships. Usually, the captain would raise the Jolly Roger and the merchantman across the waves surrendered rather than put up a fight.

Images of pirates and navies fighting broadside to broadside are mostly fiction as well. Treatment on a navy ship was *so* bad, when a pirate came into sight, the navies usually mutinied against the officers, turned their ship over to the pirates and asked to join up.

All the romantic notions of snatching gold and silver from a treasure ship are mostly... well, romantic notions. Pirates more commonly found exotic spices, tobacco and cotton aboard their prey than silver and gold.

The pirates who live in our dreams and the pirates who lived in our past are two very different creatures. Obviously, Game Masters and players will want to mix history and myth until they find a combination that works perfectly for their individual tastes. The mixture discussed here is about 20% history and 80% myth.

## Players

If you're playing in a pirate campaign, keep a few things in mind. First off, you're in a crew, which means you have to figure out your position and duties on the ship. You can't do everything, but you can be the best at what you do. Pick a Hero concept that complements the other players' Heroes.

Remember your landlubber cousins and connections. You weren't born at sea; you did *something* before you became a sailor. Figure out what that was and put a few points toward those Skills.

The next time you visit [www.7thsea.com](http://www.7thsea.com), take a moment to look over the **Ship** Advantage. If all of you purchase a ship together, you can share the burden instead of forcing a single player to cough up all the points.

Finally, don't forget that you are a Hero. Pirates who pillage and burn and loot and murder are *Villains*. Berek is protecting Avalon, Allende is fighting for his men's freedom, and Yngvild is avenging Vestenmannavnjar. These captains are Heroes. They don't torture prisoners and they don't murder entire townships.

Remember, just because you're playing a pirate doesn't mean you get to be a bastard. Villains do that well enough without your help.



## What's To Do?

So, you're a pirate, you've commissioned out on a ship for the south seas and... what do you do now? Pirates can make a lot of money if they're smart or clever or lucky — or all of the above — and here's a few paths they can follow to do it.

### *Capturing Ships*

The classic way for a pirate to make money is to raid merchant ships, treasure fleets and other ships. This involves a great deal of violence and is *extremely* dangerous. Most ships merchant ships don't carry cannons, but a great deal of marines. After all, in order

for the pirate to get what he's after, he's got to come aboard. If he sinks the merchantman, he gets no profit.

However, many treasure ships — carrying cargo valuable to a nation — are escorted by navy ships, well equipped and ready to handle any wayward pirate who stumbles in their way. Pirates tend to avoid treasure ships for that very reason. It's much easier to intimidate a merchant ship than a war ship.

### *Smuggling*

Another profitable pastime for pirates is smuggling. Merchants are always looking for ways to increase their income, and one way to do it is avoiding taxes and tariffs. Theah's pirates also smuggle a great deal of Synchron





artifacts to private collectors. Strangely enough, the Explorers' Society has also turned to pirates to smuggle items... especially in Vodacce waters.

### ***Ransom***

One highly questionable method of making money is by kidnapping wealthy individuals and ransoming them back to their families. Naturally, this would fall under Villainous activity under most circumstances, but there could be instances where such an act could be used for good.

For example, a young man or woman is married against their will to a completely unsavory, Villainous partner. The victim in question has some sort of romantic entanglement with a pirate captain who then kidnaps the Villain forthwith. What's the ransom? you ask. Why, it's an annulment of the marriage, of course.

### ***Raid Ruins***

Pirates carry a lot of different kinds of plunder in the hold, but the most dangerous may be Syrneth artifacts. Gold and silver don't explode when you expose them to sunlight. Guilders don't suddenly come to life under the full moon and start eating your crew's eyes out. And as nasty as a Fate Witch hostage may be, she can't burn your entire ship to a cinder if you drop her.

Well... maybe she can, but the fact remains that raiding Syrneth ruins is dangerous, but shipping the artifacts you find back to mainland Theah can prove to be even more so.

### ***Privateer***

The difference between a pirate and a privateer is a slim one. Privateers have "official sanction" from a higher power to prow! the seas. Always on the lookout for "fair salvage", they bring what they capture back to their patron and keep a share for themselves.



The advantage of being a privateer is that you aren't alone on the sea; you always have a friend. The disadvantage is that you don't get to keep 100% of your captured plunder. In fact, usually, you only get to keep a very small portion.

## Game Master

It's easy to think of a pirate campaign in terms of a bunch of guys sailing on a ship. You've got to start thinking *outside the ship*. Here's a few suggestions for campaign hooks and twists to get you going.

### Profit

*"Piracy: Commerce without its folly-swaddles, just as God made it"*

- Ambrose Bierce, The Devil's Dictionary

"Heroes out to make a dishonest buck" describes the classic pirate campaign. These fellows are out to take from the rich and give to the poor: namely, themselves. There are more than a few ways to hook your Heroes, then twist their expectations to your advantage.

First, give them part of a treasure map. Let them know (through an NPC) that there are three more pieces... and let them know who has them.

Suddenly, instead of just sailing around looking for a treasure ship to loot, the Heroes have to sail to three different locations and find out exactly where those pieces are. Sure they know *who* has them, but *where* they're hidden is another problem.

Once they've got all four pieces together, they have to figure the whole thing out. After all, what self-respecting GM would give his Heroes a map that tells them *exactly*

where the treasure is without a riddle or two? With all the pieces together, the Heroes discover the map is written in ancient Thean (very different from the scholarly Thean the learned folks speak today), which means they have to get a Church scholar to translate it. That's another evening's worth of adventure that doesn't take place on board.

Finally, they've got all four pieces, they've got it translated, and they've figured out the riddle. Now all they have to do is get to where the treasure is and dig it up, right?

Wrong.

The treasure is in a Surneth ruin, surrounded by beaus'es, death traps and... hey! What are *those* guys doing here? Well, it turns out there were *two* copies of the map, and a rival pirate ship has the second copy. Now it's a race to the center of the ruin to get the treasure.

That's only *one* way to deal with greedy Heroes, and that alone accounts for nine or ten nights of adventure.

### Duty

Many of the pirate factions are dedicated to serving a nation (Sea Dogs, Yngvild's Raiders) or an idea (Brotherhood of the Coast). Duty is a powerful motivation for Heroes, a motivation you should not underestimate. Here are a few campaign ideas to throw at your duty-driven Heroes.

A group of fate witches come to the docks, looking for a crew. They tell the captain that they need to go to a distant island *right away*. They offer the captain a great deal of money for the effort. Over the course of the voyage, the captain learns from one of the witches that they've foreseen a great earthquake in Vodacce's not-too-





distant future and that only a Syrneth artifact can save the island chains.

The Heroes learn of a plot to capture a fellow pirate captain. They can thwart the plot, or aid it. What do they do? It all depends on the past relations between them and the pirate. It also depends on their past relations with whoever is initiating the plan. This is really a question of loyalty. Whom do the Heroes feel more loyalty to?

The Heroes are approached by a young man or woman, obviously a noble in disguise. The noble tells the sad story of kidnapping and ransom. Can the Heroes do what no-one else can?

#### Hot Potato

A "hot potato" story involves something the Heroes have that everyone else wants. Let's take a peek at a few ways to handle this one.

The Heroes capture a treasure ship and find a small copper box. They can't open it and there's no obvious lock. Soon enough, they see the sails of the *Crimson Roger* over the waves. Reis wants the box. They don't know why and he ain't talkin', but he's going to get it... by hook or by crook.





The Heroes pick up a few passengers who want to go from Vodacce to Avalon... no questions asked. Of course, they're wanted by *someone* in Vodacce. Soon enough, Vodacce ships start showing up, all armed to the teeth with marines, guns, cannons, knives and fate witches.

How about the Heroes taking a hostage who turns out to be a Montaigne heir running away from his heritage? The boy is worth thousands but he won't go home. In fact, he uses *Porte* to transport himself somewhere else. Now the Heroes know him, can recognize him and know he's worth a few thousand Guilders if they send him home. All they have to do is find him.

## Politics

Finally, there's politics. Privateers usually have a patron, and having a bunch of ratty, scurvy-ridden scum dealing with the Queen of Avalon is not very smart politics. The Heroes need a spokesman and it's a cop-out to make him or her an NPC.

Once they've got a sponsor, the Heroes will find themselves doing much more than just raiding enemy shipping lanes. They'll be transporting dignitaries, carrying secret messages, rescuing hostages, looking for new lands and resources, sabotaging other ships and looting ruins in their spare time. It's a busy life, this privateering business. Anything to keep the crown's hands clean.

## Conclusion

Don't get caught in the trap of thinking that a pirate game is all sailing, drinking and wenching (although those last two bits are *very* important!). A ship is not an independent entity. Whenever your Heroes sail into dock, they'll need materials to repair the ship, new crewmen, cannon shot, ammunition for muskets, food, fresh water, new barrels, nails, rope, canvas, lemons, beer and new clothes. I<sup>^</sup>t's

not forget that at least half the nations are looking for them while they're shopping.

They've got to go home some time. They can't live their *whole* life at sea. Adventure doesn't end when a sailor steps on shore, it only just begins.

## Navigation in Theah

Navigation is no mean feat in 17th-century Theah. Nordi-south isn't a big problem; all you do is wait until the stars come out, find the Prophet's Star (the North Star), and figure out how far off the horizon it is. If it's overhead, you're at the North Pole. (You're probably also lost.) If it's on the horizon, you're at the equator. Halfway up, and you're on the 45th Parallel. Easy. Any idiot could do it

East-west, however, is tricky. You see, there's no equivalent of the Prophet's Star to tell you how far east or west you are. You could go by the Sun, if you knew what time zone you were in: Every hour earlier is 15° west; every hour later is 15° east. ("Why?" Well, the Sun goes 360° in 24 hours — the technical term is a "day" — so it goes 15° in 1 hour.) If I've got the sun directly overhead, and my pocket watch (which I have set on Home Port Standard Time) is reading 11 AM, I know that I'm 15 degrees west of home.

That seems pretty simple too, right? There's a catch: my pocketwatch hasn't been invented yet. Sure, clocks exist, but they're based on pendulum mechanisms, and pendulums *hate* being on board pitching, yawing, rocking ships. Furthermore, a clock can be set pretty accurately when it doesn't get exposed to big variations in temperature and humidity, but those also tend to vary when you're going a thousand miles over the sea. A practical watch that overcomes all of these difficulties



won't show up for quite a while. So there's no watch, and consequently no easy longitude determination.

Now our captain has a problem. Without a reliable guide to tell him what time it is at home, he has to fall back on other methods to determine longitude. There's always "dead reckoning", which works like this: "We went about 70 miles west today, I reckon." As you can guess, it's not the most reliable method in the world, and it's responsible for almost all of Théah's maps. Captains were just guessing where they were, and when they got home, they told the mapmakers "It looked sort of like this." The mapmakers took their best guesses from a bunch of sea-captain stories and filled in the blank areas with fiddly scrollwork and "Here Be Dragyns."

The captain doesn't have to just blindly guess at his ship's speed, of course. The standard method for determining speed involves a high-tech, 100% natural, organically-grown piece of equipment known as a "log." The log is dumped over the side, and the ship's speed is estimated by how quickly it retreats from the floating log. The captain then uses this speed estimate to figure out how far he's gone.

There are other methods for determining longitude. The main non-clock method of figuring out longitude is called the "lunar distance method", and involves parallax of Théah's moon (which is much like our own) against the stars, and hours of math after you make your measurements. This method is popular only with people who know how to pronounce "ephemerides", which leaves out the vast majority of heroic-type captains. Furthermore, even a mathematically-minded fellow isn't useful during monsoon season: if you can't see the stars, you can't navigate by them.

Even if you were to have a modern map of whatever area you are sailing in, it won't do you much good without a

guess at your longitude. "I've fixed our ship's position on this fine new map, my boys: We're somewhere in this big blue area." So most of the captains at the time have a rutter. Rutters are like *Cliffs Notes* for navigators. They go something like this: "Sail two weeks west from Entour until reaching the Sea of Stale Bread. When wind sets from NNE, come about and sail for 36 hours until you see the mountains that look like Juliette sunbathing. Sail toward *le grande cleavdge* until you make landfall." Rutters are trade secrets, carefully guarded and passed down from crusty elder to fresh-faced novice. Usually they are a bit elliptical as well, as a further layer of security: if nobody else can figure out what the hell your rutter is talking about, they're less likely to, say, try to kill you and take it. For instance, if the rutter quoted above had been captured, it wouldn't have done the new owner much good unless he knew what the Sea of Stale Bread referred to, and that Juliette is the captain's dog.

Once you get to a coast, especially a mapped coast, you are in much better shape. Coastal maps are pretty good, because seafaring types have been drawing them since they first started stretching hide over logs. A captain with a practiced eye can sail along a coastline and retire to his cabin to draw a reasonably accurate map. It's those weeks on end with no land in sight that tend to make features difficult to locate.

Then there are currents. Everybody's heard about the Gulf Current: it takes warm water from the Gulf of Mexico and runs it across the Atlantic to dump it next to Europe. This is why, although Rome and New York City are at about the same latitude, you never hear people saying, "Gee, it's cold this winter. Let's go someplace warm and sunny for a couple weeks, like Buffalo." There are many currents in Théah's oceans, and the damn things are hard to map. After all, you're under sail anyway, so you're already moving in the water: how are you going to tell that the water you're moving in is also



going somewhere? Answer: you aren't. So sea currents are good for tourism but lousy for navigation by dead reckoning.

### The Montaigne Solution

Things change as soon as magic comes into the equation. With a magical version of a long-distance phone call — *Porté* — who needs a watch? Every day when the sun's overhead the Montaigne navigator reaches into a portal and pulls out his blooded clock. Because it's noon on board and three PM back in Montaigne, you know your longitude: 45" west. Because of this innovation, Montaignes have the most accurate maps in Theah, making all other maps obsolete.

Well... Montaigne *had* the most accurate maps. Avalon, Castille, Vodacce and Vendel have either stolen copies of those maps. However, good maps lose much of their usefulness without good position knowledge, so any captain who can afford it hires a Montaigne noble as navigators.

## Gambling on the Seven Seas

Sailors love to gamble and listed below are a few of the more popular gambling games that can be found in tavernhouses in every port in Theah. All of these games use regular six-sided dice. Sailors seldom (if ever) learn card games, because cards are easily ruined by the water and salt air on a ship. On the other hand, no self-respecting gentleman or lady would *ever* play with dice: only criminals and sailors play with *bones*.





### Ship, Captain, Bosun

This is a collecting game that involves players collecting a "set" to score points. Six dice are used and every player gets three rolls. The title refers to the object of the game: to collect a ship, a captain and a bosun. Players roll six dice trying to collect a 6 (ship), a 5 (captain), and a 4 (bosun).

A player must collect a ship before he collects a captain, and he must have a captain before he has a bosun. Each player has three rolls. Once a player rolls a 6, he may keep that die and re-roll the rest of his dice. He cannot keep any other dice — even 5s and 4s — unless he has rolled a 6. If the player rolls a 6, 5, and 4 by his third roll, he has completed a set. The remaining dice are "crew" and are counted as points: one point for each pip showing. If he does not collect his set, he cannot count any of the dice as crew and gains no points. The player with the highest points at the end of a turn wins the ante.

### Mermaid's Eyes

Before each round, all players ante up. A pair of dice are rolled under a cup so the other players cannot see the result. The dice are read high-low, so a 4 and a 2 are called "forty-two." The possible combos are: 11, 21, 22, 31, 32, 33, 41, 42, 43, 44, 51, 52, 53, 54, 55, 61, 62, 63, 64, 65 and 66. These are the only numbers that a player may call.

The first player begins the turn by rolling the dice, looking at the result (without revealing it to the other players), then calling a number. The call does not have to be the same as the actual roll. The next player must then either challenge or accept the call.

If the call is challenged, the dice are revealed. The roller loses if the call is above the actual roll. Otherwise, the challenger loses. The losing player is out for the rest of the round and the other player rolls to begin the next turn.

If the next player accepts the call, the cup is slid to him. He then has two choices: roll the dice or pass them without looking. Either way, he must call out a number higher than the previous player and pass them to his left. Iliis continues until only one player remains. The remaining player collects the pot and the next round begins.

## *What's In the Hold?*

### Supplies

A ship doesn't fix itself, and the men who repair her need supplies to keep her running. Here's a list of what sailors use to help keep their ship healthy and happy.

### *The Big Four*

The four most important supplies aboard ship are lumber, pitch, canvas and rope. Lumber is used to repair holes in the ship, pitch (or tar) is used to make the ship watertight, canvas replaces torn sails, and ropes, of course, are used in the rigging.

### *Gunpowder and Shot*

Gunners need gunpowder and shot to do their jobs, and typically, several tons of both are kept below. In order to fire a cannon, it requires as much powder as the poundage of the shot. For example, a twelve-pound cannon shot requires twelve pounds of powder.

### Provisions

A sailor's life is hard enough, but when he sits down to a relaxing dinner... things just get worse. Here's a typical sailor's list of appetizers, entrees and deserts.

### *Biscuit*

"Biscuit" is the sailor term for bread and is the most common meal on a ship (another word for it is "hard tack"). Sailors have invented many ways of serving





biscuit, the most famous being rum pudding (they add rum to the bread and serve it in bowls). If biscuit isn't kept dry, it quickly falls victim to weevils and maggots. Sailors call the insects "bargemen" because the bread comes in long sheaves that look like barges.

#### *Water*

The most important thing on the ship is fresh water. The human body can only go two days without fresh water and requires approximately eight pounds of it a day. Unfortunately, sailors haven't figured out how to keep it fresh yet, so it goes bad rather easily. Instead, they substitute...

#### *Alcohol*

Beer and wine keep much longer than water and have side benefits ;is well. Sailors tend to drink a great deal of alcohol when at sea, which usually leads to a great deal of drinking when in port.

#### *Vegetables*

Fresh vegetables last only a few days on a ship before they go bad, so when sailors have them, they eat them quickly. One of the best ways to keep vegetables on board is to pickle them. Sailors pickle cucumbers, eggs, cabbages, radishes and anything else that will keep. Pickles keep better than almost any other provision.



#### **Jack Tar**

One of the most common nicknames for sailors is "Jack Tar." This is because sailors are almost always covered in the thick, black stuff. Sailors almost never wear shoes (the leather doesn't last long in the salt air), so they paint the bottom of their feet with tar, their canvas clothes are covered with the stuff and bald sailors cover their heads to keep them from sunburn.

Peas were recently discovered on a small island south of Vodacce and have become a real treat for sailors. Dried peas keep for a very long time and can be made into a dozen different dishes. They can be eaten dry, boiled, mashed into a gruel or dropped into boiling water with salted pork and made into a particular favorite: split pea soup.

#### *Fish*

Sailors in Theah are highly superstitious of fishing off the deck. "Take from Mother Ocean and she'll take from you," is a common phrase. All too often, hanging hands and feet off the side of the ship attracts the attention of sirens, leviathans and other nameless nastiness. Even daring sailors seldom fish out of respect for their brethren; they don't want to attract undue attention to the ship. Dried and smoked fish, on the other hand, are very common provisions in the hold.

#### *Salted Meat*

Meat is a real delicacy for sailors. It is heavily salted to keep it from spoiling, but when it is served, sailors dip it in their daily water ration to moisten it up. The most common meat found on ship is pork, but beef is also sometimes served. Salted meat is *very* expensive; it's only found on the richest ships, and seldom on a navy ship.

#### *Other Meat*

When ships carry livestock, a certain portion is always set aside for slaughter to feed the crew. However, livestock must be fed, which means it's usually the first to go when a ship is run off course and runs out of supplies.

Chickens and goats are most popular aboard a ship because they can produce eggs and milk. Cows can also provide milk and (if necessary) about a thousand pounds of beef, but require a great deal of food and water and take up a great deal of space.







## Last Stand, Episode 2

by Jennifer Wick

Smoke still drifted up from his cannons as the General roared in triumph. The Sea Dog dinghys disappeared in the rush of smoke and flame. "Take that and damn you, Berek!" he cursed with a black smile.

"Sir..." The General turned. His first mate was composed, but only barely. "Our shot to the powder kegs was a direct hit. The *Maiden Lady's* crew jumped at our signal. We're fishing them out now."

"Throw down ropes," he muttered. "They can pull themselves from the sea if they've the will."

"Sir?" The first mate looked uncertain.

"Never mind. Get them on board fast. And move in, cannons ready. We'll blow the *Black Dawn* to the Abyss!"

The General spun on his heel, his heavy coat whipping around him. Staring out through the dense smoke, he tried to catch a glimpse of his quarry as he paced the deck.



"Captain? Captain, what'll we do?" Berek heard the voice as if from a distance. His ears still rang with the explosion that took his marines. He turned to face Celedoine beside him, her face concerned but calm.

"Bring the ship around," Berek said, gathering his thoughts. "We'll fire on the mouth of the cove until we're

out of shot or they're out of ships. Then..." he paused trying to gather his thoughts. "Then we'll take to the island. Arm all the men. We'll make it a fox hunt, only this fox'll have teeth!" Berek gave a wolfish grin himself,

Celedoine nodded and turned to give the order, but her voice was lost in a sudden explosion, and the deck shuddered beneath them. Berek's stomach heaved at the sickening sound of splintering wood. "Fire!" he screamed over the roar, and his own cannons split the air. "Again!" he yelled. He heard a groan and a crash, and the mizzenmasts crashed down on the deck beside him.



The General let a broad smile split his lips as he savored the frantic cries of his quarry. One or two more volleys, and the *Black Dawn* would lie ruined at the bottom of the cove. "Fire!" he cried, and the blast of his cannons shook the ship. A rush of wind just behind the general spun him around in time to see the body of one of his riggers hurtle into the deck beside him with a wet thud.

"What?" but the question died on his lips as he took in the scene before him. More bodies lay on the deck, all of them in Montaigne uniforms. And standing on his deck — *his deck* — were Sea Dogs, dripping wet, but with guns smoking. Even more were climbing over the railings.

Shaking with rage, the General cried out again. "Fire!" Silence greeted him. His gunners lay dead or stood helplessly with their hands in the air, staring down the barrels of Sea Dog guns.

"Calm down there, Cap'n," said the small red-haired woman who walked casually toward him. "Ain't nobody firin' but me 'n' my boys here. Now," she shouted at the



Montaigne gunners. "Load up the cannons port-side, an' do it fast!"

The General bit hard on his tongue as his men did exactly as the Sea Dog scum commanded. Deliberately, he memorized the name and face of each man still standing, each man following those orders.

"Now do like your Cap'n said, boyos," called the woman. "Fire!"

And they did. At point blank range, the Montaigne vessel beside them never stood a chance. She tossed her keel in the air and rattled apart like an old shed. The wreckage blocked half the cove entrance.

"Very good, boys," grinned Bonnie McGee. "Now load 'em again."

As all attention focused for a moment on the business at hand, the General took a deep breath and leaped from the side of the great ship, plummeting toward the water below. The second cannon volley shook the water as he hit.



"Ready the guns," cried Berek. His voice was calm and clear in the stunning silence that came after the last onslaught. "We'll hold them as long as we can."

Through the clearing smoke, Berek could see the General's ship turn a bit more in the wind, facing them full broadside. Berek opened his mouth to give the command to fire when the cannons of the other ship let out another roar. Berek braced himself, but the blow never came. Staring in fascination, he watched the

Montaigne vessel to port of the General's ship heave and collapse into the sea. Another volley fired and the next vessel down the line also dropped into the water.

As Berek watched in disbelief, Montaigne signal flags began to wave out a Sea Dog code...

*The skip is ours. Sail nearer.*

Pulling his spy glass loose from his belt, Berek focused on the General's ship where he saw one of his lost marines waving the flags, and beside him, Bonnie McGee grinning like a mad woman. A cheer broke out along the *Black Dawn*. Berek found himself mirroring the grin. "Bring her about, men," he called out. "And sail her toward the mouth of the cove."



Sodden and cold, the General hauled himself inch by inch from the sea. He'd shed his heavy coat, but the water soil dragged at his woolen vest as he slowly climbed up the hull of the *Black Dawn*. Reaching the railing, he peered cautiously over. All of the crew had run to the port side to see the spectacle of his ship firing on its own. Cursing in spite of his good luck, the General dropped quietly to the deck. Creeping forward, he spotted Berek standing alone at the base of the quarterdeck stairs.

Without a sound, the General charged. His blade cut the air just left of Berek's ear as the Sea Dog ducked out of the way.

"Well, well," grinned Berek, "I was disappointed to think that you'd give in so easily." His own blade was in his hand, parrying *the* General's next blow.



Silent and grim, the General, standing a full head taller than Berek, pressed forward, his Eisen *zweikander* swinging as if to cut the smaller man down like a sapling.

Berek ducked and lunged, turning the General's strikes with his slender rapier. But with all of his attention needed to fend off the other man's attacks, he had no opportunity to counter. Then, the Avalon's foot caught in a pile of loose rope and he fell backwards. The *zweihander* bore down on him and he swung up his own blade, throwing his body to one side. His rapier broke with a ringing snap.

"I'll see your rotting corpse swinging from the pirate's cage, Berek." The General ground the words through gritted teeth.

"Perhaps. But not today," came Berek's calm voice from just behind him. The sharp bite of cold steel pressed against the back of the General's neck.

He turned slowly to see the Sea Dog captain standing behind him, rapier poised in one hand and a pistol cocked in the other. Looking down at the deck by his feet, the General watched a slender woman rise, shoving long, dark hair from her face, the broken sword still in her right hand.

"Impeccable timing, Captain," she said with a faint smile as she moved past the smoldering General.

"Impeccable distraction, Lady Celedoine," Berek replied with a mock bow, keeping his eyes on the man in front of him. "McGee signaled you might be coming aboard, General," he said with an ironic grin. "It was important that I have a few moments to plan with my men, so Lady Celedoine promised to entertain you should you arrive unannounced."



"The lady is a gracious hostess," The General drew himself up and straightened his vest a bit. "Where do we go from here?"

"Well, since you've made a career out of hunting me, my better judgment tells me I should not let you continue," smiled the Sea Dog captain.

"Indeed, your judgment is sound," agreed the Eisen with a tight smile, "However, my own warns me not to leave the decision to you." With a sudden flick of his wrist, the General jerked his *zweihander* upward, catching Berek's gun as it fired, throwing the shot high. Then, with a running lunge, he hurled himself over the side of the ship.

Sea Dogs raced to the railing. "He's gone, Cap'n," shouted one. "I don't see him surfacin'."

"Never mind that, Harry." The Captain shook his head. "There's no time to lose if the plan's to work. Besides," Berek paused, gazing over the side, "there'll be other days."



Captain Alexandre du Paine stood on the deck of his ship *Le Dameur*, straining to see any sign of movement on the General's ship. Nearly 15 minutes passed since its last volley sank *La Verite* without explanation, and du Paine's crew waited for further orders with shivering fingers. They fished most of the ship's crew from the water, along with those from *Le Cygne*, and now du Paine's deck was





crowded with almost three times its normal crew, all standing. Waiting.

"Captain!" The sharp cry from the lookout above snapped du Paine from his reverie. The General's ship raised its sails and began to move. Slowly, it drifted past *Le Danseur*. The sailors aboard stood at sharp attention, staring straight ahead as they went. Some of *Le Daweur's* men called out to them, but they didn't answer. Du Paine spotted the man with the signal flags after a few moments...

*The enemy is sunk. We'll circle the island for dinghies. Turn back. We'll catch up.*

Then, the flags were still.

It didn't sit right with du Paine, but he was not about to question the order of a superior, least of all the General. "Pass the message," du Paine called to his flagman. "We sail back toward Montaigne." Curious, but relieved to be moving again, his sailors hurried to their positions and began to move the sails to turn them about.



*Good work McGee.*

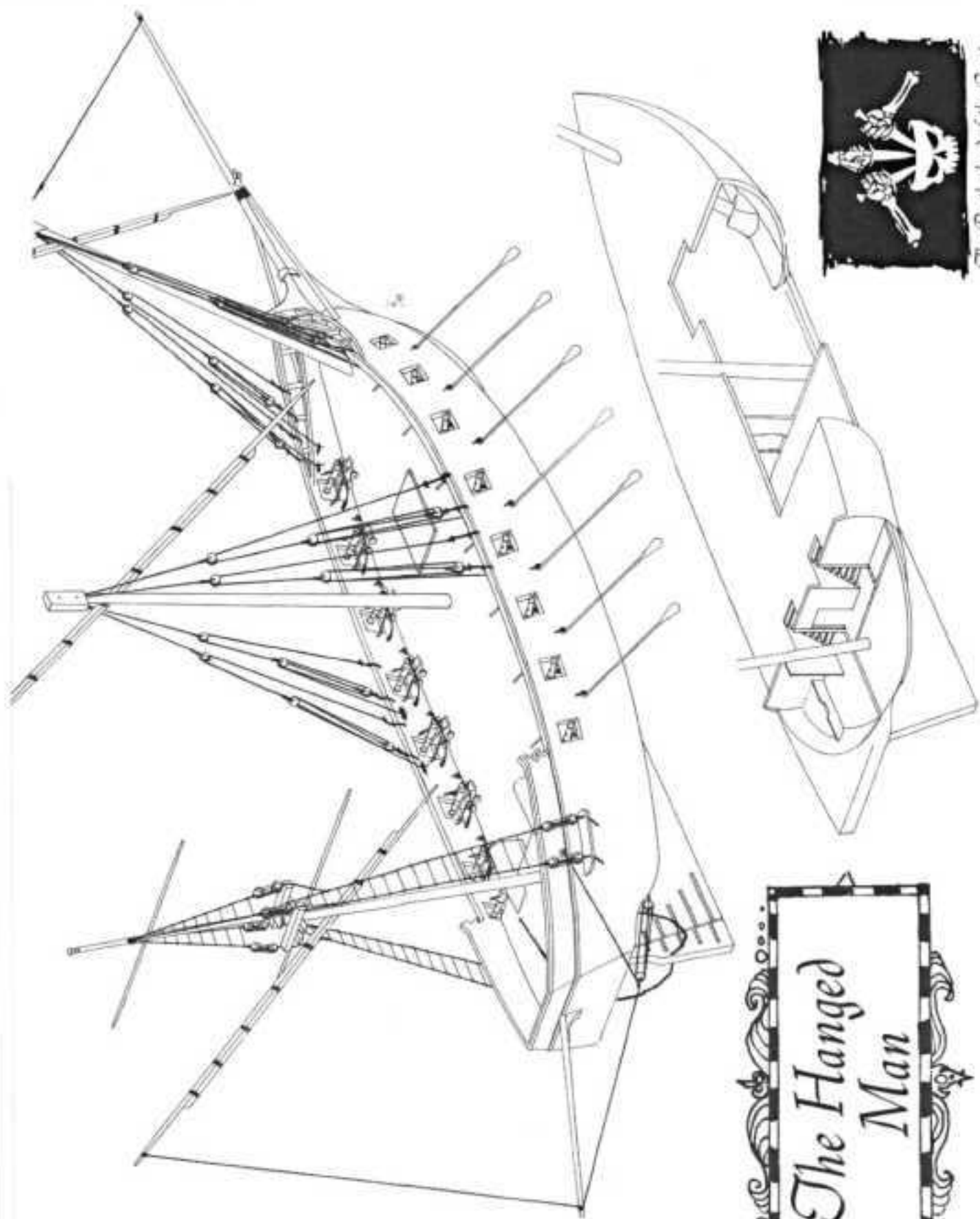
Berek signaled his topmen to keep pace with the General's ship. With her keel up to let her sail the shallows and using the larger ship for cover, they'd make it past the Montaigne vessels easily. He raised a hand to McGee, and she waved back, her rifle never lowering from the back of a Montaigne gunner.

Berek shook his head. With half their guns gone and a broken mizzenmast, it would be a long sail back to

Canguine. But what really worried him was how he'd ever manage to make the crowd at the Broken Compass Tavern believe that the *Black Dawn* faced the General and 20 Montaigne vessels and still won the day.

After all, he was still standing.





*The Brotherhood of the Coast*

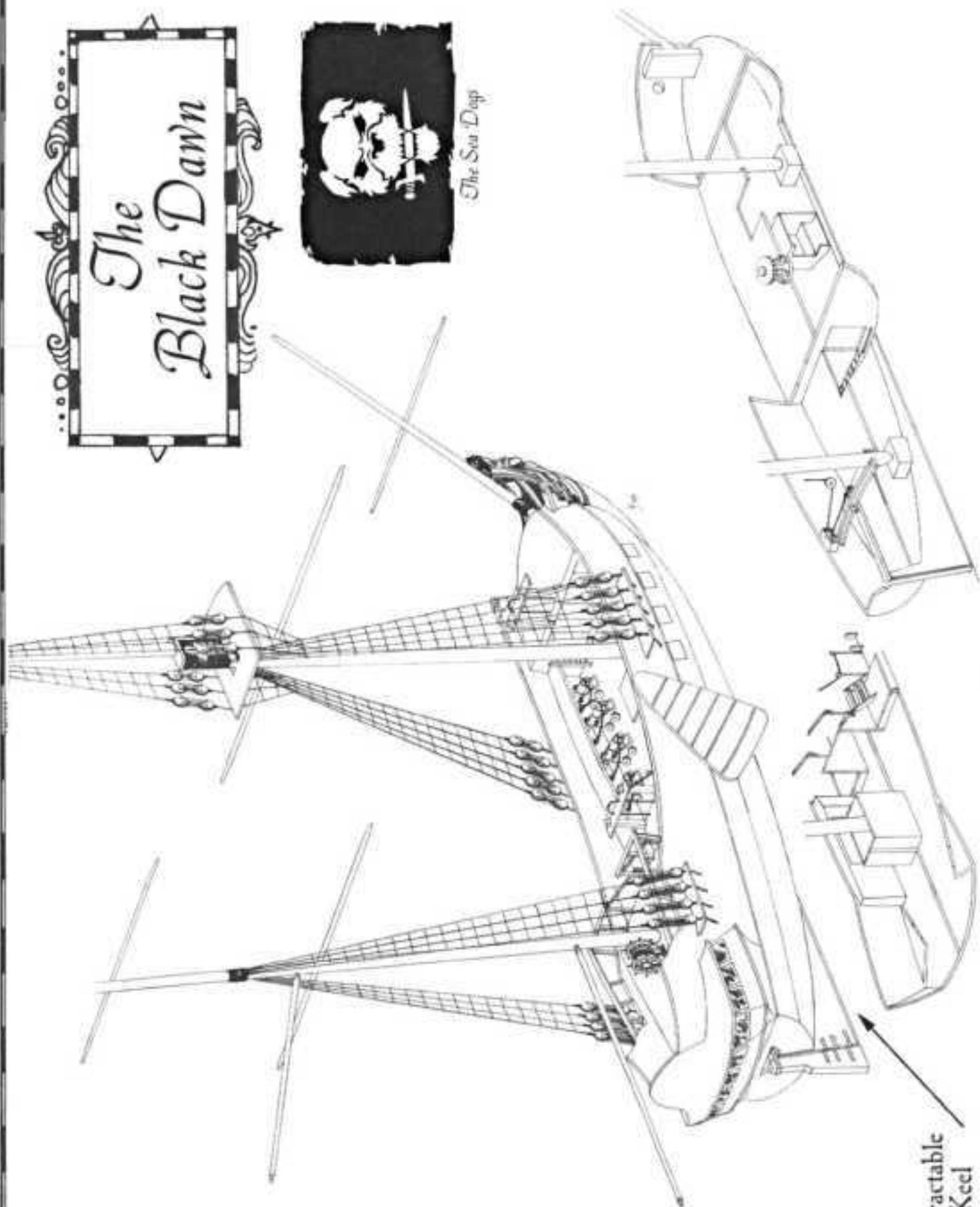
*The Hanged  
Man*



# The Black Dawn



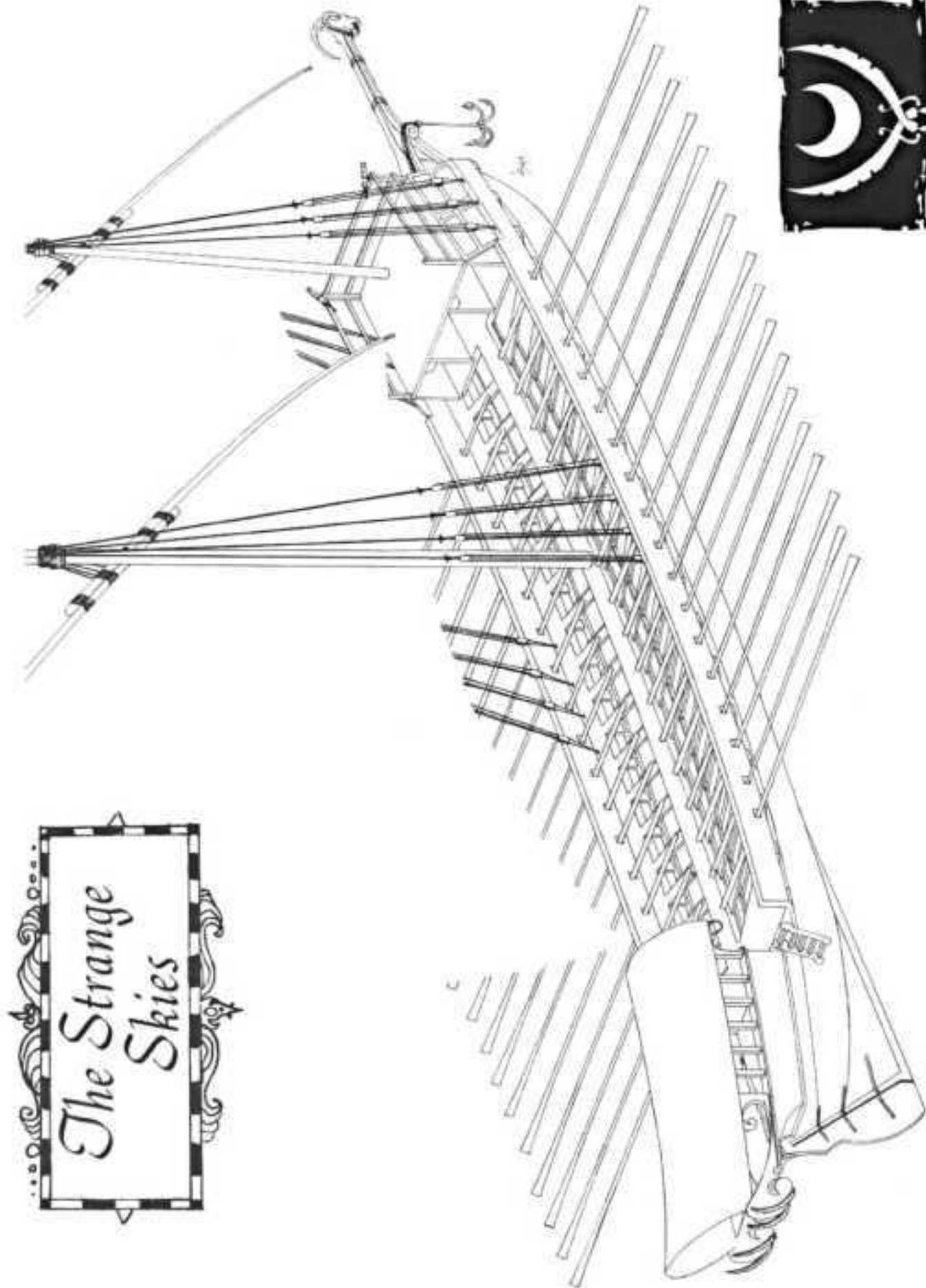
The Sea Dogs



Retractable  
Keel



*The Corsairs*

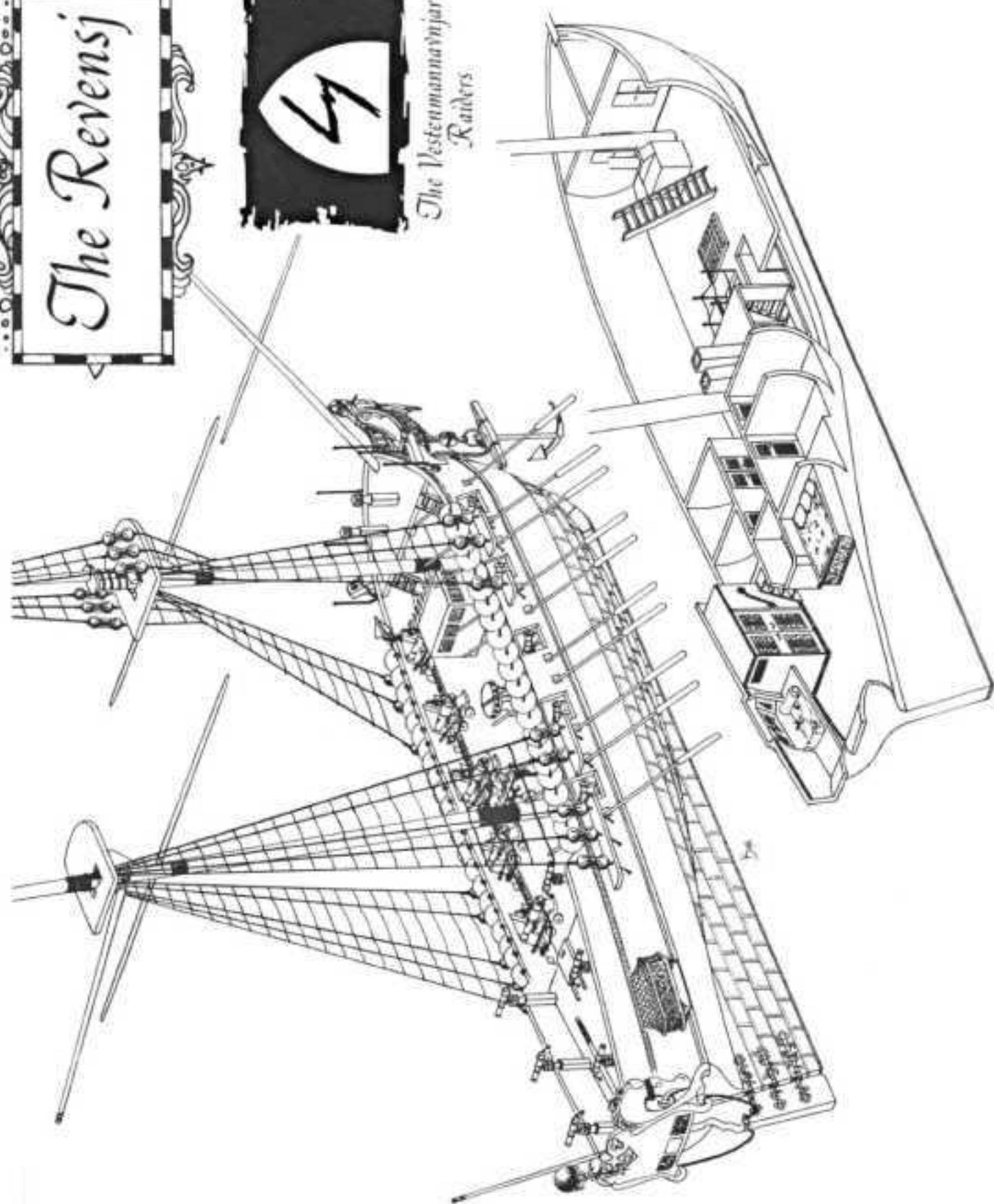


*The Strange  
Skies*

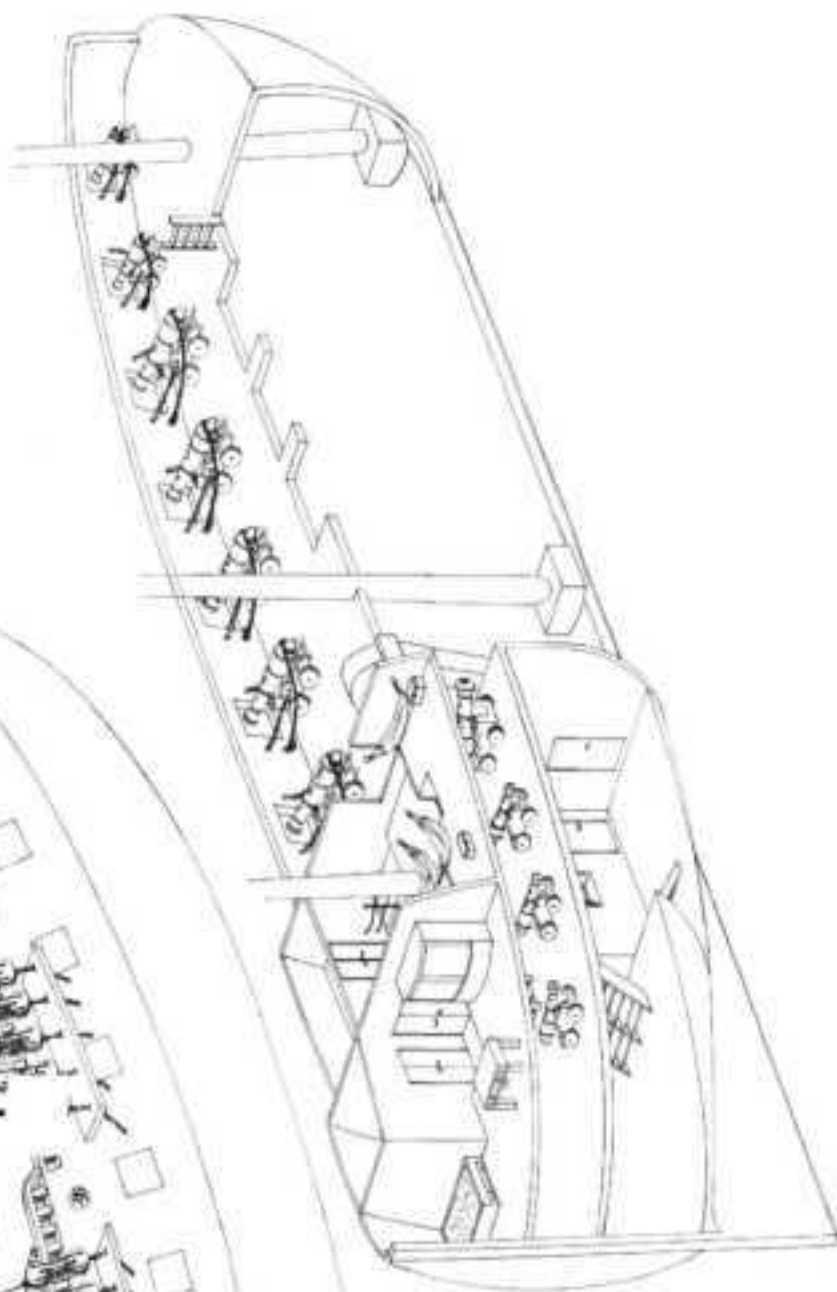
# The Revensj



The Vestenmannavíjar  
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# *The Crimson Roger*



*The Crimson Rogers*





## *The Pirate Nations*

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- Bloody Bonnie McGee, bosun of the Black Dawn

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