

PIRATES

OF PUGMIRE



A CHRONICLE SOURCEBOOK FOR
PUGMIRE & MONARCHIES OF MAU

PIRATES

OF PUGMIRE



DIXIE COCHRAN, MATTHEW DAWKINS, JASON INCZAUSKIS, DANIELLE LAUZON,
TRAVIS LEGGE, ELISSA RICH, AND EDDY WEBB

Written by Dixie Cochran, Matthew Dawkins,
Jason Inczauskis, Danielle Lauzon, Travis Legge,
Elissa Rich, and Eddy Webb

Pugmire created by Eddy Webb and owned
by Pugsteady

Edited by Maria Cambone

Art by Jon Hodgson, Priscilla Kim,
Pat Loboyko, Pat McEvoy, Michael Phillippi,
Scott Purdy, Brian Syme

Cartography by Alida Saxon

Cover art by Claudio Pozas

Art direction by Rich Thomas

Creative Direction by Richard Thomas

Layout by Aileen E. Miles



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Scuttle in Seaport

The two companions browsed the open-air market, simultaneously pleased and annoyed that no one recognized them. Sabu, a gecko with a stump for a tail, glanced at the cut of a fine silk coat hanging in a market stall. His colorful parrot companion, Polly, was talking. Sabu wasn't listening though, because Polly was always talking.

"So that's when I said, 'You better hoist that sail, lad, or by the Old Ones, I'll have you!' And then I did this!" Polly stuck an arm out as if brandishing an imaginary sword.

Before Polly could launch into the next part of her tale, Sabu called the attention of the mouse tending the stall. "How much plastic for this coat?"

Polly put a clawed paw on Sabu's shoulder. "Er, maybe you should..."

"You can finish your story in a moment, Polly," Sabu sighed irritably, keeping his eyes on the merchant. "I'm —"

As he was chastising Polly, a lean terrier in a green hood bumped into Sabu. The lizard stumbled and would have fallen if Polly hadn't caught him in her muscular arms. She hefted Sabu onto his feet and called after the terrier with an angry, loud squawk. "Hey, matey! You better watch where you're going!"

"Go fly away, birdbrain!" the terrier called over his shoulder, disappearing into the press of eager shoppers and merchants milling around the square.

Polly, like many parrots, was sensitive about her lack of wings. "Right. I'm going to thrash that dog until he gets a personal visit with the Old Ones. I'll bring back his ear as a souvenir."

She started to stalk after the terrier, but Sabu held her arm. His grip wasn't nearly as strong as Polly's, but she stopped anyway. Still looking at the mouse merchant, Sabu smiled again. "Excuse my companion. She's excitable and talkative: qualities that are useful on a ship but irritating on land. Again, how much for the coat?"

"Th-th-thirty coins, sir," the mouse stammered. Sabu couldn't tell if she was nervous because of the Polly's posturing or Sabu's control over the obviously stronger bird.

"That seems reasonable." The lizard dug around his belt, ignoring the glass vials that hung there to find his pouch of coins, and was only mildly surprised to discover it missing. "Ah. I seem to be missing something."

"I told you!" Polly exploded. "That flea-bitten thief took your plastic!"

Sabu chuckled, finally turning to his companion and releasing her arm. "Indeed. Or so he believes." He glanced back at the merchant. "I shall return for your fine wares. Excuse me while I recover my lost property."



Polly was pushing through the crowd of shoppers before Sabu could finish, so he sketched a quick bow to the mouse maiden before hurrying after his companion. She was devising inventive, painful things to inflict upon the thief when he finally laid a paw on her feathered back. She stopped, and he caught his breath. "You... you needn't fuss, Polly."

"But he's getting away!"

Sabu shook his head. "Just wait for the screaming."

"What scream —" A loud yelp of pain cut through the crowd ahead of them. Polly pushed through the throng of people, who had begun to gather around a comatose form in a green hood.

She yanked the terrier onto his feet, but the thief didn't resist. Instead, he was trying to pull the pouch from his paw. "Get it off!" he shrieked, panicking. "It's eating me!"

Sabu pulled a flask from his belt and poured its contents over the pouch. The sodden leather dropped from the terrier's paw, falling to the cobblestones with a wet slap. Some of the fur on the thief's paw was missing and his skin was red, but he was only badly shaken, not harmed. The gecko grabbed the pouch. "Mine, I think. I knew that cursed pouch we found in Dalmation Cove would be handy."

The terrier shivered as he glanced back and forth between the gecko and the parrot, tail tucked between his legs. "Who... who are you?"

Polly stepped forward. "I usually don't introduce myself to thieves, but since you didn't end up stealing anything, I guess it's okay. I'm Polly of the Seven Blazing Feathers, and this here's the captain of the *Pig's Tale*, Sabu Chromachilde."

Sabu smiled, showing all his teeth. "And you just tried to steal from two of the most notorious pirates in Waterdog Port."

The terrier whimpered and ran.



Introduction

Since the rise of the kingdom of Pugmire and the Monarchies of Mau, dogs and cats have explored the land in search of arcane secrets left behind by the Old Ones. For many years, these expeditions were confined to the land, as the corrosive waters of the Acid Sea disintegrated the hulls of any vessel set upon its waters. Though the dogs of Pugmire were able to use ancient knowledge reclaimed from the Old Ones to clean the river and drain the mire, the taint of the Acid Sea proved impossible to cleanse. The cats of the monarchies fared no better, as their extensive explorations and expansions were limited by the inability to sail on the Acid Sea.

This situation persisted until the innovation of the plastic hull.

With the advent of the plastic hull, seafaring voyages were possible for the first time. People of all species took to the seas to explore, seek-

ing new shores and facing dangers unknown. These adventurers learned that life on the Acid Sea is different than life in the relative safety of the kingdoms and monarchies. Sailors must face the dangers of thirst, sun, starvation, or becoming hopelessly lost while the plastic hulls of their boats slowly melt into uselessness. The weather on the Acid Sea is wild and unpredictable, testing even the most skilled and well-prepared crews. Large portions of the sea remain unexplored and uncharted, denying pirates the assurance of a safe journey home. A crew out on the open sea must often update their charts as they go, mapping the route they travel while seeking unknown shores and unclaimed treasures. If they find such bounty, there's always a hostile crew or two out there on the waves, lying in wait to raid returning ships.

While dogs and cats found the Acid Sea impassable for an age, the Unseen suffered no such challenge. These familiar threats prove even more dangerous in hostile waters. Twisted corpses of dead sea life animated by Unseen forces haunt the waves. Shipscales, mutated to thrive in the Acid Sea, latch themselves to passing vessels, threatening to eat the plastic right off the hull. Bizarre half-dog, half-fish creatures rise from the tides to capsize ships and drag sailors into the depths. Sea monsters and the unfathomable colossi present new enemies never before encountered by cat or dog.

It takes an extra level of grit to brave the Acid Sea. Those who have the mettle for such adventures are known across the realms of Pugmire as pirates. Do you have what it takes to conquer the Acid Sea?

What is Pirates of Pugmire About?

Pirates of Pugmire is a chronicle book for both *Pugmire* and *Monarchies of Mau*. It's usable in either game, or as part of a joint experience. We give you some additional guidance for creating dog and cat pirate characters, and introduce two new species to play: lizards and birds. These pages contain information on building, sailing, and sinking ships, as well as a trove of new allies, enemies, and treasures. We detail the societies of Waterdog Port and Port Matthew, and reveal their secrets, politics, and schemes. We even talk about what separates a pirate crew from a mere collection of people on a boat. *Pirates of Pugmire* gives you the tools you need to take to the Acid Sea with a ship of your own, seeking plunder, treasure, and glory with your fellow adventurers.

Theme: Family of Choice

Characters in *Pirates of Pugmire* come from all over. Dogs and cats often live together, while lizards and birds often crew ships of mixed species. Unlike *Pugmire* and *Monarchies of Mau*, which each focus on cultures that are predominantly determined by geography, pirate crews are created by circumstance. No one cares what your surname is or what house you were born into,

as long as you can hoist an anchor and hold a cutlass with the pointy end forward. Particularly close crews may even refer to themselves as a family of choice, over a family of birth.

The structure of a pirate crew binds this family of choice together through a shared solemn vow called the Articles. Crews who sign on to a ship's Articles are connected by common purpose and shared fortunes and failures. In some ways, the bond of a signed crew is deeper than even that of siblings, further reinforcing the theme of a family of choice.

Mood: Dangerous Legacy

Each treasure has a strange legend attached to it. Every port has tales of mysterious happenings. Every sailor whispers of terrible deeds after a few drinks. Pirates eschew the comforts of civilization, but there are reasons why thick walls and stone castles are attractive — because the alternative is trying to live in a world where ancient secrets and bloody dread haunt your every moment. The life of a pirate is one of danger and mystery, but they may be the people best positioned to unravel the secrets left behind by the Old Ones.

In *Pirates of Pugmire*, pirates sometimes face the greatest dangers with the least support. Land-bound explorers can often reach out to their homeland for aid and reinforcements, whereas pirates face grave jeopardy with nothing to rely on but that which their ship carries. These risks are necessary to uncover the greatest treasures. Often, the prize for such hazardous pursuits comes at a high cost to pirates who seek their glory on the Acid Sea.

Action: Acquiring Treasure

The explorers of Pugmire and Mau seek out new lands and new artifacts for their kingdoms. They fill in the blank spaces on the map and answer the nagging questions of the past. All of this is to improve their nations through improved knowledge and raw power.

Pirates, however, seek *treasure*. Treasure has intrinsic value, of course; it might be worth a lot of plastic, and it might have a significant power to be used as part of a political scheme. But

to pirates, it's a trophy of the quest. The legend of the treasure is often more important than the item itself. Mere merchants seek out chests full of plastic; a pirate only gets excited if the chest was the long-lost bounty of the first monarch of Smilodon that has remained hidden and unclaimed for ages.

How Do I Read This Book?

If you haven't read a chronicle book like this before, we recommend reading the first part, called the Player's Cove. If you want to be the Guide, you should probably read the second part as well, called the Guide's Charts. It has information on rules, enemies, and advice on creating adventures for you and your friends to enjoy. The three adventures provided comprise the third and final part of *Pirates of Pugmire*.

Whether you plan to be the Guide or assume the role of a pirate on the Acid Sea, read the parts of the book that look interesting to you. If there is something you don't understand, you can always look it up later. What's important is getting a feel for the setting, developing an idea for an adventure or a character, and telling fun stories with a group of friends. You can work the details out as you play.

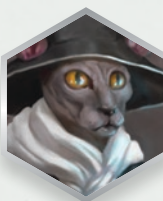
To help you out, we have a few sidebars scattered throughout the text to call out anything important in the text. Since this book brings pirates into *Pugmire* and *Monarchies of Mau*, we have brought together some of the finest adventurers from all around to help us out.



Ahoy! My name is Polly of the Seven Blazing Feathers, but you can just call me Polly. I'm here to help explain things about adventuring on the Acid Sea!



Hi! I am Princess Yosha Pug. I try to be a good, helpful dog, and I am here to explain ideas that apply to the dogs of Pugmire.



Greetings. My name is Sabian Sphynx von Angora. I am here to contribute my clarification and guidance to elements that relate to the Monarchies of Mau.

This section of text should be read aloud at the table. Only the Guide sees this text, to describe something to their players.

Chapters

This is a brief overview of what you will find in *Pirates of Pugmire*.

Player's Cove

This section is most important to players, but the Guide will want to read it, too.

Introduction. An explanation of *Pirates of Pugmire* and what you will find within it.

Chapter One: The Tale of "Stumpy" Sabu. This story paints a picture of the pirate life from the perspective of an observer in Waterdog Port.

Chapter Two: Pirate's Life for Me. This chapter helps players create pirate characters, including new callings for dogs and cats and two new species: birds and lizards.

Chapter Three: Rules of the Open Sea. This chapter discusses all the rules you need to create a ship and sail it. Everyone should at least look at this chapter.

Chapter Four: Ports of Call. This chapter details the relationships between pirates, the kingdom of Pugmire, and the Monarchies of Mau. There is also an in-depth look at the cities of Waterdog Port and Port Matthew.

Guide's Charts

This section contains information geared toward anyone who wishes to be the Guide. Players do not need to know this information. Some players may prefer to have these secrets introduced throughout the course of play.

Chapter Five: Enemies. This chapter introduces new characters for the Guide to use as enemies, foils, and perhaps even allies in their adventures.

Chapter Six: Treasure. This chapter explains the role and function of Treasure in your *Pirates of Pugmire* story. This includes rules for creating your own Treasures.

Chapter Seven: Over the Acid Sea. This chapter details several locations on the Acid Sea, including the infamous Dalmatian Cove. This chapter also contains useful story hooks and charts to help the Guide craft new adventures.

The Chronicle

We have also included a series of adventures to allow you to set sail on the Acid Sea right away! If you are a player, you definitely want to skip this part. You wouldn't want to spoil the surprises!

Chapter Eight: Going on the Account. Within this chapter is the first of three connect-

ed adventures, suitable for characters of 1st or 2nd level. The pirates discover the inner workings of Waterdog Port and learn about a mysterious treasure.

Chapter Nine: The Race. This chapter presents an adventure for 3rd to 4th level characters that centers on a dangerous race across the Acid Sea! Sea monsters, rival pirates, danger, and treasure await the victors!

Chapter Ten: Heart of the Storm. In this adventure for characters of 5th to 6th level, a sudden storm brought about by a mysterious attack that threatens to sink the players' ship. Seeking refuge on the island of Stormheart, the crew discovers that the Stormcaller's attack was no mere coincidence.

INSPIRATIONS FOR PIRATES OF PUGMIRE

During the creation of *Pirates of Pugmire*, we were inspired by several games, films, and books. Here is a list of other media that might get your creative juices flowing as you craft your stories of maritime adventure!

- *7th Sea* roleplaying game by John Wick
- *Assassin's Creed IV* video game released by Ubisoft
- *The Black Swan*, the 1942 movie featuring Tyrone Power and Maureen O'Hara
- *Captain Blood*, a classic movie starring Errol Flynn and Olivia de Haviland
- *Cutthroat Island*, film featuring Geena Davis, Matthew Modine, and Frank Langella
- *The Goonies*, the movie starring Sean Astin, Josh Brolin, and Kerri Green
- *On Stranger Tides*, novel by Tim Powers
- The stories of Sinbad the Sailor from *One Thousand and One Nights*. Various translations exist, the most recent being the 2008 Penguin Classics version, translated by Malcolm C. Lyons and Ursula Lyons.
- *The Pearls of Lutra*, a novel by Brian Jacques
- *Peter Pan* and its sequel, *Hook*, starring Robin Williams and Dustin Hoffman
- *The Pirate Primer*, a reference book by George Choundas
- *Pirates of Dark Water*, an early 1990s cartoon produced by Hanna-Barbera
- *Pirates of Penzance*, a comic opera by W. S. Gilbert and Arthur Sullivan
- *The Princess Bride*, a film starring Cary Elwes and Robin Wright. The book by William Goldman is equally spellbinding.
- *Rat Queens*, comic book series by Kurtis J. Wiebe
- "Sea Curse," short story by Robert E. Howard
- *Treasure Island*. The book by Robert Louis Stevenson and the 1950 film featuring Bobby Driscoll and Robert Newton are both remarkable.



Chapter One: The Tale of “Stumpy” Sabu

“She did it! I swear! She stuck this bloom-in’ lightning rod right on her main mast!” The cries and howls of laughter throughout the Lark’s Head welcomed Arkady Lux von Mau’s tale as he held aloft a rod with a metallic point. “You know what they say: the sea takes the brave and spits back the fools!” The bar patrons hammered their tables and downed their bowls of ale and spirits, singing a salute to the crow captain whose ship went down in flames a few months prior. It was only the seventh time they’d heard this tale from Arkady the Shipwright. He climbed down to a loud applause and a few murmurs of “I hope someone has a new story to tell us soon...”

That’s how it goes in the Lark’s Head and countless other taverns in the Haze of Waterdog Port, and how I’d tell you most tales are

told. There are cheers for daring exploits, cries of protest when a pirate is unfairly besmirched, a great deal of mirth, and much drinking. I can’t say I found anyone judging the quality of these tales, and Man knows nobody asked for a critic like me to give them a review, but there I was listening to story after story. As a writer of popular literature in this part of the world, it behooves me to embed myself into the thriving maritime culture, but that night I heard nothing exceptional. That is, until I listened in on a bird named Polly and a lizard named Sabu whispering about some of their exploits at a bar named Harv’s Hideaway.

It’s the quiet stories you ought to listen to. Take it from a dog who knows.

There I was, sat at the bar with a flagon of some weasel-brewed concoction in my paw.

I was prepared to turn in for the night when a parrot in a dashing hat and stunning red feathers walked in, accompanying a drooping gecko with a shorn tail. I discovered their actual names long after their departure, but at the point they sat down, the parrot said “Stumpy will have the hotpot,” and the gecko replied in turn, “Pally will have porridge. And grog for us both! We have business.” The barkeep dashed off. I was intrigued. Genuine pirates with genuine pirate business? I shifted to a closer stool and listened in.

Pirate Business

It transpired that Sabu — the gecko at the table — had discovered the location of the ne'er-do-well responsible for stealing their valuables. He'd been digging around Waterdog Port and narrowed in on one of their least reputable associates. After all, Sabu and Polly own a ship, the *Pig's Tale*. From what I could glean, until recently they had kept the *Tale* in Bernese Marina, among the pleasure cruisers and luxury vessels. When they came into some plastic following a profitable adventure, they decided to entrust their vessel to the upper crust guards at the marina over the less-than-reputable militia down in the Underport or the broader quayside. Anyway, the associate whom Sabu tracked down — a mouse named Brutus, with some reputation among the rodents of Waterdog Port — took their coin and guaranteed the safety of their ship and its cargo. Sabu and Polly returned to it two nights after arriving in dock, only to find the vessel stripped of its valuables!

It's worth mentioning ship's law, sometimes called “the maritime agreement,” other times called “the pirate's code.” It differs from crew to crew and captains enforce it with varying levels of severity, but a common code between pirates is that you don't rob a moored ship. It's not piracy as much as it's criminal, if that makes sense. Pirates draw a distinction between the two.

Well, to describe Polly and Sabu as quietly but intensely animated during this discussion would be an understatement. They have no love lost for dear old Brutus, who I understand dis-

covered Sabu is more than just a pleasant alkalist. To be a successful pirate, you have to know when to throw down and fight; “Stumpy” did. He was asking after the whereabouts of their treasures, fixtures, and fittings, when Brutus pointed him in the direction of the Echo House.

Echo House

Ah, the Echo House: a fabled building that seems to travel in and out of Waterdog Port with the foggy sea mist. This revelation took Polly aback. Her tail feathers knocked my bar stool enough times to compel the parrot to turn around and apologize for the disturbance. I assured her that she need think nothing of it and went back to listening in. What did the Echo House have to do with the plundering of their ship, and why did it perturb Polly — by all accounts a valiant ship's first mate and rimer — so much?

Sabu drove his right fist into his open palm and reassured his first mate she wouldn't need to visit the house. It sounded like he believed that the mysterious Echo House changes both form and function each time it appears. On one occasion in the past, it housed a two-headed giant named Ulf, a pirate of ill repute. It was this two-headed giant who brought down the axe that severed our gecko hero's tail! Did Ulf have something to do with the crime, perhaps looking to perpetrate a second wave of grief against Sabu, what with giantish tendencies to practice two measures of everything?

No, as it turns out. While connected to this story, Ulf was not behind the robbery. We'll get back to him. Rather, Sabu explained that Brutus told him that he and many of the other thieves of Waterdog Port had been hired by the acclaimed rat actor, Aurelio, to loot the *Pig's Tale* and bring its chests back to Echo House! A scandal! Aurelio is, if my information is correct, one of the members of the Council of Luminaries — the governing council of Waterdog Port, no less. For him to be commissioning thefts from safely docked ships would strike pirates everywhere as a capital offence.

When Sabu announced this revelation, his parrot companion stood bolt upright and hissed, “I’m going to cut that rodent from bow to stern.” Sabu managed to push his enraged rimer bird companion back into her seat. This wasn’t the end of the tale.

Sabu had pulled in some favors just that day to find out why a member of the council might be hiring thieves. He has another friend on the council – Luna Tabby – and asked her for the why of it all. Luna is, after all, head of the port security. Surprisingly, Tabby came clean to Sabu. She explained the council had received high payment from a source to permit this robbery, as a treasure named the Flask of Bobby Golden was believed to be in a chest on the *Pig’s Tale*. Polly guffawed at this claim, apparently having heard of this flask. She pointed out, drilling a nail into the table, that if they had such a valuable treasure, they wouldn’t have left it on a ship with no crew. Sabu agreed. And this is where things took a turn.

The Council

See, the council is a pirate’s way of finding work, taking on the role of “pirate under commission” for a Luminary or the Governor. They run the city in the loosest terms, but there are worse governments. In this case, the issue wasn’t with what the council wanted – a group ostensibly driven by enlightened self-interest and free of political influence – but what they would have found. They may have plundered the ship for a flask Sabu and Polly didn’t possess, but what they unintentionally stole was a chest of valuables stolen by the pirates for a third person, Eveline von Chausie! But Eveline von Chausie is not on the council!

Confused yet?

Eveline von Chausie could very well be the wealthiest cat in Waterdog Port. The Chausie family practically own the entire Sunset Quarter of the city. They’re also a family of inveterate criminals, and run the worst part of the underworld for the city. If the *Pig’s Tale* was commissioned to steal something for von Chausie? Well, losing that property to the Sea

Lord Council would be a big problem. Not only did they owe von Chausie, it meant one or more of the Luminaries might have become aware of something the highly corrupt von Chausie sought. And, to clarify where we’ve got to, the thieves who stole the stolen treasure from the *Pig’s Tale* had delivered said stolen treasure to the Echo House so Aurelio could claim it – despite Aurelio not even wanting this treasure!

As excited as I was to hear of all this, it didn’t sound much like piracy. Dockland thefts with intrigue attached are interesting, but they don’t make for the kinds of thrills I turn into my award-winning Acid Sea piracy tales. Thankfully, things picked up when Sabu explained what happened next.

The Governor’s Mansion

Despite his fear of having to revisit the site where he lost his tail, Sabu approached the Echo House. He needed to retrieve the treasure before Aurelio could get to it. Sabu spotted Aurelio in the gardens of the nearby Governor’s Mansion, conversing in whispers with Erwin Sharpei, our ruthless and cunning Governor (and like the rest of the members of the council, prone to hiring pirates). Sabu told Polly he couldn’t risk entering the Echo House only to find the treasure had already been dispersed. It could have been what Aurelio and the Governor were already discussing. The gecko changed tack, somersaulted over the marble walls (his words), and scurried up a tree to better hear what the two politicians were saying.

Sure enough, Aurelio had already pried open the chest stolen from the *Pig’s Tale*. He’d already discovered the Man treasures within, therefore also finding what the Chausies were interested in stealing. The two of them spoke of powerful weaponry that shouldn’t be in the paws of thieves and pirates. It was all Sabu could do to not shout out in frustration: the Chausies had told he and Polly the treasure had no practical application. Still, it didn’t remedy the issue of it being stolen from the *Pig’s Tale*, and therefore, from the Chausies.

Sabu clung to that tree branch, listening to them speak, until he found out what he needed: the treasure had since been moved from the Echo House to *Plastic Minnow*, a new pirate ship under commission to the Luminaries. The Governor explained to Aurelio how the treasure would be making its way to Port Matthew, as nobody would guess these powerful weapons were being stored right under the noses of the Monarchies of Mau.

Sabu smiled at Polly at this point. He was going to catch the *Plastic Minnow* before it left port and recover their treasure.

Laws of Piracy

Do you remember I mentioned a pirate code earlier? Sabu is apparently a firm adherent to the code, so he wasn't just going to jump aboard *Plastic Minnow*, cut some throats, and rob their stores. He found the ship as it was being loaded and hid on board, waiting for it to depart. He was going to rob it after it had reached the Acid Sea!

This may all sound ludicrous to you, landlubber, but I find it charming and – to a degree – honorable that pirates adhere by a code. Many abide by the ship law allowing captured enemies a chance to serve on their ship. Some insist two crew members must always be on deck, while others believe (and this is widely held) that crew members receive equal shares of plunder. Others agree on a tithe of their plunder to the poor of Waterdog Port, or from wherever they hail. Keep in that mind many pirates, no matter how ostentatious they appear or might act, come from backgrounds of poverty. They know what it is to struggle and how the children – whether cat, dog, lizard, or anything else – love it when a pirate comes to port and gives out pieces of plastic or pilfered valuables. Of course, some pirates, such as the criminals who sail the *Green Plague* out of the forbidding and mysterious Dalmatian Cove, spit on the idea of a code.

As I mentioned earlier, there's a difference between a criminal and a pirate. I have it on good authority from several shepherds that we

learned the word “pirate” from Man-penned adventure books, though I've never seen one personally. The distinction is subtle, but it is there. And these two embodied that difference in their words and deeds.

Honorable Theft

Sabu told an enthusiastic Polly about how he hid in a box on board *Plastic Minnow* and only emerged that evening – the very evening I'm recording this tale. He recognized some of the crew: the bombastic, kind-hearted Captain Juniper Pipe and the grumbly ship medic Bugs Electrachilde, who often tells tales at the Lark's Head. He couldn't bring himself to harm this oft-times friendly pirates. So, he was forced to act with stealth instead.

Sabu snuck around the ship like the lizard he is, hiding behind a barrel here, secreting himself beneath a coil of rope there. He scouted out his prey and eventually found it. The chest taken from his ship was in Captain Pipe's quarters! What Sabu did next impresses me still.

He started a fire.

According to Sabu's account, it was no inferno. He drizzled some pitch onto the deck and set it alight, hiding from sight as the crew rushed to put out the flames. He then broke into the captain's quarters and liberated the chest, though not before ensuring that the contents were intact. Now armed with the chest, what was he to do? Well, there's the impressive part. As he'd been darting around the ship, he'd been loosening ropes and sawing through knots, planning for this exact moment. As *Plastic Minnow's* crew assembled to douse the fire, he severed the final cord and down came the main sail, swaddling the whole bunch of them! In the confusion, he jumped overboard with his chest!

I expect you exclaim now “Surely ‘Stumpy’ Sabu didn't swim in the Acid Sea all the way back to Waterdog Port, and with a chest in his arms?!”

Of course he didn't. As Polly remarked to Sabu, at the table not five feet from where I sat, “The first law in our pirate's code: Always come equipped with an emergency rowboat.”

(One of many “first laws” I heard that night, mind you.) Sabu had lashed a small boat to *Plastic Minnow* before the ship set sail, and having jumped into it, rowed all the way back to Waterdog Port with the treasure at his feet! That, my friends, is the mark of a bold and genius pirate. He stole his plunder, tied up the crew, and made his escape without a shot fired or his identity known.

Never-Ending Adventure

Our story is nearly at an end, and I can tell you as I wrote this, I was feverish with my pen, transcribing everything I could hear “Stumpy” Sabu and “Pally” Polly saying to each other. My only unanswered questions had to do with why Sabu was so grim when he arrived at this tavern, and where the treasure was now. I was about to pluck up the courage to ask when I found the two pirates stood either side of me.

“We’ve been listening to you scratching away at your paper all night,” said Polly, peering at my work.

“And when you’ve got eyes like mine, it’s easy enough to spot someone leaning back on a barstool to catch your every word,” added Sabu, placing his webbed paw on my forearm.

I was worried. This was the Old Quarter, and many an intrusive writer’s snout has been cut when diving too deep into the murk of this section of our city. Man knows I’ve had enough run-ins with the gangs and guilds alike here to say I know when danger approaches. Looking at the two pirates flanking me, I felt that danger.

I pleaded with them to allow me to tell their tale and change some names. Maybe even change the location to Port Matthew or Dalmatian Cove. After all, nobody would believe Sabu had been to the Governor’s Mansion, sneaked through the docks, boarded a ship, stowed away, stole treasure, and rowed back, all in one night.

That’s when the two of them grinned at me. Sabu tapped my sheaves of parchment. “Of course they won’t believe it,” he beamed. “That’s why when you write it, you’ve got to be as honest as you can. A pirate needs people like you to build a reputation! You’re just missing the ending.”

I eagerly took up my pen as Sabu leaned against the bar, lifting the half-tail for which he earned his name. “I did row all the way into Waterdog Port, it’s true,” he said, stroking his scales absently. “But I’m no brawler. For all my deeds, I’m only fit to row short distances. I was beyond exhausted. I had to ask a dock worker to help me from the boat and lift the chest up onto a cart for me. I even paid for the service.” Sabu paused. “I made a mistake.”

The end of my pen snapped. I drew forth a spare. “I should never trust treasure to anyone outside my crew,” Sabu sighed. “This dockworker was unknown to me. Just a young cat. But I should have recognized the two rings on his little finger, denoting him as a member of Ulf’s gang of pirates.” He shuddered repeating the name.

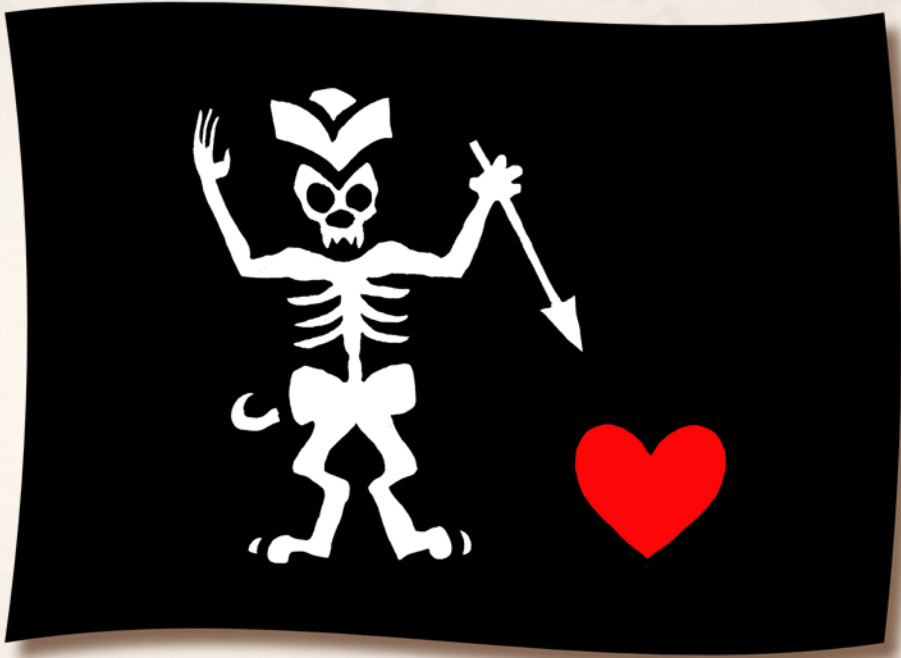
“That two-headed knave’s agents are everywhere, and, spying a pirate with a treasure chest and no support, his little kitten only went and ran off with the loot, pushing the cart away toward an alley I’m sure leads to the Underport. But alas, I was too exhausted to follow. So instead I found Polly and decided to drown my sorrows.” Sabu grimaced, dropping his tail. “It seems that giant isn’t satisfied cutting me short; he wishes to rob me blind as well.”

I asked the two pirates what they were going to do next, and the question drew smiles from both as they ordered a round of drinks for the house. “Well you see, friend dog, when a pirate hires another pirate to steal some treasure, only for the second pirate to have that treasure stolen by thieves working for a pirate lord, and that second pirate then needs to steal it from another ship of pirates, only to

have it stolen yet again by... a fifth or sixth pirate?" Polly contemplated the math and after a few seconds of calculation added "Yes, definitely fifth."

I waited for the conclusion, but nothing was forthcoming so I asked, "Yes? What happens next?"

Sabu downed his drink, wiped his mouth, and looked me keen in the eyes. "Well then, that means Polly and I have some pirating to do."





Chapter Two: Pirate's Life for Me

In order to sail the high seas, you'll first need to make your own swashbuckling character! In this chapter, you'll find everything you need to create an adventurous pirate, be they a bird, lizard, dog, or cat. There are new species of birds and lizards, some additional rules for pirate characters, and even new callings for any species.



The ocean might call anyone to its waves at any time, too, so a cat who is a mancer or a dog who's a guardian might join a crew, board a ship, and sail off to adventure!

There's no need to restrict your party to the six callings starting on p. 33. If existing characters would like to try life on the high seas, Guides might allow them to begin taking tricks or secrets from a pirate calling, as per the cross-calling hacks in *Pugmire* (p. 168) and *Monarchies of Mau* (p. 180). This is optional, but it could be fun to have an artisan or tracker go a'sailing while also picking up some new abilities!

LIZARDS

The lizard families are still elusive and mysterious to most dogs and cats from Pugmire and the monarchies. They tend to live in nomadic bands, traversing the more arid regions of the world, though a pawful can be found scattered throughout any major city, and their caravans stop in border cities and settlements with some frequency to trade supplies, goods, information, and messages. Lizards rarely settle down in one place, and those that do are referred to by other members of their species as “hibernal.” Though it’s not common, it’s also not looked down upon, and lizards will often visit their hibernal family members when they come to town or the few small, permanent lizard settlements to trade, bringing tales of their travels since the family was last together.

Lizards are consummate storytellers. In their low-pitched, pleasantly articulate tones, they spin tales about places and wonders of which the most imaginative cat might only dream. It’s not uncommon for a young dog or cat to choose to lead a life of adventure after hearing a lizard storyteller speak of far-off wonders and ruins filled with plastic. Finding those ruins based on the embellished yarns of a traveling lizard, however, is often a much harder proposition than they expect.

Though most denizens of Pugmire and the monarchies think of the lizards as belonging to “tribes,” that’s a term they applied out of ignorance of lizard culture. Lizards themselves refer to their bands as “families,” regardless of what kinds of lizards are in the family or whether they are related. Many lizard families comprise all three types of lizard – geckos, turtles, and serpents – and they all look quite different. Often, a cat or dog seeing a lizard family for the first time is struck with confusion over the fact that its members look drastically different from one another, even more so than most groups of cats, dogs, or rats and mice.

Even the term “lizard” is not truly correct. Much like the nomenclature of the “badger tribes,” which include weasels and all polecats, “lizard” is a blanket term that most species in the world use

to mean “smooth-skinned one.” The term is even occasionally used to bully young kittens who are naturally hairless, though if any adult hears the taunting, they will almost always take them aside to remind them that being different isn’t a bad thing. Smooth-skinned, furred, or feathered, everyone looks the way they are supposed to.

On the inside, lizard culture is as rich and full of history as the cat and dog kingdoms. Though there has never been a single lizard ruler or ruling council, each family has a matriarch to whom they turn to settle disputes and lead the way. Whenever more than one lizard family gathers in the same place, the matriarchs will meet in private over the course of one to several evenings, swapping information, secrets, and news that need to be spread across all the lizard families. This whisper network ensures all lizards are up to date on the doings of each family, and know who to watch out for, which places to go and which to avoid, and if there are any families that require aid.

Though they can appear standoffish, lizards are anything but. They merely have a culture that depends quite heavily on their ancestral rituals and customs. Their ways may seem odd or mysterious to strangers, but most of their greetings and offers of hospitality are simple at their root. If a cat or dog approaches a colorful lizard encampment or caravan, they will be offered a small dish of salt, which is very important to lizards. The cat or dog is expected to taste the salt, and the lizard will do the same. Once this ritual is completed, and various niceties are exchanged, the visitor will be treated after as an honored guest unless they commit a terrible faux pas. Lizards eat communally as well and expect guests to at least sample each dish placed before them, even if it is a food with which they are unfamiliar. It is perfectly fine to decline after the initial taste, but trying the food indicates trust among the lizards. If their guest doesn’t trust them, how can they trust their guest?

Salt is important to lizards for a few reasons. Most families make pilgrimages every few months

to the salt pan ruins to restock, for the mineral is used as a seasoning, a means of water retention in the arid climes, and as a component of both their religious rites and their alkalists' magic. If a family falls on hard times, they are said to have "run out of salt," and other families will do their best to assist.

Naming conventions among lizard families are usually easy to understand. A lizard's parent gives them a first name, but when they come of age, they choose their own first name. Their surname is always the name of their mother with "childe" attached to the end, so a lizard named Kaitha who is the daughter of Ranu will be Kaitha Ranuchilde. If she has offspring, their last name will be Kaithachilde. Lizards use the term "clutchmate" to refer to a lizard to whom they are blood related, whether sibling, mother, or great-uncle. This can cause confusion among other species, but lizards don't place as much stock in lineage as some do – the enjoyment they get from confusing outsiders is purely secondary.

Lizards do not generally think much about the Old Ones. The main thing they worship is the sun, as it gives them energy and makes the plants grow. Lizards are not very religious in any case, and their sun worship is more spiritual than theological. They are known to sit on stones and meditate when the sun is at its zenith, soaking in the warmth and clearing their minds. Pirate lizards may be found in clear spots of deck at this time, but they won't be overly irritated if they are disturbed. Lizards are calm, though if they get agitated, they can be as quick to rouse as anyone else.

As far as dress, lizards wear whatever best suits the climate. In warm or tropical places, they are usually found in flowing, comfortable garments in white and other light colors, and in colder areas they prefer furred hats and greatcoats. They usually keep their faces covered outside of their own communities, mostly because of their own hospitality rules. Most hibernal lizards, and many pirates, forgo this custom in favor of blending in.

Lizard Families

Lizards can belong to one of three types, though variations on size, skin color, scale pattern, and personality are found within each overarching type. Lizards are a diverse people; each is unique in their own way.

Geckos

Geckos are the talkers of the lizards. Generally, when a cat or dog imagines a lizard storyteller, they are imagining a gecko. These lizards are charismatic and agile, darting from one corner of a party to another as fast as they flit between conversations. Physically, they are the most colorful of the lizards, ranging from a solid bright green to any number of base colors with myriad spots and patterns on their skin.

Quick of wit and body, geckos blend seamlessly into any social situation, which is why they are most often chosen for trade or ambassadorial roles. They are fantastic at reading a situation and know when to use their biting tongues or when to offer a quiet ear and empathy. Though they are the lizards most used to the public eye, and to navigating other species' politics, they rarely end up as matriarchs, as most lack the focus the role requires.

Though geckos are thought of as flighty by other lizards, they still have a gravitas many other species envy. They can go from an animated conversation to a solemn tale of loss in the blink of an eye, while continuing to butter up the dog who wants to purchase their wares at a steep discount.

Their energy is calculated, and they know precisely to whom they are speaking. If they step on anyone's toes, it's because they intended to.

Ability bonus: +1 Dex, +1 Cha

Family knack: Chameleon (p. 30)

Serpents

Serpents move just as quickly on their powerful lower bodies as any other creature does on its legs. They are quieter than geckos, but a bit more thoughtful, and they target their speech, actions, and questions in calculated strikes.

While more than capable of carrying on an intelligent conversation on most topics, serpents prefer to listen instead of speaking. They consider their words carefully, and only go on the verbal offensive when they feel they have the upper paw. In battle or when exploring, however, serpents are most likely to be on the front lines, utilizing their intelligence and strength as weapons and tools of leadership. It is common for a lizard family's matriarch to be a serpent.

Serpents have powerful arms and can coil and strike in a heartbeat, so they are just as good at climbing and jumping as most species. They are better, however, at moving over harsh terrain or underwater, as they can glide easily instead of picking their way across with bipedal legs.

Serpents come in a variety of hues and markings, from flat black to bright striations. All are excellent at squeezing information from their foes and gleaning nuance in delicate negotiations. Though they work well with most other creatures, most serpents have a particular aversion toward polecats and weasels and have to work harder than usual to engage in civil discourse with them.

Serpents tend towards vanity, and when alone may spend a great amount of time tending to their scales, clothing, and armor, making sure all are bright and clean, regardless of how flashy or expensive they are.

Ability bonus: +1 Str, +1 Int

Family knack: Slither (p. 30)

Turtles

Turtles may be regarded as slow or quiet by other species, but lizards value their contemplative nature and sagacious wisdom. Turtles spend more time meditating than the other members of their families, and most only speak after considering their words carefully. The same can be said for their actions. Though turtles take their time before jumping into a fray or choosing a course, when they do, they're efficient and resilient.

Turtles' skins and shells also come in a variety of colorations and patterns, though the majority are neutral brown, green, yellow, and black. Some turtles paint designs on each other's shells or carve them shallowly into the hard carapaces. These designs can be anything from sigils telling the stories of their family to abstract aesthetics. More than other lizards, turtles prefer loose, flowing garments, as tailoring much more than a robe to cover one's shell is a tall order.

All turtles can also use their massive shells for defensive purposes, retracting their limbs

into them and hunkering down to make their soft limbs and head harder to strike. They tend to be tacticians when among a party of combatants, planning and thinking up the best possible ways to proceed. Listening to a turtle's advice has saved many a lizard's life over the years.

Ability bonus: +1 Con, +1 Wis

Family knack: Hunker Down (p. 30)

Lizard Character Creation Checklist

The following explains out how to create a lizard character for *Pirates of Pugmire*. Feel free to tweak or adjust these steps to better represent a non-pirate lizard character!

1. Choose a **calling**: crusader, gundog, torpedo, mystic, or alkalist.
2. Choose a **family**: gecko, serpent, or turtle.
3. Choose a **background**: marine, sailor, or any from *Pugmire* (pp. 62–63) or *Monarchies of Mau* (pp. 69–70). Lizards get the Seafarer knack, but you can instead choose a more appropriate background trick from *Pugmire* (p. 69), or the Cat of the World secret from *Monarchies of Mau* (p. 87).
4. Assign **ability scores**, adjust them based on lizard family, and mark **primary abilities**. Then calculate **ability modifiers**, **stamina dice**, **stamina points**, and **proficiency bonus**. More information in *Pugmire* (pp. 64–66) or *Monarchies of Mau* (pp. 71–74).
5. Write down four **skills**, two based on background and two based on calling. Skills are found in *Pugmire* (pp. 66–68) and *Monarchies of Mau* (pp. 74–76).
6. Write down all your **knacks**, based on calling and family.
7. Record all **equipment** in your rucksack, based on calling and background.
8. Calculate **defense**, **initiative**, and **speed**. Lizards can move 30 feet per turn, or 35 if they drop to all fours to run. More in *Pugmire* (p. 83) or *Monarchies of Mau* (p. 94).
9. Choose three **personality traits**. Lizards may choose either set of personality traits from *Pugmire* or *Monarchies of Mau*, so while they'll have an ideal and a flaw either way, it's up to the player whether their second trait is a bond or a mystery.
10. **Name** your character and write their story.

BIRDS

Birds are better known to Pugmire and the monarchies at large, partially because storytelling is so intrinsic to their culture. Even cats and dogs who haven't ever met a bird have likely heard some of their stories, brought into the cat and dog realms via travelers and adventurers. Though many may see the stories birds tell as fabrications and fantasy, birds value truth in their stories above all else. As with most folks, though, birds also tend to see themselves as the heroes in their stories; therefore, what's true may be up for debate at times. Whenever birds gather, from a simple duo to a huge reunion, the words flow well into the night along with their favorite seed-wine.

Many birds' favorite stories center on the Sky Kingdom, the closest thing birds have to a religion. The Sky Kingdom is a subject of some debate. Is it a physical, real paradise from which few birds return, or more of a metaphysical plane, where all birds go when they pass on to the next life? Sparrows hold tight to the rumors of it being real, as they are the only ones who could access a place so high up, while crows and parrots tend to consider it a fanciful legend. Every bird knows a story of another bird they or their friend or relative knew who returned from the Sky Kingdom with riches and wonders, but no one ever claims to have gone there themselves.

There are three different main types of birds, referred to as "nests," in their culture. There isn't a particular name for a group of birds, but groups may be made up of birds from all three nests. The nests are sparrows, crows, and parrots. Bird culture divides the three in a hierarchy, though the nests can and do intermingle. Sparrows are at the top of the ladder, as they are the ones who have the full power of flight; crows are in the middle, as they can glide for short distances; and parrots are seen as the lowest nest, as they are land-bound and lack any sort of wing. The hierarchy is influenced by each nest's proximity to the Sky Kingdom. (There are also rumors of a fourth nest, but all the stories told about them are in the past tense. It's unclear whether they

evolved or merged into one of the other nests, or if something nefarious befell them.)

Birds dress in gaudy, colorful clothing to complement their plumage. The most brightly colored birds tend to wear one or two solid colors that show off their feathers to best advantage, while the neutral-toned birds array themselves in a cacophony of hues and tones. This can be jarring even to the cats of the monarchies, who see birds as gaudy and obnoxiously candid.

After all, it's well-known that birds and cats don't get along. This is mostly due to extreme cultural differences. Birds are mistrustful of cats and believe their lack of candor and addiction to secrets can't be good for them or anyone else. Cats, on the other paw, value secrecy, caution, and putting on a good front, while birds rush in, spew information and tales at anyone who will listen, and are often loud and talkative. Because of this, birds do make excellent messengers, so long as the message doesn't contain sensitive information.

The other thing often keeping birds and cats from being close friends is the former's penchant for music, dance, and song. Though cats might enjoy an instrumental piece or two, most of them are notoriously poor singers, which is why cats (like some ministers and wanderers) who do sing well are often afforded some celebrity. Most birds, however, have a natural talent for song, especially sparrows. Bands of roving bird musicians sometimes travel from dog town to Pugmire to lizard camp, making their way through the world by entertaining those around them. Cats mistrust these roving bands, and the root cause of that might have as much to do with envy as it does with cultural clashes.

Dogs tend to be friendlier toward birds, reasoning that if the Old Ones uplifted them, there was a reason behind it. Most dogs of Pugmire admire their forthrightness and loyalty to each other, if not to the Old Ones, and find their songs and dances amusing.

Birds are given their unusual-sounding names by their families, whether it's their family of choice or their family of birth. This might mean that a bird one previously encountered as "Jozy" is "Irvine" the next time they visit. Birds don't change their names too often, but if a chosen family is a driving force in their life, often the bird will ask, as a gesture of loyalty, to be renamed. This is a great honor, so the naming family would never do anything so crass as give them a joke name, unless somehow appropriate to the bird in question.

The second half of a bird's name is called their "story name," which can also change over time. It's usually related to an accomplishment the bird made, an adventure they went on, or a treasure they discovered, though it may also relate to a prominent physical feature. Birds choose these names themselves, based on whatever makes them most proud. Thus, the young "Jozy of the Thirteen Stripes" may become "Irvine of the Three Jewels" over time. Story names usually include a number, though not all do — when asked by outsiders for the reason why, most birds simply shrug or make up an elaborate lie.

When not traveling, birds prefer to live communally in large buildings, which they call "cages," a word translated from Old Ones' writings to mean "bird house." Having everyone in one central space means it's easier to flit from story to story and group to group. Though the large, wooden cages do have small rooms branching off for privacy when needed, most birds stay in the spacious main area until they need to sleep. The

cages are multiple stories tall and are decorated with things the birds bring back from their adventures, from bits of cloth and shining baubles to artifacts of the Old Ones and precious gems.

Birds don't place too much emphasis on the monetary value of items, preferring instead to hold the story as the most important thing they get from any excursion. Thus, items the cats or dogs would find precious beyond belief are often used as simple décor or as proof that a tale is true. This would cause strife if the cats and dogs knew about the habit, but only birds and their most trusted allies are permitted to enter their cages. Old superstitions die hard, and the one about cages protecting birds from all other creatures is among the oldest in bird culture.

Bird Nests

The three nests are names taken from the Old Ones, and birds of myriad sizes, colors, and appearances can belong to any nest. The only thing that is consistent for each nest is the sort of wing the birds within have (or don't!). What the Guide and players might think is a sparrow, due to the bird being dun and slight, can actually be a parrot if she has arms and no wings!

Parrots

The physically strong parrots are also the most talkative of the birds. They'll arm wrestle a dog in a tavern for a pint, then pay for it with a story, making the dog feel they got the best end of the deal. They are fast-talking and slick, but rarely sleazy. Instead, they excel at fitting in with any crowd and rarely find themselves out of place.

Parrots are born imitators and tell their stories and tales with great flair, using an array of voices and accents to bring a cast of diverse characters and locales to life. The one sure way to upset the genial parrots is to stop paying attention to them while they're talking to you or spinning a yarn. If one notices someone's attention drifting, they will squawk a sharp-tongued admonishment or physically remind them with a pinch or a meaty arm slung around their shoulders, forcing the attention back to the star of the show.

Still, it's hard to stay mad at a parrot; their jovial natures are their best features, even more so than their knack for narrative and ease at making



Some birds smarter than me have discovered that there were many other families of birds back in the Ages of Man: cockatoos, finches, and birbs, to name a few. Particularly conservative birds occasionally incorporate their ancient family names into their story names, like my old crow friend "Provost the Ninety-Seventh Cockatoo." Just a note that what we call sparrows, crows, and parrots don't necessarily line up with what the Old Ones believed them to be. I'm sure there's a story in there somewhere!

friends. They are, of course, capable of silence and action when need be and are happy to listen to the capable crows on matters of import before using their strong voices to rally a crew or issue orders. They may seem affable, but they're the birds whose faces attackers most often see before they're knocked senseless. Parrots do not have any wings to speak of, yet their arms are incredibly powerful to compensate.

Ability bonus: +1 Str, +1 Cha

Family knack: Spin (p. 30)

Crows

Crows are the toughest of the bird nestes. They are quieter than the others, but use their voices to better effect, whether it's telling a story in only the words needed to convey their point or issuing orders to be followed without question. The most militaristic of the nestes, crows are often tacticians and researchers, lending to both pursuits a discerning eye and steady pace. Though many birds are notoriously picky about their diets, crows will eat anything offered to them, which makes them very useful in dealing with the lizards, whose cuisine may seem off-putting to birds with more delicate stomachs.

Of all the birds, crows have the greatest fascination with trinkets and ornaments, regardless of their value. Some hoard these items, while others bring anything and everything they can back as gifts to their friends or loved ones. Crows' friends find themselves on the receiving end of more small gifts than they can easily display. Adventurous or nomadic crows sometimes take their collections with them, the smaller bits and bob displayed on their clothing and feathers and a few others in their rucksacks, just so they can take them out while telling stories or simply look over them in their quiet moments.

Crows' partial wings are attached to their arms, and they can use them to glide short distances. This makes them ideal scouts or members of landing parties, as they can climb a tree or hillock then easily rejoin the group to relay what they saw. They can also easily get to dry land from a ship to secure lead lines.

Ability bonus: +1 Con, +1 Int

Family knack: Glide (p. 30)

Sparrows

Though some think sparrows flighty compared to the other bird nestes, they are often simply deep in thought. Keen observers, sparrows float between conversations, gathering knowledge. Because of this, they are usually the information repositories among the birds and the messengers both within their own society and outside of it. Of all the birds, they are the most discreet and know best when to keep their beaks shut.

Sparrows are most likely to excel at singing, and as a rule, their stories are set to song. Even if not sung, their tales are melodious and rhythmic, which makes them pleasant to hear and easy to remember.

The sparrow neste is considered by all to be at the top of the bird hierarchy because of their ability of true flight. They alone may be able to one day reach the Sky Kingdom. Their wings sprout from their backs, allowing the fine-boned sparrows to take to the skies for brief periods of time. Sparrows tend to wear form-fitting, lightweight clothing to alleviate wind resistance and to avoid adding unnecessary weight.

When walking on land or the deck of a ship, they keep their broad wings tucked neatly behind them, though if they feel threatened or are in the heat of anger, they occasionally unfurl them to make themselves look bigger or punctuate their point. They are also the pickiest eaters of all the nestes, preferring grains and fruits, though they will make the occasional exception for delicately prepared game dishes.

Ability bonus: +1 Dex, +1 Wis.

Family knack: Soar (p. 30)



It's a common misconception that all birds can fly. I wish that were true! However, our stories of the ancients confirm that lots of birds couldn't fly back then, either. More puzzling, some very colorful birds that look like me might be able to fly. Remember, if they can glide or fly, they're not parrots: they're part of the crow or sparrow neste. If you really want to make all birds fly in your chronicle, you can let birds in any neste choose the Soar knack.

Bird Character Creation Checklist

The following explains how to create a bird character for *Pirates of Pugmire*. As with lizards, go ahead and tweak or adjust this to represent a non-pirate bird character!

1. Choose a **calling**: crusader, gundog, torpedo, mystic, or rimer.
2. Choose a **neste**: crow, parrot, or sparrow.
3. Choose a **background**: marine, sailor, or any from *Pugmire* (pp. 62–63) or *Monarchies of Mau* (pp. 69–70). Birds get the Seafarer knack, but you can instead choose a more appropriate background trick from *Pugmire* (p. 69), or the Cat of the World secret from *Monarchies of Mau* (p. 87).
4. Assign **ability scores**, adjust them based on bird neste, and mark **primary abilities**. Then calculate **ability modifiers**, **stamina dice**, **stamina points**, and **proficiency bonus**. More information in *Pugmire* (pp. 64–66) or *Monarchies of Mau* (pp. 71–74).
5. Write down four skills, two based on background and two based on calling. Skills are found in *Pugmire* (pp. 66–68) and *Monarchies of Mau* (pp. 74–76).
6. Write down all your **knacks**, based on calling and neste.
7. Write down all **equipment** in your rucksack, based on calling and background.
8. Calculate **defense**, **initiative**, and **speed**. Birds can move 35 feet per turn. However, birds cannot drop to all fours to run. More in *Pugmire* (p. 83) or *Monarchies of Mau* (p. 94).
9. Choose three **personality traits**. Birds may choose either set of personality traits from *Pugmire* or *Monarchies of Mau*, so while they'll have an ideal and a flaw either way, it's up to the player whether their second trait is a bond or a mystery.
10. **Name** your character and write their story.

Lizards and Birds, Dogs and Cats

Unlike dogs and cats, lizards and birds don't have their own nations. They live in the margins of the cities of other species, or as part of a larger, more cosmopolitan cultures. That said, there are general trends in how lizards and birds relate to dogs and cats.

Lizards are, as a rule, nomadic. They prefer to migrate to more comfortable climates throughout the year, and never stay in one place for too long. The lizards of Waterdog Port are somewhat of an exception — there are many long-term lizard residents — but even then they tend to go on long trips or voyages to shake off the wanderlust that builds up inside them. This tendency to travel makes them ideal merchants and messengers. Indeed, lizard merchants were vital in sharing information between Pugmire and the Monarchies of Mau soon after the War of Dogs and Cats. That said, most lizards generally don't show their faces to outsiders like dogs or cats, making them seem somewhat mysterious or aloof. A lizard showing their face on a regular basis to you means either you are a trusted friend, or they are generally dismissive of the whole tradition (as many pirates tend to be).

Birds also like to travel, but in much shorter bursts. They don't have wanderlust so much as a keen desire to learn and tell stories, so their travels are both more intentional and more aimless than lizards. Dogs generally don't have a strong opinion of birds — birds are great to get the latest news and gossip, but between some birds' tendency to exaggerate and the fact that bad news travels faster than good, it can mean that the stories the birds spread aren't always appreciated. But birds are strongly disliked in the Monarchies of Mau, so it's a rare bird that travels there intentionally. A few have made their home there, but more often than not their metaphorical wings are clipped as they are forced to live in confined areas. Thus, birds are more likely to associate with dogs or lizards instead of cats.

Backgrounds

Backgrounds set even two pirates of the same species and calling apart. A humble sailor and a former merchant might not have much in common, even if they follow a similar path now.

Below are two new backgrounds for *Pirates of Pugmire*, along with a background knack. Feel free to use them in any *Pugmire* or *Monarchies of Mau* game as well. Just because your character was a sailor doesn't mean they have to be one forever.

Marine

Marines are seafaring soldiers. Most were trained on land before being dispatched to serve on the high seas for one interest or another. They are committed to defending adventurous pirates from raiding parties of nefarious enemies as well as from natural monsters and menaces. They remain strict in their dress and attitude and do best when they can follow a regimented routine.

Skills: Intimidate, Sense Motive.

Rucksack: An official writ granting you the right to patrol the seas, a set of fine clothes, and a purse containing some plastic coins.

Background Knack: Seafarer.

Sailor

You grew up on the high seas and were climbing rigging and unfurling sails from a tender age. You received most of your education on deck or while working under the sun, but you were happy to do it. You far prefer being on a seagoing vessel than on dry land and would rather be part of a crew than wander alone.

Skills: Know Nature, Survive.

Rucksack: A map, a set of common clothes, and a belt pouch containing a few plastic coins.

Background Knack: Seafarer.

Backgrounds for pirates aren't restricted to the two listed here. Any background from *Pugmire* (pp. 62–63) or *Monarchies of Mau* (pp. 69–70) can be used with a little tweaking. For example, a merchant could conduct their trade by sea, or a sage may decide they know enough about the world on land and want to expand their boundaries.

The same applies for using any existing backgrounds for lizards and birds. Perhaps instead of

a soldier from the monarchies, a lizard was a caravan guard for their family. A bird disciple may have spent all their life studying tales of the Sky Kingdom before embarking on a life of piracy.

Ability Scores

Like in *Pugmire* and *Monarchies of Mau*, every character has six abilities. You allocate scores to each of them, just in like those games. Once you've assigned your six scores, add additional bonuses to your scores as per your bird's or lizard's neste or family.

Family/Neste	Ability Score Bonus
Geckos	+1 Dex, +1 Cha
Serpents	+1 Str, +1 Int
Turtles	+1 Con, +1 Wis
Crows	+1 Con, +1 Int
Parrots	+1 Str, +1 Cha
Sparrows	+1 Dex, +1 Wis

New Calling Knacks

These are the new knacks for the alkalist, gundog, torpedo, and rimer callings. At first level, each pirate starts with one of two calling knacks (see pp. 33–45).

Catalyst

Alkalists combine salt, herbs, and compounds from their alkalist's kits to fuel their potions and bombs. Alkalists with this knack know how to create and detonate bombs, which can have an array of effects, and they can also create beneficial potions. They look like nothing more than glass jars full of swirling liquid to any who aren't in the know.

An alkalist can have up to their proficiency bonus in bombs or potions, spread among all the types they can make. When they run out, they must spend time either in a town or in the wild gathering supplies before they can replenish their bombs or potions, though if the crew agrees, bombs may also be obtained by spending plunder (p. 50) or by finding it among the plunder itself. All bombs may be thrown up to 40 feet away from the alkalist, and a typical bomb's blast fills an area with a 10-foot radius.

The first time this knack is chosen, choose one from the following options:

- **Acid Bomb:** Acid bombs deal 1d4 per the alkalist's level in acid damage to anyone caught within their area of effect, including allies.
- **Fire Bomb:** Anyone, including allies, caught within this bomb's area takes 3d6 fire damage.
- **Gill Potion:** This potion allows its drinker to breathe underwater, even in the Acid Sea, for up to an hour.
- **Health Bomb:** This bomb allows an alkalist to heal their whole party at once. When detonated, all caught within its area of effect receive 1d4 stamina points per the alkalist's level in healing, including enemies.
- **Heath Flask:** Contains three doses of health potion, each of which allows the user to regain one stamina die. The person drinking the potion can also spend as many stamina dice as they desire when they drink the potion, including the one they just gained. The doses may be spread out among up to three allies. If one person drinks the whole flask at once, they gain the Confused Condition for one hour unless they succeed on a Constitution saving throw, difficulty 15.
- **Smoke Bomb:** A smoke bomb gives those caught within, including allies, the Confused and Blind Conditions for two rounds or until they find their way out.
- **Tar Bomb:** This allows alkalists to create bombs full of a sticky substance, which does no damage but slows any caught within to half of their normal movement speed, rounded down.

Refinements

- The alkalist can choose an additional type of bomb. This refinement can be taken multiple times.

Jongleur

Anyone with the jongleur knack is a natural entertainer and can use their performance skills to help revitalize wounded allies during a rest.

If the jongleur or any allies who can witness the performance regain hit points at the end of the rest by spending one or more stamina dice, each of those characters regains an extra 1d6 stamina points.

Refinements

- Any character healing during a rest gains an additional 1d10 stamina points.
- The jongleur can may pick one entertainment craft at which they excel (e.g., singing, dancing, acting, playing an instrument, acrobatics, storytelling, poetry, juggling, or make up your own at Guide discretion). The jongleur doubles their proficiency bonus on all rolls using Perform.

Magic Tricks

Rimers can become attuned to magic, which grants them the use of some spells. They usually use these to enhance their storytelling, but also for more direct purposes. Upon taking this knack, a rimer can choose where to focus their magic (artisan or mancer – see the sidebar) and they gain a number of spell slots equal to 2 plus their Constitution modifier each level. In addition, they gain three basic spells based on their focus. Rimers must also work their magic spells into a performance, in lieu of a focus (such as the ones artisans or mancers use).



If you're playing a rimer and you only have *Pugmire*, you may choose spells (including basic spells) from the artisan spell list (p. 102). If you only have *Monarchies of Mau*, you may choose basic and full spells from the mancer spell list (p. 115). Any rimer may choose to substitute one or more spells with pirate spells from this book, provided they are for the mancer or artisan callings (pp. 55-57). A rimer always uses Charisma as her spellcasting ability, no matter where she draws spells from.

With Guide permission, you can also mix and match your spells from both lists!

Refinements

- The rimer can learn four more spells at her current level of advancement (for a total of six). This refinement can be taken multiple times.
- The rimer can choose spells of the next-highest spell level. This refinement may be taken multiple times.

Pistoleer

This knack gives certain callings the ability to use firearms. It makes anyone with this knack immune to Gunpowder Panic (p. 31) and grants them the training and knowledge to load, shoot, and repair most firearms (barring any relic or antique guns they may find). Characters with this knack also get Exotic Weapon Proficiency for free.

Family/Neste Knacks

These are the knacks to which each lizard family or bird neste has access. At first level, a pirate gets one of these knacks to start out. There is also a section of *additional knacks*. Depending on whether you are using *Pugmire* or *Monarchies of Mau*, your character can take additional knacks from a group of breed tricks or house secrets, depending on which starting family or neste knack you have. These knacks aren't literally dog tricks or cat secrets — we're just using the equivalents here.

Chameleon

When interacting with anyone who isn't a gecko, a lizard with this knack receives advantage on Charisma checks to make friends or blend in with the local culture. If successful, the gecko glean a piece of knowledge from body language or their surroundings they may pass on to their allies. They also gain advantage on Sneak checks in areas they are familiar with.

Additional Knacks: Companion (*Pugmire*) or House Cymric (*Monarchies of Mau*)

Glide

Crows can glide short distances over a single combat turn using their attached wings (at a speed of 35). This makes them adept at covering difficult terrain and avoiding many kinds of

traps, and provides them with a quick advantage in combat. For one round, crows gain advantage on any Traverse rolls and Dexterity saving throws to avoid ground-level traps. In addition, while gliding, they can make a Dexterity saving throw to gain advantage on their next attack in combat.

Additional Knacks: Fettle (*Pugmire*) or House Siberian (*Monarchies of Mau*)

Hunker Down

Turtles can partially withdraw into their hard shells, making them difficult targets to hit. When using this knack, turtles increase their defense by 2 and gain 1d4 on Constitution saving throws for the rest of the scene. They may use this knack a number of times equal to their Constitution modifier (minimum of one) before they must sleep.

Additional Knacks: Fettle (*Pugmire*) or House Siberian (*Monarchies of Mau*)

Slither

Legless serpents have a far easier time than those with lower limbs when covering dangerous ground. They add their Strength modifier to any Traverse checks, as well as to any rolls involving travel, swimming, or moving over dangerous ground. They also get advantage on Sneak checks, as scales make far less noise than boots.

Additional Knacks: Worker (*Pugmire*) or House Korat (*Monarchies of Mau*)

Soar

Sparrows can fly short distances (at a speed of 35), allowing them to add twice their Dexterity modifier to defense if they are able to fly up or out of reach. During combat, they can fly for a number of turns equal to their Constitution modifier plus their proficiency bonus. This also gives them advantage on Traverse rolls to cross difficult terrain. This can only be used a number of times equal to the character's Constitution modifier (minimum of one) before they must sleep.

Additional Knacks: Runner (*Pugmire*) or House Rex (*Monarchies of Mau*)

Spin

Parrots are masters of spinning tales and fabricating stories. Due to their bombastic natures and quick minds, they may double their

proficiency bonus on rolls involving the Perform or Persuade skills, such as when bluffing, convincing, or making up a story to distract someone. Also, because they lack wings, they have a four-footed running speed of 35.

Additional Knacks: Worker (*Pugmire*) or House Korat (*Monarchies of Mau*)

Background Knack

Characters that take the Marine or Sailor background gain the following background knack.

Seafarer

This character is well known among pirates, sailors, and other seafaring people. She

can easily find somewhere to rest or hide among such folk, and they will attempt to shield her from pursuers if their lives aren't threatened. If the player spends fortune, she can declare that a previously unknown non-player character seafarer is an old friend or crewmate on good terms with her.

Equipment

Sometimes battle on the high seas requires a different sort of armament than most people use on land. Also, the recent discovery and use of black-powder weaponry is still new; many folks don't trust it, and most still cower at its sound due to Gunpowder Panic.

Simple Weapons, Melee

Filleting Knife (finesse, light)	1d4 piercing
Boarding Axe (light)	1d6 slashing
Belaying Pin	1d4 bludgeoning

Simple Weapons, Ranged

Grappling Hook (light, ranged 20/80)	1d6 piercing
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Martial Weapons, Melee

Cutlass (finesse)	1d10 slashing
Cuttoe Sword	1d8 slashing

Martial Weapons, Ranged

Barbed Net (ranged 20–60, two-pawed)	2d6 piercing
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Exotic Weapons, Ranged

Blunderbuss (firearm 20/80, loading)	1d12 piercing
Flintlock (firearm 20/100, loading)	1d10 piercing
Wheel Lock (firearm 30/120, loading, light)	1d8 piercing



Pirate characters may use any weapons from *Pugmire* (p. 81) or *Monarchies of Mau* (p. 92) in addition to the ones found here.

Remember that only torpedoes, gundogs, and characters with Exotic Weapon Aptitude can use firearms!

Firearms and Gunpowder Panic

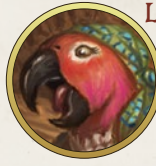
In *Pugmire* and the monarchies, firearms are an uncommon sight, largely because of an instinctive reflex that afflicts uplifted animals upon hearing their deafening reports. Called “Gunpowder Panic,” the reaction is involuntary and impacts any within direct earshot who haven't been trained to handle it. Thus, black-powder weapons are only common on the high seas and it's generally frowned upon to use them at all in

cities or even small villages, as most folks aren't immune to Gunpowder Panic.

Anyone susceptible to Gunpowder Panic who is within hearing range of a gun being fired must make a Charisma saving throw (difficulty 15) to avoid gaining the Deaf and Scared Conditions until they make a subsequent saving throw. This represents how well the character pretends to hold things together amid such scary weaponry. This applies to the firearms wielder and her allies, as well as to bystanders. Though all people (badgers, birds, cats, dogs, lizards, and rodents) must make the saving throw, most monsters don't have the panic reflex, so firing a gun into the air near a mutant crocodile or hungry shark isn't enough to scare them off.

Characters surprised by the use of a firearm might make their saving throws at a disadvantage. On the other paw, a gundog or torpedo's allies – that is, anyone in their party or on their crew – gains advantage on any saving throws against Gunpowder Panic, as they are more accustomed to the ear-splitting bangs and can steel themselves against the reflex.

Another reason guns are rare is that it's only in recent history that a pirate by the name of Ramón Armitage von Rex figured out the loading and black-powder mechanisms. The first guns used were somewhat utilitarian, but pirates are nothing if not flamboyant, so most guns in use today are covered in ornate scrollwork, gems, or



Life on the high seas is dangerous, and many pirates might be missing a paw, leg, or eye – particularly if a pistol blows up in their paws! If you want your character to have any disabilities, that's absolutely fine. You should only treat it as much of a hindrance as you, the player, wants it to be. If you'd like to make it a flaw your character has to overcome, you should let your Guide know either before or as you play.

As far as other pirates, they don't treat anyone with a disability any differently than they treat everyone else: if you hear the call of the high seas, go for it, no matter how many paws you have!

gold leaf and come with intricate loading devices. They look more like what one would expect from a fantastic, magical focus or masterwork item than most actual relics. A firearm-owning pirate cares for their weapon almost as much as they do their own crew members and spends time each day maintaining and polishing it.

Though guns are accurate and powerful, they are also deadly and dangerous. If a player ever rolls a botch for his pirate's firearms attack, the weapon explodes in the character's paws, doing maximum damage. (If this happens, it might be a good time to use Fortune!)

Callings

Pirates of Pugmire presents six new callings for your adventurers to play, each of which represents a different set of skills and knowledge gained while traveling the Acid Sea. Callings define your pirate's role and give them context within the crew. Of the pirate callings, dogs may only take crusader or gundog, which require use of the *Pugmire* core rulebook, and cats may only take torpedo or mystic, which require use of the *Monarchies of Mau* core rulebook. Though not listed here, dogs and cats might still have views on the Code of Man or the Precepts of Mau. Using those views to impact your pirate's actions or personality is completely fine!

Each calling contains the following information, some of which impacts later steps in making your pirate.

Typical pirate: What a typical pirate from this calling looks like and how they might comport themselves.

View on other callings: What the average pirate of this callings thinks of the other pirate callings. Each pirate can have individualized opinions, but this is a good place to start.

Six pirates: An assortment of pirates who might gravitate toward this calling. If you'd like, you can roll 1d6 and pick an example from this list to play.

Stamina dice: What stamina dice the calling uses. A pirate gets a number of these dice equal to their level.

Stamina points: How many stamina points the pirate gets each level.

Primary abilities: Which two ability scores the knacks for the calling are usually based on. These are also the abilities to which you add your pirate's proficiency bonus for saving throws.

Skills: What two skills you can choose for your pirate.

Rucksack: What's in your pirate's rucksack to start. You may change items with your Guide's permission and sometimes you will have an option of which equipment to choose. Each calling has one item in their rucksack acquired "under unusual circumstances." For this step, you may pick any of the unusual circumstances from the callings in *Monarchies of Mau* pp. 49-59, *Pugmire* pp. 43-53, or create your own.

First knacks: Knacks are the equivalent of tricks in *Pugmire* and secrets in *Monarchies of Mau*; these are the ones with which your character starts at first level.

Calling knacks: Which tricks or secrets the calling can draw from when using improvements, in addition to any *First Knacks* you haven't taken. If the option is listed with "or", once you take a trick or secret from one of the options provided, all your subsequent knacks must come from the same category. However, if the option is listed with "and," you can take from both categories as you please.

Example: If your Crusader takes a Guardian trick as a new knack, all future knacks must also be from the Guardian tricks. Alkalists, however, can choose knacks from both Artisans and Mancers (including the spellcasting trick and secret from each, should they choose).



Note that some First Knacks are not part of the calling knack groups. That's intentional, to give those callings a unique flavor!

Crusader

"If all I have left at the end of the day is my good word, that's enough for me."

— Macarthur Scots-Terrier

Dogs who become crusaders do so out of the noblest of intentions. Crusaders fight for what they believe in and use that belief to fuel their abilities and powerful weapon strikes. Most crusaders act as guardians and voices of the Old Ones, wielding their faith as a weapon and healing their comrades as readily as they dispatch their enemies.

Crusaders fight especially hard against the Unseen, as the Old Ones meant good dogs to do. The Code of Man is vital to their calling but, unlike shepherds, they feel Man meant them to be a force for good both on the battlefield and in prayer. They aren't always perfect, but they strive for balance and order, working to represent all the Old Ones wanted them to be with mighty blows from their weapons and patient understanding of the Code of Man.



Birds and lizards follow this calling for other reasons — birds for the eventual promise of the Sky Kingdom, and lizards for the glory of battle interspersed with the meditation and quiet contemplation of the sun. When birds take this calling, they refer to themselves as *troopers*, while lizards use the term *dervishes*.



SIX CRUSADERS

1. A quiet, reserved dog who prays over each fallen enemy.
 2. An excitable, burly dog who fights with zeal, exalting the Old Ones with every blow.
 3. A proud dog who was training to become a shepherd, but who realized battle was the only way to follow the Code.
 4. A sweet, loyal dog who is struggling with their faith, but wants to be a good dog.
 5. A lizard who meditates before every battle and can't stand being away from sunlight.
 6. A brash bird who knows they can enter the Sky Kingdom if they fight hard enough.
-

View on other callings:

- **Alkalists:** Strange enough that lizards worship the sun rather than acknowledge the Old Ones' importance, but I'm worried they're going to blow up our ship!
- **Gundogs:** I respect their morals, but do they have to be so loud about them?
- **Mystics:** While I understand the birds and lizards who take up this calling, I didn't think cats liked getting wet all that much.
- **Rimers:** Though having entertainment aboard ship is lovely, I wish they'd carry themselves with more gravitas.
- **Torpedoes:** Wonderful to have at my back in a fight – terrible to have at my back in any other situation.

Typical crusader: A crusader will always do what they think is right above all else. If they are forced to take what they consider a “wrong” or “bad” action, it will eat at them until they atone in some way, whether that's confessing their transgression to friends or members of their faith or praying on the issue for a time. Often, they attempt to find a way to make amends for whatever

they perceive they did, whether the other party is aware of being hurt or not. Crusaders believe their word is their bond and never make a promise lightly, for they are obliged to keep it.

Character Creation

Stamina dice: d10 per level

Stamina points: 10 + Constitution modifier per level

Primary abilities: Charisma and Constitution

Skills: Choose two from Heal, Intimidate, Know Arcana, Know History, Know Religion, Notice, Sense Motive, Survive, and Traverse.

Rucksack: One melee weapon and a shield or two melee weapons and no shield, one suit of armor, gloves, torches, rations, 50 feet of rope, and a token that reminds you of your faith. The token was acquired under unusual circumstances.

First knacks: Simple Weapon Aptitude, Martial Weapon Aptitude, Light Armor Aptitude, Medium Armor Aptitude, Heavy Armor Aptitude, Shield Aptitude, and choose one from either Healing or Fighting Style.

Calling knacks: Guardian or Shepherd. Spellcasting ability is Charisma.

Gundog

"I prefer to fell my enemies from a distance, thank you very much."

— Gonzales Tosa II

With thundering reports, gundogs announce their presence on any field of battle, be they aboard a ship or upon dry land. Firearms are rare and often terrifying to denizens of Pugmire and the monarchies, so gundogs generally use discretion when carrying their weapons of choice in cities and towns, though they will use them if they feel it's necessary. They are also adept at fighting up close and are fair trackers.

Though gundogs do care about honor and the Code of Man, they are more interested in ending conflicts quickly and decisively. According to their personal code of ethics, gundogs will not fire at an unarmed foe — though use of magic counts as being armed — and will not fire at an opponent's back except in the rarest of circumstances.



Birds often follow this calling, especially for high-seas adventurers, while lizards do to a lesser extent. Birds who take up firearms refer to themselves as *gunners*, while lizards simply use the term *shooters*.



BRYAN
SYME

SIX GUNDOGS

1. A raucous, friendly dog, prone to shooting into the air when they're over-excited.
 2. A sharpshooting dog who takes down enemies from the ship's nest, providing cover.
 3. A standoffish dog who only pulls their gun out when absolutely needed.
 4. A relic-obsessed dog who loves taking their gun apart and rebuilding it to see all the inner workings.
 5. A lizard who's a crack shot and can hit any bullseye from a vast distance.
 6. A bird who is all fun and games until things get serious, when they shift into hyper focus, making every shot count.
-

View on other callings:

- **Alkalists:** If I could harness the power of some of their bombs, I'd be unstoppable in battle!
- **Crusaders:** They're a bit stoic for my liking, but they're good dogs, through and through. They just need to relax a bit!
- **Mystics:** Though I don't completely understand their magic, it's helped me out more than once in a pinch.
- **Rimers:** Always good for a laugh, and they know how and when to get down to business.
- **Torpedoes:** For people who understand firearms, they sure are committed to being quiet most of the time.

Typical gundog: Gundogs treat their weapons as extensions of themselves, and lovingly care for them almost as artisan focuses. They use them with reverence, if tinged with excitement, and know that in the wrong paws, their guns could spell disaster. When not carrying them, they lock

them up to prevent that from happening. Gundogs are also blasé to Gunpowder Panic, which causes people not trained in the art of firearms to cower at the sound of powder-fueled explosions.

Character Creation

Stamina dice: d8 per level

Stamina points: 8 + Constitution modifier per level

Primary abilities: Constitution and Dexterity

Skills: Choose two from Balance, Bluff, Intimidate, Know Culture, Notice, Persuade, Sense Motive, Sneak, and Traverse.

Rucksack: One melee weapon and a firearm, one set of light or medium armor, gloves, a hooded lantern, rations, and 50 feet of rope. The firearm was acquired under unusual circumstances.

First knacks: Simple Weapon Aptitude, Martial Weapon Aptitude, Light Armor Aptitude, Medium Armor Aptitude, Pistoleer (p. 30), and choose one from either Quick Draw or Precise Attack.

Calling knacks: Hunter or Ratter.

Torpedo

"I'm always silent — at least until it's time to get loud."

— Vitas von Shadow

Stealthy and unerringly precise, torpedoes are cats that prefer to end things as quickly as gundogs, though with far less bluster and bang. They strike swiftly and quietly and prefer to covertly take down their enemies over going in with guns blazing. Torpedoes wear far more muted colors than most cats, blending in with their surroundings or creeping under cover of darkness and night. They are



Birds who follow this calling are outliers in their society, as the path of quiet stealth isn't something for which most birds are known. Those who do call themselves *duelists*; though they behave much like torpedoes, they prefer to meet their enemies face to face at the end. This is a natural and somewhat-common calling for lizards, who refer to themselves as *gunslingers*.

masters of the surprise attack, and the often-masked face of a torpedo has been the last thing more than a few bandits have ever seen.

Torpedoes enjoy getting their jobs done unseen and tend to hide in wait for the best moment to spring a trap or slice their blade through the air. They fight quietly and with dignity, yet aren't above finishing things off with a pistol shot.



BRYAN
SYME

SIX TORPEDOES

1. A cat of the world who takes on dangerous missions to satisfy their lust for adventure.
 2. A calm, quiet cat whom no one suspects is deadly with both blade and gun.
 3. A former member of House Mau who fights corruption in the monarchies from the shadows.
 4. A boastful pirate cat who vanishes into the shadows at the first sign of trouble.
 5. A large, soft-spoken bird who swoops down on their enemies from above.
 6. A curious lizard who uses their skills to adventure through ruins and fight wicked beasts.
-

View on other callings:

- **Alkalists:** I just wish they were better about warning me where and when their bombs are going to land; I hate getting my fur singed.
- **Crusaders:** I appreciate their sense of loyalty and morality, but I don't understand why they dislike the way I end things.
- **Gundogs:** Just because our tools are loud doesn't mean we have to be, but I'm fine to fight alongside a gundog any day.
- **Mystics:** Always helpful in a fight — their magic is something else!
- **Rimers:** I think they're wonderful and good fun, so long as they keep the attention on themselves and away from me.

Typical torpedo: A torpedo fights decisively, striking only when she thinks necessary and seeking to end fights rather than taking joy from them. Torpedoes know silence can be a virtue, and are different from most cats, dogs, and birds in that regard. If they must, though, they are

always willing to end things with a bang, using their firearms to finish a job. Torpedoes also don't worry about Gunpowder Panic, due to their meditative, calm demeanors.

Character Creation

Stamina dice: d8 per level

Stamina points: 8 + Constitution modifier per level

Primary abilities: Dexterity and Strength

Skills: Choose two from Balance, Bluff, Intimidate, Notice, Persuade, Search, Sense Motive, Sneak, and Steal.

Rucksack: One melee weapon and one firearm, one set of light armor, gloves, a bullseye lantern, rations, 50 feet of rope, and a dark cloak acquired under unusual circumstances.

First knacks: Simple Weapon Aptitude, Martial Weapon Aptitude, Light Armor Aptitude, Pistoleer (p. 30), Darkvision, and choose one from either Precise Attack or Martial Arts.

Calling knacks: Champion or Footpad.

Mystic

"The power of the sea boils in my veins; I can't wait to be back on the open ocean."

— *Abigail Maincoon von Angora*

Some cats are destined for the sea. Even those mystics who don't crew with pirates feel the Acid Sea's inexorable call; it powers their magic even as they yearn for its hushed song. Cats who take up the mantle of mystic are as the ocean: full of fathomless depth, frothing, and swinging from placid calm to raging torrents. They hold secrets beneath their skin, and they feel more alive near water than anywhere on dry land.

Other cats sometimes view mystics as strange, as many cats are at least slightly averse to water. While most pirate cats overcome their distaste to enjoy life aboard a ship, mystics fully embrace it, loving the feel of the salt in their fur and the wind at their backs. They are equally at home with beasts of land and sea, preferring their wild, natural state to being cooped up in cities or towns.

BRYAN
SYME

SIX MYSTICS

1. A contemplative cat born outside the monarchies, who has always felt the sea call to them.
2. An old, wise cat with eyes like the ocean and salt-crusted fur.
3. An adventurous cat who carries a small bottle of seawater with them wherever they go.
4. A cat who is a ship's mystic, entertaining the crew with shanties by candlelight.
5. A bird who harnesses wind and water into everything they do, including spellcasting.
6. A strong lizard raised by alkalists who joined a pirate crew at a tender age and never looked back.

View on other callings:

- **Alkalists:** I'd love to harness their potions with my magic or use them to tame animals, but they won't show me how!
- **Crusaders:** Seems odd to care about honor and pride this far from civilization — I just can't quite comprehend what place the Old Ones have in the wilds.
- **Gundogs:** I don't completely trust firearms; they seem anathema to the natural order.
- **Rimers:** I think they're a bit silly, to be honest, but they do alleviate the boredom of a long sea voyage.
- **Torpedoes:** Though they're more palatable than gundogs, holding explosions in one's paws is an odd thing when you can simply channel natural forces.

Typical mystic: Mystics are often thought of as stoic cats, calm as the sea on a warm summer night. Others do well to remember that they also embody tempests and tidal waves, and they crash down on the Unseen like the forces of nature they are. Once they've chosen a path, they stick to it, and only the strongest forces can steer them elsewhere. Mystics' connection to the sea can make them uncommonly good at being connected to the rest of nature as well.

Character Creation

Stamina dice: d8 per level

Stamina points: 8 + Constitution modifier per level

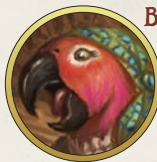
Primary abilities: Intelligence and Strength

Skills: Choose two from Handle Animal, Know Arcana, Know Nature, Notice, Search, Sense Motive, Survive, and Traverse.

Rucksack: One weapon, one set of light armor, a focus crafted from coral or shell (acquired under unusual circumstances), candles, rations, and a book of sea shanties or stories.

First knacks: Simple Weapon Aptitude, Martial Weapon Aptitude, Light Armor Aptitude, and choose one from either Given the Voice or Beast Master.

Calling knacks: Tracker or Wanderer. Spellcasting ability is Intelligence.



Birds can be natural mystics, though they refer to those who follow this calling as *soothsayers*. Other birds may view them with suspicion, seeing the sea as quite the opposite of the Sky Kingdom, but they're also assets to crews. Lizards, however, make excellent mystics, and they are viewed as not dissimilar to alkalists, as salt and sea go paw in paw. A lizard who takes up this calling is called a *magus*.

Alkalist

*"I'm sure I've got something helpful here in my pack. Just give me a few shakes, okay?
You can't rush genius."*

— Qalliope Junichilde

Alkalist is the most common calling among lizard adventurers. They are assets to any party or crew, for their potions can hurt as well as heal. Their powers are based in the use of salt, which they gather in the basins and salt pans on their nomadic journeys, though dehydrated seawater works just as well.

Lizards' natural curiosity led them to this skill set, which they pass down through the generations. The only way to become an alkalist is to be trained by one, so any who want to learn their secrets and knacks must find a teacher. The lizards keep their knowledge close, however, and will not teach any non-lizards alkalist mysteries. Though not quite a religion, the ways of alkalists are something lizards hold as sacred to their people.



SIX ALKALISTS

1. A wily lizard who's always trying to trade their potions for favors.
 2. An older, gentle lizard who likes to experiment with new mixtures and compounds.
 3. A lizard who is desperate to carry on their family's traditions, but longs to see the world.
 4. A pedantic, know-it-all lizard whose mouth often gets them in trouble.
 5. A seafaring lizard constantly worried about their knowledge falling into the wrong paws.
 6. A rowdy lizard who persistently checks flora for edibility and distrusts anything they didn't personally make.
-

View on other callings:

- **Crusaders:** I appreciate their dedication to their cause; it reminds me of the hard work I did to learn my trade.
- **Gundogs:** What fun! It's like they throw small bombs from their paws.
- **Mystics:** Though they care more for water than salt, I like that we're both at home using nature's gifts.
- **Rimers:** Fantastic at tumbling away from blasts; I've only ever grazed one or two with my bombs, and a potion fixed them right up.
- **Torpedoes:** Far too quiet, if you ask me. I like them best when they choose to end a battle rather than start one.

Typical alkalist: Alkalists are usually bright, curious lizards who enjoy seeing the world. Having undergone alkalist training within their family for a time, they can be a little less suave or knowledgeable about other places and cultures but love to learn about them, nonetheless. An alkalist always has at least a couple of vials or

bottles of potions on their person for either healing or harming, and they can whip things up from the barest ingredients.

Character Creation

Stamina dice: d8 per level

Stamina points: 8 + Constitution modifier per level

Primary abilities: Intelligence and Wisdom

Skills: Choose two from Heal, Know Arcana, Know Nature, Notice, Persuade, Search, Sense Motive, and Survive.

Rucksack: One simple weapon, one set of light armor, a bottle of ink, an ink pen, parchment, candles, and an alkalist kit acquired under unusual circumstances.

First knacks: Simple Weapon Aptitude, Martial Weapon Aptitude, Light Armor Aptitude, and choose one from either Good Memory or Catalyst (p. 28).

Calling knacks: Artisan and Mancer. Spellcasting ability is Intelligence.

Rimer

*"I've definitely got a story you haven't heard before, kittens.
Sit down and let me tell you about a faraway place..."*

— *Tulio Twelve-Pearls*

Rimers derive their power from the gift of performance — be it song, dance, juggling, storytelling, acting, or any other entertainment — but they get joy from it, too. This calling is unique to birds and it suits their personalities perfectly, making them the center of attention wherever they go. Rimers are uniquely suited to encouraging their allies, and a ship without a rimer on board is in for some boring, long nights bereft of the best stories and songs.

Rimers are also skilled cutthroats, using their innocuous, friendly chatter to distract enemies and lull them into a false sense of safety. They are among the best at bluffing and rely on their unique charisma to procure information and goods or, at the very least, hefty discounts. Though a fun and useful addition to any adventuring party, most people learn quickly not to bet against one while playing cards or throwing dice.



SIX RIMERS

1. A bird who grew up onstage, but who longed for so much more.
 2. A natural storyteller who has trouble keeping their beak shut about anything.
 3. A slight, shy songbird who fills the air with beautiful melodies but would rather read.
 4. A bird who thrives on swapping tales that grow more and more elaborate with each telling.
 5. A lovestruck bird who once heard the most perfect song from a mystic, and searches for her to this day.
 6. A poetic bird who always tries to get their crewmates to perform in the plays they write.
-

View on other callings:

- **Alkalists:** Boom! Bang! They're fantastic, even if they won't let me use their smoke bombs for entertainment purposes.
- **Crusaders:** Boring, stoic, and grumpy. I've based several characters off them — usually the losing side.
- **Gundogs:** The best audience one could ask for. They're polite, friendly, and usually give the best laughs.
- **Mystics:** I don't get how they're so comfortable being solitary; I'd expire if I couldn't talk to anyone for a day or more!
- **Torpedoes:** I'm in awe of their ability to blend into shadows, but they always seem uncomfortable in crowds, so I suppose it's a tradeoff.

Typical rimer: Rimers are natural extroverts. Even if their personalities are more subdued, they light up the minute they begin to perform their chosen craft. They are among the best candidates to send in to gather information via

conversation or disguise, and though they typically wear brighter clothing than most birds, they pride themselves on being able to blend into any situation or role.

Character Creation

Stamina dice: d8 per level

Stamina points: 8 + Constitution modifier per level

Primary abilities: Charisma and Wisdom

Skills: Choose two from Balance, Bluff, Know Culture, Know History, Perform, Persuade, Search, and Sense Motive.

Rucksack: One simple weapon, one shield, one set of light armor, a lantern, a small collection of books, and an instrument or other tool related to your craft, acquired under unusual circumstances.

First knacks: Simple Weapon Aptitude, Martial Weapon Aptitude, Light Armor Aptitude, Shield Aptitude, and choose one from either Jongleur (p. 29) or Magic Tricks (p. 29).

Calling knacks: Ratter and Wanderer.

“Stumpy” Sabu Chromachilde

Level: 1

Calling: Alkalist

Family: Gecko

Background: Marine

Proficiency Bonus: +2

Stamina Dice: 1d8

Stamina Points: 9

Defense: 11

Initiative: +2

Speed: 30/35

Spell Slots: none

Abilities: Strength +0 (10), Dexterity +1 (13), Constitution +1 (13), Intelligence +2 (14), Wisdom +2 (15), Charisma -1 (9)

Skills: Intimidate, Know Nature, Sense Motive, and Survive.

Knacks: Simple Weapon Aptitude, Martial Weapon Aptitude, Light Armor Aptitude, Chameleon (p. 30), and Catalyst (pp. 28–29).

History: Sabu Chromachilde was trained by a group of elite lizard warriors, and for a time in his youth, he traveled with his family’s matriarch as an honor guard while also learning the ways of alkalists from his favorite uncle. After several years, he felt the need to wander, eventually realizing he felt the pull of the sea as opposed to a mere youth’s need for excitement. He set sail with a few other crews before finally purchasing his own ship, the *Pig’s Tale*, where he is now captain to a fine crew of pirates.

Roleplay Tips: Sabu may come off as strict due to his military background, but in reality, he has a lust for adventure and a childlike sense of wonder at every discovery. He lives by a firm code of honor and would give up any treasure he owns for a member of his crew in need.

Description: A brilliant green gecko missing most of his tail due to an altercation with a two-headed giant some years ago that earned him the nickname “Stumpy.” He is constantly on the lookout for both threats and new places to explore, his large eyes swiveling to and fro. He



prefers to remain in military dress but does not force the rest of his crew to his style.

Personality Traits

Ideal: What is most important to me is my crew and my ship, though I’d give up the latter before the former.

Mystery: No one knows that I took great pride in my tail, and how much it pains me that it’s gone.

Flaw: No matter what, I just can’t fully relax; I always put others or my missions first.

Rucksack

Antique cutlass (1d10 slashing), military uniform that’s as starched and pressed as he can keep it, a bottle of ink, an ink pen, parchment, candles, a set of utilitarian alkalist’s tools given him by his uncle when he mastered the calling, an official writ granting Sabu the right to patrol the seas on behalf of his matriarch, a set of fine clothes, and a purse containing some plastic coins.

"Pally" Polly of the Seven Blazing Feathers

Level: 1

Calling: Rimer

Neste: Parrot

Background: Sailor

Proficiency Bonus: +2

Stamina Dice: 1d8

Stamina Points: 9

Defense: 9

Initiative: -1

Speed: 35

Spell Slots: none

Abilities: Strength +0 (10), Dexterity -1 (8), Constitution +1 (13), Intelligence +2 (12), Wisdom +2 (14), Charisma +3 (16)

Skills: Bluff, Know Nature, Perform, and Survive.

Knacks: Simple Weapon Aptitude, Light Armor Aptitude, Shield Aptitude, Jongleur (p. 29), and Spin (pp. 30-31).

History: Polly was raised on the open sea, the daughter of merchant sailors who only sporadically returned to their cage to visit family and hear new stories. Because of this, Polly grew up around all sorts of people, and still loves to meet folks of any species. Before she was old enough to help out aboard her parents' ship, the *Tipsy Perch*, she loved entertaining the crew after dinner with songs and stories. She now serves aboard the *Pig's Tale* under Captain "Stumpy," and is his best friend, though he is loath to admit it. He is the one who accidentally nicknamed her "Pally" upon mishearing her introduction, and the name has stuck with most folks.

Roleplay Tips: Polly is outgoing to the point of annoyance at times. She's always excited to meet someone new and will regale anyone who will listen with stories both of growing up at sea and the exploits of her current crew. No detail is too small for her to leave out and she is constantly singing, either to herself or as a motivational performance to lift the crew's morale.

Description: Polly is a large, well-built parrot with vibrant red and violet plumage. She dresses in a motley of bright colors unless she has to blend in somewhere. She has a patch of bald



skin on her right forearm, where seven feathers burned away in a black-powder accident when she was young, thus giving her the name "Polly of the Seven Blazing Feathers," at least until she discovers a treasure or is involved in a story she prefers to name herself after.

Personality Traits

Ideal: What is most important to me is being well-liked by anyone I encounter.

Bond: I am inspired by my bond to Captain "Stumpy" Sabu, who leads with honor and wisdom.

Flaw: No matter what, I just can't be quiet and sit still. I get anxious when I'm not doing something.

Rucksack

A small crossbow (1d8 piercing), a brightly painted shield, a set of gaudy padded clothing in lime green and rust, a lantern, a few books of songs and plays, a set of bagpipes given to her by a merchant in a far-off port when she was very young, a map, a set of common clothes, and a belt pouch containing a few plastic coins.



Chapter Three: Rules of the Open Sea

This chapter contains new rules regarding sailing ships, combat on the sea, and the functions of a pirate crew.

The Crew

A pirate's crew is their family. In many cases, a pirate's crew mean as much or more to them as their family of birth. This doesn't necessarily mean they always get along or agree with one another. Some crews enjoy peaceful, harmonious journeys filled with laughter and song, while others bicker and snipe at one another as they carry out their daily tasks. Whatever the tone of their relationships, the crew shares a deep bond that transcends species and station, uniting them through shared purpose, victories, and hardships.

Any combination of dogs, cats, lizards, and birds can jump on a boat and sail the Acid Sea, but that does not make them a crew. A crew prop-

erly bonded under a captain gains certain benefits from being part of their chosen family.

Pirates who have signed a ship's Articles as part of the crew are called *signed*. Signed characters gain an additional knack, such as those detailed below. Not every crew keeps their Articles on a physical document. Some simply swear a verbal oath or carry a trinket that reminds them of their duty. Regardless of the form the Articles take, once the members agree to them and the crew is formed, the pirates are signed.

Crew members who are bound together by a ship's Articles and are officially assigned only one crew position are considered *dedicated* to that position. Being in a dedicated position confers an additional knack, as detailed below.

Roles and Signed Knacks

Sailing a ship is not a solo endeavor. Any seafaring vessel worthy of its name requires many

skilled paws to keep it afloat. Apart from the practical concerns of keeping the ship functional, crew roles help pirates manage domestic responsibilities. On smaller ships, some crew members perform the work of multiple roles – in those cases, only one position is “primary” and awards a knack, so a captain can’t have the knacks for, say, captain, quartermaster, and gunner. In some cases, a group may not have enough players to fill each role, in which case non-player characters can be used to fill those positions.

Captain

The captain of a pirate crew is the leader of the ship, assuming full responsibility for command during battle or other crises. On some ships, the captain acts as a despot, issuing orders to a cowed crew and ruling through fear. Those ships don’t tend to last long out on the Acid Sea. Captains who abuse their power are often subject to mutiny if they don’t first fall in battle against another crew or become prey to one of the horrors of the sea.

A good captain is someone who leads by example. Captains work alongside their officers and crew, sharing responsibility for cooking, swabbing the decks, and chores. Many crews see their captain as a parental figure, guiding the family unit of the crew and resolving disputes that arise between crew members.

Most often, the captain holds no more or less responsibility for a ship’s command and operation than any other crew member in the day-to-day matters of running a ship. The captain usually coordinates the efforts of the other crew positions to ensure that the ship can sail smoothly and that the crew’s needs are all met.

On smaller ships, the captain often serves as quartermaster, sailing master, or gunner, sharing those responsibilities with their first mate.

Signed Knack: A signed captain can allow one crew member to reroll one die per day while aboard ship. This ability cannot be used if the crew member or captain is in the grip of Gunpowder Panic.

First Mate

The first mate acts as the captain’s second in command, handling the captain’s duties when

the captain is unavailable, ill, or otherwise indisposed. This means that the first mate is expected to be able to perform any duties the ship may require in calm waters or in combat. The first mate is also the person that the crew is most likely to turn to if they have a grievance with the captain. In some ways, this makes the first mate most responsible for enforcing the ship’s Articles and ensuring that everyone on the crew is treated fairly. On smaller crews, the first mate and quartermaster are often interchangeable positions with overlapping responsibilities.

Signed Knack: A signed first mate can negate 1d10 worth of Seaworthiness loss each day (even from combat). If you negate more than you lost in Seaworthiness that day, nothing happens – you just don’t lose any Seaworthiness.

Gunner or Ship’s Magician

The Acid Sea is not a place for pleasure cruises. Going about unarmed is a good way to wind up adrift with your plunder in another crew’s coffer. Thus, any pirate crew worth its salt has a gunner or a magician in charge of armaments and defense. Maintaining both positions is a costly and complicated proposal, possible only on the largest of ships. The crew member in this position is responsible for executing the captain’s commands in times of conflict.

Signed Knack: Gunners gain advantage on rolls for operating the ship’s mundane artillery, such as cannons and ballistae, while a ship’s magician gets advantage while operating all magical artillery (see pp. 51–52 for more).

Medic or Entertainer

Health and morale are important to maintain on the open sea. A sick crew won’t last long against the threats and dangers of life on a sailing ship. Poor morale can lead to lax practices, missed chores, or even mutiny! As such, a wise crew designates at least one of these roles. While most ships cannot afford both an entertainer and a medic, those individuals recruited to perform one task frequently have rudimentary training in the other, or they wind up seeking such training after their first lengthy voyage.

Signed Knack: A signed medic allows each member of the crew to recover 1d4 stamina points after a scene in which they took damage.

A signed entertainer allows each spellcaster to recover 1d4 spell slots for free after a scene in which they cast spells.

Quartermaster

A ship's quartermaster is responsible for ensuring that food and water supplies are properly acquired, maintained, and preserved. The threat of starvation, scurvy, and dehydration can be just as frightening as any enemy crew or creature from the deep. Only the largest crews have a dedicated quartermaster. In smaller crews, this job is frequently performed by the First Mate, with many responsibilities shared with the captain.

Signed Knack: A signed quartermaster grants an advantage on all crew members' saving throws to see if they have equipment while they are on the ship.

Sailing Master

The sailing master is the crew member responsible for the ship's navigation. Frequently, they also pilot the ship and are responsible for keeping the helm staffed and scheduled. A crew member's species and cultural background can impact this position more than any other, as each culture uses different reference points for navigation. Also, they're useful in successfully executing and avoiding ramming attacks.

Signed Knack: A signed sailing master grants an advantage on all navigation rolls (pp. 52–53).

Fortune and the Crew

Multiple species working in the same group maintain separate fortune bowls for each species, because characters in *Pugmire* and *Monarchies of Mau* games are more accustomed to cooperating with others of their own species. Once a crew accepts a ship's Articles, however, they can cir-

cumvent this limitation, sharing their fortune in a single bowl.

Articles

The Articles are a collection of three rules that bind the crew. These can be any three items the crew agree upon, which determine the way the crew behaves and the type of adventures the crew seeks out. One of the rules must be a forbiddance for the crew, something that is not allowed. It is grounds to expel someone from the crew, up to and including making them walk the plank, and generally starts with "Never...". A captain who breaks the forbiddance can be subjected to a mutiny.

Sample Articles

Articles of the Seabreeze:

- Every pirate of the crew gets an equal share of the spoils.
- This ship is a democracy, except when boarding or being boarded.
- Never leave a crewmate behind.

Articles of the Snarling Vengeance:

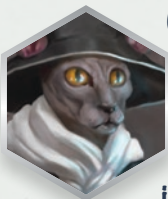
- Prisoners are dead weight.
- At least two crew members must always be on deck.
- Never give an enemy comfort or mercy.

Articles of the Pleasure Crews:

- Leftover Plunder shall go to less fortunate in port.
- Greet the sun with a smile, the moon with a song, and enemies as friends.
- Never refuse help to the sick or wounded.

Plunder

Plunder is the money, trade goods, and other common items a pirate crew amasses during an adventure. Rather than tracking individual coinage or items, plunder is simply treated as something you have or you don't. This does not include Treasure (see pp. 86–87), which is tracked and handled separately. It is rare that a journey does not involve acquiring at least a small amount of plunder.



Cats on the crew can still create individual fortune piles. When a cat is awarded fortune, the player must choose between placing the fortune into the crew's fortune bowl or to keep that fortune for herself.

When a pirate crew returns to port, plunder is expended to make ship repairs, restock supplies, fund shore leave activities such as carousing, or as directed by the ship's Articles. The ship's Seaworthiness is reset to maximum, and any conditions on the ship (such as Unsafe, Hobbled, or Adrift – [see p. 53](#)) are removed.

Once the plunder is expended in this way, and if no conditions were removed from the ship, all crew members may increase their personal coin by one level: characters without any coin now have “some coins,” and so on. Pirate ships do not leave port with plunder, spending all that that have with each stop in port.

Ships

Each pirate crew needs a ship. A ship defines a crew just as much as the crew's Articles do. The ship gets the crew from place to place, sure, but it's more than that. For some, it's a sovereign vessel; for others, a home.

Ship Statistics

Building your ship is much like building a character. You need to make a few choices during the process to help represent what kind of ship you want to sail. Is it built for combat or comfort? Do you prefer speed or durability? These are a few questions the crew must consider. Ships are represented with the following game statistics.

Artillery

Artillery represents the ranged combat capability of your ship. Not all ships have artillery, but if you're planning on fighting threats head on, attacking other vessels, or sailing into unknown waters filled with mysterious sea creatures, this might be a good place to invest some improvements. Each ship starts with an artillery score of 0.

Hull

Hull is a measure of your ship's raw durability. Much like your character's defense score, the ship's hull acts as the difficulty for an attacker to land a damaging blow against your ship. Most of the time, this damage comes from another ship's artillery. Most characters do not command enough raw power to overwhelm a ship's hull.

At the Guide's discretion, some actions taken by individuals; for example, a particularly powerful spell that affects a large area might overcome this limitation. If the Guide does permit an individual's ability to damage a ship, the damage is determined normally and then halved and applied to the ship's seaworthiness (see below). Each ship starts with a Hull score of 14.

Seaworthiness

Seaworthiness is a measure of the overall health and function of a ship. This trait measures things like the ship's structural integrity, the amount of available supplies, the state of sails, and other narrative elements that may impact the ship's ability to serve safely as a seafaring vessel. Damage sustained in combat reduces Seaworthiness, as can spoiled supplies, sick or missing crew, or simply spending too long on the Acid Sea. Each ship begins with a Seaworthiness score of 100.

Speed

A ship's speed determines how far it can move on a single turn. This is measured on the same scale as a character's speed. Each ship starts with a Speed score of 100.

Improving Your Ship

A pirate crew's ship is their home. Crews therefore often take pains to customize their ship to their needs before setting sail. When building your ship, you can select three improvements from the following options:

- **Add Artillery:** Increase Artillery by 2.
- **Improve Hull:** Hull increases by 2.
- **Enhance Seaworthiness:** Seaworthiness increases by 20.
- **Increase Speed:** Speed increases by 10.

Ships that spend at least one improvement on Hull or Seaworthiness are automatically outfitted with a plastic hull and become resistant to acid damage (as well as Seaworthiness loss – [see p. 53](#)).

Artillery Weapons

As you increase your Artillery score, you may select weapons. Weapons available for your ship include:

Ballista: This massive crossbow allows for bolts to be fired from ship to ship, damaging enemy hulls and sails with ease. *Ammunition, ranged 150/600, loading, two-pawed, 3d10 Seaworthiness (piercing) damage.* Cost: 1 Artillery

Catapult: The catapult hurls heavy objects, barrels of burning oil, and particularly foolish crew members at an enemy vessel. Damage inflicted by this weapon can be devastating, but due to the need for suitable projectiles, keeping ammunition stocked for such a weapon is challenging, especially on smaller ships. *Ammunition, ranged 150/300, cannot hit a target within 60 feet, loading, two-pawed, 2d10 Seaworthiness (bludgeoning) damage, may have an additional 1d8 Seaworthiness plus heat, acid, or other depending on payload.* Cost: 1 Artillery

Six-Pounder: This is the standard black powder cannon. Steady, reliable, and dangerous as all get out. *Ammunition, ranged 600/1600, loading, two-pawed, 3d10 Seaworthiness (bludgeoning) damage.* Cost: 1 Artillery

Mariner Staff: This massive magical cannon functions like an exotic weapon masterwork, dealing elemental damage to an enemy ship. Unlike most masterworks, a mariner staff is too cumbersome and massive to be used as a personal weapon. When selecting the mariner staff, the crew must decide which type of damage they wish to do with the weapon, choosing from the options below. Cost: 2 Artillery

Sample Ships

The following ships can be used as a reference for designing your own ship, or they can be placed directly in use in your game.

The Pleasure Crews

Artillery: 0

Hull: 16

Seaworthiness: 120

Speed: 120

Sea Turtle

Artillery: 2, one ballista and one six-pounder

Hull: 18

Seaworthiness: 100

Speed: 100

Snarling Vengeance

Artillery: 4, two ballistae and two six-pounders

Hull: 16

Seaworthiness: 100

Speed: 100

Getting Lost

As if the Acid Sea weren't dangerous enough on its own, it's easy for a crew to get lost while exploring this vast body of water. Experienced navigators rely on the stars and good charts to stay on course while sailing, but storms, poor visibility, and even the chaos of combat can drive a crew off course with disastrous results.

If the conditions could lead to a group becoming lost, the Guide may require that the character handling the ship's navigation (usually the sailing master) make a Wisdom check a few times during each day of travel. The difficulty of the check depends on the weather and visibility conditions (full sunlight, light rain, fog, etc.), but 15 is a good default difficulty. Having up-to-date sea charts and good winds add an advantage to this check, while storms, strong opposing winds, or not having a map add a disadvantage. A wise

Mariner Staff	Seaworthiness Damage	Range	Qualities
Staff of freezing	6d8 (cold)	300/900	two-pawed
Staff of hammering	6d10 (bludgeoning)	300/900	two-pawed
Staff of lighting	6d8 (lightning)	300/900	two-pawed
Staff of needles	6d10 (piercing)	300/900	two-pawed
Staff of radiance	6d8 (radiant)	300/900	two-pawed
Staff of stunning	6d8 (force)	300/900	two-pawed
Staff of thunder	6d8 (thunder)	300/900	two-pawed
Staff of withering	6d8 (necrotic)	300/900	two-pawed

sailing master makes sure to keep their charts up to date!

If the roll fails, the group is lost. The Guide can randomly determine in which direction the party is moving – roll a d12 and use a clock face (with 12 as north) as an indication of which direction the group is now moving in. The ship continues to move in that direction until they get some indication that they are lost, such as finding an unexpected island or coming across sea life that isn't expected in the region. Once they realize they are lost, the sailing master can roll another Wisdom ability check to reorient.

Dangers of the Acid Sea

The Acid Sea is incredibly perilous, with its lack of access to fresh water and supplies, potential encounters with sea monsters, and terrible storms. As if these were not enough, the sea itself slowly deteriorates any vessel set upon its waters. Every day of sailing on the Acid Sea reduces a ship's Seaworthiness by 1d4. Ships without a plastic hull are more susceptible to the destructive nature of the Acid Sea and lose twice that, doubling the result of any Seaworthiness rolls. Fortune can be used to reroll a Seaworthiness die, if desired.

If the ship reaches 0 Seaworthiness, it starts to sink.

Integrity Checks

Every day of sailing after the first, a member of the crew must make an Integrity check for the ship. An Integrity check is made immediately after the day's Seaworthiness loss is applied. To make an Integrity check, roll d100. If the roll is equal to or less than the ship's Seaworthiness, nothing happens.



You'll notice you probably don't have a d100 in your normal dice set. That's okay! Select one of your d10s to represent the tens place, and another d10 to represent the ones place. A result of "0" on both dice equals "100."

Unsafe

If the roll result is higher than the ship's Seaworthiness, the ship becomes Unsafe. The Guide may determine the event that led the ship to become Unsafe. Perhaps the food and water stores on the ship have spoiled, the crew has contracted some sort of mysterious illness, a plastic plate on the hull cracked, or a sail has torn. The Guide may choose to base the nature of the event on the role of the crew member who made the Integrity check.

The nature of this event helps the Guide determine what actions, if any, the crew can take to try and repair the ship. The Guide may determine that some damage to the ship cannot be repaired while at sea, or that the circumstances causing the ship to be Unsafe require a number of days of repair work to overcome. If the Guide permits repairs and the crew are successful, the ship is no longer Unsafe. Regardless of the cause, the effect is the same. While Unsafe, all rolls made to operate the ship are made at a disadvantage, and the ship loses 2d4 worth of Seaworthiness every day of sailing.

Hobbled

If the result of an Integrity check is higher than the ship's Seaworthiness while the ship is Unsafe, the ship becomes Hobbled. While Hobbled, all rolls made to operate the ship are made at a disadvantage, the ship's Speed is reduced by half, and the ship loses 3d4 worth of Seaworthiness every day of sailing.

Adrift

If the result of an Integrity check is higher than the ship's Seaworthiness while the ship is Hobbled, the ship becomes Adrift. While Adrift, all rolls made to operate or repair the ship are made at a disadvantage, the ship's Speed is reduced to zero, and the ship loses 4d4 worth of Seaworthiness every day of sailing.

Combat

Sometimes, pirates must fight. When they do, the game moves into combat. On a ship, however, these rules function a little differently.

In combat, each ship is considered to be a character. The ship's actions are determined and

controlled by the crew, with each member of the ship's crew rolling for tasks that are related to the role or roles they fill on the ship. Members of a dedicated crew who have sworn to a ship's Articles (p. 50) gain additional benefits to certain checks in ship-to-ship combat.

One can generally assume that ships, rather than individual characters, are targeted by the attacks of other ships and enemies on other ships during combat (enemies on the same ship as a target can attack them normally). Knacks, tricks, secrets, spells, and other things that would help characters attack characters can be used at the Guide's discretion in ship-to-ship combat as well. Damage is inflicted to a ship's Seaworthiness. Conditions can be applied to a ship, affecting everyone on the targeted ship.

Characters can't usually impact ships without using artillery or magic that affects an area. If the Guide rules that a particular action would impact a ship, cut the damage in half and subtract it from the ship's Seaworthiness. On the other hand, ship artillery attacking individual characters packs a particularly nasty punch. Instead of rolling for damage, assume a maximum roll and apply that to stamina instead of Seaworthiness. It hits all characters in the affected area. Triumphs cause double damage as usual, whether to Seaworthiness or to stamina.

Ramming another ship does 3d10 Seaworthiness (bludgeoning) damage against both ships.

Certain attacks and spells can cause a ship to become Unsafe, Hobbled, or Adrift in combat (see p. 53).

Abandoning Your Post

Ships have their own initiative and should get their own cards for tracking initiative (if you're using that system). The captain of each ship rolls the ship's initiative to determine who starts the conflict. Initiative starts with the highest roller, as usual — if there's a tie between a character and a ship, the ship wins.

A ship has most of the same action options as a character. Each round, the ship has movement and an action. The captain (or first mate, if the captain is unavailable) decides on the ship's action. They may decide to let another crew member

use the ship's action as a personal action, such as casting a spell or using a trick or secret. Otherwise, when a character's turn comes up, they simply declare that they're manning their post.

For a character to act outside of the ship's action (such as to attack boarding enemies), they must abandon their post. By taking an individual action when it's their turn, the pirate automatically abandons their post, making the captain responsible for the checks and saving throws made by that position. The character then acts independently until they use an action to resume their post. Once the adventurer has done this, they regain responsibility for all rolls made by their post.

Reactions and bonus actions do not cause the character to abandon their post and may be made normally.

Crew Roles and Dedicated Knacks

Certain crew members handle any ability saving throws for the entire crew — in the rare cases where two crew members exist with the same saving throw “authority,” the crew decides who handles saving throws for the entire combat. Crew roles and the aspects of the ship they control during combat are as follows.

Captain (Intelligence saving throws): The captain makes the initiative check for the crew, using their Intelligence modifier instead of Dexterity modifier. **Dedicated Knack:** Advantage on ship-based initiative checks.

Entertainer (Wisdom saving throws): The entertainer may use the Help action to benefit any crew member within 20 feet of them. **Dedicated Knack:** The ship's entertainer may use an action to give all crew members on the ship an encouragement d4. The target must use the encouragement die on their next d20 roll, adding the results of the die to their d20. This ability is separate from any other knacks that offer inspiration dice, and a character may not benefit from more than one such die (such as from the *Bless* spell or the *Invigoration* secret) at the same time. The entertainer may use this ability a number of times equal to their Charisma modifier (minimum 1) before the entertainer needs to sleep.

First Mate (Charisma saving throws): The First Mate makes the initiative check for the crew

(using Charisma instead of Dexterity) if the captain is indisposed. **Dedicated Knack:** Advantage on saving throws made to resist the Charmed, Possessed, Repelled, and Scared conditions.

Gunner (Dexterity saving throws): The gunner makes ranged attacks for their ship. **Dedicated Knack:** The ship requires only one ammunition saving throw per day, regardless of the number of combats the ship is involved in.

Magician (Dexterity saving throws): The magician makes all spell attacks for their ship. Ships that have a dedicated Magician have an advantage on saving throws made to resist the Anosmic, Blind, Charmed, Deaf, Petrified, and Possessed conditions. **Dedicated Knack:** Advantage on saving throws made to resist or reduce damage from incoming spells.

Medic (Wisdom saving throws): The medic may use the Help action to benefit any crew member they are within 20 feet of. **Dedicated Knack:** Medics may use an action in combat to heal all crew members on the ship, allowing each member of the crew to regain 1d4+1 stamina points. Alternatively, the medic may opt to grant this benefit to the ship instead, allowing the ship to regain 1d6+1 Seaworthiness. The medic may use this ability a number of times equal to their Wisdom modifier (minimum 1) before the medic needs to sleep.

Quartermaster (Constitution saving throws): The medic may use the Help action to benefit any crew member within 20 feet of them. **Dedicated Knack:** Advantage on saving throws made to resist the Sickly and Stunned conditions.

Sailing Master (Strength saving throws): The sailing master makes melee attacks for their ship in the event of ramming. **Dedicated Knack:** Advantage on saving throws made to resist the Blind, Immobile, and Paralyzed conditions.

Going Overboard

If a pirate goes overboard, they begin to take damage from the acidic water. Each minute a pirate remains unprotected in the water, they suffer 1 point of acid damage. The pirate can try to swim by making a Constitution check using

the Traverse skill. The difficulty of this check is normally 10, but may be modified if the sea is particularly rough or choppy. Failure on this check means the poor soul becomes submerged and begins to drown.

A character can hold their breath for a number of minutes equal to their Constitution modifier (minimum of 30 seconds). When the character runs out of breath, they begin drowning, surviving for a number of rounds equal to their Constitution modifier (minimum of 1 round). At the start of their next turn, the character drops to 0 stamina points and is dying. A character in such dire circumstances can't regain hit points or be stabilized until they can breathe again. For example, a pirate with a Constitution of 14 can hold her breath for 2 minutes. If she starts drowning, she has 2 rounds to reach air before she drops to 0 hit points.

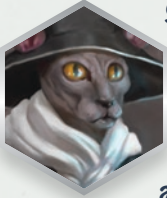
Acid damage from exposure to the waters of the sea is resolved separately from drowning.

Magic, Tricks, and Secrets at Sea

When a bunch of folks get together and sail, they must rely on their individual skills to survive and keep the boat afloat. However, once a pirate crew has signed their Articles, their ship becomes like another member of the crew. Signed crew treat their own ship as a character for most spells, secrets, and tricks. For the purposes of healing tricks, those that specify the target must be living cannot be used on the ship.

Spellcasting on the Seas

The magic of cats and dogs offers mighty tools for survival, exploration, and fighting the Unseen. Though powerful in execution and diverse in application, few of the spells most people study are adequate to address the challenges of life on the Acid Sea. As a result of this, brave pirates with an inclination toward magic have developed new spells specifically for seafaring adventures. Many of these spells are quite potent and powerful while the caster is on a ship but become useless on land. Such is the nature of pirate magic and the cost of seeking such power.



Some of these new spells inflict the Cursed condition. This condition is granted from certain magic and effects, most of which originate from the Monarchies. Cursed works like other conditions.

Cursed: You have a disadvantage on attack rolls and ability checks due to bad luck.

Favorable Winds

(Shepherd/Minister Level 3)

Casting Time: 1 action **Range:** Touch

Duration: Concentration, up to 1 hour

You touch the mast of your ship and summon favorable winds. For the duration of this spell, your ship's speed is doubled.

Magic Skiff

(Artisan/Mancer Level 1)

Casting Time: 1 action **Range:** Self

Duration: Concentration, up to 8 hours

This spell creates a magical skiff of force that holds up to 8 people. The skiff has an Artillery of 0, Hull 14, Speed 25, and Seaworthiness of 50. The ship does not have a sail or any oars and moves by magical force and willpower, directed by its creator. If those aboard use oars (created or brought aboard through another effect), the ship's speed is doubled.

Ocean Mist

(Artisan/Mancer Level 3)

Casting Time: 1 action **Range:** 120 feet

Duration: Concentration, up to 1 minute

The spellcaster replicates the worst of the Acid Sea's eerie mists anywhere they can see within 120 feet. The cloud of mist has a 20-foot radius, and anyone caught within or passing through must make a Constitution saving throw. Those surrounded by the mist take 2d8 acid damage on a failed saving throw or half of 2d8 acid damage rounded down on a successful saving throw for every round they spend in the mist.

Rough Seas

(Artisan/Mancer Level 3)

Casting Time: 1 action **Range:** 150 feet

Duration: Concentration, up to 1 minute

Select a ship or colossi you can see within range. The target must make a Wisdom saving throw. On a failure, the seas around the target become choppy, making any area it moves through difficult terrain for the duration.

Spell Descriptions

The spells below are presented in alphabetical order for ease of reference.

Arcane Anchor

(Shepherd/Minister Level 5)

Casting Time: 1 action **Range:** 120 feet

Duration: Concentration, up to 1 hour

Choose a ship that you can see within range. The ship must succeed on a Wisdom saving throw or become Adrift for the duration.

Briny Deep

(Artisan/Mancer Level 5)

Casting Time: 1 action **Range:** 100 feet

Duration: Concentration, up to 1 minute

Choose a character you can see within the spell's range. No matter how far you are from water, the target of this spell becomes convinced they are drowning as the spell fills their lungs with fluid and cuts off their air supply. The target must succeed on a Wisdom saving throw or be Paralyzed for the duration and takes 1d6 acid damage each round. They may make another Wisdom saving throw at the end of each of their turns.

If this spell runs its full duration uninterrupted, the target is Unconscious for one round afterward. Creatures who do not need to breathe, such as Unseen and constructs, are immune to Briny Deep, though enemies who breathe water are affected as their lungs dry out.

Suppress Gunpowder

(Shepherd/Minister Level 3)

Casting Time: 1 action **Range:** 150 feet

Duration: Concentration, up to 1 minute

All gunpowder and black powder in a 20-foot-tall cylinder with a 40-foot radius centered on a point you choose is rendered inert. Weapons and items that rely on this substance to function simply do not work. Items removed from the affected area regain function immediately.

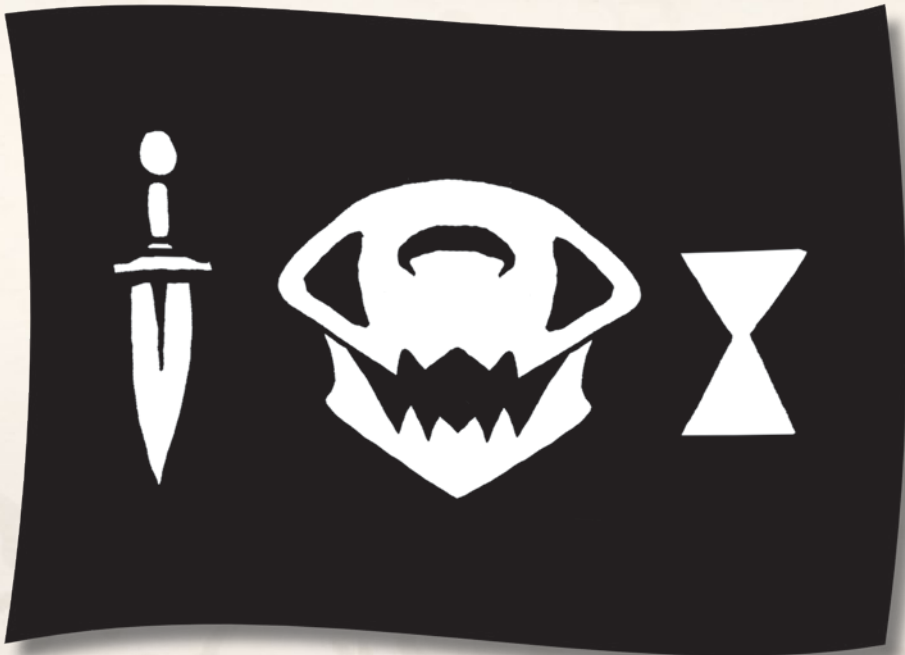
Waterspout

(Shepherd/Minister Level 1)

Casting Time: 1 action **Range:** Self (60-foot line)

Duration: Instantaneous

Gathering moisture from the sea, a stream, or the very air itself, the spellcaster shoots a jet of freezing-cold water in the direction she chooses. The stream, which is 60 feet long and five feet wide, hits anyone in its path who doesn't succeed at a Dexterity saving throw. Anyone caught in the blast takes 1d8 cold damage and is knocked back five feet.





Chapter Four: Ports of Call

This chapter provides information on dog, cat, lizard, and bird pirates, a brief history of the gunpowder trade, and details on two of the largest cities on the Acid Sea, Waterdog Port and Port Matthew.

The Pirate Life

It takes an intrepid soul to embark on a life at sea. Pirates face long days far from shore, an endless cycle of grueling physical labor and interminable boredom. Cramped quarters and a lack of privacy exacerbate tensions between crew mates, slowly unraveling the camaraderie binding them together. It's worse when things go poorly, and they usually do. Rival buccaneers attempt to overthrow the ship. Storms arise, blowing the ship off course and threatening to swamp it with acidic waters. Monsters emerge from the depths to assail the crew. When disaster strikes,

unfortunate pirates risk drowning or washing up broken and storm-tossed upon the far shores of a forsaken island, if the Acid Sea itself doesn't devour them first.

Old salts claim anyone taking to sea is either searching for something or running from something, and there's some truth to the saying. New sights await beyond every horizon. The broken-hearted experience wonders that distract them from their pain. Criminals with prices on their heads find freedom on the waves. Treasure hunters and explorers are seldom disappointed with the bounties of distant lands. Those choosing to remain at sea after achieving their initial goals grow into a love for the sea itself, embracing each new challenge with grim smiles upon their faces.

With resources up for grabs and so much yet to explore, stalwart seafarers find ample support from Pugmire and the Monarchies of Mau alike.

Competition escalates between seaside cities with the capabilities to brave the Acid Sea, like Port Matthew and Waterdog Port, and these conflicts offer lucrative opportunities to seafarers, irrespective of their loyalties. Beholden to none, pirates unfurl their sails and set their sights on the distant horizon.

Dogs

Dogs returning from sea voyages often relate riveting tales featuring gigantic horrors of the deep or aquatic rats with great fins stretching like wings from their backs. These stories purchase drinks and lodging as easily as plastic, inspiring a sense of adventure in their audience and ensuring there will always be more dogs ready to set sail. Dogs recording these tales find Pugmire is willing to purchase them, trusting the veracity of dog accounts over those of other species.

Dog pirates are divided almost evenly between those serving Pugmire or Waterdog Port loyally to further their interests, and those seeking the opportunity to live free upon the waves, but the discoveries of each are valued equally.

Cats

While cats of every House see the advantages and tactical potential of sailing on the waves, in practice, most defer to House Rex in matters concerning the Acid Sea. Few would admit it, but many cats fear the sea, and Mau hold much respect for cats with the courage to traverse the waters. Rex accepts the risks and responsibilities, pushing their limits ever outwards.

Cats at sea frequently acquire superstitions, and House Rex has developed an arcane system of them. Among the most enduring is that polydactyl paws (having extra fingers or toes) signify a fortunate and destined sailor. Few dangerous voyages are undertaken without a polydactyl on board, and while not every polydactyl takes to sea, the superstition is strong enough that members of Rex will be legitimately shocked to encounter one without interest in mastering the waves.

Lizards

The nomadic lizards regularly visit to trade in Pugmire and Mau, and both societies welcome

them whether they arrive by land or sea. Cats and dogs find the creatures fascinating, and their whimsical tales seldom disappoint. Their wares are often as unusual as the tales the sellers weave, and many purchase them for novelty's sake alone.

With their constant traveling, few lizards make long-term plans for a given dog or cat settlement, preferring to focus on immediate goals, but hibernating lizards in such areas sometimes maintain ulterior motives. Accustomed to harsh environmental conditions, lizards were among the first to take to sea, exploring the waves on wooden ships they discarded when their usefulness came to an end. With the advent of plastic hulls, some lizard families now live permanently upon the waves in colorful, elaborate ships, coming to shore only for trade and repairs.

Birds

Birds value stories above all, willing to endure almost anything for novel experiences. When one travels, they invariably seek to share their tales or gain new ones.

They find themselves unpopular in the Monarchies of Mau. Cats value secrecy, while birds value truth. As a result, birds tend to share secrets they learn, which frustrates cats to no end. At best, birds in Mau receive tepid welcomes. At worst, they're actively driven away by guards or citizens. The needs of trade sometimes require passage through cat lands, but most birds avoid them whenever possible. Those spending extended periods of time in Mau are explorers or seekers of secret knowledge, which does little to improve their reputation among cats. Frustrated pirate birds embrace chaos, reveling in uncomfortable looks and easy notoriety.

Pugmire is more welcoming, and when a bird begins to relate a tale, puppies gather to listen in rapt fascination while adults pretend not to be doing the same. Some speak of an immortal bird, Calliope of the Thousand Songs, said to know every tale that has or ever will be told. Physical descriptions of Calliope vary greatly, leading most to dismiss her as mere legend. This is compounded by a tendency for birds concealing their identity to give the name Calliope.

Gunpowder

Regardless of species, the increasing numbers of pirates have proved a boon to Pugmire and Mau, both for advancing knowledge and trade. Nowhere is this more obvious than the burgeoning gunpowder industry. While long known to both societies, gunpowder was viewed as a novelty used mostly by lizard alkalists. The idea of weaponizing it didn't catch hold until pirates began importing it in larger quantities from lands overseas. Prior to the War of Dogs and Cats, gunpowder weapons were shunned by Pugmire and Mau, as Gunpowder Panic proved too dangerous in crowded areas. While they relented during the war, most places now maintain restrictions or outright bans on loaded firearms within city limits. Despite this, the weapons grow in popularity among pirates, and as more individuals develop resistance to Gunpowder Panic, it's only a matter of time before cultural shifts disperse guns more widely through dog and cat societies.

Waterdog Port

Waterdog Port charts its own course, owing allegiance to none. Those calling it home may pursue their dreams and fortunes with little hindrance, even from the monitors enforcing the city's laws. Economic opportunities abound for those with entrepreneurial spirits, and new businesses and attractions frequently arise. The port accommodates numerous ships, many with plastic hulls, ready to launch new expeditions at a moment's notice. A haven for pirates, Waterdog Port serves as a base of operations for local crews and a common destination for foreign ones. A murky and almost perpetual fog drifts over the western sections of the city, providing cover for criminal enterprises, and only the brave or desperate dare to tread where the fog shrouds the city. Whether someone is seeking a fresh start or looking for trouble, Waterdog Port welcomes all with open arms.

History

Constructed as a center for shipping and exploration, cats and dogs have coveted Waterdog Port since its inception. Pugmire and Mau each attempted to claim the city for their own,

igniting the War of Dogs and Cats. When holding it overburdened each power, they withdrew, abandoning the residents to continue the fight alone. The brutal Alleyway Skirmishes, though largely unheard-of outside Waterdog Port, were some of the bloodiest battles in the War. After the assassination of the Mau-appointed Lionel von Korat, Samantha von Rex — better known as the pirate captain Calico Sam — assumed the mantle of mayor. But even her practical wisdom proved unable to calm the unrest or stanch the flow of blood in the streets.

Following a particularly savage clash, the heads of each faction in the city met secretly one night seeking a truce. Recognizing the current course of events would lead to mutual destruction, Calico Sam and Axel Bull-Terrier, a disgruntled Pugmire patriot, contrived to disrupt the cycle of violence and forge a new government. The two met with their most avid supporters, declaring that for the good of the city, the other empire must rule. In the ensuing confusion, the two agreed to rule jointly, declaring independence from Pugmire and Mau.

Each chose their four most charismatic supporters to act as assistants, effectively preventing them from forming new factions. Together, they declared every citizen of the city would vote in favor of Axel or Calico Sam to rule the city, not as a mayor but as Governor. The others would act as a Council of Luminaries to rule alongside them, ensuring both species would be equally represented in the government. The first Council laid down the Great Laws, and while tempers still flared, the two sides learned to respectfully work together. In the following years, the Council would open their ranks to other species, seeking to promote harmony in the city.

Species of Waterdog Port

While every species is welcome in Waterdog Port, dogs maintain a small majority of the population. Most Luminaries and Governors have been dogs, ensuring dog interests frequently take precedence. While most dogs are content to be free of Pugmire's rule, many maintain cordial relationships with family and friends in Pugmire and Houndton. Dogs own more plastic-hulled

ships than any other species, benefiting more from the city's lucrative economy.

Second only to dogs in population, the cats maintain a strong presence. While some retain their loyalties to Mau, most cats are moggies, and renouncing one's house is mandatory for cats to hold positions of authority in the city (although many cat patriots still proudly hold their allegiances in their surnames). Cats own almost as many plastic-hulled ships as the dogs, gaining similar benefits from the shipping industry. They enjoy significant influence in government, although dogs and cats frequently rely upon other to settle differences when their opinions clash. The cats constantly watch for signs of Unseen activity, ready to pounce at any moment to preserve the security of their home.

The nomadic lizards have found a niche in the city, and their authority far exceeds what their population would indicate. When tempers flare between cats and dogs, geckos are quick to defuse the situation. Serpents and turtles utilize these opportunities to share advice, steering cooler heads towards mutually beneficial conclusions. As a result, lizards have become mediators, ensuring the interests of all species are considered, even if they're unable to ease individual prejudices. Many hibernal lizards become monitors, proactively seeking to maintain order and freedom within the city.

Birds find themselves in an interesting position. While their population has grown large enough to exert influence in the city, they end up clashing most often with themselves. Other species don't distinguish between sparrows, crows, and parrots, lumping all birds together. Traditionalists don't approve, while those rebelling against bird norms are delighted at the greater freedom and authority they enjoy. Regardless of nest, birds find their knowledge in high demand, and many find a place for themselves in positions requiring keen memories.

With rumors of equality and opportunity for all spreading, rats and mice swarm to the city in the hopes of building happy lives for themselves. While some find success, most quickly find the reality doesn't live up to their dreams. A lack of resources force many to live in the worst sections of the Haze, squatting in deteriorating buildings

and competing for necessities. Rodents readily take to the sea, but the frequent prejudices they experience often lead them to band together into rodent crews. While seldom able to afford plastic-hulled ships, their patchwork wooden ships are frequent sights in Seaport.

Few badgers call the city home. Most who do live solitary lifestyles, seldom meeting with others of their kind. The exception are members of the otter tribe, who frequently cluster in crews to intimidate rivals. Otters take well to the pirate life, hiring out their services as muscle to other species taking to sea. With the brutal reputation held by the badger tribes, many are surprised to discover the fierce loyalty and camaraderie of their otter crew mates.

Politics

The Council of Luminaries consists of eleven seats. While each Luminary maintains their personal life outside of governance, all are expected to gather for matters concerning the city. Each votes in city affairs, with the Governor casting the deciding vote when the others can't reach an agreement. Luminaries may retire at any time, nominating a replacement, but otherwise the seats are lifetime appointments. The full title of a member of the Council is Admired Luminary, and the proper mode of address is "Your Brilliance."

Chosen from among the Luminaries by a citywide election, the Governor functions as ruler of Waterdog Port to outsiders, and as the mouthpiece of the Council in local matters. The previous Governor, Dobi Weimaraner, recently died under mysterious circumstances, following her declaration of policies running counter to the otherwise unanimous decisions of the Council. Erwin Sharpei was quickly elected as her replacement.

While one seat on the Council remains vacant, the others are currently occupied:

- Noble and loyal to a fault, the cat **Asher Mainecoon von Waterdog** longs for the seafaring adventures of his youth. Once a member of House Rex, Asher traveled beyond the edges of the map, courageously facing the unknown without a single hair of his gray and white

fur out of place. Now dedicating himself to Waterdog Port as Luminary and occasional ambassador, he avidly supports exploration, dreaming of a day when the cartographers have charted every island and when every peril is revealed for the next generation of pirates. His navigational charts note each unexplored region where previous expeditions have failed to return, and it's only a matter of time before he recruits a crew for one last great adventure.

- The renowned rat actor **Aurelio** is famed throughout Waterdog Port for his talent, but more so for his shining golden fur and boundless hunger for luxury. While the Council chose the popular actor to quell the growing unrest among the rodents, few take the rat seriously, believing him shallow and easily manipulated. Worse, Aurelio knows he's merely a political tool, but he isn't content with that arrangement. He offers daring missions to pirates in the hopes of gaining respect, but of late, he considers the possibility that earning it may require a coup.
- The dog **Brandi Springer-Spaniel** never planned to become a Luminary, but her warm heart and renowned bravery pushed her into the role. While beloved by the dogs of Waterdog Port, she's prone to disappearing for long periods of time, making her difficult to contact. Her wanderlust traps her between the call to adventure and her duties to her people, and she desires nothing more than to find a suitable successor so she might live out her days upon the road or the waves. Until then, she settles for disguising herself whenever the urge for excitement grows too strong, joining others to aid them on their quests.
- Everybody's best friend, the charming dog **Erwin Sharpei** is best known as the owner of the influential Calico Trading Company. Founded by his deceased partner, Gwendolyn Manx von Cymric, the company is renowned for its willingness to employ dogs and cats in equal measure. While displaying a friendly demeanor to all publicly, Erwin is utterly ruthless in business, willingly doing

whatever it takes to guarantee greater profits. Recently voted Governor by a narrow margin, Erwin is torn between his desire to leverage his position into ever greater gains and his fear of enemies lurking around every corner and behind every smiling face.

- Although it's been years since she broke ties with House Angora, the cat **Luna Tabby** watches over her shoulder for unseen foes. Her first concern is the security of Waterdog Port, which she is prepared to defend against all enemies. She believes an attack could come at any moment and expends much of her time and resources seeking information on potential adversaries. Her network of informants helps her keep extensive information on notable individuals within Waterdog Port as well. Thanks to her ever-watching eye, anyone showing the slightest hint of Unseen influence swiftly finds themselves on the wrong side of the law.
- Before losing his leg to the jaws of a leviathan, the dog **Montana Saluki** hunted monsters across the face of the world, earning a reputation as a great trophy hunter. His heroic efforts during those days left him with an extensive collection of contacts owing debts of gratitude scattered across the known world. He now maintains Montana's Menagerie in the Sunset Barrio, caring for the numerous creatures on display and relating tales of his youthful adventures and recruiting ambitious pirates to obtain rare beasts, living or dead, for inclusion in his collection. He insists his creatures never escape their habitats, but more than one live trophy whose capture was attributed to local heroes has appeared in his trophy hall following the closure of its exhibit.
- Pirates at sea whisper horror stories about the otter **Odessa One-Eye**, one of the cruelest and most implacable buccanniers to ever sail the Acid Sea. Hijacking her first ship when she was little more than a pup, Odessa proceeded to bring grisly death to all who opposed her, perpetuating her reign of terror for over two

decades before she developed a terminal case of empathy. While few suspect it owing to her spiteful attitude and pitiless practicality, Odessa hopes to make amends for the sins of her past, secretly tending to the children and the wretched citizens of Waterdog Port. She holds a nightly vigil at the harbor, knowing former allies and enemies from Dalmatian Cove will one day come to settle old scores.

- Once Port Matthew's Secretary of Defense and a respected member of House Korat, the cat **Pejay Shorthair** speaks neither of the incident leading to the loss of his claws nor of the scandal that stripped him of his office. While he's slowed a little and gained some gray in his orange-striped coat, he maintains a warrior's vigor, honing his battle prowess every day. Aggressive and bellicose, Pejay believes Waterdog Port should go on the offensive to become a new, conquering empire. Whether he hopes for Waterdog Port to be the reigning power or intends

to deliver it into the paws of his former House remains to be seen.

- The oldest member of the Council, the turtle **Slymar Oteechilde** embraces Waterdog Port as his culture, walking with his face uncovered to show solidarity with other species. In his youth, the alkalist traveled widely, and the yellow stripes on the box turtle's black shell are marred with burns and scratches from adventures and experiments gone awry. His long-winded stories frequently contain kernels of wisdom or warnings of future perils, and he stands ever-willing to share one. Valuing knowledge above all else, Slymar frequently requests rare reagents for his experiments, and he's more than willing to risk others to advance his studies.
- Bold and defiant, the parrot **Zanna of the Four Audacities** refuses to live in anyone's shadow. The black-feathered bird and her green-feathered sparrow lover, Irving of the Forsaken Crown, embraced a life of seafaring adventure,



taking satisfaction in flaunting societal norms wherever they landed. When they decided to start a family, the parrot and sparrow settled in Waterdog Port, with Irving returning to sea frequently in search of treasures worthy of his bride. As a Luminary, Zanna boldly throws herself into her work, seeking constant improvements for Waterdog Port, flitting from one personal obsession to another to distract herself. Irving hasn't returned from his latest foray, and between the perils of sea and the enemies they left behind, Zanna awaits news of him with hope and dread in equal measure.

Laws of Waterdog Port

While Waterdog Port plays host to many individuals of questionable morality, it does maintain its own laws. The monitors, warriors and observers who work to preserve a semblance of order and safety for the people, are charged with arresting those who flout these rules. The Council and monitors enforce the laws at their discretion though, and it isn't uncommon for favored citizens to get away with violations that would see others imprisoned or executed. Any Luminary may pardon a criminal, but the pardon can be overturned by a majority vote of the Council. While lesser laws and regulations change regularly according to Council decisions, the Great Laws have thus far remained inviolable.

Loyalty is Freedom

Waterdog Port glorifies freedom, priding itself in owing no allegiance to Pugmire or Mau. All citizens choose their own destinies, reaping the rewards and facing the consequences of their own actions, and the Council makes it abundantly clear where this freedom comes from. Any allegiance greater than family or guild must be sworn to Waterdog Port and no other. Conspiracy with other nations or organizations to undermine the city's independence is among the most harshly punished crimes. On a more individual level, gaining the favor of the monitors or a Luminary permits more leeway in behavior, allowing for greater gains and diminished punishments in exchange for loyal service.

Business is Business

Plastic shall eternally flow to the citizens, and through them, to the coffers of Waterdog Port. The Council recommends every citizen pursue a healthy livelihood, encouraging creativity and entrepreneurship. In exchange, every transaction should benefit the city. Interfering with the business of another is strongly discouraged, although competition is considered appropriate. Inadvertent harm to others is often overlooked when it results from business endeavors. While smuggling contraband is officially illegal, rampant bribery ensures the monitors turn a blind eye to such business. In practice, even crime is condoned, provided one has the decency not to be caught. The exception to this is trade in people, as slavery in any form is never tolerated within Waterdog Port.

All Are Equal

Every person is equal in value, regardless of resources, social standing, or species. Each citizen votes for Governor. Every vote is weighed the same. Anyone may become a citizen simply by taking up residence in the city, and many in untenable situations flee to Waterdog Port in search of acceptance or new opportunities. While the Council includes members of other species besides cats and dogs, however, individual residents retain their prejudices. Citizens often side with each other against outside threats, but in the absence of those, old grudges prevail. Only cats and dogs have acted as Governor, and barring large population shifts, this is unlikely to change.

Violence is Personal

Violence isn't forbidden in Waterdog Port, but it's expected to involve only the clashing individuals. Causing harm to other people or property is unacceptable. The monitors are slow to enforce this law, and brawls in the seedier sections of town are common. They step in only when making an example of someone, or when the violence threatens to fray the fabric of their society. Attempts to stir up large-scale trouble are harshly punished when discovered, but personal vendettas are tolerated.

Waterdog Port Locations

Waterdog Port has evolved constantly since its inauguration, ensuring visitors will always find their explorations rewarded with new discoveries.

Seaport

Assiduously maintained, the southern section of the city remains critical to its economy. Monitors patrol continuously, discouraging aspiring thieves from vandalizing plastic hulls for quick profit. The shipyards operate around the clock to keep up with demand for repairs and new ships. The wooden docks also require regular maintenance and replacement. Seaport acts as the city's trading hub, with numerous shops available for lease to traveling merchants, although many simply set up along the streets or on the docks beside their ships.

Bernese Marina

This area was engineered to fleece travelers of their plastic. Expensive restaurants adjoin facilities offering pricey souvenirs and entertainments. Along the road and docks, games of chance and enticing snacks target those unable to afford fancier fare. The greatest draw, by far, are the pleasure cruises giving opulent travelers the chance for a couple days sightseeing on the Acid Sea. The Marina is the masterstroke of Waterdog Port's richest dog, Beaumont Bernese. Caring only for his own profits, Beaumont seeks to lure tourists to Waterdog Port. He wishes to curb the city's chaotic and criminal elements, restricting freedom in favor of a more orderly and easily exploitable arrangement. To his frustration, he hasn't been welcomed onto the Council, but he's confident he'll soon fill the vacant seat.

Staffordshire Hall

Originally constructed for Jake's Pioneers during Waterdog Port's early days, Staffordshire Hall now houses the Seafarers' Guild. The spacious building provides a place for disparate crews to meet and rest, recount their experiences, or resupply for their journeys. Competitions between crews occur frequently, although they often band together in such events against their counterparts

from Port Matthew. The young dog chronicler, Kiki Beagle, has been thrust into the role of leadership following the recent disappearance of her turtle teacher, Monet Ridleychilde. While she hopes to lead wisely and record everything of value, she's learning as she goes. Anyone may come to the Guild to hire a crew, although in practice the Luminaries hire more than any others.

The Watchtower

While the monitors maintain outposts throughout the city, the Watchtower remains their central base of operations. Once home to Pugmire's navy, the lower levels of the edifice now house several monitor crews and a small block of jail cells. Vitali Hanachilde, a gecko resembling an iguana, runs a tight ship, and he's well-respected by monitors and citizens alike. While he knows corruption has crept into their ranks, Vit hasn't yet determined which monitors are compromised.

The tower itself functions as lookout point and lighthouse. At all times, keen-eyed monitors watch from the top for signs of peril on the Sea. When danger arises, they toll the alarm bell, deploying nearby monitors to the rescue. By night, Tobias of the Ten Forgotten Dreams kindles and maintains the light. The crow's past weighs heavily upon him, and while reluctant to speak of it, he does admit to harboring a sense of duty to keep the beacon lit for those lost upon the Sea.

Sunset Barrio

Housing its more prosperous citizens, the eastern section of Waterdog Port serves as the city's cultural center, hosting numerous theaters, galleries, and restaurants. New construction is common, as entrepreneurs continually add amenities. Visitors are frequently greeted by Barnabas Amber, a portly rat child with a passion for costumes who acts as unofficial barker for the attractions of the Sunset Barrio. Between performances at his parents' Grape Theater and almost nightly parades or celebrations on the Riverside Promenade, he always has something exciting to announce. Monitors patrol regularly, discouraging obvious crime and violence. Despite this, the Chausie crime family maintains a strong pres-

ence. Headed by the cat Eveline von Chausie, they seek to consolidate as much wealth and power as possible, with the goal of forging themselves into a new monarchy.

Montana's Menagerie

One of the most popular attractions in Waterdog Port, the Menagerie houses rare creatures from all over the world, providing opportunities for travelers and residents to safely see them up close. New habitats are regularly added throughout the city and crews deliver supplies for the care of these specimens at all hours. Despite his obligations to the Council, Montana tenderly cares for many of these beasts personally, demonstrating little concern for the dangers they pose. The Trophy Hall at the center of the Menagerie's original location contains the results from Montana's own hunts and those provided by other adventurers. Sonya Parisachilde, a serpent curator, helps maintain this collection, eagerly regaling visitors with tales about each specimen.

Nautical History Museum

Only half-completed, construction of Waterdog Port's first museum has been plagued with disasters. Rumors of hauntings or Unseen influence proliferate among workers with each accident, and only the brave or desperate continue working towards its completion. A few exhibits are displayed in the completed portions of the museum, but most of its collections remain sealed in the maze of box stacks in the back rooms. The aging cat curator, Smokey von Waterdog, avidly gathers artifacts and accounts of great adventures at sea, dreaming of one day allowing visitors to vicariously experience these nautical journeys, but even she despairs of seeing the museum's completion within her lifetime.

North Barrio

The sprawling northern section of the city expands continually, containing more residential neighborhoods than any other. While the seat of government lies in this Barrio, its criminal element remains strong and the monitors have little luck in discouraging it. The Bloodhound crime family operates a group known to locals as the Bad Dogs, specializing in smuggling, frequently carrying contraband as far as Pugmire.

Their operations have become strained of late, as they're forced to deal with encroachment from the Chausies and the Incisors.

The Echo House

An urban legend in the North Barrio, the Echo House has no permanent location. Instead, it appears within residential neighborhoods on nights when the fog drifts in from the Haze. Residents of the neighborhood never recognize it as anything unusual until after it's gone again, at which point the rumors begin anew. Nobody agrees on how the Echo House came to be or why it appears, but numerous theories compete for prominence. Some say it was the site of a great massacre, either during the Skirmishes or at the paws of one of the city's crime families. Others claim a great treasure was buried beneath it, and the house reappears on nights when a ghostly pirate crew comes searching for it. What all agree upon is that if one encounters a mysterious house with indistinct voices echoing from within on a foggy night, one must neither look inside nor go within, lest they vanish with the house upon the dawning of a new day.

Governor's Mansion

Overlooking the town square and the central fountain where citywide announcements are made, the Governor's Mansion serves as seat of government and home to the current Governor. Due to its blocky gray exterior, its palatial and luxurious interior often surprises visitors. Callers are greeted by Myra Pearl, a friendly mouse assistant harried by the struggle to balance conflicting schedules and keep the government running smoothly. The Governor's Receiving Room, which could better be described as a throne room, is where she leads most visitors who seek an audience. The Council Chamber sees fewer outsiders. While each Luminary has their own seat along the round table encircling the room, there are few additional seats available for visitors. Most are never welcomed into the Council's inner sanctum.

The Hall of Stars

The largest building in Waterdog Port towers over other structures, its upper dome visible on clear days from miles away. The building sprang

from the ambitions of the first birds to settle in Waterdog Port. They hoped to discern the path to the Sky Kingdom through a perfect map of the ever-moving stars, and to this day, their work on perfecting the planetarium continues. Overseen by the sparrow savant Nora of the Slumbering Moon, the Hall of Stars has become the greatest center for the study of the heavens in the known world, drawing scholars of all species to its libraries and amphitheater.

Students at the planetarium study celestial navigation techniques, and many sailing masters received their first lessons here. The Stormdogs focus less on the stars and more on the clouds, mastering secrets of thunder and lightning to better protect sailors from the cruel vagaries of shifting winds and ominous weather. The Fate-seers, a trio of lizards representing each family, regularly use the observatory tower to study celestial phenomena. While not everyone believes their colorful prophecies, few dare to impugn the well-respected lizards' wisdom to their face.

The Old Barrio (The Haze)

The Old Barrio, better known to its impoverished residents as the Haze, borders the Shrouded Swamp to the west and the Acid Sea at its southernmost edge. It derives its nickname from the fog emanating from the murky swamp water. When the wind blows inland, the mists blanket the Old Barrio, shrouding pathways and causing eyes to water uncontrollably, though colors are muted even on clear days. The architecture of the Haze slowly deteriorates under the fog's unrelenting caress, requiring frequent repair.

Crime runs rampant in the Haze, which sees little attention from the monitors. When they do make their presence known, it usually indicates something is causing trouble for the rest of the city. While most criminals in the Haze operate independently or within small gangs, growing numbers of embittered rodents swarm to the banner of the Incisors, a large gang run by a mouse called Hairless Nash.

Cypressroot

Because of its proximity to the Acid Sea and the Shrouded Swamp, the southwestern section of the Haze suffers more from the fog than any oth-

er area of the city. Cypressroot consists of several blocks of residential buildings. Amateur repairs and construction transformed the neighborhood into a vast maze rendered unnavigable by the pervasive fog. These buildings are unsafe, but heavily occupied by struggling rodents drawn to the city by promises of better lives. Competition for resources is fierce, and mice find themselves on the losing end, thanks to the largest rat, Brutus. While he welcomes newly arrived rats and finds them suitable living quarters, mice get neglected. Unhappy with Aurelio's election, Brutus believes he can better support the interests of Cypressroot's rats by gaining the vacant Council seat.

Harv's Hideaway

The largest legal establishment in the Haze is a bar and restaurant owned and run by a gruff ferret named Harvey Pewter. Harv's spacious establishment connects three different buildings, the variation in architecture obvious to any who enter, and it's often easy to find tables or booths separate from other customers for clandestine meetings. While the tantalizing food and drink are reasonably priced, this privacy is the main draw for most customers.

Harv doesn't tolerate violence in his restaurant, giving few warnings before shooting violators of this policy, making it popular among rival criminals seeking neutral meeting grounds.



The Haze is no place to go wandering on a whim.

Threats of crime or rickety buildings won't frighten brave pirates, but beware of that fog! It imposes a disadvantage to

Wisdom checks involving perception, and after a time, it starts burning your nose. Worse, some pirates claim it takes your eyes if you stay too long! In actuality, you'll be fine after rinsing them out with fresh water, but they'll be too painful and watery before then to be of any use, so grab an eyepatch to protect yourself before staying in the fog for long. Succeeding at a difficulty 12 Constitution saving throw prevents one from becoming Anosmic or Blind from the fog for another hour, whereupon another saving throw is needed.

Harv's keen ears and nosy cat waitress, Sheridan Manx, pick up numerous secrets from his customers, but his dedication to maintaining confidentiality ensures that he does not surrender such information cheaply.

Swampwalk

When Waterdog Port was constructed, some portions of the city were built over the swamp, extending its reach through the wetlands to hidden docks. The acidic waters of the swamp proved too much for the architecture, and most buildings have since crumbled into the swamp. The rickety network of docks and plank walkways lingers, though many areas have collapsed, rendering them unsafe. Despite the peril, they remain popular among criminals for illicit smuggling or other criminal enterprises. An aging monitor, Dorian Dane, is tasked with patrolling the Swampwalk and keeping people away, but the tired dog is half deaf and easily bribed.

Underport

Beneath Waterdog Port, a vast network of dog-made tunnels links every part of the city. These function mainly as a sewer system, but criminals regularly take advantage of them to travel unnoticed from one section of the city to another. During the Skirmishes, these tunnels enabled many ambushes, and some of the most brutal battles occurred beneath the streets. Evidence of these clashes remain to this day. The southernmost portions are prone to flooding, and few go there without pressing need.

The sturdy shelter from the elements provided by the tunnels draw the homeless beneath the streets. Most recently, mice displaced from above have begun squatting in the driest and brightest of these tunnels. While the mice try to make this work, most find the situation untenable. One influential mouse, Lady Brie, seeks to rally their spirits. She believes mice need a voice in the Council, and that gaining the vacant seat should prove easy once they reclaim their surface territories.

Port Matthew

Port Matthew, the shipping capital for the Monarchies of Mau, is the only city to challenge Waterdog Port for mastery of the Acid Sea. While the two cities ceased to be enemies following the War of Dogs and Cats, they maintain a fierce rivalry to this day. This is especially obvious within the Seafarers' Guild. While both cities maintain guildhalls, each claims to hold the original, and friendly challenges between pirates are common. In both cities, the Guild welcomes members of all species, and mixed species crews abound. This openness has influenced Port Matthew to the point where all species are nominally welcomed as equals, with the notable exception of birds.

As its trading empire grows, more eyes within Mau turn towards Port Matthew. The other monarchies question whether House Rex should maintain full control of such a useful resource – particularly with their strange decision to allow other species to freely partake in the glories of the Monarchies of Mau – or whether Port Matthew should become a jointly held asset benefiting Mau as a whole. While Pugmire has few illusions about its ability to take Port Matthew for itself, they seek to establish strong relations with it even as they look longingly back towards Waterdog Port. Within the city itself, hushed whispers question: if Waterdog Port can become its own independent power, why not Port Matthew?

History

Bluesail, a small fishing village on the coast of the monarchy of Rex, has grown enormously over a short period of time. Originally, Bluesail sought to push ever further out into the Acid Sea, its residents experimenting with techniques to render their boats resistant to its corrosive waters. They discovered an oil mixture useful for treating wood, and for a time, oil-hull ships were prized as the most durable until the advent of plastic hulls. As the village's prosperity grew, more cats were drawn to it.

When the War of Dogs and Cats erupted, ambassadors from House Korat approached House Rex to collaborate on the construction of a proper navy. Land adjacent to Bluesail was chosen for the first cat naval base, the Pearl of War. With the construction of the base, the Unified Marines were born, combining the warrior spirit of Korat with the seafaring expertise of Rex. Cats flocked to the area, some to join the navy, others to offer goods and services, rapidly expanding the city until it was second in size only to Rex City within the monarchy of Rex.

Rather than relying upon defensive walls, the city was built to be a labyrinthine maze of bridges, stairways, and platforms, rendering any concerted military invasion difficult to accomplish. An elaborate network of enclosed secret passageways, called traboules, allowed unseen cats to move quickly from one part of the city to another. In recognition of its unique architecture's utility, the city was renamed the City of Bridges, though this name would be short-lived.

During the War of Dogs and Cats, the City of Bridges might have fallen, if not for the polydactyl pirate captain Matthew Hemingway von Rex. A sudden, brutal storm had risen, devastating the cats' burgeoning naval forces. A dog fleet arrived in its wake, intent upon dominating the naval conflict before Mau could properly prepare. Seeing the devastation of the storm and Pugmire's naval forces descending upon them, Matthew launched his ship directly into the fray. His crew had just returned from a long voyage overseas, bearing large quantities of gunpowder for the war effort, and had yet to unload the volatile materials. They rammed the point ship, the crew diving overboard as Captain Matthew ignited their cargo. Both ships were destroyed, and the explosion triggered the largest attack of Gunpowder Panic in history, ravaging the ranks of the remaining dogs and effectively ending the naval conflict. With his sacrifice, nobody questioned the decision to rename the city once more, and the residents of Port Matthew proudly relate the tale to this day.

Species of Port Matthew

Unsurprisingly for a city ruled by House Rex, cats outnumber other species. However, cats don't

enjoy more privileges than other species, much to the frustration of the other monarchies. Slightly mollified by the inclusion of representatives from other Houses among the mayor's secretaries, they would prefer to see cats elevated above all others, or at least granted discounts on docking fees. Rex is unconcerned by their irritation, believing that the boundaries preventing different species from working together are appropriate ones to push.

Despite their openness, cats fill most positions of authority and control most of the city's resources. Ropes incorporating the knot language of House Rex are strung throughout the city, with most corners adorned with one or more. These guidelines provide cats with easily accessible information unavailable to other species, and they're loath to weaken this advantage by teaching the language to others.

While few dogs settle permanently in Port Matthew, those who do embrace pirate mannerisms and the nautical aesthetic even if they aren't seafarers. Many offer their services as guides to visitors, leading them through the city's confusing pathways to their destinations. While few decode Rex's knot language, most guides still make it a point to inspect guidelines intently when working to give the impression of mastery. Still others intentionally get things wrong occasionally, to not let on that they've decoded the cats' secret language. Dog pirates are common, and the rivalry between them and the cat pirates causes frequent arguments and brawls, some escalating to the point where guards need to step in.

Lizards regularly arrive by land and sea to visit and trade. They pitch their tents and hawk their wares in one of the open-air markets with such frequency that locals dubbed it Lizard Square. Their colorful ships arrive with great fanfare, as the lizards are usually prepared to put on a performance after long days at sea. The few hibernal lizards of Port Matthew usually broker deals between residents of the city and traveling lizards, though some embrace criminal lifestyles. A band of serpent mercenaries called the Black Coil offer their services to the highest bidder, extracting information from targets or silencing them permanently.

Birds are unwelcome in Port Matthew, a fact most locals quickly make abundantly clear. When

birds approach, cats go silent, waiting until their feathered foes move on before continuing conversations. Despite their lowly status, birds maintain a stable population in the city. Sparrows and crows construct rough shelters around the city's spires, much to the cats' continued irritation. While some cats eventually seek to remove them, the birds are seldom discouraged and are difficult to catch. Most parrots eke out an existence beneath the bridges and walkways of the Canal District, trading secrets for necessities.

Rodents are surprisingly fortunate in Port Matthew, as mice and rats have opportunities for success unavailable elsewhere. To the cats' perpetual chagrin, the rodents have discovered and mastered use of the traboules. Those falling on hard times sometimes seek shelter within them until they're able to get back on their feet.

While few badgers call Port Matthew home, otters putting into port from long sea journeys are frequent sights in the rowdy taverns close to the shore. Most don't stay in the city for long, although members of the Seafarers' Guild may linger longer than their kin. While officially welcomed like other species, city guards keep close eyes on them, ready to step in to halt violence at a moment's notice.

Politics

Political power in Port Matthew rests wholly in the paws of a mayor appointed by the Dynast of House Rex. The mayor appoints whoever is needed for the proper functioning of the city, providing them with a regular salary in exchange for fulfilling required duties. These secretaries serve as a combination of adviser and official representative, and may be appointed or removed from office at any time. As a result, many cats seek to curry favor with the secretaries to promote their interests, or with the mayor in the hopes of gaining a secretary position of their own.

- Before being appointed by Dynast Tirian, the cat **Blinky von Rex** was a mystic of great skill, quenching her thirst for knowledge and adventure with numerous exploratory missions on Port Matthew's behalf. Clever and charismatic, she managed to broker a truce between a feuding band of badgers and a lizard family during one adventure, establish-

ing trade relations with both. Upon hearing of the achievement, Tirian immediately appointed her to the recently vacated mayor's office, confident she'd shine. While her pride doesn't allow her to admit it, Blinky is terrified she won't prove up to the task, but she accepts it with determination to push her limits.

Blinky has appointed over two dozen secretaries during her tenure, although some are vanity titles bestowed on allies rather than vital positions required for the city's operations.

- The white cat **Buddy von Rex**, Secretary of Spirits, traveled and drank alongside Blinky during her adventuring days. While her companion didn't retire as quickly as the mayor, his last adventure haunts him, and he refuses to set foot on a ship. Granted his position out of respect for their voyages together, Buddy performs few duties, spending his days and salary at lounges and taverns. When he's had too much rum, his taciturn demeanor cracks, and he regales any who ask with incoherent tales of lost treasures and perils he can't recall when sober.
- Given the importance of the Seafarers' Guild to Port Matthew, it's unsurprising the cat **Fraidi Mainecoon von Rex**, head of the Guild, would be appointed Secretary of Seafarers. The burly cat's rust-tinted black fur is often unkempt, but he maintains a jovial demeanor, welcoming all into the Seafarers' Guildhall regardless of species. Those dismissing him as an oaf underestimate his skill and loyalty, often regretting any move they make against him or the seafarers. Fraidi's wide smile conceals a lonely heart, and he secretly fears he'll never find love.
- Anyone looking at **Gloria Hereford** knows the mouse should have died. Scars crisscross her lilac-furred body from her white nose to the base of her kinked tail, marking her as the only survivor of an attack by the Ospreys, the brutal bird pirates who butchered her loved ones. Now in her twilight years, she leads with the courage and compassion of one who has lost everything. As Port Matthew's Secretary of Diversity, she represents the

interests of the other species to the mayor, though her bitter grudge against the Ospreys and thirst for vengeance ensures birds find no sympathy.

- Young and idealistic, the cat **Joni von Cymric** dreams of a world where everyone works together for the betterment of all. The minister once hoped to take to sea to build bridges with foreign nations, but horrible seasickness binds her to the land. Her beautiful voice stirs the hearts of those who hear it, and she uses it when she can to benefit the less fortunate. While the title of Secretary of Adversity was bestowed as a gift following a moving performance, she takes it quite seriously, and the birds of Port Matthew find one of their few allies in Joni.
- The Secretary of Order, a cat named **Mikhail von Siberian**, coldly oversees the enforcement of the laws in Port Matthew and advises the mayor on regulations. Mikhail doesn't hesitate to use the laws to his own advantage, enforcing them unequally when he can get away with it, and the birds whisper of his cruelty when one of their own falls into his paws. He encourages Blinky to forgo her heart in favor of order and practicality when making decisions, though he's had little luck so far. A secret member of the Seekers of Ubaste, Mikhail hopes to place himself or one of his allies into the mayoral office if Blinky cannot be drawn under the Seekers' influence.
- The cat **Tora von Korat**, a decorated officer of the Unified Marines and the current Secretary of Defense, was the protegee of Pejay Shorthair prior to his exile. Dividing her time between the Pearl of War and Port Matthew, Tora focuses upon the safety of Port Matthew and Mau, aggressively opposing any potential threat. Tora's skill in battle and tactical mind has earned Mayor Blinky's trust, and she generally grants Tora whatever she needs to fulfill her duties. More paranoid cats question her true motives, seeing Tora's fiercely vocal enmity towards Pejay and Waterdog Port as too pat to be genuine.

Port Matthew Locations

Constructed of acid-resistant stone, Port Matthew is vertically stratified over a network of canals, the city connected by an intricate web of bridges, staircases, and walkways. Wide open areas where multiple platforms or thoroughfares meet are referred to as squares, and occur at all levels in the city. Most squares contain purity fountains at the center, providing magically purified water to residents. The lower levels belong to the Canal District and the upper to the Spire District. Whether given areas of the middle levels belong to one or the other is a frequent source of argument.

Canal District

Canals crisscross the lower levels of Port Matthew, and small boats ferrying travelers from one part of the city to another are common sights. While many canals occur naturally, others are cat-made, fed through an elaborate system of aqueducts. Traboules are common, some even crossing under the canals or over them through the bridges, and most residents know at least a few. As storm surges cause the lowest levels to flood with acidic waters, only the most destitute make their homes there, and residents commonly seal their homes and businesses before moving upward to storm shelters during intense storms. The knotted guidelines require regular oiling and replacement due to these corrosive surges. The docks and shipyards are considered part of the Canal District, though some cats argue they should be considered a separate district entirely.

Jasper's Toys and Oddities

The small shop contains an abundance of paw-crafted wooden toys on one side, and strange wooden carvings and bizarre objects on the other. As anyone who has spent time listening to Jasper Tabby's stories of seafaring adventures can attest, the cat received these items as gifts from the frogs of Bog Island. Jasper's long, fluffy coat always appears untamed, but he's a friendly and engaging storyteller, and his tales are perennial favorites among the city's kittens.

One cat, Rumpel Tortoiseshell von Rex, idolized him, and now as a member of the Seafarers'

Guild, she intends to repay him for a lifetime of inspiration. With the success of her first voyage fresh in her mind, she purchased a ship and prepares to finance a voyage to establish trade relations with the frogs. Now, she wants Jasper to accompany her. He's tried to politely demur, but Rumpel will hear none of it. He's terrified she'll learn the truth. The only ship Jasper ever stepped onto was the one carrying him from Waterdog Port to Port Matthew, and he spent the entire journey seasick. His tales are masterful fabrications, and the oddities in his shop are carefully crafted by his skilled paws. Caught in his web of lies, he struggles to find a way to protect both himself from the perils of sea and Rumpel from the pain of realizing her kittenhood hero is a fraud.

No Quarter

When the cat Mari Siamese von Korat retired from adventure, she thought to live a peaceful life, opening a small social club called the Shore Lounge, where sailors could enjoy fine food, catnip tea, and dancing. It was demolished in a month. Never one to fight fate, Mari remodeled, and No Quarter is now one of the rowdiest taverns in Port Matthew. The drinks are affordable, and with the dance floor converted into a fighting arena, patrons can vent their frustrations (or take bets on those that do) without damaging the establishment. Its popularity with pirate crews ensures the faces of the crowd are ever-changing. Her oldest friend, a jovial, blind otter named Roger, drinks for free, readily offering advice and tales from his pirate days. Those challenging the otter or causing trouble for the tavern soon discover the loss of his eyesight has not hindered his prowess as a warrior.

Spire District

The upper levels share the Canal District's tendency to stratify vertically based on affluence, with the wealthiest favoring the highest levels for privacy and their scenic views of the spires and Sea. The stone platforms and walkways are connected by bridges, and more than one flat rooftop from a shorter building serves as a square for the Spire District. Traboules are less common in the upper levels, and their locations and layout

are generally privileged information. While residents of the Spire District have little to fear from flooding, wise residents remain indoors during storms, as the pointed spires draw lightning strikes.

The Clock Tower

The tallest structure in Port Matthew, the ever-growing Clock Tower provides employment for rodents in need. At any time, the twisting gears swarm with rodents diligently performing maintenance, repairs, or construction upon the intricate device. Mice climb into narrow and hard to reach areas, while stronger rats manually wind mechanisms. The head engineer, a rat named Alyssa Black-Roan, constantly studies blueprints and performs intricate mathematical equations. She's friendly, if constantly distracted by her thoughts, but she never explains why they continue to expand the Clock Tower or what further purpose it could have. At the highest platform level, a gourmet restaurant allows diners to enjoy the finest cuisine beneath the cogwheels and scurrying rodents. It's a tribute to the food's quality that diners return even after being subjected to the raging temper of the snobby mouse chef, Gus Argente.

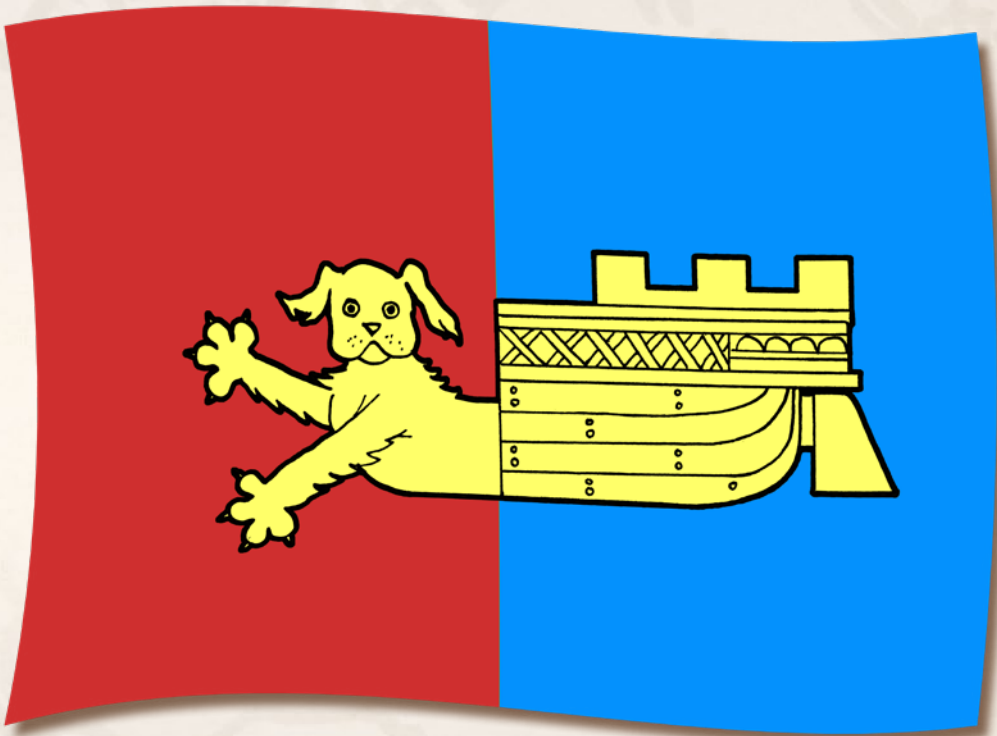
Ministry of Health

Cat scholars recall the Old Ones tending to the needs of their servants' bodies, mending wounds and curing diseases. The Ministry of Health was founded by a coalition of mancercs and ministers to study those ancient practices and the interplay of life and death. The Ministry serves dual function as a hospital and research center, combining mundane medicine and mystical remedies, and many medical advances arise within. At all hours, the chanting of ministers echoes outward, as do the cries of those awaiting care.

While the Ministry is one of few buildings in Port Matthew owned entirely by a single organization, only the top four levels are accessible. The lower levels were long been sealed off without explanation, and even Ministry staff don't venture there. Reports of strange sounds emanating from below are frequent but unverified. The cat Head Minister, Grizabella von Angora, is less con-

cerned about bizarre echoes than she is about rumors of patient disappearances. While her staff denies any knowledge of such occurrences, some residents have raised concerns about friends who

never returned. Whispers suggest corrupted staff members provide unique components to a fabled necromantic organization bent on domination of death itself, the Cult of the Ebony Skull.



Lurker in the Fog

Noctis von Siberian, scourge of the Acid Sea, wasn't happy. The report he got from the lookout meant that what he had to tell the captain was troubling indeed. He had spent the past three minutes in his cabin screaming into his pillow, getting all his frustrations out before making his way down to the captain's room. Taking a deep breath, he knocked on the door.

"Come in," came the sonorous voice beyond the door. Noctis stepped inside and closed the door behind him, standing at attention and staring over the dog's head. Captain Desdemona Pug of the *Wet Nose* was finishing up her meal, her plate carelessly set on a stack of navigation charts. She'd slung her coat on the back of her chair and now wiped her hook clean, holding a napkin in her good paw. "How are things, number one?"

The cat stared hard at the wall past her. "Ma'am, I've asked you before not to call me that. I prefer the term 'first mate,' as the Old Ones dictated."

Pug shrugged. "What's your report?"

Noctis could feel another scream welling up in his throat. "Ma'am, it appears... we may be off course."

The captain slid her coat back on and started to button her many shiny buttons one-pawed. "So get us back on course."

Oh, why didn't I think of that? Noctis wanted to say, but he bit his lip, continuing to stare at the wall. "Ma'am, we've drifted into... the Fog."

"What's wrong with...?" Pug stopped and glanced down at her charts again. The impact of that capital letter dawned on her. "Ah. *That* Fog."

"Aye, ma'am."

"This is serious, number one."

Noctis counted every grain on the wall he was staring at. "Aye, ma'am."

She put a paw on the cat's arm. He flinched at the touch. "Don't worry. We'll sort out your mistake. Come along." She brushed past her first mate and made her way up the stairs to the deck. Noctis watched her go. As soon as she was on deck, he put his face into the crook of his arm and screamed again into his coat.

...

The deck of the *Wet Nose* was abuzz with activity. The crew desperately adjusted sails, pulled ropes, and turned wheels — anything to try to adjust the course of the ship away from the looming fog squatting dead ahead of them. Captain Pug strolled among the crew, staring at the Fog when she wasn't barking the occasional order. Noctis double-checked the crew's



work before going to join the captain. The two stood shoulder-to-shoulder, not speaking. The Fog dominated their vision as they stared, and Captain Pug scratched her nose with her hook in deep thought.

Finally, after what felt like hours of watching the Fog, Noctis noticed that he could see a faint patch of blue off to his left. Turning, he confirmed that there was clear sky peeking through the dense vapor. "We did it, captain!" he shouted with joy. The rest of the crew cheered, but Captain Pug continued to stare at the Fog. Seeing the captain so stoic always made Noctis nervous, so he yelled at the crew for a bit to make himself feel better.

Eventually, the blue sky took up more and more of the view. Confident they had avoided the Fog, Noctis returned to his captain, who was still staring ahead. "Ma'am, shouldn't you be happy? We've cleared the Fog."

"We have. But you've forgotten one thing."

At that moment, the water all around the ship started to boil. The acid splashed onto the deck, irritating the eyes and skin of the crew as they tried to figure out what was going on. Noctis ran to the starboard side of the ship and stuck his head into the spray, shielding his eyes to get a better look. He caught a glimpse of something dark and rubbery slithering under the water before it disappeared again.

Then he heard a loud keening wail, and a gargantuan tentacle lurched out of the water in front of the ship. It waved menacingly in the air as it reared up, large as the ship itself.

Captain Pug stared calmly at the monstrosity. "You forgot the kraken, number one."

This time, Noctis didn't try to muffle his scream.



Chapter Five: Enemies

Pirates navigate countless dangers from upon the waves and beneath them. As on land, the malevolent attentions of the Unseen threaten their very lives and souls. Colossal horrors lurk in the darkest depths, emerging only to feed upon hapless seafarers. Nobody said sailing the Acid Sea would be *safe*.

Enhancements

Enhancements are optional traits applied to existing enemies to grant altered or additional capabilities. Adding the Amphibious or Aquatic enhancement makes enemies from *Pugmire* or *Monarchies of Mau* function as suitable nautical threats, while the Spectral enhancement converts enemies into ghostly versions of themselves. Some enhancements increase an enemy's

CR. Here are some example enhancements, but Guides should feel free to create their own:

Acid Sea Denizen: All Acid Sea natives are resistant to acid damage, suffering no ill effects from the sea's acidity.

Amphibious: The enemy is capable of existing on land or water. Select the creature's primary habitat, then grant them half their movement speed within the other.

Aquatic: The enemy cannot drown and moves easily through water.

Colossal: See below. CR +3

Corrosive: The enemy is immune to acid. All attacks deal 1d6 additional acid damage. Corrosive enemies gain the Acidic Doom knock. CR +1

- **Acidic Doom:** Upon death, the enemy's blood creates an acidic pool equal to 5 feet times the enemy's CR in diameter, shrinking by 5 feet each turn after the first. Characters in the pool suffer 1d8 acid damage each turn.

Crawler: The enemy can move along any surface capable of holding its weight, including walls and ceilings.

Sepulchral: The enemy is attuned to necrotic energies. It heals from attacks dealing necrotic damage, but gains a weakness to radiant damage (which is doubled, as with normal weaknesses) weakens it. All attacks deal 1d4 additional necrotic damage. Sepulchral enemies gain the Grave Vengeance knack. CR +1

- **Grave Vengeance:** Three turns after being slain, the enemy and any recently killed creatures within 30 feet rise as zombies.

Spectral: The enemy is incorporeal, moving through solid matter as though it doesn't exist. The enemy is immune to bludgeoning, piercing, and slashing damage. They make all melee attacks as touch attacks, ignoring mundane armor. Spectral enemies gain the Wisdom Drain knack. CR +1

- **Wisdom Drain:** The enemy drains 1d4 Wisdom points with a touch attack, healing 5 stamina points regardless of their maximum. At 0 Wisdom, a target loses all stamina points and begins dying. Lost Wisdom returns with rest.

Unflappable: The enemy is immune to Gunpowder Panic.

Winged: The enemy is capable of flight at the same speed as their normal movement rate.

Colossal Foes

The depths of the Acid Sea harbor creatures of impossible size, such as the colossal hydrozoa (see p. 134). Aquatic colossi may engage in combat against ships as though they were enemy ships, and may gain the following knacks:

- **Breach:** The colossus bursts from the water at speed, sending powerful waves outward, affecting all ships within 50 feet. These waves knock ships back 100 feet, requiring a difficulty 18 Dexterity saving throw to regain control of the ship. Until its crew regains control, they make all actions at a disadvantage.

- **Daunting Size:** The colossus easily ignores most attacks, adding its CR to defense. Colossi make Strength and Constitution checks and saving throws at an advantage. On the other hand, they suffer a disadvantage on Dexterity checks and saving throws. Targets can make Dexterity saving throws to avoid damage from melee attacks, even if the attack normally doesn't offer one. Targets don't receive saving throws if they have restricted mobility or the colossus rolls a triumph on the attack.

- **Dive:** The colossus dives beneath the waves for greater maneuverability. Underwater, all Dexterity saving throws gain an advantage against foes lacking this knack. By taking an action to dive, attacks against the colossus from the surface suffer a disadvantage.

- **Sea Bound:** Colossi are at home in the sea, but clumsy outside of it. When moving on land, their speed is halved and all actions are made at a disadvantage.

- **Titanic Might:** The Colossus adds 100 stamina points to the base creature and increases its speed by 20. Its Strength and Constitution ability modifiers increase by 3. All attacks improve damage dice to the next highest die and add one die to the roll. For example, if the base creature's attack deals 2d6 damage, the colossus deals 3d8 with the same attack.

Animals

The sea hosts a plethora of ferocious animals within its depths. Most swim or lurk beneath the waves, but some crawl onto ships or the shore in search of prey.

Acid Shark (CR 2)

Defense: 15 (jagged hide)

Stamina Points: 30

Speed: 40 feet (underwater)

Proficiency Bonus: +3

Abilities: Strength +3 (16), Dexterity +4 (18), Constitution +2 (15), Intelligence -3 (5), Wisdom -2 (7), Charisma -3 (4)

Skills: Notice, Intimidate, Survive

Attacks: Bite (+6 melee; 2d6+3 piercing), Jagged Hide (+6 melee; 1d4+3 slashing)

Knacks: Darkvision; resistant to all slashing and acid attacks; weak against piercing and thunder attacks.

- **Acid Bite:** After successfully biting its prey, an acid shark leaves corrosive fluid in the wounds, dealing an additional 1d6 acid damage each turn until the target makes a Constitution saving throw (difficulty 12), the wound is washed out with clean water, or the wound is healed magically.

Crocodile (CR 3)

Defense: 15 (scales)

Stamina Points: 42

Speed: 20 feet/30 feet swimming

Proficiency Bonus: +3

Abilities: Strength +4 (19), Dexterity +1 (12), Constitution +4 (18), Intelligence -5 (1), Wisdom +0 (10), Charisma -5 (1)

Attack: Bite (+7 melee, 2d6+4 piercing)

Knacks:

- **Roll:** On the turn following a successful bite attack, a swimming crocodile may roll with their target, severely tearing flesh. This is a second bite attack – if successful, the damage rolled is doubled.

Giant Crab (CR 4)

Defense: 17 (shell)

Stamina Points: 56

Speed: 40 feet/10 feet swimming

Proficiency Bonus: +3

Abilities: Strength +5 (20), Dexterity +1 (12), Constitution +6 (22), Intelligence -5 (1), Wisdom +1 (13), Charisma -5 (1)

Attack: Claw (+8 melee, 2d6+5 slashing)

Knacks: Darkvision

- **Claw Grip:** On a successful claw attack, the crab may impose the Immobile condition, resisted with a difficulty 16 Strength saving throw. The crab may maintain this hold on one target while attacking another.

Jellyfish (CR 0)

Defense: 10

Stamina Points: 6

Speed: 5 feet

Proficiency Bonus: +2

Abilities: Strength -2 (6), Dexterity +0 (10), Constitution +0 (10), Intelligence -5 (1), Wisdom +0 (10), Charisma -5 (1)

Attack: Sting (+0 melee, 1d6 poison)

Knacks: Unflappable

- **Sting:** Characters stung are Stunned for 1 turn, resisted with a difficulty 10 Constitution saving throw.

Shark (CR 3)

Defense: 14 (tough hide)

Stamina Points: 42

Speed: 40 feet

Proficiency Bonus: +3

Abilities: Strength +4 (18), Dexterity +1 (13), Constitution +4 (18), Intelligence -5 (1), Wisdom +1 (12), Charisma -5 (1)

Attack: Bite (+7 melee, 2d6+4 piercing)

Knacks: Scent, Unflappable

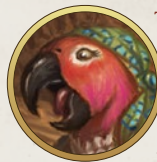
- **Feeding Frenzy:** When a victim bleeds in the water, all sharks can make a second bite attack with a bonus action, targeting the nearest creature.

Buccaneer

The open waves provide a ready hunting ground for the lawless, but survival at sea requires more commitment than setting an ambush and waiting. The pirate's life treats buccaneers well, but is unforgiving of those who take to it lightly. Buccaneers are brutal and efficient, and they never travel alone.

Buccaneers gain the following knack:

- **Sea Legs:** When at sea, buccaneers gain advantage when using the Balance and Traverse skills.



The sea calls to many, and buccaneers are a variable lot. To add more diversity to buccaneer crews, recruit some enemies

from *Pugnire* and *Monarchies of Mau*. Bestow the Sea

Legs knack and whichever others you feel appropriate to provide a nautical enhancement. Bandits, badgers, cats, dogs, lizards, and mice make excellent buccaneers. Add the Spectral enhancement for a ghostly crew!

Crow Lookout (CR 2)

Defense: 12 (leather armor)

Stamina Points: 18

Speed: 30 feet/20 feet gliding

Proficiency Bonus: +2

Abilities: Strength -1 (8), Dexterity +1 (12), Constitution +1 (12), Intelligence +2 (14), Wisdom +2 (14), Charisma -1 (8)

Skills: Notice, Search, Survive

Attack: Flintlock (+3 ranged, 1d10+1 piercing)

Knacks: Darkvision, Unflappable

- **Precision Shot:** The lookout forgoes an attack, aiming to gain +2 bonus and an advantage on the next attack.

Gecko Rigger (CR 2)

Defense: 14 (leather armor)

Stamina Points: 10

Speed: 30 feet/20 feet climbing

Proficiency Bonus: +2

Abilities: Strength +3 (16), Dexterity +3 (16), Constitution +0 (10), Intelligence -1 (8), Wisdom +0 (10), Charisma -1 (8)

Skills: Intimidate

Attack: Cutlass (+5 melee, 1d10+3 slashing)

Knacks: Darkvision

- **Ropework:** If the rigger is close enough to interact with a ship's rigging, their defense increases by 1. The rigger may also swing upon the ropes, moving their full speed without triggering attacks of opportunity.

Parrot Pirate (CR 2)

Defense: 11 (leather armor)

Stamina Points: 18

Speed: 30 feet

Proficiency Bonus: +2

Abilities: Strength +2 (14), Dexterity +0 (10), Constitution +1 (12), Intelligence -1 (8), Wisdom +0 (10), Charisma +2 (14)

Skills: Bluff, Intimidate

Attack: Cutlass (+4 melee, 1d10+2 slashing)

Knacks: Darkvision

- **No Quarter:** The pirate takes a penalty up to their attack bonus before making their attack roll. If successful, damage is increased by the same amount.

Mouse Gunner (CR 2)

Defense: 13 (leather armor)

Stamina Points: 18

Speed: 30 feet

Proficiency Bonus: +2

Abilities: Strength +2 (14), Dexterity +2 (14), Constitution +1 (12), Intelligence -1 (8), Wisdom +1 (12), Charisma -1 (8)

Skills: Notice

Attack: Blunderbuss (+4 ranged, 1d12+2 piercing)

Knacks: Darkvision, Unflappable

- **Strategic Retreat:** By retreating at only half speed, the gunner may avoid attacks of opportunity and defend or help as a bonus action.

Otter Boarder (CR 3)

Defense: 14 (leather armor)

Stamina Points: 27

Speed: 30 feet/30 feet swimming

Proficiency Bonus: +3

Abilities: Strength +2 (15), Dexterity +3 (16), Constitution +1 (12), Intelligence +0 (10), Wisdom +0 (10), Charisma -1 (8)

Skills: Intimidate

Attack: Cutlass (+6 melee, 1d10+3 slashing), flintlock (+6 ranged, 1d10+3 piercing)

Knacks: Darkvision, Unflappable

- **Aquatic Grace:** The otter suffers no penalties for operating underwater and may hold their breath for twice as long as other characters. The otter's defense increases by 2 underwater.
- **Battle Frenzy:** The otter can make a second cutlass attack as a bonus action.

Turtle Quartermaster (CR 3)

Defense: 15 (leather armor, shell)

Stamina Points: 36

Speed: 30 feet

Proficiency Bonus: +3

Abilities: Strength +2 (14), Dexterity +0 (10), Constitution +4 (18), Intelligence -1 (8), Wisdom +1 (12), Charisma +0 (10)

Skills: Intimidate

Attack: Maul (+5 melee, 1d12+2 bludgeoning)

Knacks: Darkvision

- **No Quarter:** The quartermaster takes a penalty up to their proficiency bonus before making their attack roll. If successful, damage is increased by the same amount.
- **Protective Presence:** The quartermaster and allies within 10 feet gain advantage on Constitution saving throws.

Sparrow Captain (CR 4)

Defense: 14 (leather armor)

Stamina Points: 36

Speed: 30 feet/30 feet flying

Proficiency Bonus: +3

Abilities: Strength +1 (12), Dexterity +3 (16), Constitution +1 (12), Intelligence +2 (14), Wisdom +1 (12), Charisma +2 (14)

Skills: Bluff, Intimidate

Attack: Rapier (+6 melee, 1d8+3 piercing), flintlock (+6 ranged, 1d10+3 piercing)

Knacks: Darkvision, Unflappable

- **Rallying Cry:** Whenever the captain achieves a triumph or starts a new round, they give an inspirational call as a free action, granting every member of their crew an advantage on their next action.

Frog-Monkey

These amphibious primates cause trouble for ships and coastal settlements. While not actively malevolent, the mischievous creatures steal food and shiny objects. When obtained at a young age, frog-monkeys can be trained to act as pets, but their natural curiosity frequently leads them into trouble.

Frog-Monkey (CR 1)

Defense: 15 (scaly skin)

Stamina Points: 8

Speed: 20 feet/30 feet climbing/40 feet swimming

Proficiency Bonus: +2

Abilities: Strength +2 (14), Dexterity +4 (18), Constitution +2 (14), Intelligence -4 (2), Wisdom +1 (12), Charisma -2 (6)

Attack: Bite (+4 melee, 1d4+2 piercing), Claw (+4 melee, 1d4+2 slashing)

Knacks: Low-Light Vision, Scent

- **Pickpocket:** On a successful attack, a frog-monkey may forgo damage, clinging to

their target instead. On the following turn, instead of attacking, the frog-monkey steals a small object the target carries, provided they are not actively holding or wielding it.

- **Galley Raid:** If left unattended among the ship's stores for an entire round, a group of frog-monkeys devour, steal, or taint enough supplies to remove 1d4 Seaworthiness.

Globster

Animated by dark necrotic magics or the attention of the Unseen, globsters are horrific amalgams of rotting sea life. Globsters consume dead and living alike, growing ever larger and deadlier. They envelop their prey in their amorphous flesh, incorporating their victims fully into their body as they decay.

Nascent Globster (CR 4)

Defense: 16 (amorphous flesh)

Stamina Points: 39

Speed: 30 feet/50 feet swimming

Proficiency Bonus: +3

Abilities: Strength +5 (20), Dexterity +3 (16), Constitution +5 (20), Intelligence -5 (1), Wisdom +0 (10), Charisma -5 (1)

Attack: Flesh slam (+8 melee, 1d6+5 bludgeoning), Glob (+6 ranged, 1d4 necrotic)

Knacks: Immune to necrotic damage; Resistant to bludgeoning, slashing, and piercing damage; Weak against heat and radiant damage; Scent; Unflappable

- **Consume the Dead:** Devouring a dead creature restores 2d8 stamina points, even if it raises it beyond the globster's maximum stamina points. Consuming a decayed creature restores the maximum amount, as it is immediately incorporated into the creature. The globster may only consume one corpse each turn.
- **Engulf:** Following a successful slam attack, a target must make a difficulty 16 Dexterity saving throw or be engulfed. Engulfed characters are Paralyzed and suffer 1d8 necrotic damage each turn until they make a difficulty 16 Constitution saving throw to escape.
- **Glob:** Characters struck by the mass of decayed flesh become Immobile for one turn unless they succeed at a difficulty 14 Stamina saving throw.

Kraken (CR 9)

These legendary gargantuan squid are infamous for attacking ships. Krakens devour hapless seafarers, constricting them in their tentacles, rendering them helpless while they feed. The largest crush ships in their grips, dragging them beneath the waves, never to be seen again. Each kraken counts as two separate creatures – the tentacles and the head.

Kraken Tentacles

Defense: 18 (rubbery flesh)

Stamina Points: 84

Speed: 80 feet

Proficiency Bonus: +4

Abilities: Strength +5 (20), Dexterity +5 (21), Constitution +4 (18), Intelligence -5 (1), Wisdom +0 (10), Charisma -5 (1)

Attack: Tentacle lash (+9 melee, 2d6+5 bludgeoning)

Knacks: Immune to bludgeoning damage, Scent, Unflappable

- **Constrict:** Any character struck by a tentacle lash is rendered Immobile, resisted with a difficulty 17 Dexterity saving throw. Each turn, the tentacle constricting the individual inflicts 2d8+5 bludgeoning damage. A pirate attempting to break free makes a difficulty 17 Strength saving throw. The tentacle may forgo its damage for a turn to bring a victim within reach of the kraken's head for a bite attack.
- **Death Throes:** Upon the head's death, if the tentacles still have stamina points remaining, the kraken can make one last tentacle lash attack before dying.

Kraken Head (CR 9)

Defense: 22 (rubbery flesh)

Stamina Points: 216

Speed: 80 feet

Proficiency Bonus: +6

Abilities: Strength +4 (18), Dexterity +4 (18), Constitution +4 (18), Intelligence -3 (4), Wisdom +0 (10), Charisma -3 (4)

Attack: Bite (+10 melee, 2d10+4 piercing), Siphon jet (+10 ranged, 2d6+4 bludgeoning)

Knacks: Immune to bludgeoning damage, Scent, Unflappable

- **Consume:** A triumph on a bite attack allows the kraken to swallow the victim. The victim is Immobile, suffering 1d12 acid damage each turn. A triumph on an attack against the kraken from the victim or an ally with slashing or piercing damage frees the victim.
- **Siphon Jet:** Characters struck by the siphon jet must succeed at a difficulty 18 Dexterity saving throw or be rendered Prone. The kraken may release ink instead, rendering the target or all within a 50-foot cube underwater Blind.

Leviathan

Seafarers speak in hushed whispers of these monstrous sea serpents. These apex predators of the deep are mercifully rare, but few crews run afoul of one and live to tell the tale. The greatest of these creatures are rumored to swallow entire ships whole.

Leviathan (CR 10)

Defense: 20 (scales)

Stamina Points: 250

Speed: 80 feet

Proficiency Bonus: +6

Abilities: Strength +6 (22), Dexterity +4 (18), Constitution +5 (20), Intelligence -4 (2), Wisdom +1 (12), Charisma -5 (1)

Attack: Bite (+12 melee, 2d6+6 piercing), Breath weapon (+10 ranged, see below), Coil strike (+12 melee, 2d8+6 bludgeoning)

Knacks: Immune to damage sources matching the leviathan's breath weapon, Resistant to bludgeoning and slashing damage, Scent, Unflappable

- **Breath Weapon:** The breath weapon of a leviathan functions identically to a mariner staff (p. 52), usable once every three rounds. This damage is rolled normally when targeting individuals, unless the leviathan is colossal, in which case it follows the regular rules for a mariner staff. This damage is not otherwise increased for colossal leviathans.
- **Constrict:** Targets struck by a coil strike must succeed at a difficulty 18 Dexterity saving throw or be rendered Immobile. Three successful coil strikes are required before a leviathan may begin to constrict a ship. Constricted targets suffer 2d8+6 bludgeoning damage and/or 1d8 Seaworthiness damage each turn. Breaking free requires a difficulty 20 Strength saving throw.



- **Consume:** A triumph on a bite attack against an individual allows the leviathan to swallow the victim. The victim is Immobile, suffering 1d12 acid damage each turn. A triumph on an attack against the leviathan from the victim or an ally with slashing or piercing damage frees the victim. Colossal leviathans may swallow entire ships (dropping them to 0 Seaworthiness immediately), but do not digest them quickly. Their cavernous insides host their own small ecosystems.

Seafolk

The sea has its own people dwelling beneath the waves. Catfish, dogfish, and stingrat cultures and motivations appear mysterious to surface species. Catfish reign over the waves with strange sorcery, bending nature to their will. Dogfish warriors swim through the seas in search of ever-greater challenges to prove their mettle. Peaceful and curious, stingrats would be harmless if not for their inability to understand concepts of ownership.

Catfish Aquamancer (CR 7)

Defense: 17 (protective spells)

Stamina Points: 63

Speed: 30 feet

Proficiency Bonus: +5

Abilities: Strength +0 (10), Dexterity +3 (16), Constitution +1 (12), Intelligence +4 (18), Wisdom +2 (14), Charisma +0 (11)

Skills: Know Arcana, Know Nature

Attack: Freezing touch (+5 melee, 2d8 cold), Water jet (+8 ranged, 2d8+3 bludgeoning)

Knacks: Darkvision

- **Spines:** Colorful, venomous spines cover the catfish, threatening anyone who draws near. Anyone striking with a melee attack must succeed at a difficulty 16 Dexterity saving throw or pierce themselves on its spines, suffering 2d6 poison damage. Upon suffering this damage, the character must succeed at a difficulty 14 Constitution saving throw or be Paralyzed for 3 turns.
- **Water Jet:** Upon being hit by a water jet, a character must succeed at a difficulty 17 Dexterity saving throw or be knocked Prone. Underwater, characters or ships are instead moved 30 feet in any direction.
- **Whirlpool:** The catfish causes a whirlpool with a circumference of 50 feet to form, and characters within it are Confused. Breaking free requires a difficulty 17 Strength saving throw. Without something to enable water breathing, characters kept beneath the waves for more turns than twice their Con-

stitution modifier begin to drown (p. 55). Ships become lost and require a difficulty 17 Strength saving throw to break free, losing 2d6 Seaworthiness each turn they remain in the whirlpool.

Dogfish Contender (CR 5)

Defense: 15 (scale mail)

Stamina Points: 55

Speed: 30 feet

Proficiency Bonus: +4

Abilities: Strength +4 (18), Dexterity +2 (14), Constitution +3 (16), Intelligence -1 (8), Wisdom +1 (12), Charisma +1 (12)

Skills: Survive, Traverse

Attack: Trident (+8 melee, 1d8+4 piercing)

Knacks: Darkvision

- **Battle Frenzy:** The dogfish makes two trident attacks with a single action.
- **Fair Challenge:** The dogfish has disadvantage on its next attack. If successful, the attack becomes a triumph.
- **Victory Howl:** When the dogfish gains a triumph, it may howl as a free action. Enemies within earshot become Scared for three turns unless they succeed at a difficulty 13 Charisma saving throw.

Stingrat Scrounger (CR 2)

Defense: 13

Stamina Points: 24

Speed: 30 feet/30 feet swimming

Proficiency Bonus: +2

Abilities: Strength +1 (12), Dexterity +3 (16), Constitution +0 (10), Intelligence -1 (8), Wisdom +0 (11), Charisma +0 (10)

Skills: Sneak, Steal

Attack: Bite (+3 melee, 1d6+1 piercing), Sting (+5 melee, 1d6+3 piercing)

Knacks: Darkvision

- **Reflexive Whip:** When damaged by an attack, the stingrat may counterattack with a sting attack as its reaction.
- **Sting:** Stung characters suffer an additional 1d4 poison damage and must resist being Stunned for 1 turn with a difficulty 10 Constitution saving throw.

Shipscales

These gigantic iridescent barnacles become troublesome when they grow on the hulls of ships. While their reinforced shells give added protection from attacks, they also weigh down the ship, slowing it and reducing its maneuverability. The shipscales use their long feathery pincers to feed on small sea organisms, and don't attack individuals unless threatened. Removing them from a ship usually involves dry docking it until they starve.

Anchored Shipscale (CR 1)

Defense: 18 (stony carapace)

Stamina Points: 15

Speed: 0

Proficiency Bonus: +2

Abilities: Strength +2 (14), Dexterity -2 (7), Constitution +5 (20), Intelligence -5 (1), Wisdom +0 (10), Charisma -5 (1)

Attack: Pinch (+4 melee, 1d4+2 piercing)

Knacks: Immune to bludgeoning damage, Resistant to piercing and slashing damage, Weak against cold and heat damage, Unflappable

- **Shipscale Encrustation:** While largely harmless as individuals, great numbers can seriously impact a ship. A ship encrusted with shipscales adds 3 to their Hull and becomes resistant to bludgeoning damage but subtracts 15 from its Speed and makes Dexterity saving throws at a disadvantage. Daily loss of Seaworthiness also increases by 1d4.

Spider-Goats

Friendly and playful, spider-goats clambering over a ship's rigging are a frequent sight. Able to eat almost anything, these small eight-legged goats are prized for their milk, as a single glass nourishes a person for an entire day. Alkalists refine the milk to produce sturdy fibers required to craft incredibly durable spider ropes. The docile creatures aren't frightened by storms or long journeys at sea and remain unfazed even by Gunpowder Panic.

When injured or sensing the Unseen, spider-goats become fearful, transmogrifying into

horrific defensive forms, growing larger and sprouting additional eyes, jointed legs, and vicious mandibles. Transmogrified spider-goats cannot distinguish friend from foe, lashing out at everything around them. They do not calm and return to their natural form until they spend an hour alone or only in the company of other spider-goats. Spider-goat kids are unable to transmogrify, but a mother nursing kids gains a deadlier defensive form to protect them. For this reason, spider-goats with kids are seldom brought out to sea.

Imperiled Spider-Goat (CR 3)

Defense: 16 (chitinous flesh)

Stamina Points: 33

Speed: 30 feet

Proficiency Bonus: +3

Abilities: Strength +3 (16), Dexterity +4 (18), Constitution +3 (16), Intelligence -4 (2), Wisdom +1 (12), Charisma -3 (4)

Attack: Acid spit (+7 ranged, 1d6 acid), Bite (+6 melee, 1d6+3 piercing), Gore (+6 melee, 2d4+3 piercing)

Knacks: Crawler, Darkvision, Unflappable

- **Brutal Charge:** The spider-goat charges at least 20 feet, culminating in a gore attack. A successful attack deals an additional 1d4 piercing damage, and the target must make a difficulty 14 Dexterity saving throw or be knocked Prone.
- **Web:** The spider-goat targets a 20-foot cube, filling the area with strong, sticky webbing. Characters in the area must make a difficulty 15 Dexterity saving throw or be rendered Immobile. Immobile characters may attempt to break free with a difficulty 14 Strength saving throw on their next turn.

Goat Mother (CR 5)

Defense: 18 (chitinous flesh)

Stamina Points: 65

Speed: 40 feet

Proficiency Bonus: +4

Abilities: Strength +4 (18), Dexterity +4 (18), Constitution +3 (16), Intelligence -4 (2), Wisdom +1 (12), Charisma -3 (4)

Attack: Acid spit (+8 ranged, 2d6 acid), Bite (+8 melee, 2d4+4 piercing), Gore (+8 melee, 2d6+4 piercing)

Knacks: Crawler, Darkvision, Unflappable

- **Bristle Spines:** The goat mother's fur has transmogrified into fragile, razor-sharp spines, which splinter at the slightest pressure. Anyone striking the goat mother with a melee attack suffers 2 slashing damage from the flying fragments.
- **Brutal Charge:** The spider-goat charges at least 20 feet, culminating in a gore attack. A successful attack deals an additional 1d6 piercing damage, and the target must make a difficulty 16 Dexterity saving throw or be knocked Prone.
- **Web:** The spider-goat targets a 20-foot cube, filling the area with strong, sticky webbing. Characters in the area must make a difficulty 16 Dexterity saving throw or be rendered Immobile. Immobile characters may attempt to break free with a difficulty 16 Strength saving throw on their next turn.

Stormcaller

Feared for their command of the weather, these demons thrive on the despair of those adrift at sea. Possessing victims during storms, these demons bide their time, revealing themselves at the worst moment. The only hint of their presence is constant wind ruffling the fur of their host, making birds and lizards the subtler choice for possession. When unleashing their wrath upon a ship, they take to the skies upon feathered wings of dark fog.

Stormcaller (CR 8)

Defense: 18 (harrowing winds)

Stamina Points: 120

Speed: 30 feet, 40 feet flying

Proficiency Bonus: +5

Abilities: Strength +4 (18), Dexterity +5 (20), Constitution +5 (20), Intelligence +1 (12), Wisdom +2 (14), Charisma +0 (10)

Skills: Know Nature, Survive

Attack: Lightning Bolt (+10 ranged, 2d8+5 lightning)

Knacks: Immune to lightning and thunder damage, Darkvision, Unflappable

- **Death Rain:** Once per combat, the stormcaller may unleash a 50-foot cube of acid rain, inflicting 4d10+2 acid damage on all targets

within. A difficulty 18 Constitution saving throw halves this damage.

- **Squall:** The stormcaller pushes the target 30 feet in any direction with a violent gust of wind, resisted with a difficulty 17 Constitution saving throw.
- **Tempest:** A massive storm gathers, subjecting everyone to powerful winds, heavy rains, and crashing thunder and lightning. Individual pirates suffer a disadvantage on Dexterity saving throws and perception-related rolls

while the storm persists. Ships become lost and must succeed at a difficulty 18 Dexterity saving throw or lose 2d8 Seaworthiness. The stormcaller may maintain the tempest as a free action.

- **Thunderclap:** All targets within a 20-foot cube surrounding the stormcaller must succeed at a difficulty 17 Constitution saving throw or suffer 2d8+4 thunder damage and become Deaf.

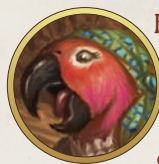




Chapter Six: Treasure

Treasures in *Pirates of Pugmire* are similar to the items cats and dogs call *wonders* (*Pugmire* pp. 176–177, *Monarchies of Mau* p. 189). For pirates, the legends attached to each treasure are far more important than what the treasure does. Most provide no obvious or substantive benefit, but they are rare curiosities some pirates would happily spend a lifetime attempting to acquire.

Owning a treasure grants a pirate *Notoriety* and may even be the source of certain pirates' nicknames or titles. *Notoriety* gives a pirate advantage on certain social *Charisma* rolls when talking to non-hostile people who are interested in piratical exploits, but also increases the chance enemies will come looking for the pirate, having heard of her bounty and wanting it for themselves. *Notoriety* increases depending on the number of treasures a pirate possesses — and



Hello! It's ultimately up to the Guide whether any one non-player character will be impressed by a pirate's notoriety. Most characters in port towns and within the pirate world should care at least a bit, but someone from far north who's unfamiliar with treasure and piracy more'n likely won't bat an eye!

certain, rare treasures may give a pirate more than one point of *Notoriety*. *Notoriety* may not go over 3.

For each point of *Notoriety*, there is a corresponding moniker other folks will use to show their respect, and which pirates themselves may use to demonstrate to friend and foe alike their prowess at adventuring and acquiring treasure. At

one point of Notoriety, a pirate is “Acclaimed,” at two they are “Renowned,” and at three they are “Glorious.” Thus, if one hears of the Glorious Captain Rasteg of the Three Blue Gems, he’s either a fearsome enemy or a good pal to have in your pocket!

Notoriety

Points	Notoriety	Effect
1	<i>Acclaimed</i>	Advantage on social Charisma rolls with allies and friendly strangers; enemies know your name.
2	<i>Renowned</i>	Advantage on social Charisma rolls with neutral parties and complete strangers; enemies know your name, your ship’s name, and recognize you on sight.
3	<i>Glorious</i>	Advantage on social Charisma rolls with everyone; enemies know your name, your ship and crew members’ names, recognize you on sight, and can find you within a week of searching.

New Conditions

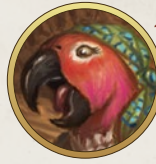
Treasures may also cause Conditions, either those from *Pugmire* (pp. 97–99), *Monarchies of Mau* (pp. 109–110), or one listed below.

Called

You are called by something, perhaps the siren song of the sea itself, the lure of a treasure, or a long-forgotten location. You will not rest until you find what is calling to you. To take an action that you feel takes you further away from achieving your goal requires you to pass a Wisdom check at difficulty 12.

Puffed Up

You are convinced you are mighty and invincible in battle, that enemies will cower before you and everyone else will love you on sight. You are so wrapped up in how wonderful you are that you commonly make social blunders and pick fights. You have disadvantage on all Charisma rolls.



Ahoy! Though we’ve given ya a list of treasures in addition to the wonders in *Monarchies of Mau* and *Pugmire*, feel free to make up your own or modify the ones in this chapter! Just remember: ev’ry treasure has a Notoriety rating and they generally don’t offer combat benefits.

Oblivious

You are fascinated by something, and thus oblivious to most things around you. You automatically fail initiative rolls, cannot be chosen to start any initiative rounds, and you make any Notice, Search, and Sense Motive checks with disadvantage.

Watched

You are sure someone — or something — is watching you, lying in wait. As your paranoia increases, so does your jumpiness. You automatically attack anyone who approaches you from any direction aside from your front; this includes allies and members of your own crew.

Treasures

Below, you can find a small assortment of treasures for Guides to use in their *Pirates of Pugmire* games. There are treasures of all Notoriety ratings, and any can be modified to suit your story!

Amulet of Murmurs

Notoriety: 1

This heavy copper necklace, said to have belonged to one of the first people the Old Ones uplifted but who sadly perished at sea, is set with a red stone and covered in ornate carvings. If worn, the bearer hears continuous whispers and sighs, though not in any language known to anyone today. If a pirate wears the amulet for more than a day, they gain the Called Condition, though it fades almost immediately upon removing the necklace.

Crone's Carving Knife

Notoriety: 2

This knife, the handle of which is carved into the shape of a hunched, hooded figure holding a lantern, allows whoever uses it to carve exquisite, small statues out of bone or wood, regardless of prior artistic inclination. The carvings can range from simple animals to multi-masted ships, though no carving can be larger than the artist's closed fist. If a carving is given away, the recipient receives advantage on their next Wisdom roll. The knife was purportedly brought back from the Sky Kingdom, where everything is beautiful.

Flask of Bobby Golden

Notoriety: 2

Bobby Golden — a legendary pirate from ages past — was notorious more for his time spent carousing in inns than he was for his piracy. His flask was his most prized treasure; it was as golden as his name and as friendly and giving as he was. Whenever any liquid is poured from the flask, it becomes the imbibers' favorite drink, be it catnip tea, ale, or something more exotic. The flask can be refilled with any liquid, including the water of the Acid Sea, and what comes out (after letting it sit for a day) will be whatever the pirate holding their cup out most wants to drink.

In addition, once a day, the flask can do one of the following:

- Convert the contents into any kind of consumable liquid, such as a beneficial potion (*Pugmire*, p. 176 or *Monarchies of Mau*, p. 188)
- Multiply the non-magical contents so that the volume can be poured out to fill an entire barrel — useful for clean water on long voyages. This can offset 1d6 worth of Seaworthiness loss due to tainted supplies.

General Shyla's Signet Ring

Notoriety: 2

General Shyla of Twenty Chains found a signet ring so old no one can figure out the material of which it is made. Since her disappearance some decades ago, none have seen her

ring, though reports of its whereabouts float into Waterdog Port from time to time. The ring is heavy and silver, set with a dark stone that seems to absorb light. Unfortunately, Shyla was driven to disappear until her eventual death due to the fact that the once-inert ring gives its wearer the Watched Condition. If this treasure is discovered, it will be near the bones of a sparrow. Removing the ring ends the Condition immediately as the fog clears.

Nautilus Heart

Notoriety: 2

The nautilus heart is a small, ornate puzzle box that barely looks large enough to hold a few coins or a bit of jewelry. It appears occasionally in stories, though most of them end with the owner throwing it into the ocean for reasons unknown, and none of the stories can describe the box itself. Once a pirate discovers the method of unlocking the box, they find a series of chambers inside, each filled with a different color of enamel. Only the center chamber is empty and hollow. If a pirate stores an item in there the size of a single coin or ring for a day or longer, when they take the item out, it carries a curse. Keeping the item close to them after that, whether in a pocket or as jewelry (not in their rucksack) bestows the Cursed condition (p. 56) on the item's bearer.

Pearlescent Telescope

Notoriety: 1

Although it looks like a typical telescope inlaid with pearls and gemstones, the pearlescent telescope is anything but. When a pirate peers through the lens, they see not what lies in the distance, but a glimpse of... *something*. A destination, a loved one, a fantastic landscape, or a horrible creature, none can say — though the pirate may describe it while actively looking through the telescope, they and those around them immediately forget what the vision contained once the telescope is lowered from their eye. Written accounts, too, melt into gibberish.

This gives the character using the telescope an uncanny and vaguely threatening sense of déjà vu, but also grants the player advantage on one future roll of their choice. Birds and lizards have the most stories about this treasure, as birds

think it will show them the Sky Kingdom and lizards believe they may see the original lizard homeland, to which they hope to return one day.

Saber of Writhing Eels

Notoriety: 1

Though brittle and wholly unsuited for battle, this long blade in its eel-skin scabbard is a wonderful accoutrement, either to wear at one's hip or hang above their bunk. According to a few cat folk tales, the saber was made by famed pirate queen Millicent Sphynx who sailed long before the monarchies existed. As the story goes, she was forced to walk the plank by a gang of vicious rat buccaneers and was swallowed by a giant eel. She escaped, however, by clawing her way through the eel's tough hide before making her way back to her ship in dead of night and retaking it. Though the blade was ruined by the eel's corrosive blood (and she carried scars the rest of her days), she covered the scabbard in bits of its hide and wore it proudly to symbolize that she always won the day.

Wearing the saber give a pirate advantage to their first Charisma roll to interact with anyone, not just those familiar with pirate culture, each time they don the weapon. Hanging the saber in place of pride – such as in one's quarters or over a fireplace – gives advantage on the first Charisma roll made within sight of the saber.

Saturn's Sight

Notoriety: 2

If placed upright on a ship's deck at night, this silver eye in a cylinder always looks in the direction of the nearest port and somehow keeps a boat afloat in rough winds and seas, providing an unseen balance to the vessel beneath it. The crew with this treasure becomes cursed with bad luck at the gambling tables in port, however, suffering a disadvantage to all wagers and cons based around increasing their wealth. The saying goes, "Saturn's Sight keeps a crew's course straight and punishes the crooked."

The strangest capacity associated with this item is its ability to lead pirates to new treasure, but only once. If a ship's captain whispers the name of a desired treasure into the cylinder at

night-time, the eye will turn to face the direction in which the treasure can be found and act as a navigation tool locked onto the named treasure. Saturn's Sight only works once per ship, however. If a captain relocates the treasure to a new vessel, it can be used to locate a new prize.

Susurrus Shell

Notoriety: 1

Made of green sea glass, the susurrus shell otherwise resembles a typical conch shell. A true mystery, no one is sure as to its origins aside from what looks like a miniscule crown stamped into its side, worn by time. It produces pleasant ocean sounds and the occasional distant chime at a low volume. Anyone who keeps the shell by their bunk or next to them while they sleep for more than two nights acquires the Charmed condition, as the shell contains the remnants of a tricky Unseen. This will lead them to attempt to gift the shell to someone else, as the Unseen within is capable of only the most basic manipulation. Once out of their possession, the Charmed condition wears off in half a day or so, and they are vaguely sad and confused as to why they gave away their treasure.

The shell appears to want to go somewhere by hopping from person to person, but there's only so many pirates on a crew and so much room on a ship. If it makes it to land, though, its desires could change entirely.

Tablet of Seventeen Scales

Notoriety: 1

Musicians of any stripe will tell you there are only 12 basic scales in music, but the tablet proves them wrong. The innocuous-looking, flat device fits easily into most rucksacks, and can be operated by two paws. It consists of 17 sliding mechanisms which, when pushed into the open position, produce the 12 known musical scales in various pitches, along with five new ones from surpassing beauty to otherworldly dissonance. Anyone using the tablet for more than an hour at a time gains the Oblivious condition until it is silenced, and anyone listening to it for more than two hours gains the Oblivious condition until it is silenced.



The Caliban

Notoriety: 3

The *Caliban* is an exceedingly rare treasure, as it's an entire legendary sailing vessel. Tales passed among pirates speak of a ship that never deteriorates, though it might still be damaged by combat in the usual ways. Its gleaming, silvery hull does not pick up grime or shipscales, nor does it suffer the effects of the Acid Sea. The material coating the *Caliban* seemingly repels it all while shining in the sun like a beacon, reflecting the waves and clouds. Its sails are sky blue and sturdy, picking up the slightest of winds to propel the vessel through the water like a missile. Some say the *Caliban* always takes you home, no matter how far adrift or lost you become, but surely that's only a story — right?

Anyone who captains this ship gains the Puffed-Up condition, which only ends if they step down as captain or the ship is stolen from them. If the *Caliban* is destroyed, it appears one year later in a completely different location, ready

to be sailed again by a new captain. It also does not lose Seaworthiness from daily use, although it can still lose it from combat, accidents, sabotage, and the like.

The Red Star

Notoriety: 1

Though some treasures are renowned as much for their decorative value as their use or



Here's an interesting story for you: lizards and birds don't have the same relationship with masterworks that dogs and cats do. They can't absorb a masterwork like cats can (*Monarchies of Mau*, p. 183), nor can they improve masterworks like dogs (*Pugmire*, p. 171). Those are just special things that dogs and cats can do. Of course, as the Guide, you might disagree — if so, consider that lizards might be able to improve relics while birds might be able to absorb them.

rarity, the Red Star is unassuming. This slim, metallic cylinder was first discovered by Rhoni Dervachilde long ago; it emits a slender red beam of light that points unerringly toward... something. The light adjusts its point of origin with a ship's movements, so it always orients the same direction, but so far none have followed it to its terminus and returned. Though most pirates are at least curious where the light may eventually take them, cats especially feel a compulsion to follow it to the end and see what lies there.

Verdigris Compass

Notoriety: 1

Many pirates claim to have known someone who owned a verdigris compass, but the truth is there is only one real one in existence, and it's lying in a cave only accessible at the lowest point of low tide. The compass was made by "Chatty" Miguel of Two Claws and enchanted by a sea witch who was never heard from again. Unlike most compasses, the verdigris compass has only two directions on its shining face: calmward and stormward. Pirates using it always know if they are sailing into rough seas or which way to go to get away from howling tempests.





Chapter Seven: Over the Acid Sea

As Guide, it's helpful for you to have a few destinations in mind for pirate characters once they sail the Acid Sea. Dalmatian Cove may be a popular destination for buccaneers in the know, but it's also just a step along the way to newer and stranger places. Adventures await!

Dalmatian Cove

Maybe a century ago, Captain Josephine Dalmatian sailed from Waterdog Port to fulfill Jake Staffordshire's dream: to explore the lands and seas beyond what dogs knew. She hoped to find more wonders the Old Ones left behind, but she also had a keen nose for opportunity. Unfortunately for her, a string of mishaps sent her off her original course until her ship foundered in a strange archipelago, where Josephine reluctantly made her home for the rest of her days. All this was discovered when her diary was found in the

bay in the middle of the now-infamous pirate destination, Dalmatian Cove.

All sailors know of the Cove, which is a two-week sail from Waterdog Port, but its actual location — sometimes even existence — tends to be a well-guarded secret outside of seafaring society. Coded phrases are even used to discuss it in public. Everyone remembers their first trip to the Cove, however. Whether they're a new member of a pirate family or they have a keen instinct for treasure, coming to the archipelago brings a buccaneer into a new orbit of lawlessness and previously undreamt-of possibility. Even so, every sailor — regardless of their reasons for doing so — respects the Cove's tradition of secrecy and does not speak of it. Woe betide the pirate who wags their tongue.

Over time, as maps were made of the archipelago, sailors noticed its general shape and named the various islands and features after the creature

it reminded them of: a crab. Many, but not all, of the islands are connected to each other through a complex system of bridges and the remains of ships lashed together, so it's not required to sail between them. The waters around the archipelago are shallower than most captains are used to, and ships have foundered on its rocks and reefs or become stranded on a sand bar. Some claim it is Josephine Dalmatian's ship just barely poking above the water on the tip of Claw Island.

Although it is Claw Island's bay that is specifically named Dalmatian Cove, many pirates have taken to using that name for the entire archipelago as well.

Head Island

Head Island, or the Head as it's generally referred to, is the largest and most central island. It has the widest variety of features — a mountain; thick, wet, jungle-like forests; rivers and waterfalls and inlets; wide sandy beaches and rocky cliffs — and thus, it's often seen as the biggest playground for pirate crews. Whether it's to stash or pillage each other's plunder and treasures, make deals with another crew for a larger venture, settle rivalries or start new ones, or for lone sailors to sign on with a new crew, there's no end to what can and does happen here.

Even a place as lawless as the Cove recognizes a need for some neutral ground, however. A settlement at the northern side of the island calls itself "The Teeth" due to its proximity to the mouth of the largest river. Its denizens are a mix of old pirates who can't or won't sail any longer, a pirate's brothers or sisters or loved ones who decide to stay to support their life, buccaneers recuperating from a hard adventure, or simply those who need a place to lay low for a while. Hale and hearty adventurers regularly come and go, returning to The Teeth for supplies, rumors, a drink or two, and perhaps to introduce (or find) a recruit for their ship.

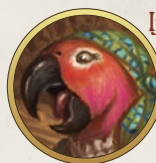
Fights are expected to erupt now and again, but they're also expected to settle into a truce as soon as possible, or the participants get kicked out to handle their business elsewhere. This is posted in big letters on signs on the docks, and a reminder is posted in the tavern.

The Red Rover

Rosie Rover is a salty old dog who had been a member of the Royal Pioneers until she felt the call of the sea. She signed on with the crew of the *Sandy Claws* at Waterdog Port and never looked back. She made friends and enemies on the sea, lost an eye, claimed to have fought a leviathan, and is rumored to know the location of a few stashes of plunder, maybe even a legendary treasure or two. She retired and set up her tavern in The Teeth several years ago. While the rigors of adventure are too much for her these days, she's spry enough to handle a pair of gunpowder weapons when sailors get too rowdy and can call upon numerous friends to make life difficult for those who won't behave in her tavern. Her closest friend, a crow named Izzy Two Stars, collects and shares stories while he's in town, but is often away searching for the fabled ship the *Caliban*. He's convinced it can help him find his home, which he does not remember.

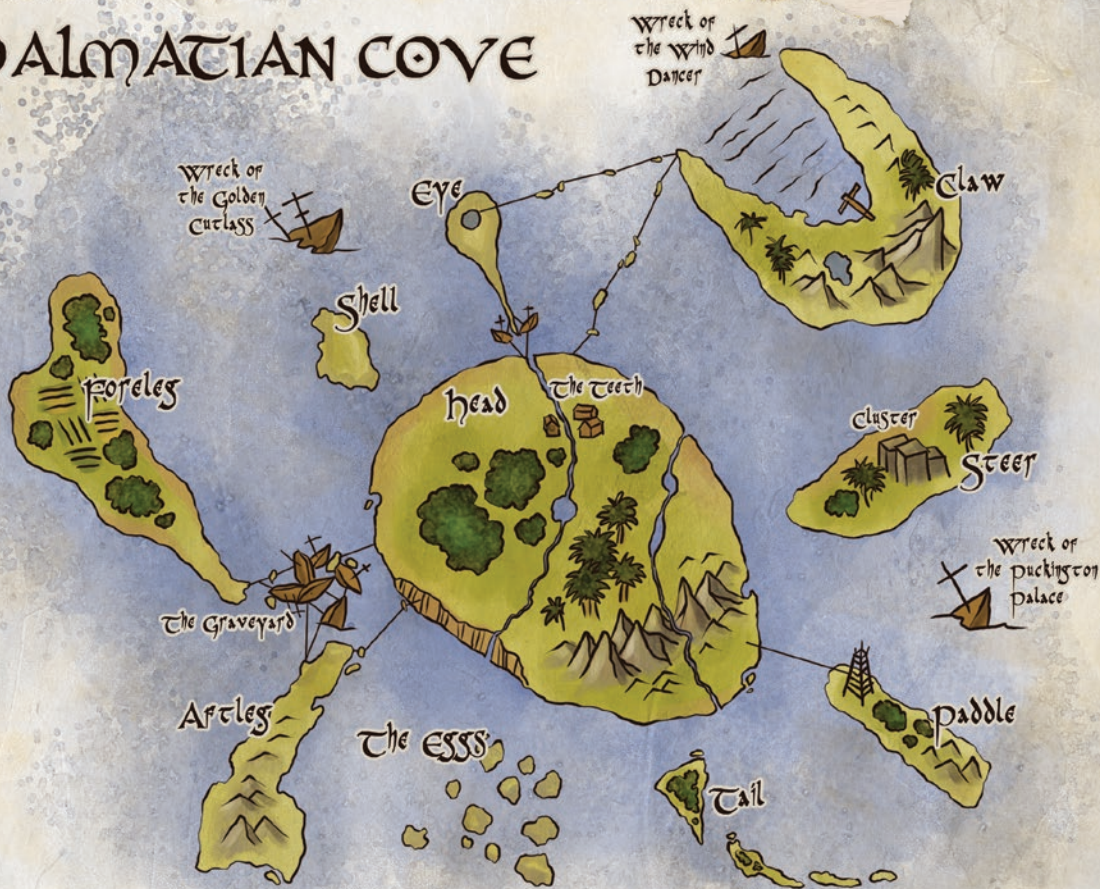
Sapling Strand

"Sapling Strand" is just what's on the map — the ship captains and everyone else wanting to repair their ships call this special area of the jungle "the trees." A special kind of tree grows here with a particularly sticky sap used to patch cracked plastic. It can't completely replace plastic hulls, although some genius alkalists have tried, but the sap can work long enough to get a ship somewhere that can replace the damaged plastic. The trees grow as fast as they are cut down, making them a reliable resource. Pirates looking to confront a rival will sometimes camp in the thick green foliage, hoping to catch up with them when they come to make repairs.



If you coat your hull with the sap, it works like a plastic hull until you fail an Integrity check. After that, the crew rolls Seaworthiness losses as if the boat has a plain wooden hull. In other words, hope you like paddling in the Acid Sea!

DALMATIAN COVE



Claw Island

The easternmost of the archipelago, Claw Island takes its name from the pincerlike appearance its large, shallow bay gives the otherwise roughly oval land mass. It was here that Josephine Dalmatian's journal and the skeleton of her home was found years after her demise. Her journal also detailed her explorations of the island and its resources – its sulphuric hot springs, bat caves, stands of bamboo as well as denser plants and trees – that led to the manufacturing and shipping of gunpowder weapons today.

A consortium of cats and lizards that calls itself the Primogeniture controls this island. They consider themselves neutral, primarily concerned with the profit they earn from making and selling gunpowder weapons. They will sell to any government, faction, or individual. Freelance and hired smugglers can all be found regularly at the Primogeniture's headquarters at the base of the mountain or walking the small dock town in the bay. Mystically inclined characters will notice

that there are wards and traps littered about the island, but concentrated around the manufacturing area, designed to warn against or capture the Unseen.

The Primogeniture fiercely guards Claw Island. While all are welcome to come buy and sell, aggressive action against the group – whether attempts to take over, or violently settle a grievance – is met with well-trained magical and physical resistance. They have no qualms with literally burning bridges to deny a path to their seat of power.

The Eye

North of The Head is The Eye, a small, rocky spit of land used as a lookout and lighthouse for the Head and Claw islands. It's tenuously connected by land to The Head, a sandbar extending most of the way before disappearing several feet under the water at low tide, leaving the island almost completely cut off at high tide. It's more firmly connected by ship and bridge, and in clear

sight of The Teeth. Old Narsa Gythachilde maintains the lamps and mirrors in happy solitude, rarely speaking to anyone except in emergencies. She collects and trades her fishbones and shells to someone at The Teeth — but to whom exactly, no one knows.

Shell Island

Also north of The Head and west of The Eye, Shell Island only appears at low tide. The few who have been there swear that more of the island appears during some periods of low tide once or twice a year where it seems to truly rise above the water. There's very little reason to visit it normally, though a tasty species of shellfish like to congregate in its surrounding shoals. Still, the self-same individuals who say they've visited also say it emits an odd, deep humming sound, and a popular rumor places a cache of treasure underneath its rocky surface.

Foreleg Island

Foreleg Island is considered a “leg” of Dalmatian Cove's crab merely due to positioning — it's very oddly shaped otherwise. It is located west of the main island, although farther away from it than most of the other islands. An assortment of ships that either crashed or were hauled there have been lashed together to span the waters between the islands.

The island produces a small cornucopia of rare and interesting herbs and ingredients to power mystical spells. Different mystic factions have been in control of Foreleg Island from time to time, but most of them agree conducting magical fights near rare, easily-destroyed ingredients is a bad idea. The rest are fine with collateral damage, though: if they can't have it, no one else should either. Most battles either happen on the beaches or the ship graveyard.

The Graveyard

A wide variety of ships have set sail for Dalmatian Cove only to end up here due to bad decisions, miscalculations, storms, or rotten luck. Most are lashed broadside to broadside, a few snugged up to the sterns, some just what's left of a mast poking up from a submerged wreck. This path connecting the islands is uneven and bobs with the waves or the passage of others across

decks and rails. Some parts of it even wind up or down guylines and rigging, rather than firm decks.

The tangle of masts, shredded sails, and crow's nests are a favorite gathering spot for some bird sailors, allowing them a modicum of private conversation. The view is also favorable for watching the goings-on at Foreleg and Aftleg Islands, as well as the westernmost beaches of Head Island. A few daring lizards or cats can sometimes join the birds up at these vantage points to exchange or gather stories, secrets, and gossip they learn here — for a price.

Any plunder these ships might have carried once is long gone, though rumors persist that somewhere in this tangle is a hidden treasure just waiting for the savvy sailor to brave the acidic water and the maze-like depths.

Aftleg Island

South of Foreleg Island, Aftleg Island is known mostly as a collection of coves and caves for the brave and experienced smuggler. Some hideouts along its jagged coast can only be accessed at high or low tide, requiring a detailed chart and timetable for either the chosen hideaway or the whole island. A few old salts prefer docking here instead of Claw or Head Island to keep their business from being observed by all and sundry. It's also often the last known whereabouts of pirates departing for the murky depths of The Fog located some miles straight south on the Acid Sea.

Aftleg is connected to the Head via The Graveyard. It also has its own secondary bridge located further north, connecting directly to the Head's cliffs, where at least one cave can be seen with keen eyes or magical aid.

The Eggs

South and slightly west of the Head is a little collection of playas and salt flats poking up from the waters, called The Eggs. Although the shape and location contributed to this area's name, smaller non-uplifted lizards and turtles have chosen the larger beaches for their regular spawning grounds. It's a draw for a few lizard buccaneers to watch, and sometimes to use the recently vacat-

ed spawning holes to stash some plunder in the short term.

The whole area is not directly connected to any of the islands, requiring a shallow-drafted vessel to row out to visit. At low tide, a few of the playas are almost connected to each other, such that someone in well-crafted boots could walk from one to another. At most high tides, they are cut off from each other.

Tail Islands

Despite most crabs not having tails, this one does: an island chain, the nearest and largest called Tail. The other, smaller formations trailing behind Tail are considered part of it despite not being physically connected. Each island is absolutely brimming with flora and fauna. They would not seem unusual were it not for the fact that Tail is where Captain Mally von Angora deliberately foundered her ship and spent the rest of her days. Old friends and enemies sometimes go looking for where she might have made her home, hoping to find hidden, forbidden secrets

she'd learned before leaving the Monarchies of Mau.

Tail begins at the southern end of the Head, but one must sail to get to it. One or two bridges connecting the individual islands have slowly sprung up over the years, but not all are connected.

Paddle Island

East of Tail Islands and southeast of Head, Paddle Island holds similar features as the other islands — beaches, lush foliage, and a few rocky areas. What sets it apart is an ancient, corroded, spindly metal tower rising like a half-buried skeleton from the sand. Standing near it makes one's fur stand on end. It's to this structure that a simple rope bridge is affixed, connecting the island with Head. On stormy nights, these ropes and the tower are limned in blue and purple light. During a sunlit day, they're as safe as such things can be. If one stands by the tower, a deep vibrating hum can be felt coming up from the ground.



Steer Island

An island about as hotly contested and fought for as Claw, Head, or Foreleg Islands, Steer offers not only an abundance of resources but also boasts the only ruins from the Old Ones on the Acid Sea that anyone knows for certain.

Cluster

The ruins themselves do not have a name, at least not one that sticks. Morfa's Raiders had called it Our Nest, the Sandy Claws named it Haven, and for the Black Blades, it was Destiny. The Coral Corsairs, a mouse and lizard crew currently in control, call it Cluster. They say to any friend who asks that it no longer holds any treasures or knowledge, as all these things were stripped from it by previous pirate crews. They continue to hold residence here to map every inch of what is left of the structure, saying that it's the last "treasure" it holds. But Plato Daschund, a devout dog often found at The Teeth and enemy of the Corsairs, swears they are searching for a hidden level under the ground and that they will destroy the Old Ones' ruin once they find it.

Wrecks

Aside from the remains of ships serving as bridges between the islands, there are a few notable wrecks dotted around the archipelago. Some are just seaworthy enough to serve as a remote area for caching plunder, while others are curiosities or landmarks to steer by or temporarily tie up to.

Wind Racer

The wreckage barely seen above water on the tip of Claw Island is supposed to be *Wind Racer*, Josephine Dalmatian's ship written about in her journal. By the time it ran against Claw Island's reefs, she had already lost most of her crew. The few who were left couldn't flee the ship in time and perished in the water. Dalmatian writes several times in her journal that she thinks they are haunting her, and sometimes strange lights can be seen floating above its mast at night.

Golden Cutlass

Northwest of Shell Island, the *Golden Cutlass* ran aground on rocks below the surface. It was well caught even with its keel snapped, though



Although most of these areas aren't well-known to the average seafarer, some are more familiar to adventurous pirates.

But even if the characters don't know how long it'll take before they find something interesting, you as the Guide should have a rough idea. So here's roughly how long it takes to sail from one of the ports to each of these areas.

- A week's sailing between Waterdog Port and Port Matthew
- Dalmatian Cove: Two weeks to Waterdog Port; 10 days to Port Matthew
- Stormheart: Varies, but at least two weeks
- Hopewell: Five days from Port Matthew, a week from Waterdog Port
- Beacon: Five days from Waterdog Port, nine days from Port Matthew
- The Trio: Six days from Waterdog Port, eight days from Port Matthew
- The Aerie: Nine days from either port
- The Shift: Fifteen days from Waterdog Port, eighteen days from Port Matthew
- Also, remember that there's plenty of room on the map for new islands and exciting encounters. No pirate's map is truly and completely accurate, so add or change whatever you like!

many have wondered why stormy weather hasn't managed to dislodge it over the years. But it makes for a decent mooring point for anyone wishing to explore Shell Island, and some pirates also try to use salvage materials from it to repair their own ships if they can manage to tear them out or rip them up.

Puckington Palace

This ship shouldn't have been seaworthy in the first place. How the *Puckington Palace* managed to get all the way to Dalmatian Cove and settle between Paddle and Steer Islands is a mys-

tery all its own. It is ornately carved and, though sun-bleached, remains bright and colorful. This ruined gem looks as if it would be more at home sailing in comfort down a river than floating on its side in the Acid Sea. It also doesn't seem like a ship that Pugmire would commission in the first place, so it must have been ironically or whimsically named. Perhaps someone in Port Matthew knows where it came from?

Other Places of Interest

Many places on the Acid Sea have yet to be found. Islands and places of great interest to all sailors have only just been discovered and very little is known.

Stormheart

Several areas surrounding Dalmatian Cove make it hard to find and sometimes even harder to get to: the large, shielding island of Hopewell, the churning Vortex north of the Cove, and Stormheart south of Hopewell. When pirates wish to take a "safer" route, they plot a course between Hopewell and Stormheart and hope to stay clear of The Fog.

The trouble with this plan, however, is that sometimes Stormheart *moves*. In addition, it comes by its name honestly: while it's not always embroiled in stormy weather, chances are good that some big, gusty gales and streaks of lightning will form over Stormheart and keep moving to chop up the seas too.

Because of this, very few buccaneers have explored the island — being stuck on shore when a storm blows up could mean waiting days for it to blow over, and it has a reputation for smashing ships that sail too close. Mystics swear they can hear voices on the wind and feel uneasy when they draw near. Some tales of pirates lost at sea can be attributed to Stormheart.

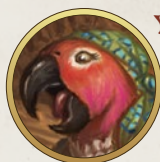
Lonely Tower

Lonely Tower is one of the island's few features that can be seen from the sea. It's a tall, white pillar bedecked in many-colored lamps on the hills of the northern coast. Its lamps are not lit all the time, however, and no one has tried to figure out if there's a pattern to the lights or

if they are for decoration. Most merely wonder who or what lives there, or if there is a purpose to the structure. At the very least, it serves as a landmark and warning for passing ships that seek to avoid the island.

Misty Ruins

Passing ships have sometimes described the vague shapes of other buildings or structures that might be on the island in the shadows of its mountain. Many agree they're ruins of some kind, but mist and fog constantly shroud them and make it hard to see for certain. They present a tempting target for the daring and foolhardy, although others wisely steer clear regardless of the promise of treasure.



You can find more information on Stormheart in Chapter 10, "Heart of the Storm," pp. 142-145. Squawk!

Hopewell

Gabriel von Rex, who led the first successful exploratory voyages out of Port Matthew, found the large island and gave it its name, Hopewell. Its central region is dominated by tall, lush, green mountains easily seen a day's sail away. Seemingly filled with plentiful greenery and resources, scholars and pirates and royal explorers have set up temporary settlements that could become permanent — if anyone can figure out under whose jurisdiction the island would fall.

Summit

Summit Camp lies near the northern shore, established in a clearing near a waterfall. Among the "settlers" are Anastasia von Korat, Daniel Af-fenpinscher, and Rilis Lirachilde, all hardy and cunning scholars happy to brave the elements and inherent dangers to map and study the place. Rilis, a serpent, has been particularly useful in getting into and out of tight spots for as thorough a look as possible. All of them try to rely on what the island can provide for food and shelter, but they regularly receive new supplies every few

months and send back reports and discoveries to their superiors at Port Matthew.

Two Tankards Bay

It was an unfortunate incident that led to the “discovery” of Two Tankards Bay on the southern side of Hopewell, and its reputation hasn’t gotten any better since then. A haven for lazy pirates who don’t fit in even at Dalmatian Cove, it’s little better than a collection of rickety shacks around a cave that serves as a perpetual tavern. What goods they have come from salvaged wrecks or supplies occasionally stolen from Summit Camp, with a special brew cobbled together from those food stuffs and easily-gathered ferns, mosses, and mushrooms. Some traveling to or from the Cove will make a stop at Two Tankards Bay for a no-holds-barred good time and to get some fresh water, but the denizens tend to be shady, bad-tempered, or both. Unless you’re looking for someone scurrilous, no one would recommend that you stay for long.

Beacon

Beacon Island is Waterdog Port’s first discovery, much like Hopewell is Port Matthew’s. Although expeditions to Beacon are jointly funded by the Luminaries, they are much less organized, and sometimes crew members have conflicting goals to work toward. Mapping has been haphazard as interests are pulled this way and that in pursuit of strange creatures, investigating features that catch a Luminary’s interest, or even internal sabotage to keep secret locations of coveted resources. A few Luminaries, hoping to expand their reach as well as build up Waterdog Port’s power over Port Matthew, have begun to discreetly meet to focus their goals and recruit quieter and more methodical ship crews to get things done.

Inner Rim

From the deck of a ship, Beacon Island appears to have scant beaches one can pull a boat onto, but these quickly rise into green-encrusted rock faces all around. Scaling the rocks reveals the vivid flora surrounding a vast lake at the bottom of the island’s “bowl.” It’s in here that most of the interesting species inhabiting the island live, and the rest can be found in the water. Enough

expeditions have come and gone that supply caches and the remains of shredded camps can be found here and there.

The Trio

Located roughly between Beacon Island and The Aerie, The Trio was found by an all-rodent crew funded by the Luminary Aurelio back in Waterdog Port. It was a proud day for those rats and mice, at least until they discovered that their ship wouldn’t be able to make the return journey. Fortunately (or unfortunately, depending upon one’s point of view), a passing pirate crew picked them up, but returned to Port Matthew instead of Waterdog Port. By that time, they were happy to abandon Aurelio’s project and integrate into their rescuer’s crew instead.

But word tends to spread among sailors, and the location of The Trio found its way to the ears of the powerful in Port Matthew. The islands are now nominally claimed by Port Matthew, with various signs and sigils to mark it so, but as of yet, no one from the cats’ port has taken advantage of it and explored. The first of its landmarks on their list to investigate is a massive, seemingly natural stone arch spanning from the northern island to its southwestern companion.

The Aerie

In the center of the known regions of the Acid Sea is a landmark called the Aerie. It’s a grouping of four immensely tall, dark stone pillars with many worn ledges all around, overlooking a connected, shallow depression in the center of the pillars. One could sail up, drop anchor, and row a boat into the depression to have a closer look, though there isn’t much to interest most species. Birds, however, absolutely delight in it and have begun to use it as a regular social (and some say quasi-mystical) gathering spot. Parrots, lacking wings, often bring equipment to help themselves get up to at least the lower ledges (with the daring managing midlevel or higher) to see and be seen, and to exchange stories and information.

A few observant birds have begun noting strange scratch marks, like language, on a few of the ledges. Some are clustered on very low ledges and some on very high ones. They don’t corre-

spond to anything seen before. They are slowly being noted and catalogued, but it may be some time before the project is complete, due to tensions between the bird nestes.

The Shift/No Island

Far to the southwest on the Acid Sea, one can see an enormous landmass. It could merely be an extremely large island, or it could be an entire continent. No one knows for certain because as soon as they reach a day's sail from it, all navigational instruments cease to function, and an unseen force seems to slowly repel any and all ships. One can either fight this force and capsize or allow oneself to be turned around. Sailors call this phenomenon The Shift. The landmass doesn't have a formal name, so some sarcastic souls have labeled it on their maps and charts as "No Island."

Dangers on the Sea

The Vortex is a massive, strong whirlpool that ships can get sucked into if their navigators aren't extremely careful – it has eddies and undertows that can shift and pull in an unsuspecting ship. Once pulled in, vessels are smashed to bits, their flotsam and jetsam sometimes spat out but more often pulled completely under. It is located roughly east of Hopewell's northern shores.

The Fog, south of Dalmatian Cove, seems less dangerous until buccaneers find themselves completely lost in the thick of it. In fact, it is so thick it's almost impossible to see one's own paw in front of one's face, and some pirates accidentally fall overboard their own ships. Only luck and cunning can get a ship back out of The Fog. Most of the time, pirates easily avoid it, but something can always happen – an ambitious Luminary or bad luck – to push a ship in.

Story Hooks

Whether you are looking to expand the chronicle in this book, add something extra to your own adventures, or get the seed of an idea for a standalone adventure, the following may be just what you are looking for! These story hooks can help you synthesize the information you've absorbed in this book and embark on further adventures on the Acid Sea.

- Whispers in the shadows say that Governor Erwin Shar-Pei may have been behind the mysterious death of the previous Governor of Waterdog Port, Dobi Weimariner. Trying to find the source of these rumors confirms that Erwin has enemies, but they're not concerned with the fate of Dobi: what they are actually trying to do is undermine his business.

Who are these enemies: a fellow Luminary like Luna Tabby or Peejay Shorthair? A rival trading company? A recent shipment meant for Beacon Island has turned up missing, with evidence pointing to pirates, but there may be a much larger conspiracy tying all these incidents together. If someone can point a more convincing finger at someone else for Dobi's death, Erwin will be enormously grateful.

- The bird Luminary of Waterdog Port, Zanna of the Four Audacities, has grown too tired and anxious to wait anymore for news of her missing beloved, Irving. She knows your crew takes risks and sails to strange places on the Acid Sea, and she's hoping you will follow up on some potential clues to find Irving. She can't make any sense of them, but perhaps in time you can.

The first clue is a strange letter she found in Irving's things that might be a coded message. An old crow friend of his might be able to help decipher it, but he's gone missing as well. Fortunately, he might be easier to find: he has some shady connections that lead to Dalmatian Cove. The second clue is a brilliant, rainbow-hued



The Acid Sea can be difficult enough to navigate sometimes, but these areas are impossible without magical help from a spell or treasure. (These could focus upon boosting the ship's navigator's skills or abilities, or they could modify the ship to shed some light or become harder to drag, and so on.) Even with help, navigation rolls here are still going to be at a disadvantage with a difficulty of 17 or higher. The idea is to mitigate that disadvantage for the best chance of surviving to tell the harrowing tale later. See the rules on navigation and getting lost (p. 52-53).

feather with strange notches on its quill, and every bird you take it to claims they've never seen those marks before. Strange: why would a bird lie so badly? Or at all?

- One of Blinky von Rex's secretaries wants to hire your crew to take supplies from Port Matthew to Summit Camp at Hopewell. It should be relatively easy until it's discovered, purely by accident, that the cargo doesn't contain supplies for Summit's residents. It contains gunpowder instead. Did the gunpowder come from Dalmatian Cove? If not, how did Blinky's secretary get it? Is someone at Summit smuggling or preparing for war? Or was this originally an accident that happened at Port Matthew — and who was supposed to get that gunpowder instead? Involving the Primogeniture may be a bad idea, but it may also be too late to avoid them.

- As part of a salvage crew, you tend to find all kinds of tidbits, from absolute junk to interesting junk to useful and recoverable materials. After successfully picking up some wreckage from the fringes of the Vortex, your shipmates are ready to go to Two Tankard Bay. You pull out an interesting piece you saved to pay for your swill when one of the residents gets angry and draws a weapon. They recognize your find as something they thought buried in their past, leading you a mystery of an abandoned family, secrets from a former life and dishonored house, and a current friend they're trying to keep safe by staying gone.

- Globsters have begun congregating off the coast of Claw Island, coming closer and closer to the wreck of Wind Dancer. There shouldn't be anything left of Josephine Dalmatian's old crew for them to consume, but they keep coming anyway. Are there recent bodies coming up from the wreck? The Primogeniture is not happy about this development, claiming they didn't put those bodies there. But someone did, and this trouble is beginning to disrupt their gunpowder weapons trade. Someone in Dalmatian Cove is practicing necromancy and needs to be dealt with fast.

- Aurelio has finally caught up with the whereabouts of the rodent crew he'd hired as well as what happened with The Trio. He feels humil-

iated and is looking for recompense or revenge. He's not picky about which he gets. The problem is that either may instigate another war with Port Matthew, one that the rodents of Waterdog Port (especially Brutus and Pinky) and Port Matthew can't afford and doesn't want. You need to find a way to help or placate both Aurelio and The Trio, and thanks to independent actions Aurelio has taken, time is running short. You may need to bring in some lizard help on this.

- While your ship is in drydock to scrape off some shipscales, the crew takes the opportunity to walk around Seaport and sample what luxuries of Bernese Marina they can afford. When one of the crew spies a pleasure cruise, they remark how they've seen one wrecked in Dalmatian Cove: the *Puckington Palace*. The owner of the cruise ships is distraught to learn what finally happened to the boat, as it still had a few passengers on it and their relative was the navigator when an accident pushed it out to sea. They offer a substantial reward if you will go search through the wreck for a family heirloom their relative wore. A simple mission becomes complicated by the arrival of a school of dogfish and catfish to that area of Dalmatian Cove, and they're feeling very territorial. You also get the feeling there's much more to this story that you haven't been told.

- An affluent friend in Port Matthew begs for you to come visit and enjoy the food at the Clock Tower with them. It is indeed remarkably good, but your friend lets you know that's not the real reason you're here. They introduce you to the chef, Gus Campbell, who rants and raves about the quality of a certain foodstuff or spice recently discovered on an island you've been to. He absolutely must have a regular supply of it for a dish for a regular customer of his. A customer, he explains, who is willing to overlook Gus's debts if Gus cooks this special dish for him once a week. The food Gus wants isn't difficult to come by, and it's hard to muster sympathy for the irascible chef until you follow him one night. He's cooking for Mikhail von Siberian, who is having a disturbing conversation with Mayor Blinky von Rex over refreshments. Just how involved do you really want to get?

Charts

We know your time as a Guide is sometimes limited and you just need a cool name for a ship or an island on the spot. We understand! Below you'll find some charts to help you create names on the fly. You can decide to pick a name from

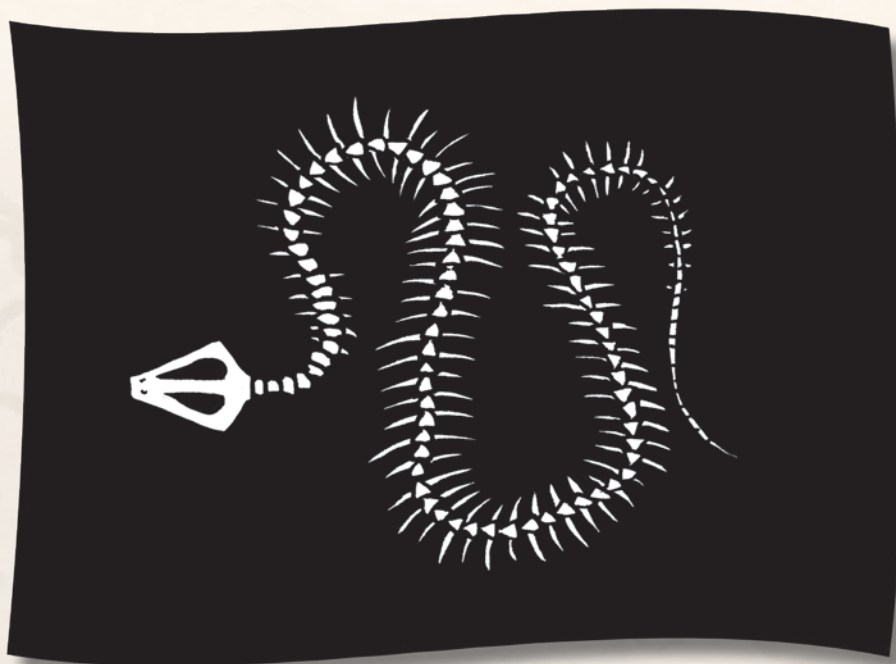
each chart to create your own, or you can choose to roll the dice for a random combination! These are also just some ideas to help inspire you – if a random table roll gives you a nonsensical name, you can always adjust it to something you like.

Ship Names

Dice Roll	Name A	Name B
1	Jolly	First Name (Roger, Matthew, Molly, etc.)
2	Mad	Wind
3	Rolling	Body part (Skull, Claws, Eye, etc.)
4	Ruler's Name	Personal weapon (Cutlass, Wand, Dagger, etc.)
5	Dancing	Doom
6	Sea	Creature (Dog, Fish, Goat, etc.)
7	Flying	Enemy (Kraken, Shark, Demon, etc.)
8	Pick a Color	Ship Type (Galleon, Clipper, etc.)
9	Fate's	Treasure
10	Sweet	Castle
11	Dark	Shield
12	Legend Name	Revenge
13	Deadly	Hope
14	Last	Moon
15	Shivering	Timbers
16	Night	Wonder
17	Singing	Glory
18	Glorious	Sun
19	Perilous	Plunder/Plunder type (Pearl, Gold, Necklace, etc.)
20	Shining	Star

Island Names

Dice Roll	Name A	Name B
1	Deep	Harbor
2	Misty	Reef
3	Foggy	Mountain
4	Dark	Shores
5	Dangerous	Forests
6	Perilous	Cove
7	Mysterious	Bay
8	Lost	Inlet
9	Pick a Color	River
10	Pick a Name	Port
11	Sandy	Beach
12	Rocky	Waters
13	Big	Ruin
14	Body Part	Trees
15	Creature Part	Cliffs
16	Small	Playa
17	Haunted	Isthmus
18	Wondrous	Cay
19	Old	Waves
20	Strange	Boulder



X Marks the Spot

The boxer with a large hat thumped the proclamation down on the scarred wooden table. "X marks the spot, lads."

All around the table, rough and tumble sailors gazed down at the parchment, and then at each other. One of the braver ones raised a paw. "There ain't no X on that, cap'n Pipe."

Bugs, the elderly turtle, harrumphed and tapped the table. "Surprised you lot can read enough to know what an X is."

Indignant, the cat sailor piped up, "My brother spelled it out for me once."

Captain Juniper Pipe, feeling like she was losing control of the conversation, adjusted her hat before taking a seat at the head of the table. "The X in this case is purely metaphorical, Sidney."

Sidney, the brave sailor, knit his brows together. "Who's Phorical, and why are we meetin' them?"

"'Metaphorical' means the captain made it up," Bugs interjected.

"First there ain't no X, and now there ain't no Phorical to be meetin'." Sidney took a sip of catnip from his bowl. "Not a good start."

"If I may shift the conversation into a forward motion," Juniper said. Her tone might be polite and jovial, but the crew of the *Plastic Minnow* knew better than to push their luck. They fell silent for her. Delighted, she clapped her paws. "In fact, 'X marks the spot' is an ancient incantation for good luck when sailing. And we shall need it for the journey ahead of us."

Bugs stuffed another lettuce leaf into his mouth and began crunching away. Between slurpy smacks of his lips, he asked, "So should I expect to treat moderate or heavy casualties on this voyage?"

"If all goes well, my curmudgeonly medic, she should be able to gain our heart's desire with barely more than a wink and a nod."

The turtle swallowed. "Moderate, then."

Juniper waved the turtle's comments away with a flip of her paw. "I refer only to the latest proclamation from one of House Korat in the monarchies. It appears that one Sagra Major von Korat seeks to recover an item of value to her family. She is offering a handsome reward to any that would find it and return it to them."

Sidney scratched behind his ear in thought. "So they hired you and no one else to gets it?"

"Not at all." She thumped the proclamation. "This was posted all over Waterdog Port. I suspect most every crew knows of it by now."

Sidney was even more confused. "So them Korats don't know where it is?"



“On the contrary.” With a flourish, the captain pulled a parchment from her sleeve and rolled it out over the proclamation. “They have provided me with a map to the location in question. One ‘Tilly Isle’.”

“What our young mister Sidney is asking, *captain*,” Bugs said, sniffing loudly as he did so, “is why the Man-damned Korats don’t just float over to their precious island and pick up their trinket themselves.”

Sidney shivered in his seat. “Is it haunted?”

“Psh.” Juniper’s lips vibrated as she made the sound, spraying slobber all over the map. “Perish the thought. No ghosts nor ghouls haunt this distant isle.” She noticed the bubbles on the map and wiped them away with her sleeve. “It is, however, currently under the water.”

Bugs snorted. “Makes it a bit hard to find, don’t it?”

“Ah, but this mysterious isle has a hidden quality.” The boxer put a finger in the air dramatically. “Once every ten years, it manifests from the Acid Sea, appearing in all its slow and careful glory like... like...”

“Like Sidney’s thought process.” Bugs stuffed another lettuce leaf into his mouth. After a pause, the crunching drowning out the cat’s yowled protest.

“Precisely. So all we have to do is beat all the other pirates to the isle, locate the treasure and whatever else of value remains there, overcome some ancient traps or monstrosities lurking on the isle, and then return with nary a scratch on our supple hides to claim the reward from a grateful, affluent client.”

Sidney beamed at this comment. “And then we get paid!”

Bugs rolled his eyes. “I was wrong. We’ll definitely have heavy casualties.”

Juniper raised her bowl of ale. “To a successful voyage! X marks the spot!”

The rest of her crew raised their bowls as well, cheering with her. “X marks the spot!”



Chapter Eight: Rotten Rats

Within this section of the book you'll find several stories. The adventures together form a chronicle called "Going on the Account," which is intended to bring your group from 1st level landlubbers to 6th level seadogs over the course of three independent yet connected adventures. This means that each adventure can be completely self-contained. You could pull any one of the three and drop them into an already established chronicle with characters of the appropriate level and not play the other two. You could also play through the three adventures successively — or between other adventures — to make a complete chronicle.

While each story is self-contained, each one presents threads and ideas that could jump-start side quests, small one-session missions, or entire additional adventures that follow up on the individual story in question. And as you finish up those threads, your characters are well-placed to either start the next story in the set or move on to other adventures.

These stories are designed to also take the players' characters around the Acid Sea. They start in Waterdog Port, then take sail to remote islands and distant locales. Playing through "Going on the Account," the characters can find patrons in cities, secure their own ship, learn the secrets of the Acid Sea, and get a feel for what it means to be a pirate in the realms of Pugmire.

Going on the Account

Characters for these adventures can be anyone from dogs and cats to parrots and lizards. There are no species restrictions on these adventures; indeed, they are ideal for adventuring with a party entirely composed of just *Pugmire* or *Monarchies of Mau* characters, a mixed group of characters from both games, or a pirate crew built using the rules presented in Chapter Two.

Rotten Rats

The first adventure is geared for first or second level pirates. A reason for the characters to join one another is included in the adventure in case this is their first adventure together, but don't worry about that if the pirates are already connected. This adventure is set completely in Waterdog Port and explores the parts of the city and the politics between mice and rats.

One of the city's Luminaries asks the player characters to find a lost treasure, which may be in the hands of the city's rats. But when they go to find it, the player characters instead must help the rats clear their good names before they will give them any information about the treasure. Use this as an introduction to the politics of the city as well as to establish the characters as reliable pirates that the Luminaries can depend upon. It also introduces the quest for Bobby Golden's Flask, sending the pirates on a treasure hunt that spans the rest of the adventures in the "Going on the Account" chronicle.

The Race

The second adventure is geared for third or fourth level characters. Characters can come to this adventure after following up with "Rotten Rats," or they can jump into the treasure hunt

straight here if they have already spent time as pirates. "The Race" takes the characters out into the Acid Sea for a high seas adventure including sailing, a ship battle, and exploration.

The characters learn that a normally covered island will soon be revealed near Dalmatian Cove, and they must procure a ship to get there. Finding the island comes with the promise of treasure and riches, but they aren't the only pirate crew searching for it. It's a race against time and against a rival pirate crew.

Heart of the Storm

The third adventure is geared for fifth or sixth level characters. Pirates coming into this adventure should be established characters with several adventures under their belt. They can enter this adventure from other pirate adventures or by following the trail of Bobby Golden's treasure.

"Heart of the Storm" explores remote islands on the other side of the Acid Sea, giving the characters a tour of wilder places and parts unknown. The characters must put in at Stormheart during a terrible storm and find other crews shipwrecked there. What starts as a rescue mission quickly turns into a mystery as the characters attempt to repair their storm-wrought ship.

Rotten Rats

Zanna of the Four Audacities seeks the lost flask of the famous pirate captain, Bobby Golden. Rumors say that Bobby's sunken ship has been salvaged, but no one knows where the treasure lies now. Zanna needs a small group of pirates, new to town, to find out what became of the flask.

The rats ran the salvage operation, but they don't give away information for free. Worse, they've picked up a bad reputation for attacking anyone who goes snooping around their part of town.

Characters

The pirates will meet the following characters throughout this adventure.

Zanna of the Four Audacities



Zanna of the Four Audacities is a pirate first and a Luminary second. If you ask her, she doesn't even really know how she ended up a Luminary in Waterdog Port, but she takes her role seriously. She's determined to make Waterdog Port an open, inviting place to all, and that means upkeep and care. She likes to personally oversee the monitors when she can and often proposes the construction of new buildings and infrastructure improvements. Her current project is the Haze.

Zanna is watching the influx of new people into Waterdog Port, and the overcrowding in the Haze bothers her. She was happily working with Aurelio to find solutions when Brutus began his own campaign to clean up the Haze. While his efforts have led to new building projects, they have only created a confusing, mazelike effect in the area – to say nothing of the large numbers of mice they have displaced. Zanna can see the tension between the mice and rats growing. When the rumors of rats murdering people made their way to her ears, she knew that there was more to it than just illegal dealings.

She has no idea that the mice are behind the rumors, but she suspects the overpopulation tensions are leading to the deaths. She wants to prevent a full-out fight between the mice and rats. When she hires the pirate band, she is leveraging her knowledge that Bobby Golden's Lost Flask was once in the rats' possession. She doesn't know if it's still there, but she's sure that once the group gets embroiled in the politics of the Haze, the truth about the rats and the disappearances will come to light.

Zanna of the Four Audacities functions as a patron for the characters throughout this adventure. Anything they need, they can put on her tab.

If necessary, use the statistics for Sparrow Captain, p. 80.

Claire Mune



Claire has been working for Lady Brie as a scout and a spy for years as a lesser member of the Incisors. Just like her mentor, Claire capitalizes on the stereotype that mice are harmless to get her work done. But Claire doesn't like the criminal life, and she's certainly not a fan of Lady Brie's new campaign. When the pirates meet her, she has just finished a conversation with some rats who are trying to shake her down for information. Instead of fighting back, she lets them beat her up as a form of self-inflicted punishment for her part in Lady Brie's plan.

In this moment, she has a change of heart when encounters the pirate band. She becomes determined to stop Lady Brie from killing any

one else with the crocodile. She decides to follow the characters when she realizes that they might be the next victims, but she arrives too late to help. The best she can do is give them a warning before they leave.

She feels responsible for what Lady Brie has wrought, but still believes in her mission. If the characters can find another way to deal with the rats, Claire is willing and ready to help them take down Lady Brie.

If necessary, use the statistics for a Mouse Gunner, p. 79.

Brutus



Brutus is the face of the rat population in the Haze. He isn't their leader; only the rats know who their true leader there is. But when an outsider asks to speak to someone in charge, they get Brutus. It helps that he is the most vocal rat advocate in the city, and he is full of opinions about how to restructure the Haze.

He's trying his hardest to get the rats in the best position possible in the hopes that as he lifts them up in the Haze, they can move out into other parts of Waterdog Port and make names for themselves. He resents Aurelio's position as Luminary, as he feels the other rat doesn't do enough for his brethren. Brutus doesn't understand that the rats are rarely taken seriously outside of his own small area in Cypressroot, but that doesn't stop him from being the loudest and the proudest rat around.

Brutus doesn't even consider that his actions are harming the mice in the area. He has his eye on his goal and rarely considers anyone else as he works. He isn't opposed to the mice in any way, and when he realizes that his actions have caused harm, he's willing to work to rectify the situation.

Brutus (CR 3)

Defense: 13 (leather armor)

Stamina Points: 28

Speed: 30 feet

Proficiency Bonus: +3

Abilities: Str +1 (12), Dexterity +2 (14), Constitution +1 (12), Intelligence -1 (8), Wisdom +1 (12), Charisma 0 (10)

Skills: Balance, Steal, Traverse

Attack: Bite (+4 melee, 1d4+11 piercing) or dagger (+7 melee/+5 ranged, 1d4+1 piercing) or short bow (+5 ranged, 1d6+2 piercing)

Knacks: Darkvision

- **Nimble Escape:** Brutus can take a disengage or hide action as a bonus action on each of his turns.

Lady Brie



Lady Brie thrives on appearing sweet and innocent, playing off the stereotype that mice are harmless. She's anything but. Ever since arriving in Waterdog Port, she's been deep in the gritty underworld, and joined the Incisors shortly after her arrival. She made a name for herself while working with them, and now many in the Haze know her as a mouse who gets things done.

So, when the rats started to edge the mice out of the Haze, they came to her first for help and support. Brutus has long been trying to reshape the Haze in his own image, starting with Cypressroot. But his aggressive redesign of the area has forced the already beleaguered mice out of the nicer areas of the Haze and into the streets. Most of the mice have taken up residence in Underport, which is no place for an honest mouse to live.

Lady Brie has the noble intention of helping her people find a place in Waterdog Port, but instead of working with the rats, she has decided to work against them in the worst way possible. She doesn't care who gets hurt in the process, as long as it doesn't disrupt her criminal enterprise. Her goal is to drive the rats out of the Haze entirely, though she knows that will take more than just a smear campaign against them. She is unrepentant about her methods, though she is willing to listen to reason if someone presents her with a better way to achieve her goals.

Lady Brie (CR 2)

Defense: 11 (padded armor)

Stamina Points: 24

Speed: 20 feet

Proficiency Bonus: +2

Abilities: Str +2 (14), Dexterity 0 (11), Constitution +2 (14), Intelligence -1 (8), Wisdom 0 (10), Charisma -1 (8)

Skills: Intimidate, Sense Motive

Attack: Bite (+4 melee, 1d4 +2 piercing) or longsword (+4 melee 2d8 +4 slashing)

Knacks: Darkvision, Low-light Vision

- **Power Attack:** If Lady Brie has an advantage in melee, she can forfeit that advantage. If she does so and the attack hits, treat the hit as a triumph.
- **Desperate Strike:** When Lady Brie is reduced to 12 stamina or less, she may immediately make a single attack on everyone within melee range. Afterward, she takes psychic damage equal to the number of attacks she made.

Synopsis

Zanna of the Four Audacities hires the pirates to find out where the Lost Flask of Bobby Golden might be. She has heard rumors that it might be in town, with the rats in the Haze. The governor Erwin Sharpei has offered a large reward for anyone who can bring him the flask, and she hopes to use the reward to fund more improvement projects in Waterdog Port.

But, Zanna has an ulterior motive. She knows the Haze is overcrowded with rats and mice, and fears that those tensions are boiling over. She's heard rumors that the rats are doing something nefarious but can't find out more. The Golden Flask is a good cover for getting the pirate group involved in the politics there. She tells the characters that the rats were the last known group to have seen the flask after its salvage and should start there.

The rats in the Cypressroot area of the Haze have started rebuilding the area and their activities have made it hard for people to live. As they create new businesses and clear spaces, the mice must leave their homes but have nowhere else to go, so they end up in the sewers of Underport. This has been going on long enough that the mice, led by gang member Lady Brie, have started to spread nasty rumors about the rats to run them out of business and drive them out of the Haze.

To seal the deal, they are directing anyone attempting to talk or do business with the rats to Swampwalk, where they know a vicious crocodile lives. And when people go missing or get maimed, it is the rats who are blamed for the incident. The

rats have no idea where the rumors are coming from, and have put themselves on lockdown, refusing to meet anyone new until they can solve the issue. The pirates must discover the source of the rumors and clear the rats' good names before the rats will give them any information on the flask, which plays perfectly into Zanna's plan.

Scenes

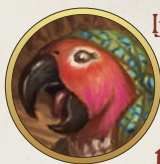
Introduction

Waterdog Port is abuzz with newly arrived pirate bands and adventurers. Erwin Sharpei, the city's governor, has announced a hefty reward for anyone who can bring him the Lost Flask of Bobby Golden. The news of the reward and the promise of a daring treasure hunt has brought pirates from all ends of the Acid Sea.

But without much information on the flask or a patron to assist them, most pirates are left wandering aimlessly around the city. Plenty sit in taverns boasting of the adventures they hope to have, but few expeditions have gone underway. Instead, hopeful pirates fill inns to brimming and spill out into the city's streets, all looking for something to do.

It is this lust for treasure that has brought the player characters to Waterdog Port. The characters should already have established themselves as a group, if not already a known pirate band. Feel free to come up with a reason the characters are already working together, or use one of the options below:

- The characters grew up in Waterdog Port together and have always been friends.
- The group worked together to protect their caravan from the Monarchies of Mau.
- The pirates are all crew members from the same pirate ship, which has recently sunk.



If this is the first story the group is playing in together, it might be good to run a short scene as a prequel to this adventure to ensure the characters are on a friendly basis before starting "Rotten Rats." Or if you're feeling frisky, just dive right in!

- The characters all had to work together to escape a burning inn, saving each other's lives in the process.
- Each member of the group was a passenger on a ship that wrecked not far from Waterdog Port and they had to help each other reach the city safely.
- The pirates all share a contact or patron who has sent them to Waterdog Port to collect the reward.

Zanna of the Four Audacities has invited the group to her home in the Sunset District of Waterdog Port. They receive a short, written letter from her as follows:

Your reputation precedes you. I would love to have you visit for a discussion on matters of the improvement and betterment of Waterdog Port using your unique skills. Sincerely, Zanna of the Four Audacities, Luminary

Zanna is well-known for tasking new pirates in Waterdog Port with various projects. She keeps an ear to the ground for loyal and amenable pirates who could help her, so she's heard of the characters and will cite their exploits as her reason for contacting them. If they haven't yet had exploits, then she will cite a mutual friend or acquaintance. Someone has heard good things, and Zanna is the first to know when good groups are in town.

Zanna's home is functional and sparse without much in the way of amenities, despite her position as a Luminary. She apologizes profusely for not having room for everyone to sit, but she offers food and drink as a good host before beginning.

"I'm sure you know that Erwin Sharpei is offering a hefty reward for the Lost Flask of Bobby Golden. I want to be the one to collect on that reward. The funds he is offering could go a long way towards improving Waterdog Port, and I want to see them used for the good of the city.

"I can share the reward with you, but there are plenty of pirates looking for the treasure right now. I think I know where to find it, though. If you'll go look for me, then I'll make sure you have everything you need to collect it."

Zanna is willing to ensure the characters have a place to stay in Waterdog Port and food to eat.

She will also sponsor them in their endeavors if they agree to search out the flask for her. Zanna is willing to negotiate but is shrewd: she is a pirate, after all. She wants the bulk of the reward so that she can spend the funds improving Waterdog Port. No matter what they negotiate, Zanna gives them a writ to use to charge items and a stay at an inn on her own tab.

Once any negotiations are over, Zanna will tell the characters what she knows about Bobby Golden's Flask. She overheard from Aurelio that the rats ran a salvage operation on Bobby Golden's sunken ship and brought up the flask. Its last known location was still in the rats' possession, but they have been keeping information on it close to their chests. This is not common knowledge, but the few who have gone to the rats in the past month or so have either gone missing or been turned away. The rats are on lockdown. Rumors about their nasty attitude permeate the Old Quarter, better known as the Haze.

Zanna doesn't know if the situation is related to the influx of pirates searching out the flask, or something else. She suggests starting the search by talking directly to Brutus, who seems to lead the rats in the Haze. He keeps a home in Cypressroot, where most rats and mice live. If asked, Zanna is cautious about explaining her concerns about the Haze, and instead suggests they find Brutus.

Scene 1: A Visitation

- **How did the player characters get to this scene?** After getting information from Zanna about the rats having the flask.
- **What do the player characters need to accomplish in this scene?** Talk to Brutus about Bobby Golden's Flask.
- **Who or what is keeping them from accomplishing it?** Cypressroot is a maze of shoddy architecture and dense fog. Not to mention that the rats themselves are not currently hospitable to visitors.
- **What scene or scenes should logically happen next?** Scene 2, "Hitting the Streets"

A dense fog permeates the Haze, making it difficult to see more than a few feet in front of you. Even at the height of day, the fog makes navigation difficult. The buildings here are built in haphazardly. New construction builds on old, and all of it is weathered by the rough acidic fog.

The rats are spread out throughout the Haze, but their current de facto leader is Brutus who hails from Cypressroot. Normally, anyone attempting to do business with the rats would meet along the market street of the Haze or in Harv's Hideaway, but the current pressure on the rats has them pointing anyone who wants to talk directly to Brutus, which requires navigating Cypressroot.

Cypressroot

As you step from the Haze into the neighborhood of the Old Quarter called Cypressroot, you find yourself in a veritable maze of piled trash and architecture. Roads bend and wind only to stop abruptly at a building, picking up again on the other side. Cypressroot is deliberately difficult to navigate without a native guide. Despite its reputation as welcoming to newcomers, it appears only rats get welcomed. Everyone else is left to fend for themselves, leaving the streets cramped with wanderers and the homeless seeking a job or a place to stay.

Finding anything in Cypressroot is often a matter of luck, as the residents move almost as often as the tide comes in. As one building becomes unsafe, another goes up. Merchants close shops in one location at night, and open in another location the next morning. And Brutus keeps his hideout strictly confidential among rats these days.

Traversing Cypressroot to find Brutus's lair requires a Wisdom check (difficulty 15) or the characters become lost in the maze. If they do become lost, they may need to leave Cypressroot and attempt to find a guide at Harv's Hideaway, going to Scene 2, "Hitting the Streets."

The Lair

Brutus keeps his lair in the heart of Cypressroot. All the other buildings in the neighborhood are in various states of disrepair, old construction bolstered by new. But Brutus' stronghold is clearly new construction that has constant upkeep against the acidic fog that plagues the area. Rough, tough rats patrol the area and keep your group from entering.

Conversation with the guards reveals that Brutus has locked himself in his stronghold and is refusing to meet with anyone except his trusted allies. The rats here are on edge, and any small slight might set them off. If the characters are rude or belligerent while trying to get a meeting with Brutus, the rats might start a fight with them.

Questioning the rats in the area reveals that they are on edge because the city monitors are investigating them for kidnapping and murder. While the group is not innocent of illegal activity, the current rumors of attacking anyone who comes snooping around are flat-out lies, and the rats can't figure out where they are coming from. Brutus refuses to meet to do any business until the rumor-mongering is cleared up.

The pirates may want to try to convince the guards to give them an audience despite the lockdown. Convincing the guards is a Charisma check (difficulty 18). Even if they fail, the guards will give the characters the hint that Brutus desperately wants information on who is spreading the pernicious rumors. If they can bring that, they're sure to get an audience. If they succeed in the check, the guards bring them in for a short meeting with Brutus.

Brutus is an old rat with battle scars running down his arms. His demeanor is that of someone with too much on their mind and not enough time. He practically barks when he speaks, "This better be good!"

Brutus is unwilling to talk about anything other than the rumors that have been plaguing his business. He's worried about the monitors digging into his affairs and he doesn't have time for anything else. No amount of coercion or convincing can shake his focus onto anything else, especially not the flask. He knows what the rumors say, that

rats have been acting suspicious, hiding something, and killing anyone who gets too close. He claims these are lies, but he doesn't know who is spreading them. The only connecting factor seems to be Swampwalk, which he has blocked access to just in case. Time to hit the streets!

Scene 2: Hitting the Streets

- **How did the player characters get to this scene?** They tried to speak with Brutus and need to find out about the rat rumors.
- **What do the player characters need to accomplish in this scene?** Find out who is spreading rumors about the rats.
- **Who or what is keeping them from accomplishing it?** The mice who are directing people who ask questions about the rats to Swampwalk.
- **What scene or scenes should logically happen next?** Scene 3, "Into the Depths"

As you step back onto the streets of the Haze, you feel a sense of relief. The fog is still here, but the piles of trash are smaller and older construction dominates the streets. People move about the streets with heads down and faces covered against the fog. Nobody wants to stop and chat, but you see plenty of people lingering inside shops to pass the time out of the oppressive fog.

The Haze is a large district filled with a jumbled mix of residences right next to shops and taverns. It's clear people only spend their time on the streets to get from one place to the next, attempting to stay out of the fog as much as possible. Allow the player characters to explore the Haze for as long as they like. Pirates are bound to hear rumors anywhere people are gathered.

Gek's Garments

You enter a clothing shop with cloaks, hats, and gloves on prominent display. The shop's lizard owner flits between the racks showing off his wares to a pair of mice who listen with interest. "Guaranteed to last, and if you start getting holes, you can bring it back for free repairs," he chirps as he passes them a set of sturdy canvas gloves.

Gek Solchild is a lizard purveyor of rugged and durable clothes. He's made a good business of providing affordable clothing that seems relatively resistant to the acid fog of the Haze. The mice and rats who can afford his wares spend enough plastic here to keep him in business. His stitching isn't as exquisite nor his materials as fine as what you would see in Pugmire or Mau, of course, but it isn't clear why his shop is in the Haze instead of in other parts of Waterdog Port.

The mice in the shop are willing to speak at length from what they've heard about the rats, which isn't much. The characters can make a Charisma check (difficulty 10) to learn the following information:

- If you want to do business with the rats, you must go to Swampwalk.
- The rats have gotten aggressive towards anyone who isn't a rat and have been seen beating people up in the street.

Millie's Bakery

The enticing scents of fresh-baked bread and smelly cheeses waft through the streets outside a small mouse-run bakery. The shop is packed to the brim with people who either stand at the counter waiting to buy or sit at small tables eating snacks and chatting.

The bakery café is a staple in the Haze. Patronized primarily by rats and mice, it is open from sunrise to sunset. Today's patrons do not include any rats, which seems odd considering the number of rats that pass by in the streets. The mice here are comfortable and open, sharing rumors, stories, and information freely with little to no provocation. The characters can learn the following rumors:

- A parrot who was trying to get a caravan started up with the rats recently went missing.
- The rats have all but taken over Cypressroot, and they are trying to spread into the Haze.
- The rats are only open for illicit or illegal business, and anyone who approaches them for anything else gets run off.

Residences

When you knock on doors, you get no response. Some people might peer out through their windows to see who is calling, but no one answers for you.

People don't call unannounced in the Haze. As such, if the characters attempt to collect rumors by going door to door, they will find nothing but suspicious stares.

Outside Harv's Hideaway

As you come around the corner near Harv's Hideaway, you see five rats kicking a mouse who is on the ground. She is curled up and squeaking out pleas for help. Passersby hurry along, averting their eyes to the abuse, not wanting to get involved. It's clear that no one will help this mouse.

If the characters do anything to indicate that they are trying to help, the rats will turn on them instead. The rats aren't in it to the death and scatter if even one of them falls in the fight. The rats know the area very well and chasing them down requires a Wisdom check difficulty 15. When questioned, the rats say they were trying to get information out of the mouse. They seem to think she knows something about the rat rumors in the area, but don't have any more information than that. Afterward, go to "Saving Claire."

For the rats, use statistics for Road Rats found in *Pugmire* p. 181 or *Monarchies of Mau* p. 193.

If the characters ignore the mouse, then go straight to "Harv's Hideaway."

Saving Claire

As the last of the rats run off into the distance, the mouse picks herself up off the ground and dusts off her torn clothes. She proffers a paw in thanks. "I'm Claire Mune. Thank you for helping me. Most here wouldn't do that kind of thing. Can I buy you a drink at the Hideaway?"

Claire Mune appears to be an ordinary mouse who has been caught up in the rat's paranoia and reputation for trouble. When asked, she tells the characters that she was minding her own business when the rat thugs began pressing her for information. When she couldn't help them, they attacked her. A Wisdom check difficulty 17 reveals that she is leaving something out of her statement, but if pressed on the matter, she shuts down and changes the subject.

Claire knows all the rumors about the rats and will share them freely with the pirate band. She says she doesn't necessarily believe them herself, but after the unprompted attack in the street earlier, she is more inclined to give them credence. Claire will sit in the tavern and reflect herself long after the characters leave. If they come back to look for her here later, she will have already left. If they have more questions for her, they can attempt to ask them again in Scene 4, "A Confession," later.

Check "Harv's Hideaway" for entering the tavern and the rumors characters can hear about the rats.

Additionally, Claire tells the pirates that Swampwalk is a dangerous place, and there's more there than just the rats to look out for. She seems to want to warn them away from the place but is torn on how to do so without betraying something important to her.

Harv's Hideaway

Harv's Hideaway is a newer building constructed from stone and mortar, which is rare for new buildings in the Haze. Inside are small, intimate tables where patrons can conduct business in relative privacy. A posted sign reads "No Fighting Allowed. – Harv." The tavern is sparsely filled, mostly with mice, though a few other people are here as well.

Harvey Pewter might appear to be a stand-offish ferret, but he is pleasant enough when plastic is on the table. He serves anyone in his tavern if they follow his one rule. He isn't big on talking much himself, and if asked, will suggest the characters ask around. He prides himself on keeping a space for safe and secure talk though, so warns

the characters not to press people who don't want to be interrupted.

The pirates can learn the following rumors from chatting with people throughout the tavern.

- **The rats are hiding something in Swampwalk's Murky Alley.**
- If you want to do business with the rats, you must go to Swampwalk.
- **The rats are doing shady business in Swampwalk, and anyone who makes them mad disappears without a trace.**
- Brutus is making a move to take over the entire Haze, turning it into a rat-only territory.

The characters might notice at this time that only the mice seem to know these rumors, but it might also be a little too early to recognize that. A Wisdom check difficulty 18 could clue in a particularly observant pirate. Swampwalk seems to be the focus of the rat rumors. If the characters don't catch on that they should check out Murky Alley, then allow them to make an Intelligence check (difficulty 10) to figure it out.

If the characters came to the tavern looking for a guide through Cypressroot, they meet Skip, a young mouse who lived in Cypressroot until recently. He's willing to guide them through to Brutus's stronghold as long as they leave soon. If they go check out Swampwalk first, Skip won't be around to guide them.

Scene 3: Into the Depths

- **How did the player characters get to this scene?** After hearing rumors about the rats hiding something in Swampwalk.
- **What do the player characters need to accomplish in this scene?** Find information about the rats.
- **Who or what is keeping them from accomplishing it?** A large crocodile.
- **What scene or scenes should logically happen next?** Scene 4, "A Confession."

The characters may want to secure provisions before heading out to Swampwalk. They have a writ from Zanna to procure anything they deem necessary for their expedition, within reason.

Merchants in the Haze are easy to come by and carry all manner of items and weapons. Give the players time to get provisions for their characters, but don't let them spend too long.

Swampwalk is more swamp than walk. Its broken bridges and piers barely touch one another, forcing you to walk on marshy land between them as you go. The fog here is denser than in any other part of the Haze, as it runs through the Shrouded Swamp. You can tell why people use the place for illegal deals.

Navigating Swampwalk is treacherous at best. The piers and bridges are rickety and old, often breaking when walked on. The marshy area sucks at feet and slows movement. Swampwalk is a huge area made up of old docks and sunken buildings. The characters don't necessarily know what they are looking for and will need to wander around for a while before finding the supposed rat-protected area.

Crossbridge

As you leave the trodden road behind, you enter a system of wooden bridges that crisscross the swamps. Crossbridge is the most-often traversed area of Swampwalk. Haze natives use the bridges as shortcuts between remote areas, with Cypressroot connected to the northern side of the swamps. You enter from the east and notice how quiet and desolate it is; there isn't a soul around. To the south presumably lies the Acid Sea, but you can't see it through the fog that permeates the area.

Crossbridge is a relatively safe part of Swampwalk. If the characters try to enter Cypressroot from this area, they find rats guarding the entrance. They aren't guarding the way into Crossbridge, but instead protecting against something coming from the area. The pirates can pass through with little question.

Middle Marsh

The bulk of the swamplands are simply referred to as Middle Marsh. If you walk too far south from here, you'll end up splashing into the Acid Sea. Old docks and piers lie half-sunk in the murk and no one tries to rebuild the bridges here.

Middle Marsh is dangerous for two reasons. The first is that the landscape is bleak and repetitive. It's easy to get lost here as the fog obscures the sky, preventing normal modes of navigation. This makes passing through difficult, and the marsh is deep in places. One missed step could lead to a character getting caught in the quagmire. It takes a Wisdom Check difficulty 10 to remain on course and bypass the bogs, but the players must roll this twice for their characters to make it through the marsh unscathed. If an individual character fails either check, she ends up in a bog. She can attempt to free herself with a Constitution check (difficulty 17), or her friends can attempt a Strength check to free her (difficulty 15).

The other reason Middle Marsh is dangerous is because it is teeming with creatures adapted to the harsh life of the Acid Sea! As the characters move through the Middle Marsh, they run across group of frog-monkeys, one for each member of the party.

Use statistics for Frog-Monkey, p. 80.



Remember that the environment in the swamps is harder to see through than the rest of the Haze! Ranged attacks are at a disadvantage here.

Murky Alley

Murky Alley is on the far west side of Swampwalk in an area far outside the new growth of the Haze. It leads to scrub lands beyond the city's outskirts. There are no more bridges or piers here, only patches of less wet land. You see a few crates marked with Brutus's personal seal, which you recognize from Cypressroot.

Cursory inspection suggests that no one has come to Murky Alley in a long time, except for those who have ended up on the wrong end of the large crocodile that has taken up residence here. The place is a set-up, and with only a casual look-over, not a very good one. Upon closer inspection, the painted crests on the crates are crude renditions of Brutus's brand, nothing like what the rats themselves make. The crates are all empty, sunk into the muck with rocks to keep them in place.

As the characters investigate the area, they may stumble across remnants of those who have come before them. They may find a scrap of torn clothing attached to a reed, or if you are feeling particularly gruesome, a digit once belonging to a cat's paw. Give the characters a moment to search around and decide that there is nothing of interest in the area before reading the next entry aloud.

Murky Alley lives up to its name. Everything here is wet and confusing. The rats aren't hiding anything here, but something clearly happened. As you begin to feel your search has come to naught, you notice the twin trails in the murk, warning you that something is moving swiftly towards you. Before you have a chance to react, the gaping maw of a crocodile erupts from the water to attack.

Give the pirates a chance to make a Wisdom save (difficulty 15) to notice the crocodile before it attacks. Only those characters that succeed can roll for initiative and act in the first round – failure means they are considered to have already acted for that round. After the first round, everyone can act as normal.

Use the statistics for Crocodile, p. 78.



Don't forget to have the characters make Wisdom checks on their way back through the Middle Marsh on their way out!

Scene 4: A Confession

- **How did the player characters get to this scene?** The characters are leaving Swampwalk after fighting the crocodile.
- **What do the player characters need to accomplish in this scene?** Find out the truth about what's going on from Claire.
- **Who or what is keeping them from accomplishing it?** Mice are hunting for Claire and attack the group.
- **What scene or scenes should logically happen next?** Scene 5, "Confronting Lady Brie" or Scene 6, "Meeting Brutus."

As the characters leave Swampwalk, a group of mice ambushes them. Read the following:

As you step off the last bridge from Crossbridge, several mice step out of the shadows to block your path. They are wearing armor and are armed, but their possessions look old and worn. They have a look of desperation about them that tells you this won't end peacefully.

There are as many mice as player characters, and the mice aren't looking to talk. The most the pirates will get out of them is the sentiment that this isn't personal, but the mice can't let them leave Swampwalk alive. The mice are not coordinated, and don't use tactics of any kind. They are determined though and will fight to the last. If the characters capture and interrogate them, the mice only know that they were paid good plastic by a mysterious, hooded figure to watch for people going deep into Swampwalk. Anyone who came back out must die. (The hooded figure is actually Lady Brie, but the mice don't know that.)

Mice Ambushers (CR 1)

Defense: 13

Stamina Points: 7

Speed: 20 feet

Proficiency Bonus: +2

Abilities: Str -1 (8), Dexterity +2 (14), Constitution +1 (12), Intelligence -1 (8), Wisdom +1 (12), Charisma 0 (10)

Skills: None

Attack: Bite (+0 melee, 1d4 -1 piercing) or dagger (+4 melee or ranged, 1d4 +2 piercing) or short bow (+4 ranged, 1d6 piercing)

Knacks: Darkvision

- **Hamstring:** After a successful melee attack, the mouse can spend her move action to hamstring her opponent, which halves his Speed for the next 1d4 rounds.

Meeting Claire

Swampwalk is just out of sight when you run into black-eyed Claire Mune, the mouse you saw on the street earlier. Winded, she hurries towards you and motions you to step off the road to talk with her. "You made it out! That must mean you killed the crocodile!"

It shouldn't be a huge surprise that Claire knew about the crocodile, but the characters may have questions for her concerning it, the rumors about the rats, and the mice who ambushed them.

This time, Claire is more forthcoming about what she knows, even if the player characters walked past her being beat up in front of Harv's. She tells them the rumors about the Swamplands are fake, made up to lure people there. When they didn't return, people would blame it on the rats.

"No one comes back from the Murky Alley, which means the mice are going to be looking for you. If you tell anyone what was there, you'll blow their ruse. They're going to be looking for you to keep you quiet."

Characters can make a Wisdom check (difficulty 10) to recognize that Claire is hiding something from them. She knows the name of who is behind the rumors, but she isn't telling them. With a little coercion (Charisma check difficulty 10), the pirates get Lady Brie's name.

If the characters saved Claire in the "Hitting the Streets" section, she will join their group and tell them that she feels responsible for the predicament they are now in. Otherwise, she leaves after her warning.

At this point, the characters may wish to regroup and figure out what they are dealing with. It should be clear that the mice have a vendetta against the rats. They have enough information to bring to Brutus. This can secure an audience with him and finally get them information about the flask.

If Claire remained with the group, she encourages them to visit with Lady Brie and get her side of the story before going to Brutus. But she will defer to whatever the group decides.

Scene 5: Confronting Lady Brie

- **How did the player characters get to this scene?** Either directly after speaking to Claire about the Lady Brie's plans, or after talking with Brutus.
- **What do the player characters need to accomplish in this scene?** Convince the mice to stop spreading rumors about the rats.
- **Who or what is keeping them from accomplishing it?** The mice refuse to stop their campaign without assurances that the rats will stop their expansion.
- **What scene or scenes should logically happen next?** Scene 6, "Meeting Brutus" or Scene 7, "To Justice"

Underport is strangely devoid of the fog that plagues the rest of the Haze. Instead, the dirty tunnels are filled to the brim with mice. While unkempt and unclean, the mice seem to be well-fed and hearty. True to mouse form, they are cheery despite their hardships, though some throw you disgruntled looks as you pass by. These tunnels are little more than sewers. You can tell that the mice are making the best of a bad situation with make-shift lean-tos propped up against the tunnel walls and blankets spread out to keep the damp away from possessions.

Lady Brie makes her home in Underport along with most other mice in the Haze. Finding her is relatively easy, as most mice in the area know her by name. It only takes one or two questions to get a mouse to point the pirates in the right direction. If Claire is with the group, she leads them directly to Lady Brie. It should be clear moving through Underport that the living conditions here are terrible and the mice are miserable.

Lady Brie's lair isn't anything more than a specific section of tunnel, but she's made it a home. Cloth drapes hang from wires, creating private spaces for sleeping and entertaining. Mice guard the entrances, but step aside to allow you to pass as you come through. The lady herself is dressed in practical clothes and thick padded leather. She looks ready for a fight, even when sitting at leisure. Where all the other mice in Underport are slightly grimy or downright dirty, Lady Brie looks clean and collected.

The mice have been forced to live in these conditions by Brutus's ever-expanding business practices. He tears down multi-family homes to create spacious marketplaces as he tries to make Cypressroot and the rest of the Haze as cosmopolitan as other districts in Waterdog Port. The mice are convinced that his actions are maliciously designed to drive the mice out of the area, as they have suffered the most from the housing crisis the rats have created.

"Mice suffer at Brutus's hands. Just look around you, and you can see what results from his kind of business. And now the city monitors are taking notice of what's happening in the Haze. If the rats weren't so terrible, none of this would be happening. I'm only shedding light on their awful business practices."

Lady Brie is forthcoming with any information about what Brutus has been doing, as well as its effects on the mice. But she is less forthcoming about her own strategy for dealing with him. She claims that she simply spread the truth about the rats, and certainly some of the things you have heard seem true. The rats do seem to want to expand throughout the Haze, but she fails to mention the crocodile or how she's been misleading people into its clutches.

Characters can make a Wisdom check (difficulty 10) to recognize that Lady Brie knows more than she is telling. And with Claire's information, it won't take long for the characters to change her attitude from her normal act of being a poor helpless mouse into the shrewd person she actually is. If they push her, she explodes with the following:

"I would kill Brutus myself if I thought the mice were ready for war. What's a few people lost to their own greed in the face of all this suffering? I'll do whatever it takes to bring down the rats, and every mouse here will stand behind me. And if something happens to me, someone else will take my place. We are done allowing the rats to step on us."

The mice in the area listen to her and do what she asks. They look to her for answers, and she has been providing them. Her actions have emboldened them to act out, and if she weren't focusing their attacks, it might devolve into a full out war between mice and rats. Lady Brie seems to be the linchpin for this though, and if she were to give up on her own, or if she changed her tactics, the rest of the mice would follow.

The characters need to sway Lady Brie to convince all the other mice to quell a possible uprising. But she is not open to negotiation or alternate methods without some convincing. The characters must succeed on a Charisma check (difficulty 15) to convince her to listen to reason. If Claire is with the group, she grants advantage on the check.

If unsuccessful, Lady Brie ends her conversation and shoos the pirates out of her home. She is done with them unless they are willing to press the issue. At this point, pressing the issue means a fight (see Scene 7, "To Justice").

If successful, Lady Brie will break down and admit that the mice are tired of killing innocent

people. She is losing her grip on them. She is willing to negotiate alternate methods, but is firm that Brutus must personally agree to stop all aggressions against the mice.

If the pirates met with Brutus already, they can offer her the information they gained from him to get her to negotiate and forgo the Charisma check. They also know that after this discussion, they will need to bring up the topic of justice for the people that Lady Brie has killed to defame the rats. Go to Scene 7, "To Justice."

If the pirates have not yet met with Brutus, Claire will join them to meet with him, regardless of whether she was with the group previously.

Scene 6: Meeting Brutus

- **How did the player characters get to this scene?** Either directly after speaking to Claire about the Lady Brie's plans, or after talking with Lady Brie herself.
- **What do the player characters need to accomplish in this scene?** Convince the rats to do what the mice want.
- **Who or what is keeping them from accomplishing it?** The rats want to kill Lady Brie for her treachery and won't listen until justice is served somehow.
- **What scene or scenes should logically happen next?** Scene 5, "Confronting Lady Brie," or Scene 7, "To Justice."

Armed with information, the rats are willing to let the characters inside their stronghold. Once again, navigating Cypressroot is not easy, even if the characters have been through here before. Without a guide, they must succeed on a Wisdom check (difficulty 15) to navigate to the stronghold, although you can give them an advantage for their previous trip, if you feel it's appropriate.

The inside of the stronghold is as impressive as the outside. Brutus's rat sigil hangs from tapestries lining the entrance and rats in clean uniforms guide you in. Brutus is an old rat, but he has a surprising amount of liveliness to him. He greets you with a twinkle in his eye. "I hear you have information on who has been spreading rumors about us. Please, I'm happy to give you anything within reason for this information."

Brutus is a business rat and understands that information is often more valuable than plastic or a shiny relic. He's good to his word and offers the characters whatever he knows about Bobby's Flask in return for their information, with the caveat that the information is good.

As soon as the characters tell Brutus it's the mice, read the following:

"The mice?" Brutus sounds shocked. "I knew that they were insidious, but I didn't think them capable of this. I can't let this stand. People have gone missing or worse, and I don't even know why. The mice deserve to die for this."

Brutus is angry, but also confused. Why would the mice do such a thing? If the pirates have been to see Lady Brie, they can tell him about why the mice are upset. Read the following:

"I've been trying to make Cypressroot and the Haze a better place to live for everyone. I had no idea the mice thought we were working against them. I didn't even know they were living in Underport. How could they hold me responsible for this? And to go to such measures? Had they just come to me, we could have avoided all this. Of course we'll work to make space for the mice."

A Wisdom check (difficulty 10) reveals that Brutus is genuine in his regret and confusion about the situation with the mice. The rats were so busy doing their own thing that they had no idea they were hurting others. Brutus is sorry for his part in it, but also angry that the mice resorted to slander and murder instead of just talking to him.

Regardless of whether the characters have met with lady Brie, Brutus's biggest issue right now is that the city monitors think he is responsible for the crocodile attacks and people going missing. He needs that to end, and tasks the characters with resolving the problem.

"I need the monitors to stop questioning me. You are going to go to the mice and deal with whomever is behind this. Kill them for all I care, but make sure the monitors know who is responsible. Then, and only then, will I give you any information about Golden's Flask."

Brutus walks back on his agreement with the characters easily, and requires a Charisma check (difficulty 20) to give them the information they asked for without first dealing with Lady Brie.

If the pirates have talked to Lady Brie already, Brutus will claim that he's calling off his building projects until he can work with the mice. Claire will stay with him to begin discussions in good faith.

The Flask

Brutus knows the following information about Bobby Golden's Flask:

"We pulled that flask up from the depths last year. You'd think with something called Golden's Flask, it would be shinier than it was. We didn't have much use for it, so we traded it for a real golden idol a few months ago. The trader who took it was heading out to Dalmatian Cove last we heard. It might be there, or somewhere else by now."

Brutus can give an accurate description of the flask to the characters (see p. 88) and verify that the one the rats had is indeed the legendary treasure. If they had known it was going to cause such a fuss in Waterdog Port, they would have held on to it, but alas, it was a missed opportunity. The characters are the first to come to the rats about the flask though, so they have the information before anyone else.

Scene 7: To Justice

- **How did the player characters get to this scene?** The characters have met with Brutus and he has asked them to bring Lady Brie to justice.
- **What do the player characters need to accomplish in this scene?** Bring Lady Brie to justice.
- **Who or what is keeping them from accomplishing it?** Lady Brie's guards.
- **What scene or scenes should logically happen next?** This is the last scene!

If the characters enter this scene immediately after Scene 5 "Confronting Lady Brie," then as the characters bring up Brutus's desire for vengeance, several mouse guards approach as they

are speaking. She tries to flee while the guards attack the group.

If the characters come from Cypressroot to this scene, guards stop the characters from entering. It seems Lady Brie is trying to flee after you spoke, and she's put guards out to slow the group down.

Use the Mouse Gunner, p. 79. There is one guard per character.

Capture

After the characters defeat the mouse guards, Lady Brie tries to flee. But catching her is easy, as she's weighed down by bags and her panic makes her slow. Characters must succeed on a Dexterity check (difficulty 10) to catch her before she slips away into Underport.

Lady Brie speaks with a venom in her voice, "I may have committed a crime or two, but who here hasn't? I only did what I had to in the face of the terrible crimes that the rats did against my people. What are a few missing dogs or cats who were certainly up to no good in the face of so many homeless and hungry mice? I won't let myself get arrested, especially not if Brutus can walk free."

Lady Brie feels her actions were justified, but Brutus did not technically break any laws with his actions, though the consequences were dire. She instead committed terrible immoral acts in response.

The pirates may wish to deal with this in multiple different ways, and you should allow them to try for whichever outcome they think would be best. Lady Brie will go quietly with the group with a Charisma check (difficulty 10) if the characters agree to turn over Brutus to the monitors. They must prove they've turned him over before she will agree to leave Underport, though.

The characters may also attempt a Charisma check (difficulty 15) to convince her to turn herself in without Brutus also going to the monitors. This takes some time, but the characters can use some mitigating factors to convince her, such as Claire working with Brutus, or they could bring up Zanna of the Four Audacities and her interest in the situation. Either one could give the characters advantage on the roll.

Finally, if they fail to convince her, she will attack the characters to break free, entreating the other mice in the area to help her. The characters may also just decide to attack her as opposed to trying to take her to the monitors. If it devolves into a fight, the mice in the tunnels will join in the fight against the characters. Add one Mouse Ambusher (p. 116) per member of the party.

Reporting to Zanna

After all is said and done, the pirates should return to Luminary Zanna to report their findings. She is displeased to learn that the flask is no longer in Waterdog Port but gives each of the pirates some plastic for their trouble (bump each character's plastic up one rank). She also offers to continue to be a patron for their expeditions in the future as long as they are working around Waterdog Port.

Future Stories

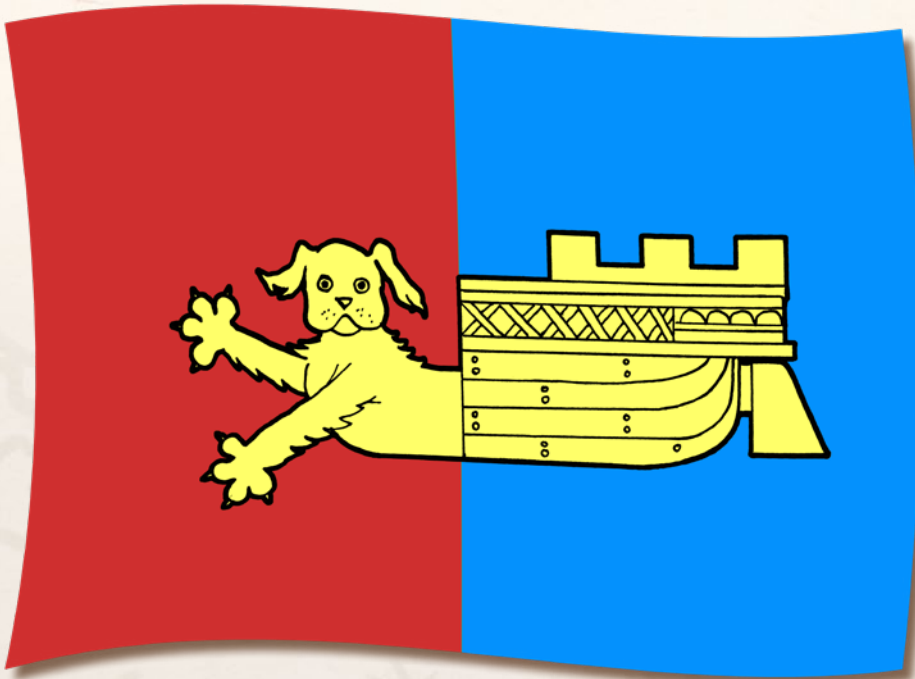
Characters should gain a level for finishing the adventure. The next story, "The Race," requires character to be at least 3rd level, so the players will need to do some smaller side adventures to bring them up to the minimum level to enter that story. We've included some smaller story seeds as suggestions to round out the characters' time in Waterdog Port and bring them to 3rd level before moving on to "The Race." If you are planning to skip "The Race" for other planned stories or to continue playing in Waterdog Port, these story seeds can still be helpful for starting up a whole new direction for your chronicle.

Before running off to other parts unknown, the characters may want to tie up some loose plot threads here in the Haze. They may want to work with Brutus and Claire to come up with a workable solution to the rat expansion problem. The Incisors just lost one of their key members, and Claire is the next in line to take Lady Brie's place. But Claire wants out of the criminal business. The characters may want to help smooth things over between Claire and the Incisors or figure out some other solution to her problem. Additionally, removing Lady Brie has turned the Incisors against the characters, and for a short

time, they are likely to want to have not-nice words with the pirate band.

Zanna is impressed with the characters' performance on this mission and may task them to some other odd jobs around Waterdog Port. She always has her ear to the problems of the city, and if the characters are looking for something to do before starting another adventure, you could use one of the following scenarios.

- A thief has escaped prison, but the monitors are overburdened as it is. The characters must track him down, likely to the Incisors' hideout, to bring him back.
- A ship has made port, but the crew is completely missing. The pirates must investigate the ship and figure out what happened to the crew.
- The tension between rats and mice in the Haze has only grown since the incident with Lady Brie. The characters must attempt to quell uprisings throughout the district.
- With Lady Brie gone, the Incisors are looking to spread further into Underport. They begin recruiting the mice there, offering plastic for petty crimes throughout Waterdog Port. The characters must find the new Incisor head in Underport and stop them.
- Rats in other areas of Waterdog Port have started to feel backlash from what happened in the Haze. Someone is leaving nasty graffiti on rat-owned businesses all over the city. The characters must get to the bottom of the situation.
- The influx of treasure hunters to Waterdog Port has brought along with it some hoping to prey on them. Several counterfeit flasks have been making their rounds throughout the city, and the pirates must find out where they came from.





Chapter Nine: The Race

Legend tells of a small island off Dalmatian Cove that is only visible above sea level for one day every ten years. Many years ago, the formidable Pirate Queen Tilly “the Ram” used it as a hideaway for ill-gotten relics and plunder, including artifacts from the age of Man. Yet, few can claim to have found the island or its reputed wealth. Tilly Isle will soon be visible again, and Sagra Major von Korat, a purported descendant of the Ram, knows the whereabouts of the island. She has offered her house’s sponsorship to the pirates who can recover a chest of paperwork – including a map – from the island. To sweeten the deal, she claims a Man-made treasure known as Saturn’s Sight is buried with it. This relic, if real, is capable of keeping any intact ship upright and guiding it back to safe harbor, providing travel occurs at night. Sagra offers this relic to the crew who return to her the map.

Sagra’s not stupid. She knows most attempts to find Tilly Isle end in failure, often with the disappear-

ance of the pirates attempting the journey. She’s hired pirates before, only for them to each succumb to the ravages of the Acid Sea, its dangerous inhabitants, or to infighting. This is why on this occasion, she has cast her net wide. Rather than hiring a single crew, she’s sent word to multiple captains in Waterdog Port. As far as Sagra’s concerned, they can fight it out to reach Tilly Isle, as long as one of them claims the treasure and brings it back to her.

“The Race” is a story for third to fourth level characters, in which a crew will acquire a ship, embark on an exciting race across the Acid Sea, engage in battles with sea monsters and fellow pirates, and receive an introduction to Dalmatian Cove. It might also result in their finding a fabled treasure in the form of the Saturn’s Sight, which comes with its benefits as well as a terrible curse.

Characters and Ships

We include notes on some of the prominent non-player characters and their ships appearing in this story. You should feel free to introduce them in prior stories (such as the ones suggested in Chapter Eight) and the opening scenes of this one, to establish their characters.

Chameleon's Pride



A newly-built vessel painted in swirling multi-colored hues hung with fluttering iridescent banners and sails, *Chameleon's Pride* is a beautiful ship to some and

an eyesore to others. Boasting speed and maneuverability, *Pride's* obvious failing comes in its excessive decoration in place of attack power, though its durability is hard to assess. No more than six crew serve on *Chameleon's Pride* at any one time.

Chameleon's Pride

Artillery: 2 (ballista, six-pounder)

Hull: 14

Seaworthiness: 120

Speed: 140

Captain Whipling Terrachilde



If stories are true, Whipling made her fortune through blackmailing House Mau with choice information about ancient family corruption, and went on to commission the construction of *Chameleon's Pride* with her extorted loot. A serpent clad in scales of painted hues, Whipling fashions her grand vessel after herself. She's smart, but arrogant. While keen to make deals, often securing hefty payments for the services of *Chameleon's Pride*, her pride encourages her to overreach or insult employers by demanding too much. Whipling has never found a creature she wouldn't bilk for a pocketful of coins, but she's a fair captain to her crew.

Use Gecko Rigger (see p. 79) for Whipling's stats.

First Mate Shiny Four Pennies

The parrot at Captain Whipling's right paw, serving as her first mate from ship to ship, is the

mostly-deaf Shiny Four Pennies. After countless battles, the sound of roaring guns served to mute Shiny's hearing to the degree she now finds Whipling's boasts a tolerable murmur. Shiny has instituted a system of sign language among the other members of the crew, which unbeknownst to the captain they use to bellyache about her arrogance. Shiny is a jocular sort of a bird, always happy to tell a tale in port and guide other ships to wrecks. Courteous pirates speak loudly so she can understand them, or utilize the sign language she's steadily teaching others. Rumor has it, even the eerie Mr. Spade on board the *Green Plague* uses Shiny's non-verbal communication methods.

Shiny Four Pennies

Defense: 11 (supple leather armor)

Stamina Points: 21

Speed: 30 feet

Proficiency Bonus: +3

Abilities: Strength +1 (12), Dexterity -1 (8), Constitution +1 (13), Intelligence +2 (15), Wisdom +2 (14), Charisma +3 (16)

Skills: Know Nature, Perform, Sense Motive

Attacks: Cutlass (+4 melee, 1d6 +1 slashing)

Knacks:

- **Ever Ready:** Shiny never needs to take an action to change weapons or items and can never be surprised, always getting an initiative roll.
- **Silent Talker:** Shiny can communicate her will through sign language, which can be simply understood through her expressions and gestures, or misleading and confusion if she wishes to speak only to other silent talkers. As such, she can communicate with her crew even if they have the Deaf condition.

Green Plague



The crew of the *Green Plague* are the kind of pirates nobody wants to meet on the Acid Sea, in a tavern in Waterdog Port, or indeed anywhere else. Captained by Phineas Twelve Beaks, one of the roughest, most violent crows to ever sail a ship, the *Green Plague* is the terror of Pugmire and Dalmatian Cove.

A ramshackle vessel of impressive size, the *Green Plague* is painted a thick bottle green from bow to stern, with the captain supposedly forcing new crew members to paint the hull while being keelhauled. The ship suffers in speed and maneuverability, but if another vessel is caught in its path or at the receiving end of its cannon fire, it doesn't really matter. The *Green Plague* rolls over most victims' ships and steals anything good from the wreckage. Her crew rarely numbers fewer than ten.

Green Plague

Artillery: 8 (six six-pounder cannons, one staff of lightning)

Hull: 20

Seaworthiness: 120

Speed: 100

Captain Phineas Twelve Beaks



Never was there a more frighteningly violent pirate on the Acid Sea than Phineas Twelve Beaks. At least, that's what the crew of the *Green Plague* like to say. Phineas is grungy, uncouth, and prone to terrible rages, but is sometimes conscientious enough to give his victims the choice: serve aboard my ship or take your chances on your wrecked vessel, hoping it gets you home. Unsurprisingly, most end up serving on Phineas' great galleon. Some claim the crow got his name for the number of siblings he slew in order to inherit his father's ship. Others claim he adds another number for every ship he sinks, or every captain he forces to jump head-first into the Acid Sea. Phineas is happy to let conjecture reign, proud of his place as the terror of Dalmatian Cove.

Phineas Twelve Beaks

Defense: 13 (leather armor)

Stamina Points: 35

Speed: 30 feet

Proficiency Bonus: +3

Abilities: Strength +2 (14), Dexterity +3 (16), Constitution +1 (13), Intelligence +0 (10), Wisdom +1 (12), Charisma +0 (10)

Skills: Balance, Intimidate, Survive

Attacks: Pistol (+6 ranged, 1d6 +3 piercing), Stiletto Dagger (+5 melee, 1d4 +2 piercing)

Knacks:

- **All-in:** Phineas can drop his defense by 4 to increase the damage he deals in a turn by 2d4.

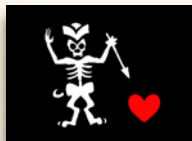
- **Ironclad:** Phineas gains an advantage to all saving throws against attempts to force him into a course of action he doesn't wish to pursue.
- **Weak Point:** If Phineas attacks the same character two turns in a row, the second attack is made at an advantage for Phineas.

First Mate Mr. Spade

The silent, murderous gunner of the *Green Plague* is the badger known as Mr. Spade. How he came into the employ of Phineas' ship is unknown — Mr. Spade isn't a talkative soul — but he is as feared as the captain. His aim with the ship's cannon is second-to-none, and his willingness to throw himself into battle with axe in hand is likewise infamous. The white of this badger's fur has turned mostly black through char and smoke. Mr. Spade unsettles anyone with whom he comes into contact, including the captain, who only keeps him around due to his skill.

Use Otter Boarder (see p. 79) for Mr. Spade's stats.

Plastic Minnow



Commanded by notable dandy and explorer extraordinaire, the boxer dog Juniper Pipe, the *Plastic Minnow* may class as one of the fastest vessels ever built in Waterdog Port. Small, elegant, and capable of cutting through the waves like a hot knife through butter, the *Plastic Minnow* is a ship of Pipe's design and much sought-after by the Pugmire navy for scouting. Pipe is disinclined to give the ship up, however, as she makes a trade of salvaging shipwrecks and darting to recently-discovered treasure locations before any other seadog. The *Plastic Minnow* is a fine vessel if heading straight to a destination, but may not be fit to sail the Acid Sea for weeks at a time, if rumors surrounding its durability are true. The ship is a small one with a crew of between three and six.

Plastic Minnow

Artillery: 0

Hull: 16

Seaworthiness: 140

Speed: 150

Captain Juniper Pipe



Captain Juniper Pipe is everything a pup or kitten aspires to be when hearing the dashing tales of pirates on the Acid Sea. Dressed in silks and polished leathers, a wide-brimmed hat adorning her head with three bright feathers protruding from its band, and possessed of an unstoppable joy, Juniper loves her ship, her crew, and life on the water. This boxer dog accompanies many declarations with a slap of her thigh, a “ha ha!” and a wink. There’s no adventure she will not embark upon, nor treasure she will not seek. Her heroic spirit is renowned.

Juniper Pipe

Defense: 13 (polished leathers)

Stamina Points: 14

Speed: 30 feet

Proficiency Bonus: +2

Abilities: Strength +2 (14), Dexterity +2 (15), Constitution +1 (12), Intelligence -1 (8), Wisdom +0 (10), Charisma +4 (18)

Skills: Bluff, Perform, Persuade

Attacks: Whip (+4 melee, 1d6 +2 slashing)

Knacks:

- **Deft Buccaneer:** Juniper adds 1d6 to all Dexterity saving throws.
- **Rouse the Crew:** Juniper can issue a stirring speech and give every friendly character an advantage to Wisdom saving throws until the next scene.

Medic Bugs Electrachilde

The grumpy medic of the *Plastic Minnow* and Captain Pipe’s trusted council, Bugs is a curmudgeonly old turtle with a serious mind for how healthy a crew should be. One of Juniper Pipe’s new hires (after her previous ship sank), Bugs is determined to keep the *Plastic Minnow*’s crew hale and hearty, even if he must circumvent some of Pipe’s more fanciful orders. Bugs rolls his eyes at many of Pipe’s proclamations, but deep down he possesses a spirit of adventure untempered by age and loves a song and dance in the Lark’s Head tavern.

Bugs Electrachilde

Defense: 14 (natural armor)

Stamina Points: 27

Speed: 30 feet

Proficiency Bonus: +3

Abilities: Strength +0 (11), Dexterity +1 (13), Constitution +1 (13), Intelligence +2 (14), Wisdom +4 (18), Charisma -1 (8)

Skills: Bluff, Heal, Know Culture

Attacks: Mace (+3 melee, 1d6 bludgeoning)

Knacks:

- **Deck Doctor:** When treating injuries, Bugs can give another character his stamina dice as a bonus action and can heal 1d6 stamina points without magic. Additionally, Bugs makes a Wisdom check at difficulty 15 to remove injurious conditions when successfully healing someone.
- **Unsinkable:** Bugs gains an advantage on all saving throws made at sea but a disadvantage on all saving throws made on land.

Synopsis

Sagra Major von Korat’s agents put word around Waterdog Port that Tilly Isle will soon be visible for the first time in a decade. She is willing to handsomely reward the pirates who make it to the island and recover the treasure buried there — specifically maps of Iron Fang Maze — for her personal vault.

The promise of Tilly Isle’s treasure excites pirates throughout Waterdog Port, as they ready to set sail for the mysterious island and unearth rich plunder. The player characters are caught up in the excitement as new and established pirates alike hope to make their names on this adventure. As *Chameleon’s Pride* and the *Plastic Minnow* aim for wealth and repute along with many other vessels, the *Green Plague* seeks to ambush any ships making the journey. Captain Twelve Beaks knows his ship isn’t fast enough to make the trip before the others, but he can make a rich haul taking out the opposition.

The characters must purchase or lease a ship and take to the Acid Sea. They must overcome its obstacles including the rival pirates, sea creatures, and ill weather, before battling on Tilly Isle for the chest containing the Iron Fang Maze and other treasures. Then, the question becomes one of the journey back to Waterdog Port. Do they take their treasure to Dalmatian Cove and risk its hostile environment to have their ship fixed up,

or head straight back to the Acid Sea and hope they can survive the perilous voyage on a damaged hull? Perhaps if they've forged an alliance with some of their rival pirates, safe travels might be possible.

Introduction

A public proclamation in Waterdog Port causes pirate mouths to salivate. The Korat cats, represented by Sagra Major von Korat, are offering a noble's bounty to anyone able to locate the mysterious Tilly Isle and recover treasure for the house. Not only is House Korat prepared to offer pirates a map to the island, which appears above sea level but once each decade, but they only require one piece of treasure from it, while any other plunder recovered – including the fabled Saturn's Sight – can go to the pirates who unearth it. Further, House Korat is prepared to sponsor the successful crew, paying for future ship repairs and enhancements for the next year, providing the crew don't act against the Korats.

The offer sends many captains and first mates dashing to the House Korat enclave in Waterdog Port for a copy of the map to Tilly Isle – its location and even existence long disputed – while crews put their ships in order to set sail with the tide at first light. Other pirates are warier: plenty of ships have sailed for Tilly Isle only to vanish. The characters have the duration of the night to secure a vessel and embark on what could be a dangerous, lucrative mission. The story begins as they claim their copy of the map. Sagra, an old noble and former pirate herself, hands it over and with a grin says, "House Korat has no ship to gift you, but the way I see it, you have a couple of options: put all your coins together to lease a semi-decent schooner from the shipwright guild, or halve the cost and buy a ramshackle tub you can call your own from an old salt in the Lark's Head. Best of fortune to you, and I hope to see you return with map in hand!"

The characters may take the opportunity to find out more about Tilly Isle, the treasure supposedly buried there, and the dangers en route. Research in the archived ships' logs at Waterdog Library and effectively questioning pirates reveals the following:

- **What is Tilly Isle?** More of a sandbank than an island, Tilly Isle is a strip of land that emerges from the water around once a decade. It would be an awful place to bury treasure, but for its apparent solid rock bed beneath the sand. Some scholars believe it's the final remains of a volcano that erupted long ago.
- **What's buried there?** The only pirate known to have buried their treasure there was a prestigious pirate cat of old named Tilly "the Ram." House Korat claim an accurate map to the ruined and probably-haunted Iron Fang Maze is buried there, as back when Tilly's branch of the family was still around, they held territory in that mysterious part of the Fearless Forest. It's said Tilly also interred chests filled with plastic and Man-crafted treasures, including the fabled Saturn's Sight with which she always sailed safely at night, and a flask once owned by an individual named Bobby Golden.
- **How do you find Tilly Isle?** House Korat have kept the purported location of Tilly Isle a closely-guarded secret but are known to have employed pirate crews every ten years to find the island and return what they deem their property. Sagra Major von Korat has other ideas, advertising the mapped location of Tilly Isle widely and describing it as visible due to the main mast protruding from the island's center. Even Sagra doesn't know who put the mast there or if there's a ship buried beneath the sand.
- **What dangers await pirates sailing there?** As well as other pirate crews racing for the treasure, the Acid Sea is thick with danger. At this time of year, pirates can expect to encounter barnacle swarms that devour plastic hulls, colossal hydrozoa, and spontaneous storms. The barnacles are best combated with magic, especially spells that create fresh water (which the barnacles can't abide). Colossal hydrozoa have tendrils lined with paralyzing, painful stingers, and the largest of their cousins wield mental domination powers. They are extraordinarily fearful of fire, however.

- **What's the closest port to Tilly Isle?** Dalmatian Cove under two hours' travel from Tilly Isle, though the outlaws who call the place home guarantee all visits come with a cost.

Scenes

Scenes 1 and 2 are optional routes to acquiring a ship for the story, while Scenes 3 and 4 are handled just before the characters set sail. Scenes 5 to 7 are each optional sea encounters, with Scene 8 as the final scene before the story's epilogue, leaving the characters in Dalmatian Cove or setting a course back for Waterdog Port. You are free to adapt any of the scenes to make them fit the characters in your game.

Scene 1: Leasing a Ship

- **How did the player characters get to this scene?** By following the directions of Sagra Major von Korat, if they decided they were prepared to spend a lot of plastic on leasing a decent schooner from the docks.
- **What do the player characters need to accomplish in this scene?** Meet with a representative of the shipwright guild in Waterdog Port to haggle a decent deal for a capable ship.
- **Who or what is keeping them from accomplishing it?** The shipwright guild is aware of the Korat offer, and the characters aren't the only crew to want a ship tonight. Guildmaster Arkady Lux von Mau will attempt to con the player characters out of all their coin in exchange for an inadequate vessel.
- **What scene or scenes should logically happen next?** Scene 3: "Making Ready to Set Sail"

The shipwright guildhouse is busy for this time of night, but the reason why swiftly becomes apparent as the name Korat flies thick and fast across the docks. Pirates not deep in their cups or out to sea have heard about the House Korat offer, leading to a run on the shipwrights. Some pirates – including the crew of the sleek Plastic Minnow – want their vessels fixed up and ready to sail in the morning, while others

attempt to scratch enough plastic together to purchase a new ship or hire one from the guild. The tall, patterned-furred guildmaster, Arkady Lux von Mau, laughs merrily at the hive of activity in his docks. The coin is pouring in. When he sees you standing around looking at half-constructed ships and vessels in drydock, he shouts a bombastic "Welcome!" and spreads his arms wide.

Arkady is happy to guide the characters to a quiet part of the shipyard, talking about all the activity in the docks and the demand for his workers being at a premium. At every opportunity, he mentions the cost of ships and ship-work going up tonight, and how this happens every time some noble house decides they're going to give pirates legitimate work.

Occasionally, one of the many rats and cats Arkady has working falls from the side of a ship with a short scream or a piece of lumber collapses on a longshoreman applying tar to a ship's hull. Whenever an accident occurs, Arkady doesn't stop talking, instead making thrusting his right arm above his head and pointing at the accident area. A small team of shepherds and mancercs works to keep the dockers healthy, and they rush to any incident to fix up the injured party. If questioned on it, Arkady shrugs. "It's more cost effective to risk an accident and pay some shepherd to make it all better than not take all this work while it's rolling in. Catch fish while the sun is shining!"

Eventually, Arkady will lead the pirates to his office.

Arkady seats you in a small office clad in sailing paraphernalia, including some apparatuses that must be archaic or highly experimental. Devices of brass, bone, and plastic hang from the ceiling and walls, but his desk is completely clear. He laughs and points out a lengthy brass pole with a silver arrowhead at its head. "A weasel captain named Moonrunner said if you strap that to a main-mast, lightning will strike it and make your ship go faster. Moonrunner's ship was found sunk off Port Matthew, burned almost to a cinder." He leans forward, leering with greed. "But a crew of mine found the lightning rod!"

The guildmaster finds this story highly amusing. "Anyway! I assume you want a ship? It'll cost you.

I wager there's no way you're going to be able to afford a whole ship, and I sold the last one fit for sale — Chameleon's Pride — to a serpent, so let's talk leases."

Arkady isn't able to sell any ships even if the characters did have the coin: the only ones he has left belong to other pirates, and he's authorized to lease them by prior agreement with the owners. If the characters are unprepared to haggle, the guildmaster leases them a ship for a week for three levels of coin, along with the plunder (but not treasure) acquired during that time, and signed agreement they will exclusively use the guild for future repairs and modifications irrespective of cost. The last part is crucial if no haggling takes place, as the contract reads "any repairs or modifications made by parties outside the guild results in immediate shipwright guild claim of the vessel and its contents, including treasure." Characters may make a Wisdom check at difficulty 14 to spot this clause.

If they threaten Arkady, he pulls a cord summoning four guards and his mancer (use the Hired Killers and Insane Mancer from *Monarchies of Mau* p. 195 or the Shadowy Assassin and Nefarious Necromancer from *Pugmire* p. 184) to his aid. A Dexterity check at difficulty 16 prevents him tugging the cord in time, at which point he attempts to keep the pirates talking for long enough for his mancer to check on him. Alternatively, on a successful Strength check at difficulty 17 or Charisma check at difficulty 18, he agrees to remove the guild repair and plunder donation clauses from the agreement. He will never reduce the coin cost of leasing a ship, as he fears the pirate owners and the nobles who support his guild more than the player characters.

Straightforward charm requires a Charisma difficulty 16 check to make Arkady drop the guild repair clause and reduce the plunder donation, meaning the plunder they acquire does not increase their coin level the next time they're in port. The easiest way of reducing Arkady's price is through compliments and questions about his trinkets. If the characters inquire about his various devices, the difficulty reduces to 14, and if the characters make an Intelligence check on difficulty 17 to identify any of the obscure items,

the Charisma check difficulty reduces to 12. In such a case, he's prepared to drop the guild repair clause and the plunder donation.

Once a price is agreed to, he takes the pirates to the ship.

As Arkady shows you to your ship, a small schooner on beams above the water, you see the hull is free of barnacles and pitched, ready for the Acid Sea. Additionally, it comes armed with two guns, spare sails, and a certificate you can use to secure safe harbor — but not free maintenance — in any guild-controlled quay. Her name reads Oil of View. "You don't get to pick the name when leasing from another pirate. Just be glad we got this one in shipshape before your morning departure. When she was brought in, she had a dirty great hole in her portside, courtesy of the Green Plague's cannon. Luckily, she didn't sink! The captain has taken some months to recover her sea legs!"

Oil of View

Artillery: 2 (two six-pounders)

Hull: 14

Seaworthiness: 140

Speed: 120

Scene 2: Buying a Ship

- **How did the player characters get to this scene?** Sagra Major von Korat mentioned the Lark's Head tavern as a place to buy an unmodified tub.
- **What do the player characters need to accomplish in this scene?** Head down to the dockside taverns to buy a ship from one of the old salts within.
- **Who or what is keeping them from accomplishing it?** The crusty dogs and lizards in the Lark's Head expect newcomers to keep up with them as drinkers and tale spinners before they'll put a much-beloved vessel in the hands of some fresh swabs. It's easy to inadvertently start a fight with one of these old pirates.
- **What scene or scenes should logically happen next?** Scene 3: "Making Ready to Set Sail"

You'd heard of the Lark's Head by reputation and through its proximity to the famed, beached ships nobody's ever seen fit to move or break up. Somehow the smog within the bar is thicker than the sea mist on the docks outside. It seems every dog, cat, and lizard in this establishment is puffing a pipe or downing a bowl of chow between songs and tales about the sea or the fun they have when they get back to port. Everybody in the tavern, including the owner and the servants, bear the lines of age. All ignore you as you enter. It's going to take some work to crack into this institution of pirate veterans.

Characters who approach the bar find themselves ignored until all other customers – including those who arrive later than them – have been served. Any characters who find an empty table are jostled by aged pirates who claim the table as their own, rudely talking over the newcomers. After a while, read the following:

A turtle climbs onto a tabletop and everyone abruptly hushes to listen to him tell a bawdy tale about the crew of the Plastic Minnow. Patrons clap along to a story you're sure they've heard hundreds of times before, occasionally shouting out cheers and toasts to Bugs Electrachilde, the storyteller of the hour.

After concluding his tale, Bugs slides down to his chair, takes another drink, and sinks into a quiet meditation. He resents his thought process being interrupted, but if the characters succeed on a Charisma check at difficulty 15, or difficulty 13 if his tale is complimented, he explains Captain Pipe of their ship *Plastic Minnow* is determined to be the first to claim the treasure of Tilly Isle. Bugs is concerned, as he's already heard tales of the *Green Plague* patrolling the seas between Waterdog Port and Dalmatian Cove, waiting to sink any ships that cross her path. Bugs doesn't have the authority to sell his vessel, if the characters ask.

If the characters spread the word that they're looking to buy a ship, they receive a piece of paper passed back through a dozen or more hands, a note on which is scrawled "Sod off." As they read it, the tavern patrons all laugh.

Sitting with a group of pirates and matching them drink for drink is a fine way to earn their

respect, but does require Constitution checks at difficulty 15, difficulty 16, and then difficulty 17 from all participants for each drink following the first. If even one character is able to manage the task, the pirates gift them a salute and a few minutes of their time.

Starting a fight with a pirate is not a good way to earn favorable attention in the Lark's Head. These patrons know and respect each other, and a young swab looking for a fight is going to get mobbed, dragged out the door, and thrown off the pier. The chief pirate in such a combat is treated as being a Powerful Warrior (see *Pugmire* p. 188) or the Stubborn Sentinel (see *Monarchies of Mau*, p. 201), though she won't use lethal force unless defending herself.

The best way of calling attention to oneself in the Lark's Head is by "taking the table," which is to stand on a pirate-surrounded table and win the audience over with an exciting story. Encourage players to improvise a tale and then make a Charisma check. The standard difficulty is 16 to win over this crowd, with a reduction in -1 difficulty each (with a total reduction of -3 in difficulty) if action, treasure, and lewd behavior are respectively mentioned in the story. A successful tale earns the admiration of the room.

If the characters are noticed and not beaten up, they can make their request for a vessel.

A bald schnauzer, wrinkled with age and experience, speaks up in a croaky voice. "The name's Eva. Time was, I went by Eva the Waverider, but it's been close to ten years since I was last off land." The other pirates in the bar all raise a short salute to Eva. She's a seadog who earned her way into a retirement at the tavern. "So, you want a vessel? Well, my ship's the Wag. She's got a few holes in her, so you'll want to spend the night fixing her up and making her seaworthy. The only weapon on board's a ballista and catapult I can't speak to the quality of. But if that suits you, she's all yours for enough coin and promise of a favor in future." There are a few tears around the room as Eva talks about parting ways with her beloved vessel, but you can see from her shakes she's not going to be back on deck in this lifetime.

Haggling with Eva is a good way to earn a punch in the eye and a quick trip to the sea via the tavern window. She won't take join the fray, actually being content to sell her ship for a round of drinks for the tavern, but the other pirates take exception to any disrespect shown to her.

Eva charges three levels of coin for her battered ship, along with a future favor. If the characters accept Eva's offer, she takes them outside.

Leaning on a cane, Eva walks with you to the beach and points to the ship on its side in the sand, for which the tavern is so well-known. "That right there is the Wag. If you're prepared to fix her up for the price agreed, I can get you some sturdy dockhands and boatmen to upright her and get her back into the sea." The holes in the ship's sides are numerous and sea has partially eaten the hull away, but it should be possible to get her seaworthy by the morning tide if you work through the night.

Wag

Artillery: 2 (ballista, catapult)

Hull: 10 (no plastic hull)

Seaworthiness: 80

Speed: 100

If the characters ask how the *Wag* fell into such disrepair, Eva is mournful and can't help but let out a howl before muttering about a pirate ship named the *Green Plague*.

Stealing a Ship

The characters may choose to steal a ship. On a night when the port is busy with pirates and guards, this is easier said than done. Storing the ship away from prying eyes in time for morning departure is also a challenge, though the player characters may elect to steal a ship at first light and sail away as quickly as they can.

If the characters decide land piracy is the best way to start the story, ensure they make Dexterity checks at difficulties of 15 and above to evade guards, and potentially engage in fights with pirates to claim their ship. Use the Parrot Pirate on **p. 79** and the Mouse Gunner on **p. 79** to represent the kind of ship defenders they'll be facing, and make the fight a challenge. If they succeed, as a reward they should now possess a modified

vessel, albeit one they'll struggle to bring back to Waterdog Port.

Scene 3: Making Ready to Set Sail

- **How did the player characters get to this scene?** This scene follows the characters laying claim to a ship.
- **What do the player characters need to accomplish in this scene?** Equip the ship with provisions, handle last-minute modifications, recruit more crew members if needed, and set sail with the morning tide.
- **Who or what is keeping them from accomplishing it?** The crew of *Chameleon's Pride* swing by to mock them, distract them, and attempt sabotage on the vessel. Meanwhile, talk of the *Green Plague* targeting ships departing at night filters through to the port.
- **What scene or scenes should logically happen next?** Scene 4: "Spontaneous Storms," Scene 5: "Plastic Minnow," Scene 6: "Colossal Hydrozoa Attack," or Scene 7: "The Green Plague."

You stand aboard your ship, aware that it lacks the basic provisions required for a two-week journey. You observe other crews carrying crates of food and kegs of clean water, rum, and ale onto their vessels, while others heave rope and hoist sails. Where flags and sails are masted in advance of the dawn, the strong wind catches several and the flapping of cloth becomes almost as loud as the voices crying out across the docks. You could spend the remaining time tonight stocking up, recruiting further crew, or modifying your vessel if you have the coin. If not, you can always rest, or find other means of making your ship complete.

The storehouses at the docks fast run short of provisions, but will have just enough to supply the characters if they have the coin. Ramp up the tension before having the storekeeper, a rat named Kuku Halftail, relent and say, "If those other sailors aren't going to pick up the stock they reserved, it's as good as yours. But you owe me!" Not everything has to be a challenge, and encounters like this encourage players to make contacts for their characters throughout the port.

Kuku even shifts crates of salted meat and barrels of ale in exchange for letters promising future service, as she's made a killing in sales tonight and sometimes favors are more valuable than coin.

If the characters aim to steal the provisions from Kuku's warehouse, they must evade her guards. The guards aren't patrolling the stores, as they're in use; instead, they're keeping watch inside the building for any odd activity, namely people visiting the warehouse without buying anything. A Dexterity check at difficulty 15 allows characters to slip past their gaze, though it is easier with a Charisma check at difficulty 12 to convince them that their actions are honest ones. Use the Rat Thug (*Monarchies of Mau* p. 221) or the Road Rat (*Pugmire* p. 181) as the template for Kuku's guards.

Modifying the ship is a task that can only be accomplished through coin or trade with the shipwright guild or another vessel. If the ship is already damaged, it requires an Intelligence check at difficulty 14 to identify the quickest methods by which to fix the ship, or the same check at difficulty 16 to know the best method, which will hopefully keep the ship intact to Tilly Isle and back. *Oil of View* already has a plastic hull, whereas the *Wag* does not. Coating the hull in acid-proofed plastic and sealing the holes costs the characters two levels of coin, but it is possible to hire help to make the repairs during the night. The characters can save money by fixing the *Wag* themselves on successive Intelligence checks at difficulty 12, 14, and 16 for the three most damaged areas, but they can't apply a plastic hull without paying for it. Each successful modification performed on the *Wag* tonight improves her hull rating by 2 and her seaworthiness by 20.

Purchasing new weapons for either ship requires a visit to the docklands armory and speaking with the dog in charge, Dixie Dog. She expects payment for any artillery amounting to two levels of coin for two cannons, but on a successful Charisma check at difficulty 16, she will accept a ship's future plunder or one immediate level of coin in exchange for two ship weapons.

If the characters only make for a skeleton crew, they may wish to recruit non-player characters to help sail their ship. Pirates don't often require payment in advance, as their service is contingent on their receiving a share of any plunder, including

what the characters find on Tilly Isle. The challenge is in finding pirates not already assigned to a ship. The old seadogs and lizards at the Lark's Head make for the best recruiting ground, with the promise of glory, adventure, and one last tale for the tavern. At the Guide's discretion, they may be unwilling to sail on a stolen ship, however.



Using the Odds and Ends trick from *Pugmire* can't be used for having immediate access to something the size and worth of a sailable vessel, but if the Guide chooses, it might offer an advantage toward haggling for one!

Hiring a Crew

There are ten pirates available to recruit in the Lark's Head, the characters of which you should customize as you see fit. See the Buccaneer stat blocks on pp. 78–80 for a quick way to fill out the crew.

Characters from the Lark's Head might include Jester Wheels, a crusader Doberman and retired captain; Magnus Foxhound, an evangelical shepherd whose ship recently sank; Jewel Boom, a poodle and injured gundog; Sal Lockechilde, an eccentric gecko alkalist; Madame Gold, a secretive serpent magus; and Hartley Sass, an aged serpent brawler.

As you work on your ship, a mocking serpent's voice from the pier calls up at you. "Are you really going to try to make it to Tilly Isle in that bucket? By the moon and stars... I've never beheld a more pitiful sight. What do you think?" The brightly colored snake turns to the others among her crew, who all let up a cheer of derision at your vessel. "We are the crew of Chameleon's Pride, and that plunder will be ours. Make no mistake: you'd be better off remaining in dock than trying to race us and the other ships to find that map." The four pirates with her start nosing around the side of your ship, pointing and laughing at a scratch here, a dent there. You hear a white rat refer to her as "Whipling" and a collie dog point something out to "Captain Terrachilde," identifying the serpent in full.

Whipling and her crew are going through this routine with numerous ships. As they mock and distract pirates, her first mate Shiny Four Pennies works to sabotage the target vessel by boring holes in the other side of the hull with the large drill she keeps at her side. Whipling continues the distraction until Shiny appears and gives a hand signal to say the job is done. If the characters don't check the other side of their ship while this is going on, it takes a Wisdom check at difficulty 17 to realize what might be going on.

If caught, Whipling and her crew attempt to flee into Waterdog Port or to *Chameleon's Pride*. They don't want a fight to the death under any circumstances. If the damage goes unchecked, it reduces the Seaworthiness of the characters' vessel by 40.

"Beware the Green Plague!" cries a forlorn rat trudging along the pier. Shortly behind her follow some damp-looking rodents. "She were waiting for us! She were waitin' for all of us in the dark!" Word soon spreads throughout the dock that noted pirate vessel, the Green Plague, has been waiting to ambush any ships setting forth across the Acid Sea tonight. This will no doubt have thinned the competition, but poses a risk for when you set sail.

*As dawn approaches, fewer vessels than expected make ready to depart. The tales of the Green Plague's attacks have spread far and many pirates think better of crossing Phineas Twelve Beaks' path. Cheers go up as *Chameleon's Pride* and the *Plastic Minnow* set sail, as pirates salute their bravery if not their sense.*

Use the Getting Lost and Dangers of the Acid Sea sections of this book found in Chapter 3 on p. 52–54 to note the daily potential of errant navigation and the corrosive effects of the water to the characters' vessel. The longer they're at sea, the more dangerous their journey.

Scene 4: Spontaneous Storms

- **How did the player characters get to this scene?** This scene can take place as one of the encounters before reaching Tilly Isle.
- **What do the player characters need to accomplish in this scene?** Survive the storm with minimal damage to the vessel.

- **Who or what is keeping them from accomplishing it?** The elements.
- **What scene or scenes should logically happen next?** Scene 5: "Plastic Minnow," Scene 6: "Colossal Hydrozoa Attack," or Scene 7: "The Green Plague."

The winds have been gentle and westerly for the past few hours, and the crew is enjoying the pleasant voyage. Predictably, it can't last. The Acid Sea is infamous for its spontaneous tempests, sometimes hitting ships with hurricanes, whirlpools, or tidal waves. The herald of sails flapping violently, the wind vane whipping around in a circle, and the sudden bulge and throw of waves tells you a storm is coming. Your ship lurches as if a great behemoth beneath it has decided to buck you from its back.

This is a good time to expose the characters to some of the violent vagaries of life at sea. The events provided in this scene can be played in any order and repeated for dramatic effect.

- A squall catches the ship's sails unexpectedly, requiring a swift Dexterity check at difficulty 16 to twist them and prevent one from tearing free. Losing the sail reduces Seaworthiness by 20.
- The swell of water beneath the ship compels a Constitution check at difficulty 12 from any characters not used to the nausea, with failure giving them the Sickly condition as the storm buffets the vessel. (See *Pugmire*, p. 99 or *Monarchies of Mau*, p. 110.)
- A rising wave rears towards the ship, requiring a crew member to take the wheel and apply a Strength check at difficulty 15 to catch and ride it with the ship's bow. Failure results in the ship tilting dramatically to the side, unsecured cargo sliding across the deck or plunging into the Acid Sea, reducing Seaworthiness by 20.
- The winds grow stronger, thrashing the vessel and forcing crew members to make successful Strength checks to hold on or Dexterity checks to jump below deck, at a difficulty of 14, or risk flying overboard. Any characters who fail cling onto the ship's rail, requiring a Strength

check at difficulty 16 to pull themselves back on board. With assistance, the difficulty reduces to 13. If a character falls overboard, refer to the rules on Going Overboard on p. 55.

- Lightning strikes the sea around the ship. If any long metallic objects sit on board, a subsequent bolt strikes the conducting rod. Any character holding such a rod must make a Dexterity check at difficulty 17 to jump away as the lightning descends or suffer 4d6 lightning damage from the strike. Lightning strikes cause fires if the Guide is feeling particularly cruel, reducing Seaworthiness by 2d10 for every turn it is not combated.
- A whirlpool attempts to drag the ship down to the seabed, requiring the crew to try with all their might to sail and steer the ship out from its vortex. Crew can choose to make Strength or Dexterity checks at difficulty 18 to save their ship and lives. The crew requires three successes. Each turn they fail reduces Seaworthiness by 2d10.

Scene 5: Plastic Minnow

- **How did the player characters get to this scene?** This scene can take place as one of the encounters before reaching Tilly Isle.
- **What do the player characters need to accomplish in this scene?** Rescue the crew of the *Plastic Minnow*, loot or repair their damaged vessel, or abandon them to the Acid Sea.
- **Who or what is keeping them from accomplishing it?** Acid sharks.
- **What scene or scenes should logically happen next?** Scene 4: “Spontaneous Storms,” Scene 6: “Colossal Hydrozoa Attack,” or Scene 7: “The Green Plague.”

For the longest time, it feels like all departing pirates charted a different course to Tilly Isle. You haven't seen hide nor hair of any of the other ships until you spy a vessel capsizing in the near distance. Its sails have been blasted through with fire, a chunk of the ship floats away on the tide, and the vessel's main body

has fewer than ten minutes remaining before it's completely submerged. You can make out the ship's crew's frantic attempts to string together a raft from its wreckage. As you get closer, you identify the wreck as the renowned ship, the Plastic Minnow.

The *Plastic Minnow* recently fell to an ambush from the *Green Plague*, leading to its present state. Only Captain Pipe and Bugs Electrachilde survived the attack. If the characters sail close to the wreck, both pirates beg for their aid.

- If the characters elect to rescue the *Plastic Minnow's* crew, they must have ropes on board or other means of pulling the stranded pirates onto their own ship. Bugs Electrachilde mournfully climbs aboard, but Juniper Pipe, resigned to her fate, is determined to go down with her ship. She'll fight anyone climbing onto the sinking remains of the *Plastic Minnow* if they try to strong-arm her to safety. A Charisma check at difficulty 18 persuades her to not throw her life away, with difficulty reduced to 14 if vengeance against the *Green Plague* is promised. Juniper says nothing if saved, quietly curling into a ball while seething with a need for justice. Bugs explains what happened:

“We'd all heard the tales of the Green Plague, but arrogantly believed Minnow was too fast for her. We could have outpaced Twelve Beaks' ship, but we didn't stand a chance against her cannon. I've never heard such a loud crack of ignition or felt such an accurate blast from a gunpowder weapon. They knew exactly where to aim. I swear whatever weapon they have on board outmatches the most devastating cannons I've ever seen aboard a ship.”

- Characters may feel inclined to loot the *Plastic Minnow's* sinking shell, much to Bugs' and Juniper's chagrin. If they make their way on board as it's sinking, they need to succeed on a Wisdom check at difficulty 16 to find anything of value. While there's no coinage, weaponry, or treasure of which to speak, a certificate in the captain's cabin names the shipwright responsible for the *Plastic Minnow's* design as the reclusive Topaz

Bassett, an artist and architect who may be able to lend her talents to making the characters' ship as fast as *Minnow*.

- Repairing the *Plastic Minnow* to sailing quality is a lost cause, as a sizeable section of the ship stern sinks separately, but characters can at least help the vessel stay afloat for Juniper and Bugs' benefit. Doing so requires an Intelligence roll at difficulty 16 to know how to stabilize the ship. With its plastic hull mostly intact, it should survive the Acid Sea's corrosion and float back to Waterdog Port on the tide. Likewise, the characters can tug the light ship behind their own and sell the wreckage at Dalmatian Cove.
- If the characters choose to abandon Juniper and Bugs, the captain accepts her fate silently while the ship's medic screams curses after the crew. Each character bears the Cursed condition (see p. 56) until it is magically removed.
- Excessive time spent at the site of the *Plastic Minnow's* sinking draws acid sharks (p. 77), which were until now feasting on the deceased crew of the damaged vessel. Acid sharks are highly aggressive and attempt to knock pirates from small boats, rafts, and ropes if they can. Otherwise, they swim in circles around the descending the *Plastic Minnow*, strongly suggesting the eventual fates of anyone left on board.

Scene 6: Colossal Hydrozoa Attack

- **How did the player characters get to this scene?** This scene can take place as one of the encounters before reaching Tilly Isle.
- **What do the player characters need to accomplish in this scene?** Fend off an attack from a colossal hydrozoa.
- **Who or what is keeping them from accomplishing it?** Colossal hydrozoa.
- **What scene or scenes should logically happen next?** Scene 4: "Spontaneous Storms," Scene 5: "Plastic Minnow," or Scene 7: "The Green Plague."

The seas are calm, and you find yourself lost in admiration of the Acid Sea's weird beauty. For every frothy wave and eddy, a ripple of rainbow colors swirls across the sea's surface. Its chemical mixture is as hypnotic as its corrosive heart is repellant. You realize you've been staring at the water for a long time. Maybe a little too long, as if something seeks to transfix you...

Colossal hydrozoa use a mental lure to pull their prey overboard and into their paralyzing tendrils, requiring a Wisdom check at difficulty 14 to resist climbing over the ship's rail and jumping into the water. Any characters who resist have a turn to intervene and hold their hypnotized fellows back from the edge.

If denied their meal, the hydrozoa attack in a more overt manner.

Thin, spiny tendrils crackling with energy snake their way up the sides of the ship. They must number at least twenty, looping around railings and sneaking around cargo, attempting to grip an unlucky ankle.

Colossal Hydrozoa (CR 5)

Defense: 16 (body) / 11 (tendrils)

Stamina Points: 110

Speed: 40 feet (underwater)

Proficiency Bonus: +4

Abilities: Strength +2 (15), Dexterity +3 (17), Constitution +4 (18), Intelligence +2 (14), Wisdom +0 (10), Charisma -2 (6)

Skills: Command, Intimidate, Survive

Attacks: Tendril lash (+6 melee; 2d6+2 slashing plus Poisoned Spines), Absorb (+6 melee; 4d6+2 bludgeoning)

Knacks: Darkvision; resistant to all bludgeoning and acid attacks; weak against lightning attacks.

- **Colossal Size:** See p. 77 for special powers the hydrozoa gain from being colossal in size. Colossal bonuses to defense, stamina, and speed have already been incorporated into the stat block.
- **Hypnotic Song:** As an action, the colossal hydrozoa can emit a song imperceptible to all but the most attuned ear which hypnotizes and draws creatures towards its mulching maw. The song effects anyone within 150 feet of its origin and requires a Wisdom check at difficulty 14 to resist. If successfully resisted, it has no effect for the rest of the day.

- **Poisoned Spines:** Most colossal hydrozoa possess between 15 and 40 tendrils lined with spines, each of which is filled with a paralyzing, painful poison. If struck by a tendril, a victim must make a Constitution saving throw with a difficulty of 14 or gain the Paralyzed or Confused condition (Guide's choice). Each subsequent turn they may make another Constitution saving throw, with the difficulty increasing by 1 each time as the poison courses through their system. The poison loses potency at the end of the scene.
- **Compulsion:** Once per battle, the colossal hydrozoa may make a mental compulsion attack on a character within 60 feet. The target must make a Wisdom saving throw at a difficulty of 14. On a failure, the victim is Charmed and pursues the course of action described to the best of their ability. This compulsion is broken when the battle ends, the hydrozoa flees, or the victim loses stamina.
- **Absorb:** In the event that a character swims or is dragged beneath the sac of a giant hydrozoa, its brain stem extends four fat tentacles to constrict, mash, and drag its victim into the hydrozoa's body, dealing 4d6+2 bludgeoning damage per turn.

Scene 7: The Green Plague

- **How did the player characters get to this scene?** This scene is the last one before the characters reach their destination.
- **What do the player characters need to accomplish in this scene?** Destroy or escape the *Green Plague* pirate galleon.
- **Who or what is keeping them from accomplishing it?** The crew of the *Green Plague* are determined to destroy the characters' ship and rob them for all they're worth.
- **What scene or scenes should logically happen next?** Scene 8: "Tilly Isle."

Tilly Isle isn't far off now. You can see the rise of land on the horizon, marking one of the islands off Dalmatian Cove. Not long, and you'll reach the fabled isle with enough time to search for the treasure before it disappears beneath the waves once more. But a deafening bang breaks your concentration, followed by the creak of your main mast as it topples toward you!

The *Green Plague* has struck with their ship-mounted staff of lightning, blasting through the characters' mast. Decide on which characters are in the way of the mast's fall, and have them roll Dexterity at a difficulty of 14 to avoid being crushed and suffering 2d6 bludgeoning damage. The crew can save their mast from toppling overboard if they work together and more than one of them succeeds at a Strength check with a difficulty of 16.

In one direction is Dalmatian Cove, but in the other, not far behind you, is the unmistakable hulk of the Green Plague! It won't be long before they strike again, and they'll soon be close enough to hit you with cannon fire!

- If characters attempt to escape the *Green Plague* by fleeing in the direction of Dalmatian Cove, the evil vessel takes another shot with her staff of lightning, dealing 6d8 Seaworthiness (lightning) damage to the characters' vessel. Unless Mr. Spade – the *Green Plague*'s gunner – is neutralized, the staff will fire every two turns.
- If Juniper Pipe is on board the characters' ship, she insists on fighting the *Green Plague*. Filled with renewed purpose and dramatic voice, she negates one roll of Seaworthiness damage during the combat just by being on board and takes any action the characters request of her. Juniper Pipe will campaign for the *Green Plague*'s crew to meet the same fate as her own: thrown into the Acid Sea or left afloat on debris.
- The *Green Plague* attempts to destroy the characters' ship with their staff of lightning until they reach the range of the pirates' stubby six-pounders (300 feet), at which point they unleash hell. Each of the six cannons equipped on the *Green Plague* inflicts 3d10 Seaworthiness (bludgeoning) damage to the characters' ship if they successfully hit.
- Captain Twelve Beaks commands his crew to board the characters' vessel if they get close enough to do so, with him leading the charge. Ten pirates attempt to swing onto the ship, armed with

blades and pistols. Use the Buccaneers (see pp. 78–80) for these pirates' stats, treating them as a mixture of creatures.

- The *Green Plague* does not retreat from battle, preferring to ram straight into the characters' ship if defeat looks like a possibility. If Mr. Spade takes the wheel, the rest of the *Plague's* crew know what that means: the player characters will need to succeed on three successively difficult Strength or Dexterity checks at difficulty 15, 16, and 17 to steer their ship as best they can from the *Green Plague's* path. If the collision occurs, both ships are dealt 3d10 Seaworthiness (bludgeoning) damage.
- In the event the characters are successful in vanquishing the *Green Plague*, fame and thanks await them at Waterdog Port, along with the bounties for eliminating these vicious pirates. The ship is bedecked with coin, weapons, and many broken treasures, and they can take as many as their ship can hold. This counts as plunder.
- Conversely, the *Green Plague's* crew are often celebrated in Dalmatian Cove. Arriving at the cove with the crew in chains is a firm way to receive a hostile greeting, giving disadvantage to appropriate Charisma checks. If, however, the characters take the ship as their own, pirates of Dalmatian Cove are sure to respect their pluck, granting advantage to appropriate Charisma checks. (Doing both negates advantage and disadvantage.)

Scene 8: Tilly Isle

- **How did the player characters get to this scene?** By following the directions on their map and overcoming encounters on the Acid Sea.
- **What do the player characters need to accomplish in this scene?** Unearth the chest for Sagra Major von Korat and share its contents with the crew of *Chameleon's Pride* or defeat them in battle.

- **Who or what is keeping them from accomplishing it?** The crew of *Chameleon's Pride* arrive simultaneously and wish to claim the treasure for themselves. They will fight if pressed or negotiate to share the plunder.
- **What scene or scenes should logically happen next?** It's the end of the story!

The mists are thick in this part of the Acid Sea, its acrid stench combining with billowing plumes of yellow smoke. Yet, finally, you see it: Tilly Isle! It would be invisible but for the main mast protruding from its middle at a slight angle, stretching a good twenty feet into the air. Your ship lets you know there are sandbanks throughout this area, as you occasionally hear the rasping of your hull on soft earth below. It's at this point you spot in the water around you the skeletons of dozens of ships, eaten away by the Acid Sea after becoming stuck on or near Tilly Isle. It seems many pirates have found this place, but few have been able to escape. Before you can think of how to leave, let alone claim the treasure buried in Tilly Isle's sands, you hear cries of "ahoy!" from close by. A ship named Chameleon's Pride has just beached not a hundred feet from your location!

Whipling Terrachilde and Shiny Four Pennies cast ropes over the side of their ship, and along with their other crew members (now matching the player characters' group in size), they scuttle down to the sand. Two rats in the crew are going to attempt to dig up the Pirate Queen's treasure as Whipling, Shiny, and anyone else in the crew protect the dig site.

If characters threaten *Chameleon's Pride's* crew, they enthusiastically draw weapons. Whipling smiles as she says, "You can just turn around and go back to Waterdog Port..." but she clearly craves a fight. The opposing pirates will not fight to the death unless pushed to do so. Use the Buccaneers (see pp. 78–80) to represent the other members of the ship's crew.

Whipling cannot be convinced to depart without some treasure, but she and Shiny can

be talked into splitting their findings. Encourage players to give a convincing argument for doing so, and depending on the strength of their reasoning, make the speaking character roll a Charisma check at a difficulty between 14 and 18. Reducing the difficulty from 18 requires using reasoning such as: “Nobody has to die,” “There’s plenty of plunder for all,” “We can all be heroes,” “One of us is going to have to tug the other out of the sand anyway,” and anything else the Guide deems persuasive. Assisting the crew of *Chameleon’s Pride* is a good way to earn grateful, if untrustworthy allies.

The noted treasure spot does indeed contain the chest Tilly buried. It is locked, but the lock can be broken with a Strength check at difficulty 16 or picked with a Dexterity check at difficulty 14. The chest’s contents include: plunder (if the characters don’t already have some); the map of Iron Fang Maze; a glass cylinder containing a silver eyeball ringed with a ruby disc; a simple leather flask; a cutlass with a bejeweled handle, gold blade, and House Cymric sigil marked with Tilly’s personal emblem; and a sea map that goes even farther west than Dalmatian Cove, pointing out a number of forbidding islands and landmasses. The flask bears a beautifully carved leather wrap, uncorroded by the Acid Sea. A scroll emerges from its neck. The writing on the scroll says “True treasures leave trails. You’re on the right track.”

The sand on Tilly Isle is intensely corrosive, as any characters putting their bare paws or skin on the land will find after a minute (fur offers some protection from the sand). At first it starts as an itch, but then sores emerge. The corrosion inflicts 1d4 acid damage per turn until washed out with clean, fresh water. If examined, the mast emerging from the island is crafted from a bizarre, twisted plastic-iron alloy, seemingly impervious to the acid.

Future Stories: Dalmatian Cove

It’s likely the characters’ vessel is damaged, and Dalmatian Cove is less than a day away. Be sure to mention this to the players, as Dalmatian Cove is where the story could take them next (covered starting on p. 92). Reaching the cove may be a more difficult prospect than it sounds, with their ship beached on a corrosive sandbank.

- If the character slew the pirates of *Chameleon’s Pride*, they may wish to take that ship instead. It is up to the Guide to determine how much damage *Chameleon’s Pride* suffered in its journey. Did it also encounter the *Green Plague*, storms, and sea creatures?
- If the characters worked with the crew of *Chameleon’s Pride*, the two ships can aid each other in escaping Tilly’s Isle and sail together to Dalmatian Cove for repairs and mutual protection.
- Entice the players with the opportunity to add further levels to their characters at Dalmatian Cove, as the final adventure in this book is best-suited to 5th level pirates.

Dalmatian Cove is a nest of outlaws and vicious pirates, along with those who wish to live free of the pirate code. The characters may find safety here, but it will come at a price. The rough and ready pirates of these free islands will want payment in coin and entertainment with tales and songs. Where they differ from the pirates of Waterdog Port is in their happiness to rob a sleeping pirate blind and steal their ship, no matter how good the story from the evening just past.

Stories in Dalmatian Cove should involve swashbuckling adventure, a heist to re-steal their just-unearthed treasure, and earning the favor of the most fearsome pirates known on the Acid Sea. Only then can the characters think of setting sail and returning to the relative safety of Waterdog Port.



Chapter Ten: Heart of the Storm

Stormheart Island an enigma on the Acid Sea that most are reluctant to explore, but the adventurers must land there to avoid a watery grave in the middle of a fearsome storm. Once safe, discovering survivors of previous wrecks should be a cause for celebration, but a simple rescue and return to sea becomes more complicated than anyone bargained for with sudden sabotage and an enigmatic creature shadowing their steps. The Lonely Tower and the Misty Ruins beckon with an irresistible pull, and the threat of the Unseen grows the longer the adventurers delay. There is a mystery at the heart of it all and uncovering it may finally bring the adventurers what they seek.

“Heart of the Storm” is an adventure meant for fifth and sixth level adventurers, so it’s best to run this game for those with previous experience with *Pugnire* or *Monarchies of Mau*. While

it is the conclusion of this book’s chronicle, it is not required to use it as such. This adventure could be played as a standalone option or nestled within a chronicle of the Guide’s own creation. The Guide has complete freedom as to how they wish to use and adapt this adventure to suit their games.

Characters

The survivors from a few different shipwrecks have banded together on Stormheart Island for the sake of survival, but not all would consider one another part of a crew or family. The names of their ships are presented along with the character names to help the Guide keep track of where everyone came from and where their loyalties lie.

Captain Maia von Korat (Eighth Life)



Maia grew up reveling in the challenges House Korat presents and sailing her family's boats on the rivers but learning about the War of Cats and Dogs spoke to her as few other things did. She

became convinced that the Acid Sea itself is the best challenge she will ever face, and so she dropped everything at the first opportunity to go to Port Matthew and learn how to sail on the sea instead. A daring sailor and bold fighter, she also has a checkered reputation with most authorities. She likes plunder, but she likes risk better, and that sometimes leads her to take on questionable adventures. She's fierce, passionate, and straightforward with sleek, soft gray fur and green-yellow eyes.

If necessary, use the Sparrow Captain (p. 80), increase Strength to +4 (18), and exchange Rallying Cry for the following:

- **Brute Strength:** Captain Maia gains an advantage on Strength checks involving lifting or pulling something.

Gideon Meeks (Scarlet Saber)



Gideon, a plain brown mouse, struggled and fought to get away from the traboules at Port Matthew his whole life, knowing he could find something he was very good at if he just had the opportunity. Constantly feeling as if he had something to prove, he would frequently get into scraps everywhere he went until he came to the attention of a turtle, Kusa Elwachilde. Gideon thought he would lecture him and was prepared to ignore Kusa. Instead Kusa suggested a life at sea was a better way for Gideon to leave Port Matthew and prove himself. With the slightest persuasion, Kusa introduced him to the captain of the *Scarlet Saber*, the otter Emmett Snarl. Although amused, Emmett was also curious to see how serious Gideon was about committing to his ship and extended an offer to join his crew. Gideon accepted, and both were delighted to discover over the next several months that he was just as good with knots and ropes as he was

the ship's artillery. Gideon eventually became the ship's gunner and has been deeply grateful ever since. His overall demeanor is confident and skeptical, but when thrown into unfamiliar territory he becomes defensive and scrappy.

If necessary, use the Mouse Gunner (p. 79).

Esther Hanachilde (Vinsen's Dream)

Esther and her copper scales gleam, as do her golden armbands and the warm-hued clothes she chooses to adorn herself with. She knows this makes her appear vain and easily tempted, and this thoughtful serpent lets strangers think as they like as she listens to and evaluates what they really want. Esther believes she truly hears the unvoiced thoughts and feelings of those she encounters. She also believes she can hear the voices of the Unseen, and both are different kinds of whispers in her mind. Her family, once they understood her gift, happily accepted this as her contribution toward protecting them all.

When she began hearing the Unseen more than family or friends, she sadly left them behind and came to Port Matthew as a final act of protecting them. She dedicated her life to using her magic to seek the Unseen to destroy them, which drew her out more and more upon the Acid Sea. Her successes as well as her reputation as an aloof yet levelheaded and strong sea witch drew Blake Labrador's attention. He spent all of ten minutes in her presence before offering her the position as First Mate of his ship. Surprised, she unveiled herself and accepted. It is a decision she greatly treasures.

If necessary, use the Mystic Calligraphist (pp. 203-204, *Monarchies of Mau*) or the Weather-Beaten Salt Sorcerer (pp. 190-191, *Pugmire*).

Captain Blake Labrador (Vinsen's Dream)



Blake Labrador has always felt a deep calling to be a Good Dog and faithfully follow the Code of Man. As soon as he heard about crusaders at a young age, Blake strove ardently to become one. He has philosophically pondered the meaning "Fetch what has been left behind" and concluded that his duty must include exploring the Acid Sea for

authorities like secretary Fraidi Mainecoon von Rex of Port Matthew – the possibility that Man could have left behind important relics for good dogs in unexplored places means that he must go and find them. He is kind and tries to make friends with everyone, although his solemn and overt devotion sometimes annoys others without meaning to. He is highly loyal and protective.

If necessary, use the Sparrow Captain (p. 80), increase Strength to +3 (16), increase stamina points to 45, and replace Rallying Cry with the Pistoleer knack (p. 30).

Tengu, the Lonely Guardian



By any species' standards, Tengu is confusing. One moment Tengu seems very tall and looms threateningly, and in the next moment one swears they were shoulder to shoulder and companionable. They are sentient and something of a trickster, willing to help one moment and become an obstacle the next moment. They also possess a mixture of features that are either alarming or fascinating, depending upon one's outlook: a long dog's body with long head and matching face, but earless, feathered, and clawed with a full and impressive set of wings.

They are quite knowledgeable about many things, particularly the island – if they choose to speak with anyone at all – but they know nothing about their own origin. It's hard to say whether they really don't know or simply don't want to tell. What is most important and relevant is that they are there to guard the island, and their disappearing ability to control the Stormcaller demons (granted to Tengu through the Stormheart gem when it is properly set in the Lonely Tower) means Tengu can no longer protect the island as well as they would like. The secrets of the Old Ones absolutely must be kept!

Tengu is largely responsible for Esther's destabilized mentality. They saw her and her abilities first as a curiosity, then a threat, and finally a possible replacement for themselves. Regardless, they have consistently believed that their particular "whispering" to her was necessary. The only thing that changed each time Tengu whispered was their questions and commands.

Tengu

Defense: 20 (tough hide and feathers)

Stamina Points: 120

Speed: 40 feet

Proficiency Bonus: +6

Abilities: Strength -1 (8), Dexterity 0 (10), Constitution 0 (10), Intelligence +4 (18), Wisdom +2 (14), Charisma +2 (15)

Skills: Know Arcana, Notice, Sense Motive, Bluff, Persuade, Survive

Attack: Claw (+5 melee, 2d6 +4 slashing)

Knacks: Darkvision, resistant to physical damage, immune to lightning damage

- **Spontaneous Spellcaster:** Choose one spell per spell level from Artisan spells (listed on p. 102, *Pugmire*) or Mancer spells (listed on p. 114, *Monarchies of Mau*). Tengu can cast these spells once per day, ignoring any requirements or preparations. After this, Tengu must rest to access any of them again.

Synopsis

While trying to pass Stormheart on the way elsewhere, the pirates' ship suddenly finds itself in the middle of a storm, the result of a Stormcaller demon's mischief. The characters must land or wreck and capsize. Once they've made it to land and the storm passes, they discover there are survivors from previous shipwrecks on the island, who offer to help and ask to be taken off the island if the adventurer's ship is still seaworthy. At first it appears only minor repairs are needed, but they discover some additional sabotaging damage (Esther's doing). The materials needed for repairs require some exploration of the island and curious poking into the Lonely Tower and Misty Ruins.

This draws the attention of the Tengu, the guardian of Stormheart, who after some interaction with the characters reveals that the guardian can no longer control the Stormcaller demons that keep people away from the island. This situation must be fixed somehow, because it's getting worse. The Tengu believes now may be the time for a new guardian to take their place, and Esther is the one to do it. Once she does, the Tengu swears the characters will be rewarded, allowed time to repair and leave, and admonished never to return. If this is the conclusion of the "Going on the Account" chronicle, the Flask of Bobby Golden is part of the reward.

Introduction

The party, aboard ship on the Acid Sea and currently on their way to their intended destination, have very little warning before a dangerous storm brews up. With high winds, lightning, and very tall waves that could slap the ship against rocks or other unknown dangers, the characters will need to fight their ship and pray to make it to a safe landing. Unfortunately the nearest safe landing is the island the storm came from.



If you're following "Going on the Account," your pirates are probably leaving Dalmatian Cove and think they're headed for Port Matthew or Waterdog Port. If you're

using your own chronicle and adventures, it's good to plan out ahead of time how they happen to be in the vicinity of Stormheart Island. It's okay if it looks like your adventurers will be nowhere near it: you can always add a simple encounter in between that adventure and this one that brings them close enough!

Scenes

What follows are the major scenes for this adventure.

Scene 1: Safer Waters

- **How did the player characters get to this scene?** Their ship was just passing through when the storm hit.
- **What do the player characters need to accomplish in this scene?** The ship needs a safe harbor to keep from capsizing or dashing against rocks.
- **Who or what is keeping them from accomplishing it?** A storm and a Stormcaller demon.
- **What scene or scenes should logically happen next?** Scene 2: "Stormheart."

One moment the sky is clear, and in the next, it is full of heavy, thickening dark clouds. The formerly even and smooth movement of the ship turns choppy with the increasing swell and abrupt fall of the waves, which have also turned a punishing

grey. The wind screams up like a damned soul, blowing the sails and the rigging every which way. Jagged purple streaks of lightning crackle the air, with roaring claps of thunder hard on their heels.

As your ship and crew yell out to each other in a desperate attempt to get the ship under control before the mast is cracked and the keel torn away, you search the horizon. Where did the storm come from? And can you outrun it or hide from it?

The source of the storm becomes obvious with even cursory observation: a Stormcaller demon (p. 84) seemingly cavorting between Stormheart – which the ship was avoiding – and the waters of the Acid Sea toward the player characters' ship. The Stormcaller was summoned to either wreck the ship or speed it on its way, but the demon is trying to resist its leash (hence its "dance" to and fro). The demon's ability to call up and control a storm has caught the ship up in it easily enough. The storm is also so fierce the ship might not be able to ride it out.

At this point either the captain of the ship (if one of the player characters does not have this role) or a non-player character aboard the ship whom the player characters trust strongly urges that the ship head for Stormheart Island – literally, any port in a storm. The main trouble will be getting there safely while dealing with the Stormcaller.

To reflect the danger the storm presents the ship, the Guide may have the sailing master make a Wisdom saving throw, difficulty of 18 for storm and high winds. Success means the ship docks well and loses only 2d10 Seaworthiness. A failure means it crashes, losing 3d10 Seaworthiness, and a botch means that the resulting Seaworthiness loss is doubled!

While the sailing master is trying to get the ship to safety, the Stormcaller finally stops its erratic movements and begins attacking ship and crew. Between the storm and fighting the Stormcaller demon, everything in the player characters' rucksacks that they are not wearing washes out to sea. As soon as either the ship or the Stormcaller takes heavy damage and is in danger of being defeated, the demon will flee the scene. Keen observers notice it heads straight for the Lonely Tower. Those knowledgeable about the Unseen can remark that this is odd behavior.

Once the Stormcaller leaves, it still takes time for the storm to move on or die down, at which point night has fallen and the crew will likely want to rest. The player characters have some choices ahead of them in the morning, such as assessing damage or going ashore to explore, seeking land-based shelter, or seeking food, fresh water, and materials for repairs.

Scene 2: Stormheart

- **How did the player characters get to this scene?** The characters assessed their needs in the morning and some must be met on the island.
- **What do the player characters need to accomplish in this scene?** Exploring the island and making repairs.
- **Who or what is keeping them from accomplishing it?** Meeting shipwreck survivors both helps and hinders the player characters' plans, as does the appearance of the Tengu.
- **What scene or scenes should logically happen next?** Scene 3: "Sabotage."

Although an Integrity roll should typically be made immediately after the loss of Seaworthiness (p. 53), for storytelling purposes it can be made in this scene as the player characters and non-player characters assess the ship in the morning and make decisions about what to do. Even if the Integrity check succeeds, the Guide can use a non-player character to express worry about the ship's seaworthiness to help dissuade characters from simply leaving the island and sailing back to Port Matthew. If need be, the Guide can remind player characters that the ship will continue to lose some Seaworthiness even with the efforts of

a first mate and may lead to the ship becoming Unsafe later — might as well stay for a while and make certain the ship will be able to finish its return to its intended destination.

If the Guide likes, making determinations about what areas of the ship were affected can be influenced by the dice rolls made during battle. Or, each character assigned a role on the ship can make a Wisdom check, difficulty 12, to see if their area of expertise on the ship was affected. The Guide can modify or add to the list of repairs, which shouldn't be so extensive as to need drydock or other extreme methods to help. Ultimately the Guide will want the player characters to remain at Stormheart for at least several days, if not longer, depending upon what's been deemed necessary to fix and what can legitimately wait even another week or two on the Acid Sea.

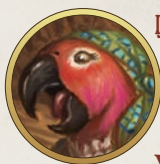
If a player character wants to remain at the ship to help make repairs, salvage food goods overturned or waterlogged in the storm and any (potential) cargo that was knocked about, or anything else that would require them to stay (personal conversations with a non-player character, retrieving a personal item), this is fine — it helps give the crew a witness to the baseline storm damages to compare Esther's damages to.

The remainder of the characters going to the island should decide where they would like to go. Where they dropped anchor may influence where they decide to go as well. There aren't dangers to the player characters yet, so if they decide to split up to explore and gather resources, this should present no problem. Some of the places they may go and what they can encounter or do there are listed below (Xs indicate where the ship may have docked or crashed).

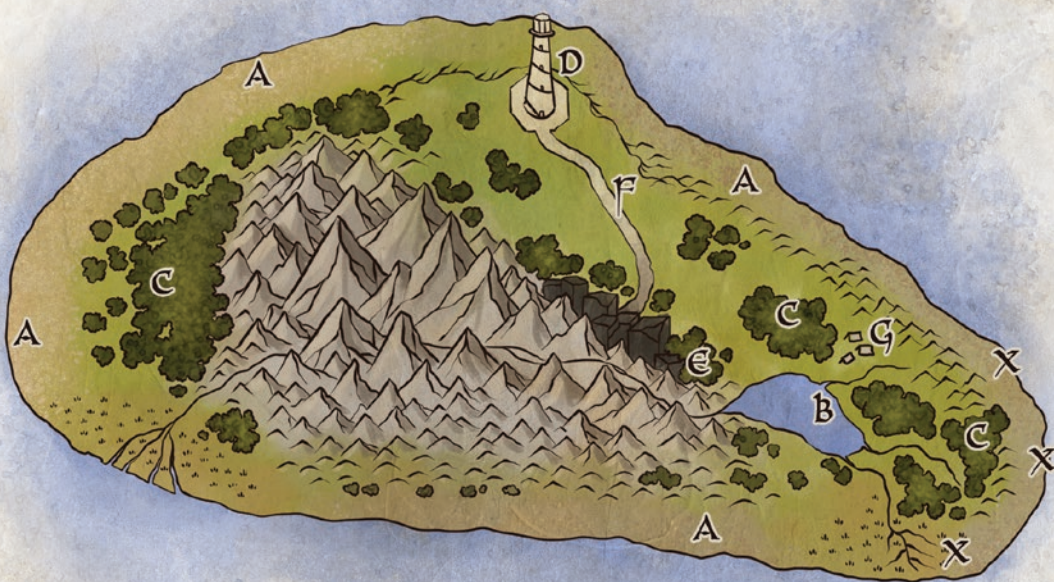
A: Beaches

Along the island, some beaches are more rocky than sandy. The rocky areas tend to have more driftwood and detritus from wrecked ships, washed up cargo, and what's left of those poor individuals who did not survive the storms at sea.

Most of these storm remainders are concentrated on the northern and northeastern sides of the island, but occasionally can be found elsewhere as well. If the player characters lost



If you're the kind of Guide that cares a bit more about story than dice rolling, here's a neat trick: Make the Integrity roll yourself behind a screen or your hand and ignore whatever the dice say. Tell them the ship is Unsafe, or whatever makes sense for the story. It's sneaky, but then again, pirates sometimes lie and cheat a little for the greater good!



STORMHEART

any cargo, this is a good area to initially search. Player characters can also search the beaches for items lost from their rucksacks. For every hour a player character decides to spend here, the Guide could ask for a Wisdom check to find something of their own (a triumph) or something generally useful or belonging to someone else (success). This does make it easier for characters to find items belonging to others (for non-player character crewmembers, just roll a d20 – 10 or higher, one of them found something from a player character’s rucksack). This can foster teamwork or contribute to sabotaging each other. If crewmates do try to sabotage one another, this could be brought up in Scene 3 when everyone is trying to figure out who is to blame for everything going wrong.

B: Creeks

For player characters off in search of fresh water (for themselves or to replenish ship supplies), finding and following the creeks will largely take care of their needs, although the southernmost creek through the wetlands is relatively shallow

and should be followed further inland for better results. Those who follow the creeks, looking for their source, can find the lake where water barrels can be filled with no issue. Additionally, traveling along the northern creek will take the player characters near the shipwreck survivor camps (location G).

C: Forests/Jungle

Player characters hoping to find firewood, larger or taller pieces of wood for certain ship repairs, or some fresh meat or other food to supplement salvaged supplies could search in these areas. The region along the western area of the island is thick jungle, whereas the trees and forested regions of the eastern area are less dense. The only other thick jungle region surrounds the base of the Misty Ruins, which is nearby the tall hills and mountains that dominate the central region of the island, or in small valley pockets deep in the mountains. Hardy trees and scrub otherwise occasionally crop up on sparsely vegetated areas (the southern cliffs, the sides of the mountains themselves, or the rocky beaches).

D: Lonely Tower

For those hoping to scout out the Lonely Tower — being concerned about whether the Stormcaller demon may return, perhaps, or wanting some information to share with the others before proposing any actions — they can observe its geography and get a more detailed look at the Tower itself before they are deterred. If one is approaching the Lonely Tower from the beaches, they must hike up rocks and hill to get to the plateau first.

The Lonely Tower is on a rise above the general plateau of the rest of the island. There are small clusters of trees dotted about its general region. The whiteness of the Tower appears to be mainly due to the type of stone from which it is constructed, maintaining its overall color from the bleaching it gets from the sun and salt spray. There is an entrance at its base, with external stairs winding up to narrow balconies that frame completely open entrances into the tower. There are at least three such balconies rising up the sides of the tower on each side of the octagonal structure, a final transparent structure with opaque roof capping the whole thing, and a large flame burning in a brazier inside.

Time and further walking reveal a very hard stony path, broken or sunk into the soil in some areas, connecting the Lonely Tower and the thick forests under the Misty Ruins off in the distance. A high, jagged, stony wall surrounds the tower with an opening for the connecting path to travel through. Both the rocks in the road and the stones of the tower are made of strange minerals, likely stemming from the time of the Old Ones.

As soon as the players try to pass through the tower, the Tengu will appear. How the pirates react will largely determine how the Tengu itself reacts: either neutral and curious, sending them off in a misleading way (“You have friends looking for you by the lake,” “The only Stormcallers I have seen are in the dangerous forests on the western hill slopes”), or hostile and intimidating. The Tengu does not want to fight, at least not currently, but it does want the characters away from the Lonely Tower. It is one of the places it protects since it has a direct connection to the Misty Ruins. It will not answer questions about either place; it deflects those questions with ques-

tions of its own about the pirates and what they plan to do. The pirates cannot pass until they are ready to confront the Tengu in Scene 4: The Lonely Tower.

E/F: Misty Ruins

See Scene 5: The Misty Ruins.

G: Survivor Camp

At some point either the player characters can encounter one or more of the shipwreck survivors at a creek, or the Guide can elect to have one of the shipwrecked captains encounter the player characters while he or she is hunting food elsewhere on the island. The player characters can even accidentally find the survivor camp itself!

After a period of initial shock, suspicion, and asking questions, the player characters are invited back to their camp.

The camp is a ramshackle village in miniature, with each survivor in possession of their own driftwood-and-hide shelter to sleep in and keep food and possessions dry. Miraculously, they also have some strange eight-legged goats: a mother and two kids.

After everyone has introduced themselves, Captain Blake Labrador speaks up.

“How did so many of you survive the storm?” he asks eagerly. “You are welcome to remain with us, of course, but if you also have some supplies...”

When you tell him about your ship and where it’s anchored, all of them perk up.

“We need to go,” Gideon Meeks says, launching to his feet. “I can leave right now.”

“Settle yourself, Gideon, we have time,” Esther smiles. “If we truly can leave with you, of course. We could help repair your ship.”

“And provisions,” Captain Maia puts in. “We’ll need more meat. I won’t get by on just salted fish again, and we’re not eating the spider-goats.” She stands up and folds her arms. “So show us this ship of yours.”

The survivors have some communal goods such as the spider-goats (p. 83) that would need accommodation on the ship. Assuming the player characters agree to essentially rescue them, they accompany the player characters back to the ship. Esther and Gideon will want to assess the

hold where the spider-goats can be kept as well as the ship's artillery and supplies. Maia is interested in the ship's rigging and defenses, sometimes deferring to Esther if the player characters' ship has magical capabilities. Blake offers to help apply any patchwork repairs, and to coordinate everything that needs to happen. In short, they are all eager to leave the island and offer their help.

During this time, each of the survivors shares their story and talks about the dangers of the island. They have dealt with Stormcaller demons before, but obviously, they were too late to do anything but try to get to shore while their ships were breaking up and sinking. They have met the Tengu, and all of them claim the creature is dangerous. Esther isn't certain whether it is a monster, or Unseen, or some intelligent species not known anywhere else but this island. Maia swears she has tried to go inside the Lonely Tower and the Misty Ruins, but the magical traps were too much for her. She didn't go very far, but she was certain there had to be Unseen in them. She is also certain there must be treasure in them. Her ship had carried very valuable cargo and none of it has washed on shore that she's seen. Blake is very concerned about the presence of so much Unseen that he has felt, here. Throughout his stay on the island, he has been torn between seeking them out to destroy them and feeling he must protect the others instead. As far as he is concerned, the only treasure of this island would be any wisdom the Old Ones have to impart.

The Guide can give the group a general timetable as to how long repairs and provisioning will take, but they should also be prepared to alter that timetable in the next scene.

Scene 3: Sabotage

- **How did the player characters get to this scene?** The player characters have met with the shipwreck survivors and banded together to get off the island.
- **What do the player characters need to accomplish in this scene?** Discover who or what is wrecking their efforts at leaving Stormheart.

- **Who or what is keeping them from accomplishing it?** Old grudges, multiple suspects, and distractions keep shifting the blame.
- **What scene or scenes should logically happen next?** Scene 4: "The Lonely Tower"

Over the next few days of the timetable that has been established, the player characters spend additional time in the areas outlined in the previous scene as they try to repair, refill, and haul water barrels, or hunt for game, or gather other resources. If they have not previously met the Tengu, this is when it finally appears to the player characters.

You turned around for just one moment and there it is in the next: it stands up on two legs, looking for all the world like a feathered and winged dog, clawed and fanged, and it looks down its long nose at you.

"Curious creatures. You look like the others, but none of you should be here. Who and what are you, and what is your business here?"

It paces and sniffs the air, sometimes tense and wary and sometimes seeming to grin at a private joke. Its behavior seems erratic and as confusing as its appearance.

Again, its initial interactions are neutral and curious, and declares itself to be the guardian of the island. Though understanding of the fact that the characters are largely on the island unwillingly, it also makes it clear that it prefers everyone to leave, and in particular for them to stay away from the Lonely Tower and the Misty Ruins. So long as the interaction does not turn hostile, the Tengu will go away after its curiosity about the player characters is satisfied, but not without saying or doing something strange in a playful manner (such as whisking off someone's hat or leaving only after distracting them into looking elsewhere).

The Best Laid Plans

As everyone works hard over the next few days preparing to leave and hoping another storm doesn't brew up in the meantime, everything starts going awry.

It seems like one thing after another goes wrong. Tools go missing, only to be found elsewhere. Additional damage to the ship is found. The work done for the spider-goat pen on the ship has been undone by the spider-goats themselves, and no one recalls seeing who brought the spider-goats aboard. Gideon loses his temper when the gunpowder for the weapons and artillery are nearly ruined and accuses Captain Maia of being careless. She is not very happy herself, having brought back a good amount of food only to see some of it spoil or burn with improper curing and storage.

The shipwreck survivors are snapping at each other and even yelling at you, and you're pretty sure someone on your crew isn't pulling their weight as they ought to as well.

"We should take what we have and leave now for Dalmatian Cove," Captain Maia says in frustration as she throws the half-repaired sails she'd been looking for all day onto the deck. "It's not far, and I can take ship with any scallywags looking for crew."

"And risk some criminals taking the ship?" Captain Blake argues stubbornly, folding his arms. "No, my first mate and I have a duty to report back to Secretary Fraidi Mainecoon von Rex and I won't have our journey thwarted by your impatience."

As Maia begins arguing with Blake, Esther tries to mediate between everyone but finally she resigns, exhausted.

In every situation that could go wrong, the characters involved can both have motive and plausible deniability such that it's often hard to find out who is at fault. Any characters that have accompanied the pirates during the chronicle can also be dragged in as suspects, especially if they have engaged in suspicious behavior before. This is an opportunity for everyone to air a grievance and keep the player characters guessing as to who or what is behind the sabotages. The Tengu is also a plausible suspect, though anyone who has met it can point out that it seems more interested in all of them leaving instead of extending their stay.

If the Guide wanted to roll for ship repairs, improvements, or provisioning, any failure rolls could be interpreted as these sabotages and setbacks instead. The trick is figuring out how to

connect it back to Esther down the road, once the characters discover that the sabotage is her doing.

Each player character from that point forward should have an opportunity to roll a check, difficulty 18, to find out what is going on. To make it more dramatic, the Guide can choose to have the characters revisit each "scene of the crime" and further make Wisdom checks, difficulty 15, to look for clues. It is up to the Guide how they do it, but eventually the clues all lead back to Esther.

Confronting Esther

Whether the Guide decides Esther accompanied the player characters as they investigated, or the player characters poked around first before going to find her, she folds quickly when confronted.

Esther covers her eyes, sinks down, and weeps. She sounds much more tired than she let on before.

"I am so sorry, it was I! Oh, I am ashamed. The skulking at night, hiding things from my own allies! But the voices — they taunt me, and for the first time, I am afraid of what they say! I could not help myself. I felt compelled to keep us from leaving. Something — I — I think it may be the Tengu — wants me to stay and I do not understand why!"

She wipes her face, looking genuinely distressed and remorseful.

"Please, you must help me. The Unseen is strong here, as are your voices, and the Tengu as well. I do not know what it is, but I need to know what it wants so it will let me be!"

If Esther has not explained to the player characters before, she does so now: all her life, she has been able to not only detect the Unseen through "hearing" them, she has also been able to detect the presence of others through hearing bits and pieces of their strongest desires and thoughts at the time. It is not usually "always on," but on this island it is, and it has been wearing Esther down.

Captain Blake has always known about this ability of Esther's. It has made her an asset to his ship, knowing about and solving problems before they get out of hand as well as pointing out the presence of the Unseen so they both can destroy it. Discovering that it has been causing her



Esther can only pick up surface thoughts and feelings from the Unseen. Normally, she must either choose to focus upon a specific person or "listen" for other beings like the Unseen which might be within 20 feet to discover their presence. She will "hear" the strongest thoughts shaping their intentions, such as guilt over a secret or planned violence. It can be switched on and off at will, but it should only be used three times a day at most. After that, each use drains a 1d4 stamina points.

distress as well as driving her to sabotage their efforts to get off the island greatly upsets him, making him highly in favor of finding the Tengu to ask them to leave her be. He would rather solve the problem in a diplomatic fashion with the Tengu, but he is also ready to fight, especially if they prove to be a creature of the Unseen.

Gideon Meeks is highly distrustful and becomes particularly distressed if he had previously been a suspect. He is not feeling particularly forgiving and would rather leave the island — and Esther — behind. Should the majority opinion swing toward helping Esther by confronting the Tengu, he refuses to help the party at all. He continues doing what he feels confident in handling and says he will remain by the ship, readying to leave.

Captain Maia is also highly distrustful, but she is feeling very hostile toward the Tengu. She reiterates how much of a danger she thinks they are. It will take some persuading to keep her from taking a swipe at the Tengu. If she can't be convinced to come help the other survivors without leaping into combat, she is more amenable to staying with the ship "just in case" the Tengu makes an appearance there while the group is gone.

Once the group has decided what they would like to do about Esther and the Tengu, those who want to help her can ask her to use her abilities to help them search for the Tengu on the island.

Scene 4: The Lonely Tower

- How did the player characters get to this scene? The characters are ready to confront the Tengu about why it wants Esther to stay.
- What do the player characters need to accomplish in this scene? They need to find the Tengu, hear its explanation, and fix the issue at the Lonely Tower.
- Who or what is keeping them from accomplishing it? Minor Unseen at the Tower and a reappearance of the Stormcaller demon.
- What scene or scenes should logically happen next? Scene 5: "The Misty Ruin."

Now that the player characters want to interact with the Tengu, finding it can either be easy or a little difficult depending on the group's general feelings about it. The Tengu can effectively monitor the island due to its role as the island's guardian, a role the characters can discover later that can be bestowed or removed. If it feels the group's intentions are generally hostile it will try to remain out of sight and present obstacles in their path until they agree to only talk. The Tengu can and will fight, if need be, but it feels the Stormcaller demon — which though it has not reappeared, it can the more time that passes — currently presents the bigger threat.

"Tengu, please come forward and speak. What do you want with me?" Esther calls out when she reaches her destination.

"What are your intentions, churl?" Captain Blake demands. "If you wish us to leave, why do you torment poor Esther and delay our departure?"

The Tengu appears almost shyly from behind a tree.

"Your companion is unique," they say. "Her ability could have been a threat to me and to this island. But now I know better, and I need her to stay. The Stormcaller no longer obeys me, and this development puts this island in danger instead of keeping it safe. It must be vanquished, and I need to know why it and its kind will no longer heed me."

The idea that one of the Unseen could be controlled is shocking information enough, but that and revealing the Tengu can also summon them may put serious doubts in everyone's mind as to the Tengu's goodness. This is fine! The Tengu itself is not a member of the Unseen, but they are very single-minded in their goals – guard Stormheart and its ruins and relics – and the Tengu has tools they see no problem in using. That's part of the Tengu's very nature.

While the Tengu now desires the group's help, they are also conflicted about asking for help considering they will need the pirates to enter the spaces the Tengu has been tasked with guarding. Therefore, they will only answer some questions with successful Charisma checks against a difficulty of 10. On a success, the Tengu reveals that their ability to control and summon Stormcaller demons is not an inherent ability, but comes from an item – the Stormheart, located in the Lonely Tower. They theorize that something may have gone wrong with the Stormheart, and it should be fixed if it has. The reason why they have not done this themselves is because the Tengu believes they are never supposed to go inside the places they were tasked with guarding. The Tengu isn't even certain if they *can* enter – they only know the layout of the island that is in their mind, and they can see the different places as if they were there.

Even if the player characters may not feel particularly inclined to help the Tengu, either Captain Blake or Esther will reluctantly bring up the fact that the Stormcaller demon could return at the worst time while they are trying to leave the island – that is one of its main characteristics, after all –and possibly leave them all stranded again. Therefore, they argue, they should at least ensure that the Stormcaller demon can no longer come after them.

Finally, the Tengu mentions a magical flask that it discovered in a wreck some time ago and offers it as a reward to the characters. Player characters who succeed with a Charisma check against difficulty 18 further get the Tengu's agreement to help finish repairs.

To the Tower

Every so often along the path, the characters find a stone or patch of ground with wards and detection spells along the way. The wards are meant to repulse the player characters, some with damaging effects. The Tengu will not warn the player characters about the traps, but it will tell them how to proceed.

The Tengu stands very uncomfortably at the opening of the wall keeping the Lonely Tower separated from the rest of the island and indicates the characters may pass within.

"Take the exterior passage, following the dark green stones," they say reluctantly. "Then climb the stairs to the third level of the tower. The Stormheart lies within the room you will find just inside. Touch nothing else!"

Player characters that stray from the path indicated can avoid these traps with a Wisdom saving throw, difficulty 15. These wards do not permanently go away once triggered: they simply reset once player characters have left their areas of effect. *Dispel Magic* spells also only last for the scene – this is ancient magic.



Flaming Sphere (p. 111), Grease (p. 112), Passwall (p. 118), or Stinking Cloud (p. 123) are good ones to use from *Pugmire* spells.



Alternately, try Entangle (p. 123), Hallucinatory Terrain (p. 125), Shatter (p. 133) or Spike Growth (p. 135) from *Monarchies of Mau* spells.

At the Guide's discretion, players can encounter a lesser version of the Stormcaller along the way.

Lesser Stormcaller (CR4)

Defense: 15

Stamina Points: 40

Speed: 30 feet, 40 feet flying

Proficiency Bonus: +3

Abilities: Strength +1 (12), Dexterity +3 (16), Constitution +2 (14), Intelligence 0 (10), Wisdom 0 (10), Charisma -2 (7)

Skills: Know Nature, Survive

Attack: Lightning Bolt (+8 ranged, 1d8+5 lightning)

Knacks: Resistant to lightning and thunder damage

- **Squall:** The Stormcaller pushes the target 30 feet in any direction with a violent gust of wind, resisted with a difficulty 17 Constitution saving throw.
- **Thunderclap:** All targets within a 20-foot cube surrounding the Stormcaller must succeed at a difficulty 17 Constitution saving throw or suffer 2d8+4 thunder damage and become Deaf.

Stormheart Room

Once the characters reach the top stair of the third level, they spy a narrow 6 foot by 18 foot ledge to their right – the stairs spiral up and to the right around the tower – and a wide, arched entrance into the room they are to access to their left. There are more ward traps on each side of the entrance, with the same difficulty as those off the path. Failing to disable the wards activates a lightning bolt across the entrance and the balcony, inflicting 6d6 lightning damage (half damage to those who make a Dexterity saving throw at difficulty 15). The lightning ignites all flammable objects in the area that aren't being worn or carried. Once they bypass or trigger the trap, they can enter the room beyond.

The room inside is startlingly plain. There are five pillars in the octagonal room, four around the perimeter and a fifth in the middle. There are gaps within each of the pillars where anyone could stick a paw inside, and within the perimeter pillars, something that looks like a faceted gem floats on a colored magical beam. The fifth pillar in the middle of the room has a very weak purple-colored beam in it, but its gem is not inside. Each pillar also has runes on it; all runes, except for those on the middle pillar, are lit.

A search of the room does not produce anything and touching the runes on the middle pillar also does not do anything. An Intelligence roll,

difficulty 12, helps the characters realize that the middle pillar's gem must be the Stormheart and the pillar needs the gem for everything to work. Sticking a paw into the magical beams doesn't do anything to the character, but it has an effect in the room. Breaking the beam of a perimeter pillar causes its light to flicker, as does its runes, and then it reconnects to the adjacent pillars with a beam of light. This does not happen in the middle pillar beam, but it does summon the Stormcaller demon, which has somehow gotten hold of the Stormheart gem.

For this battle, the Guide can approach it one of several ways: the Stormcaller is still injured from the fight at sea, having healed half of its damage in the meantime; the Stormcaller is instead the lesser Stormcaller version; or, if a truly epic battle is called for, the Guide can decide that it has fully healed and has chosen to defend its "freedom" now while it can. The Guide can also decide that the Stormcaller demon can summon one of the lesser versions during the fight.

Once more, before the characters can finish defeating the Stormcaller, it flees. It drops the Stormheart and takes off for the Misty Ruins.

Once the fight is over, one of the characters can place the Stormheart in its magical beam. It will float on the beam, and light will flare up to join the other pillars. When everyone rejoins the Tengu by the entrance, it tells them there is one more thing they must do: the Stormcaller must be completely vanquished so that it cannot come back. It also claims that the protective runes at the Misty Ruins must be reset for the Tengu to fully access the Stormheart's abilities again.

Scene 5: The Misty Ruins

- **How did the player characters get to this scene?** The player characters have restored the Stormheart and are ready to finish resetting it.
- **What do the player characters need to accomplish in this scene?** They must finish defeating the Stormcaller and decide whether Esther will be the new Guardian.
- **Who or what is keeping them from accomplishing it?** Creature encounters before entering the Misty Ruins.

- **What scene or scenes should logically happen next?** Leaving for Port Matthew.

The Tengu claims that re-establishing the Stormheart's link and thus fully empowering it once more requires traveling to the Misty Ruins. Only a restored Stormheart ensures the Stormcaller demon can finally be destroyed.

If Captain Maia is with them, she will argue for leaving now and take the risk of the Stormcaller coming back, believing it is too wounded to come after them any time soon. Captain Blake will argue that it is now their duty to finish the job of destroying the Stormcaller demon and adds that by the time they finish loading everything onto the ship, the demon could have recovered enough to make the risk unacceptable. Esther generally sides with Captain Blake, believing that this is also the best course of action if she is ever to stop the flood of impressions. Leaving the island tempts her, if only because it also promises to give her relief. This is an opportunity for the player characters to weigh in and decide if they've done enough or if they feel just as committed to finishing the job as Captain Blake is. The Tengu, of course, wants the job finished and tries to be as persuasive as possible, but will very reluctantly accept if the player characters decide that they are finished. If the pirates have not angered the Tengu, they will give the player characters everything it promised and do their best to hold back the Stormcaller demon (but they are not successful; the demon will attack as soon as they have gone to sea).

Getting to the Misty Ruins involves a long hike to the interior of the island. At least one encounter with the enemies in the woods around the Misty Ruins is recommended to underscore its dangers and the strangeness of the island. Some examples include a small thicket of Whisperwood Saplings and a Whisperwood Warden (*Pugmire* pp. 194-195) or patches of Excoriates and Thrummycaps (*Monarchies of Mau*, pp. 202 & 207). Additionally, the Tengu will not assist the player characters with these encounters, as it feels that they are not the real threat and are simply filling a similar role that it does (that of protecting and guarding the island).

The entire trek from the entrance to the woods to the door of the ruins themselves takes an hour without any encounters. The path (map location F, p. 144) can also grow more dangerous as it gets harder to see the wards with all the surrounding vegetation that start to obscure the path itself. All the trees and growth are ancient and untouched, and sometimes strange and disturbing.

The Misty Ruins are massive, made from dark, reflective stones which rise high from their forested base. They do not rise in a continuous line, but rather appear to have smaller buildings on top of larger structures, some offset and some centered, like piles of children's toys. The ruins have a thick, impervious stone base that looms more the closer you come. Parts of its walls are covered in vines and other areas are completely clean. Mists float up from the surrounding trees.

You draw nearer to what you can only assume is its entrance because, although there is no door, there is a doorway. You can see several levels from where you stand. The bones of this ruin make you feel as if the Old Ones could appear at any moment. It's enough to make your skin crawl with fear or anticipation, or both.

The Tengu calls your attention from just inside, standing beside a strange diagram on the dusty and shard-littered floor. The mischievous creature is now solemn.

"There is one more thing I should tell you about the magic of the Old Ones," it says, "because being the guardian of this place is granted through them. I have done this for a very long time, and I hope you will help me rest, Esther."

The Tengu reveals that the process to properly reintegrate the Stormheart means it must establish a link with the island's guardian. The Tengu learned long ago that this guardianship could be transferred at this time, but usually at the cost of the life of the former guardian. It refuses to say how long they have been doing this job, only that they are ready to stop if Esther will agree to replace the Tengu and remain on the island for the rest of her life. Ever since they came to understand what she was capable of, they felt she was an excellent candidate for the job.

Throughout this explanation, they try to phrase the request for Esther to take over as a requirement of the ritual to reset the Stormheart's

link. Perceptive characters can try to poke at this story to get the Tengu to reveal the truth: that the Stormheart can be harmonized again with the Tengu and without Esther.

Esther herself is conflicted about taking on this opportunity. She would miss her family and friends very dearly. However, there is an opportunity here for Esther to learn a lot about the Old Ones, and her ability does seem like it would be a great asset. She also feels a bit of the Tengu's desire to rest and feels sorry for them, but does not like that they made her question her sanity and urged her to sabotage. She looks to the other shipwrecked survivors for their opinions on what she should do.

The Misty Ruins is where the Stormcaller has fled. It emerges either after the group has made their decision and the Tengu tries to call it, or after the characters have spent a long period of time trying to decide what to do. It will immediately attack in the latter case, and the player characters will have to force it into the center of the diagram and begin the process described below.

When the player characters make their decision, the Tengu presses a rune on the wall and announces their wish to reconnect with the Stormheart at the Lonely Tower. If Esther has agreed to become the new guardian of the island, the Tengu bids her to stand in a circle opposite them in the diagram. All hear a strange humming sound start up afterward, and the circles on the floor flare up and bathe the Tengu (and Esther, if there) in magical light. The Tengu calls the Stormcaller demon into the center space, which the demon struggles against mightily. It will try to whip up winds and lightning into the space, and so some may find it difficult to keep their footing. It otherwise will not be able to damage anyone.

After a minute, it becomes clear that the magic of the diagram is leeching away at the Stormcaller demon's very essence and providing the power to link the Stormheart with the island's guardian (the Tengu or Esther). When it is consumed, the light slowly fades.

If Esther is the new guardian, the Tengu collapses with a contented smile — they are now dead, and their corpse slowly disappears. Es-

ther herself now has the same ability to use the Stormheart that the Tengu did, as well as the ability to see everything on the island as if she were there. She can't verbalize how she knows these things, as well as the certainty that she will learn more as she gets used to everything, but it fills her with wonder. She also confirms that she must remain on the island for the rest of her life and expresses sorrow that she will not see her family and friends again. She takes her role quite seriously and stresses that although she would love for others to come visit her, it is forbidden. She also cannot explain why this is, only that it feels like a commandment from the Old Ones she cannot disobey.

Esther then leads everyone out of the ruins and back toward their camps, with a stop along the way at a hidden cache also clearly built by the Old Ones. She retrieves a chest from it, presenting the player characters with the Flask of Bobby Golden along with a few treasures stashed with it. The Guide may decide from the treasures in this book (p. 87), and maybe supplement them with choose an item from the masterworks in *Pugnire* or *Monarchies of Mau*.

When it comes time for everyone to leave the island and sail back to Port Matthew, Captain Blake is tearful in bidding her farewell, but she blesses him with salt, asks him to give her love to her loved ones, and tells him to tell her tale with happiness and gusto just as she would.

If the Tengu is to remain the guardian, they fulfill their promises to the player characters — to a point. Like the trickster they are, the Tengu doesn't give as much time for repairs as promised, and only gives the player characters the Flask of Bobby Golden as a reward. It's fine with the player characters making certain their ship is seaworthy enough, but the Tengu is relentless on checking on them to hurry them off the island as soon as possible, and Esther herself is miserable the entire time. By the end of it, everyone is eager to leave Stormheart Island and sail back to Port Matthew.

Future Stories

While this adventure was written to conclude the "Going on the Account" chronicle, this

doesn't have to be the end! There are many ideas in this book alone to help provide you with some ideas. Some possibilities include:

- Gloria Hereford of Port Matthew is looking to finally get her full revenge on the Ospreys. The notorious bird pirates are enmeshed in the massive and intriguing mystery surrounding the Aerie, and they also have several hideaways all over the Acid Sea. If the player characters are going to hunt them all down for Gloria, these adventures can take them all the way to level ten and retirement.
- Similarly, Port Matthew's Ministry of Health could enlist the player characters to sail to many different islands to find and investigate different medicinal items or ancient texts rumored to exist. As they find stranger and stranger things or meet those opposed to the player characters searching for these items, they may discover themselves enmeshed in its necromantic cult and butting heads with some of the cats from the Monarchies.
- Now that the player characters have the Flask of Bobby Golden, various pirate crews are constantly challenging them in hopes of raising their own notoriety. There are numerous attempts to steal it, and eventually one attempt succeeds. All clues, which take the player characters all over Port Matthew and at least once to Waterdog Port, point to an ancient and powerful treasure hoarder in the bowels of Port Matthew who only agrees to give the item back to the player characters if they go and fetch an even more notorious treasure for them, such as Mother Anastasia Akita's Staff (the founder of the Church of Man) or the Cursed Fingerbone of Cesar Smilodon.



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PIRATES

OF PUGMIRE

Out here on the Acid Sea, it doesn't matter what your house is or what noble family you're descended from. All you need is a sturdy ship, a plastic hull, and a firm wind behind you. And maybe some guns.

— “Stumpy” Sabu Chromachilde, gecko captain of the Pig's Tale

With the advent of the plastic hull, people of all species took to the Acid Sea to explore, seeking new shores and facing dangers unknown. Life on the sea is different than life in the relative safety of the kingdoms and monarchies. Sailors must face the dangers of hunger, starvation, or becoming hopelessly lost and adrift while the plastic hulls of their boats slowly melt into uselessness. Large portions of the sea remain unexplored and uncharted, denying pirates the assurance of a safe journey home. If treasure is found, there's always a hostile crew or two out there on the waves, lying in wait to raid returning ships. And twisted corpses of dead sea life animated by Unseen forces haunt the waves. It takes an extra level of grit to brave the Acid Sea. Do you have what it takes?

Pirates of Pugmire is a chronicle sourcebook for both *Pugmire* and *Monarchies of Mau*. It's usable with either game, or as part of a joint experience. Some highlights include:

- Two new species for players to enjoy: lizards and birds
- Six new callings, including two for dogs and two for cats
- Rules for building, sailing, and sinking ships
- A trove of new allies, enemies, and treasures
- Information on Waterdog Port and Port Matthew
- “Going on the Account,” a chronicle of three new adventures, taking characters from 1st through 6th level

CAN YOU BRAVE THE ACID SEA?

