

Swashbuckling
ADVENTURES™

Islands of Gold

The Midnight Archipelago





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JOHN STRINGFELLOW'S NAME WAS MISTAKENLY OMITTED FROM THE HEROES, VILLAINS, AND MONSTERS CREDITS. APOLOGIES FOR THE MIX-UP JOHN.

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To use this companion, a Dungeon Master also needs the *Player's Handbook*™, the *DUNGEON MASTER'S Guide*™ and the *Monster Manual*™. A player needs only the *Player's Handbook*™.

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Introduction

The sounds of a ship at sea echoed around Brennan as he peered through his spyglass towards the horizon. The Avalon-born quartermaster catalogued each sound dismissing the lot of them from his mind. The rising sun shone brightly behind him sending glimmers of light dancing across the crystal blue waves. The smudge on the horizon resolved itself into a small island in the spyglass.

Brennan nodded and spoke quietly to the pilot and cabin boy beside him. "Set a heading west by north-west. We'll pass the island upwind so we land at the far end. When the captain's done practicing, let her know of our new course." The cabin boy nodded and scurried down the ladder as Brennan adjusted his vest so it hung more squarely.

As the pilot turned the ship's wheel, he raised an eyebrow. "Shouldn't we check with the captain?"

Brennan drew out a piece of parchment and a pen. "Of course not. We're here to chart and explore these islands; we don't need to check with her just to do our job. Besides, she won't turn down a chance to stretch her legs." Then he frowned ferociously jotting down the supply list for the longboats.

The cabin boy dashed across the main deck towards the prow. A few men continued practicing with blunted weapons while a crowd of sailors stood watching Captain Cossette sparring with one of the marines. The marine was dressed in a faded gray shirt and a threadbare pair of pants while Cossette wore a finely embroidered vest over a billowing white shirt. Thigh high boots rounded off with loose leather pants completed her outfit. She parried the man's sword with the dirk in her off hand and swung her cutlass towards him. The marine parried with his dagger, stepped forth and lashed out with his foot. The kick caught her squarely in the stomach and Cossette doubled over. The marine raised his sword in triumph, then toppled over with a crash as Cossette pulled his feet out from underneath him. The two warily got to their feet facing each other anew.

"Good move, Tristan," the captain panted.

"Thank you, captain. Allow me to demonstrate another." The marine lashed out strongly with both weapons, dashing hers to the side, knocking her dagger loose. While she tried to bring her sword back to bear, he kicked out towards her exposed side but his foot only caught her clothing as she spun. Several buttons popped off her vest and Tristan ogled for a moment as her shirt fell open. Cossette ignored her opponent easily reaching down to snatch up a belaying pin from where it lay on the deck as she turned to face him. He shook his head for a moment and swept his sword towards her head, but she easily parried the blow and brought the belaying pin down upon his upper thigh. In pain, Tristan stepped back, but his leg was numb from the blow as he fell back into the deck. The assembled sailors roared with approval as Cossette sheathed her blade with a smile.

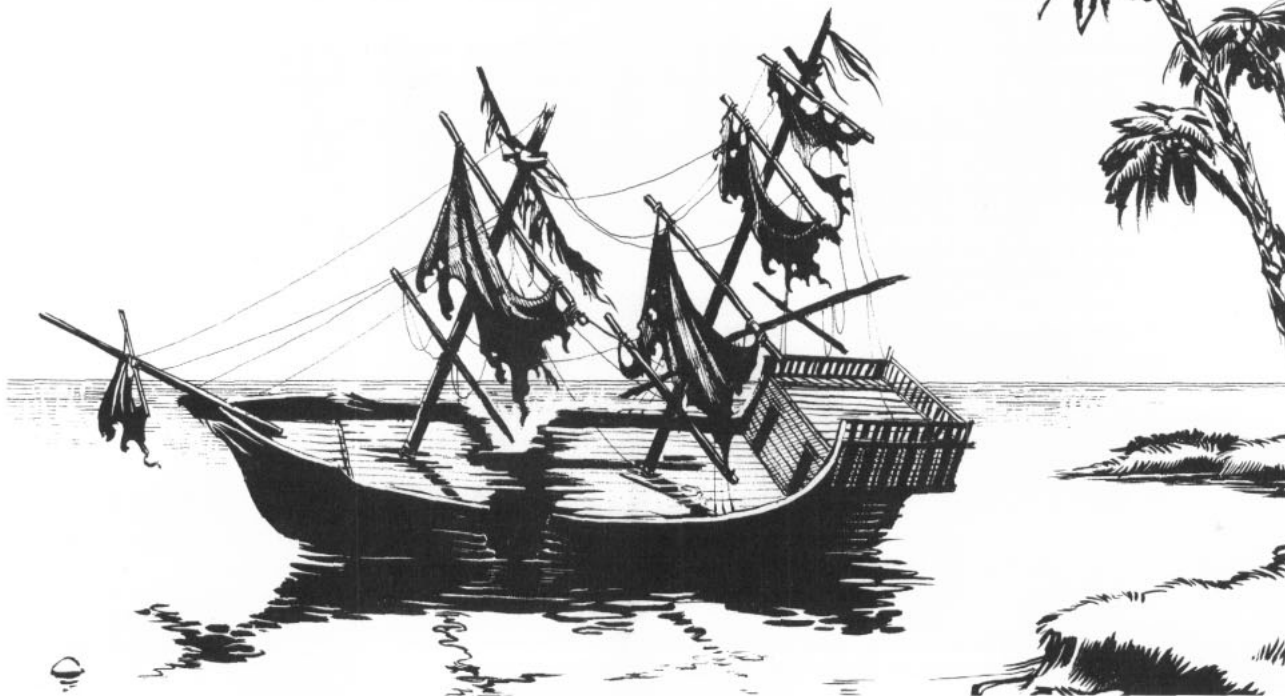
"Nicely done, but I think you're still preoccupied with powerful kicks instead of remembering your natural agility."

"Thank you, captain. Perhaps tomorrow you could show me that trick with the belaying pin?"

"Of course. Now the rest of you: this is supposed to be weapons drill for everyone, not a game of watch-to-see-who-can-knock-down-the-captain." The men broke up into separate groups. Several of them came up to Tristan and began asking for demonstrations of his kicks. Others drew practice blades and began trading blows.

The cabin boy approached the captain as she adjusted her clothing. "Brennan says we're coming up on an uncharted island, captain."

Cossette nodded pleasantly, "I felt the course change." She began striding back towards the ship's wheel, stopping to speak here and there to her men. She reached Brennan just as he finished writing upon the piece of parchment and with an amused grin plucked it from his hand.



"Two weeks of rations for twelve men," she read aloud, "two of the large casks of water, six empty casks in case we find water, three hundred feet of rope, three grappling hooks, eight lanterns, six tents, 50 iron spikes, twelve backpacks, four shovels, four picks, two archeologist kits, two small casks of gunpowder, a chest of beads and baubles in case the natives want to trade... Brennan, what do you think you're doing?!" Exaggerated horror filled her voice and the pilot struggled to keep his face expressionless.

Brennan frowned in irritation. "Good morning, captain. I'm preparing to load up the longboats with the supplies we'll need to investigate that island."

"You want to load up the boats with enough supplies for an army to storm El Morro?"

"Isn't it better to be safe than sorry? We have no idea what we're going to encounter."

Cossette raised her spyglass and looked over the approaching island for a moment. "That island is only a mile or two across with heavy jungle and no sign of natives or ruins. We'll take over the two longboats with a dozen men and just give the place a once over."

"What if the ruins are in the jungle?"

Cossette smiled shaking her head. "Brennan, we don't have time to search the jungles that closely. Even if we find a cave full of fantastic treasures crawling with deadly monsters, we'll map everything we can, but our job isn't to delve into these islands' secrets. That is for others. Our job is to see what these islands hold. We're the Explorers' vanguard, the scouts. The clerks follow."

Brennan frowned deeply at the scorn she used pronouncing the word clerks, but nodded slowly. "You are the captain. What do you think we'll need to explore these islands?"

"Imagination and courage, steel and powder. Everything else will just be a hassle."

In the world of Théah, few places hold the danger and mystery of the Midnight Archipelago. A chain of islands in a far western sea, it stands at the edges of civilization where only courage and gunpowder stand between you and a horrifying fate. Pirates ply her waters, searching for ships to plunder, while Théan colonies and native tribesmen provide all manner of wealth for those daring to claim it. Unexplored islands conceal terrible monsters, eager for prey. Syrneath ruins hold artifacts to astound. Adventurers come from all over the world, hoping to make their fortune amid a tropical paradise. Most find more than they bargained for.

The chain runs nearly nine hundred miles from north to south consisting of thousands of islands, islets, cays, reefs, sandbars, and atolls. Most formed around active volcanoes, and while many have gone extinct, some continue on occasion to spew lava. The climate is tropical with frequent rain and temperatures often reaching above 90 degrees Fahrenheit. Palm trees, ferns, and other tropical plants dominate the landscape. Geographically, the islands in the Archipelago vary little. Human civilization is limited. Perhaps fifty percent of the islands sustain human life, mostly natives with no organization above the village or tribal life, or formal Théan colonies. The rest are either unexplored or don't exhibit qualities necessary for permanent settlement.

Cities are unheard of in the Archipelago. The largest town, located in the Castillian colony of Marcina (see page 44), numbers a scant 15,000 while most are far smaller. Despite that, evidence of human activity grows larger each year, as explorers, adventurers and pirates journey to the Archipelago in greater numbers.

This book contains strings of island adventures from the Archipelago, ready for use in both Théah and swashbuckling campaigns set in other universes. The first chapter contains a brief history of the Archipelago, including a general overview of the threats and encounters found there with a few brief ideas for running campaigns in the region.

The second chapter represents the bulk of the book and contains information on eight specific islands in the Archipelago:

The Isle of Carlos: A centuries-old refuge for Théan sorcerers; whose rampant inbreeding has produced strange and dangerous new forms of magic.

The Isle of the Red God: Home to a twisted Ussuran and the terrifying results of his unholy experiments.

Kanuba: Home to friendly natives, new Théan colonies, and a drak secret within the unexplored jungles.

L'I du Bête: A former game preserve, housing monstrous creatures whom decadent nobility hunted for sport. But now the barriers are down and the hunters have become the prey...

Marcina: A prosperous colony, whose political games threaten to shatter its peaceful facade.

My'ar'pa: Home to an astounding Syrneath fortress made of coral... and the godlike magician who holds its secrets.

Sange Tara: A prison of ancient spirits, and the black magic used to keep them at bay.

The Straits of Blood: A hidden township, catering to pirates and scoundrels of all varieties

Each island is designed to be transplanted into any swashbuckling campaign, and includes maps, descriptions of important locations, NPC stats as well as adventure hooks.

The final chapter contains new rules plus game mechanics, each one formatted for both the classic 7th Sea™ system, and the universal d20 System.™

The Midnight Archipelago stands at the cusp of civilization, between everything that is known and everything waiting to be discovered. Nowhere on Théah is quite like it: a lawless frontier on the edge of the known world. Beauty walks hand-in-hand with peril here while only the brave defy the dangers it holds. Turn the page and see what waits.

CHAPTER ONE:

The Midnight Archipelago

The Midnight Archipelago lies some fifteen hundred miles west-southwest of mainland Théah, formed along a volcanic ridge in the Great Western Ocean. The name derives from an old sailor's story: an early explorer visiting the Castillian court, claimed sun shone at midnight in the Archipelago, and fish nested in trees like birds. The old rascal was lying through his teeth, but the name stuck. The natives note the title derives "from a lying white man," but most do so discreetly. The joke was on Théah's nobility, after all, not them.

The clear blue waters of the area are warm, but hide countless hazards — razor sharp coral, predatory sharks, and other menacing creatures lie in wait for the unwary. The seas are too shallow to support true sea monsters, but the islands themselves contain hazard enough to make up for that. In addition to threats from volcanoes and earthquakes, the jungles hold strange beasts, unseen by any Théan, and ancient ruins, untouched by the hand of man, lie hidden beneath the greenery. The Archipelago has become a haven for pirates and criminals, fleeing Théan justice or preying on shipping traffic between the islands and the mainland. Beauty and wonder can be found here in equal amounts, but the risks accompanying them are considerable.

History

The history of the region began long before the rise of man, with the beings known as the Syrneht. They built countless structures through out the islands, some the size of small cities with chambers and passageways stretching a mile beneath the earth. Their exact purpose and function is unknown: some may have served as prisons or hosted

scientific experiments too dangerous to conduct on the mainland. With the recent rise of Cabora (see *Swashbuckling Adventures*,™ page 232, or the *Montaigne Revolution*™ source-book), another theory emerged: that the Syrneht used the islands as a distant outpost, monitoring for threats and incursions from the west. Whatever the reason, the Syrneht maintained a considerable presence in the Archipelago; the Explorer's Society estimates roughly thirty per cent of the area's appreciable landmasses hold Syrneht ruins of some sort. Like their mainland counterparts, these structures were abandoned or destroyed, their inhabitants as a result driven to extinction.

The human populace came to the Archipelago sometime later, though it is not certain how or when. They formed loose-knit tribes, subsisting by fishing and simple farming. A wide variety of cultures sprang up; cut off from the rest of the world except for the islands in the immediate circumference, they lived in a world largely of their own devising. Some remained wild and savage, while others developed societies as complex as any on mainland Théah. Despite the diversity, Théan scholars have noted a universal theme among almost all of the Archipelago's inhabitants: their creation myths center around "gods" who brought the islanders to their homes at the dawn of time. The significance of this common connection is unclear. Since few Archipelagan tribes keep written records, there are few practical ways to pursue the matter further.

For centuries, the islanders lived among themselves, keeping their traditions out of sight of the continent far to the east. The first Théans did not appear until the early 1400s (by their reckoning). Cristobal Gallegos, an influential Castillian explorer, proposed a sea voyage around the world

in 1402. The Castillian government, with the support of the Church financed his expedition, in exchange for laying claim to any of his discoveries. Six weeks after departing San Cristobal, he sighted land — the northernmost end of the Midnight Archipelago. He made note of the siting, and left a marker there for those who would follow, then continued west into the great uncharted oceans.

He was never seen again.

Other expeditions soon followed, drawn by the promise of the waters beyond the setting sun. A few of them returned empty-handed; the majority simply disappeared as Gallegos had done. The loss of so many ships in the Great Western Ocean soon put a damper on the Age of Exploration, and interest in the western seas waned. But a handful of explorers saw potential closer to home in the tiny islands Gallegos had first noted. They speculated their might be other islands further south, perhaps containing resources of interest to the crown. The Castillian government was less enthusiastic than they had been initially, and as the years went by, a few industrious sailors managed to scrape together funds to launch voyages.

Their efforts proved more fruitful than Gallegos's. One island was discovered after another... then another... then another. Soon, it became apparent that an entire chain lay out across the sea, holding wonders unheard of on mainland Théah. Exotic fruits, spices, and other delicacies fetched a high price in Théan markets. Gold and precious minerals were discovered at several sites, leading to the establishment of mining operations. Destitute citizens could find fertile farmland allowing them establish a new life in the islands. As the strongest participants in matters of trade, the Castilians claimed the lion's share of these resources, and soon the king's coffers in San Cristobal were overflowing. Other nations followed suit so by the early 1600s, dozens of tiny colonies sprouted up along the Archipelago.

The natives, for their part, treated this development with skepticism. The strange visitors from across the sea brought new technology and other useful items, but often treated the islanders like children. In some cases, they were able to overcome these misconceptions. In others the Théans established a policy of ruthless exploitation, which the natives resisted. A few colonies were wiped out, or forced to flee from armed bands of tribesmen. The Vaticine Church often exacerbated the problem by attempting to "convert" the islanders from their heathen religious practices. Successful colonies soon learned that cooperation, not coercion, made for the best policy towards indigenous peoples. They allowed them to maintain their traditions and treated them with respect, if not absolute equality. The fiercer tribes were left to their own devices; the Archipelago held many islands, after all, and it was easy enough just to weigh anchor and search for a new one.

Besides hostile natives, the colonies had another threat to deal with: piracy. The lure of so much wealth naturally attracted criminal scoundrels while the long voyage to Théah made for ample plundering opportunities. The Archipelago held countless hidden islands where a pirate vessel could bury stolen loot, or hide from authorities. As Théan colonies developed, so too did the presence of scoundrels, buccaneers, and scum. Castille soon commissioned naval vessels to guard merchant ships traveling to and from the Archipelago, and other Théan nations took steps to protect their investments.

With the establishment of the Explorer's Society in 1598, another point of interest arose. The Syrnych ruins provided a treasure trove of ancient artifacts for those willing to brave their depths. The natives and early colonists usually avoided them, fearing deadly traps and strange creatures, but the Explorers saw them as a golden opportunity. New expeditions traveled to the Archipelago with greater and greater frequency, hoping for insight into the Syrne. Such expeditions were naturally fraught with peril, but those who succeeded returned to Théah with astounding artifacts. The demand for trinkets rose exponentially while the Explorer's found they could keep coffers full by donating Syrnych artifacts to wealthy patrons.

It also gave pirates and smugglers in the Archipelago another source of wealth to plunder. Though the Explorers did their utmost to protect their finds, greedy crews sometimes arrived ahead of them — or worse, waited until they emerged from the ruins, then attacked them and stole whatever artifacts they held. The sinister Caligari family of Vodacce paid such wayfarers handsomely, and though their recent downfall (see *Swashbuckling Adventures™* and *The Montaigne Revolution™*) has curtailed Syrnych smuggling, Théah still has plenty of ne'r-do-wells willing to pay for artifacts, no questions asked.

Thus it remains in the latter half of the seventeenth century. The Midnight Archipelago has been mapped, but countless hidden islands still wait to be explored. Native cultures mix with enterprising colonists, ambitious scholars, and wanted criminals, all far beyond the reach of Théah's rulers. The rise of Cabora in 1668 (see *Swashbuckling Adventures™* and *The Montaigne Revolution™*) has sparked a new interest in exploration, and the Archipelago has become a launching point for expeditions into the Great Western Ocean. The increased activity has stirred the pot even further, creating a chaotic, freewheeling atmosphere. Adventurous souls will find the Archipelago a place of vast potential, where fortunes can be made and lost a thousand ways. But it also holds great danger, from the pirate crews that prowl its waters, to hidden island terrors which no human being has both seen and survived.

Current Status

Islands in the Midnight Archipelago can be divided into five basic categories: those containing Syrnych ruins, those containing native tribes, those containing pirates or piratical activities, those containing Théan colonies, and those undiscovered or containing no formal settlements. Obviously the categories overlap (native tribes can be found on islands which also contain Syrnych ruins, and so on), but together, they comprise a rough overview of the region's important people, places, and things.

Colonies

Théan colonies number in the dozens, and grow more frequent at the northern half of the Archipelago. They exist mainly to exploit a local resource — farmland, local spices, or even mines — and to expand their homeland's influence in this increasingly important region. Colonial governments keep in regular contact with their home nation, most tithing or paying other fees in order to continue operations. The wealth flowing out of these colonies is considerable, and because of the dangers inherent in the Archipelago, most

of are well-armed. The largest colonies contain soldiers or naval units from their home nation. Navy vessels patrol local waters, escorting merchant ships home or hunting for pirates; they use nearby colonies as a base of operations. Colonies without a formal military presence will draft militias, calling upon men of the proper age to learn combat and tactics.

Below is a brief list of the major Théan powers, and their colonial presence within the Midnight Archipelago

AVALON

Avalon got a late start in the colonial game, but they are quickly making up for lost time. The Explorer's Society is based in Avalon, and Queen Elaine's government has used their expertise to uncover prime resources. They focus attention on farming and spices, eschewing gold or other precious metals (which the Castellians have largely claimed for themselves). Most Avalonian colonies are peaceful as well as self-sufficient; they maintain good relations with local tribe and have fierce loyalty to Queen Elaine. Because Avalon has no formal navy, the colonies use privateers or mercenaries for protection. Many Avalon "pirates" in the Archipelago perform double duty as a colonial navy, and several Sea Dog ships frequent the waters at any given time.

CASTILLE

The vast majority of Théan colonies in the Archipelago owe allegiance to Castille. Gold, spices, and other resources add considerable wealth to Good King Sandoval's coffers, and increase that nation's clout in world affairs. Some Castellian colonies have been around for nearly a century, and entire generations have grown up without ever seeing the country to which they claim allegiance. Because of the colonies' importance to Castille's economy, the government keeps a close eye on them. To this end, ships from the Castellian Armada are a common sight in Archipelago waters. Indeed, it was the need to protect Castille's colonies that made the Armada so large in the first place. With the end of the Castille-Montaigne war, naval presence has increased significantly.

Every Castellian colony in the Archipelago has at least one Vaticine church, and the Hierophant has stationed several dozen missionaries here on a permanent basis. Their efforts to "convert" local tribes mars the otherwise peaceful relations between the Castellians and the natives.

EISEN

Eisen, has no formal holdings in the Archipelago; colonies are the last thing on its mind these days. Nonetheless, several bands of Eisen refugees have made their way to the islands, hoping to start a new life away from the devastation of their homeland. The most prominent of these communities can be found on Kanuba (see page 26), but others lie scattered here and there. For the most part, they want to live their lives in peace, and forget the horrors they have fled. It is unknown how they will react should a reunited Eisen ever reestablish contact with them.

MONTAIGNE

Like Castille, the Montaigne saw the Archipelago as a resource to be developed, but unlike the Castellians, they viewed their colonies as a luxury. Porté sorcerers could bring fresh exotic fruit to Paix or Charouse, while Archipelago-grown spices accentuated numerous noble meals. The

colonies existed to provide such delicacies to *l'Empereur* and his court, not for any practical or of political purpose. As a result, many Montaigne colonies were heavily subsidized, unable to support themselves without heavy assistance from the mainland.

In the wake of the Revolution, Montaigne's colonies have been all but forgotten. The revolutionary government has enough on its hands without worrying about some little specks out across the ocean, and support from the mainland has dropped to a trickle. Destitute colonies now turn to piracy to support themselves, or welcome criminal elements into their midst. A few Montaigne nobles have come to the Archipelago to hide from the Revolutionaries, including at least two of *l'Empereur's* own daughters.

USSURA

The Gaius has no interest in the Archipelago, and as a consequence has sent no expeditions there. The islands remain an enigma to his people, as far away as the dark side of the moon. However, a few enterprising Pyeryem mages have become intrigued by the new species of animal native to the island, and a few of them have journeyed to the Archipelago in hopes of gaining new spiritskins for their sorcery. Most Ussurans in the Archipelago possess Pyeryems telltale green eyes, and locals often believe that *all* Ussurans possess shapechanging abilities.

VENDEL/VESTENMANNAVNJAR

As always, Vendel sees the Archipelago as a tremendous opportunity. They lack any appreciable colonies, but Vendel merchants have a way of showing up in every Archipelago port, ready to make a quick trade for local goods or sell passage back to Théah. The hot climate plays havoc with their pale complexion, but the freewheeling trade opportunities send them drooling like chuck steak in front of a wolf. Other colonists considered them pests, but they are rapidly filling a vital niche in the local economy.

There are very few Vesten in the Archipelago, and certainly no Vesten colonies.

VODACCE

Vodacce, too, has a very small presence in the islands, preferring to focus their trade efforts closer to home. They have no formal colonies and only a handful of native Vodacce can be found in the region. The sole exception to this is the Caligari family, who has a vested interest in the Syrneth ruins. Smugglers looking to unload Syrneth artifacts found a willing buyer in Vincenzo Caligari, and scarce was the Archipelago pirate who didn't have a few of the old man's coins jangling in his purse. With recent the destruction of their power base in Vodacce, many Caligaris fled to the Archipelago, hoping to establish new strongholds far away from their enemies. Their expertise in all things Syrneth makes them valuable advisors for explorers looking to plunder the ruins.

Natives

Islands containing native tribes are a diverse and eclectic lot. The variety of cultures in the Archipelago staggers most Théans. Each island maintains a unique society. However, a few factors stand out. Native tribes tend to keep to themselves, but become fiercely territorial when attacked. To most, the island of their birth represents the whole world, so strangers arriving from far away represent a fundamental

shift in their perception of the cosmos. This is not to say that they are simple-minded, but that they treat new arrivals as an immensely important event. Tribes who have interacted with Théans for awhile react differently — are either openly friendly, if relations are cordial, or hostile if their past experience have been negative.

Hostile tribes use the landscape to their advantage, launching guerrilla raids and hit-and-run maneuvers rather than facing their enemies openly. They rarely announce their presence until they attack, relying on surprise to carry them to victory. If they cannot wipe the interlopers out, they will try to drive them away, hoping to scare them into never returning.

Friendly tribes, on the other hand, treat visitors with a mixture of curiosity and respect. Though protective of their land and people, they will be open to trade, and willing to help visitors if they receive compensation of some sort. Most are far more sophisticated than Théans recognize meaning many will use that misperception to their advantage. Colonists are often surprised that the "simple islanders" have such shrewd instincts, and can usually gain more from any bargain than their partners can imagine.

Several specific island tribes are dealt with in subsequent chapters. The GM is free to create more if he sees fit.

Pirates

The Archipelago has become a paradise for the wolves of the sea. Synchron artifacts, gold, spices, and countless other treasures must travel by ship to reach Théah — and there's a lot of ocean between there and here. The multitude of uncharted islands make for excellent hiding places, and raiders can bury their ill-got gains in places where no interloper could ever hope to find them. Increased trading routes between the island and the mainland have seen a subsequent increase in pirate activities. The Archipelago now hosts entire communities — such as the infamous Straits of Blood — catering solely to pirate crews.

Most pirates in the Archipelago operate as lone ships, or small flotillas of three or four vessels. Larger compliments tend to draw attention, and make escape more difficult for crews involved. The Castillian Armada maintains a strong presence in the Archipelago largely dedicated to hunting such buccaneers down. The faster and leaner a pirate ship, the better it avoids foes. By far the most infamous pirate in the Archipelago you'll find Captain Reis and his crew, the Crimson Rogers (see *Waves of Blood™* or *Heroes, Villains and Monsters™* for more information). But others have made quite a name for themselves... and with the Archipelago continuing to produce so much wealth, none of them look to disappear any time soon.

Syrneth Ruins

The Syrne left behind hundreds of buildings, complexes, and even small communities which have since been largely reclaimed by the jungle. Most of them belonged to either the Thalusiai or the Tessera, though a few other examples exist. Now they lie empty and abandoned. Local tribes almost universally avoid Syrneth ruins, and even the animals tend to shy away. Spotting ruins from sea is difficult; many of them were built underground, and the foliage masks their presence quite well. Explorers learn to pick up on subtle clues (such as treelines which follow too regular a pattern, or unusual stones on a beach) to uncover such ruins, or look to natives to point them in the right direction.

Once a ruin is uncovered, real danger begins. They remain one of the richest sources of Syrneth artifacts on the planet, but risks often prove greater than rewards. Countless traps await the unwary in the rooms and catacombs, and deadly creatures — the spawn of Syrneth experiments or worse — make their lairs there as well. Most explorers emerge with only a rough idea of the layout and a few useful artifacts to sell back home... if they emerge at all.

Few Théan colonies exist near Syrneth ruins, though pirates frequent nearby waters looking for easy marks. If local tribes live in the area, they will avoid the ruins religiously; some attach horrible myths to the place, and all of them know better than to poke around entries. Ruin monsters and similar creatures live in the jungle nearby; the remnants, perhaps, of long-dead species. With the arrival of the Explorer's Society, a few semi-permanent archeological encampments have sprung up, hoping to study the local catacombs at length. These encampments are usually well-armed, able to maintain regular contact with their superiors back home.

Unexplored Islands

Despite the frenzy of activity in the Archipelago, many islands go unexplored. Many more have never been seen by the eyes of man. Such islands can hold nearly anything, from monsters to secret coves to the sites of pirate battles from long ago. A few souls may appear in such environs. Shipwrecks are a common occurrence, and the survivors may be stranded for decades before rescue arrives. Marooning is a common form of punishment in the Archipelago. Lonely hermits can be found on dozens of tiny islets, waiting for human contact.

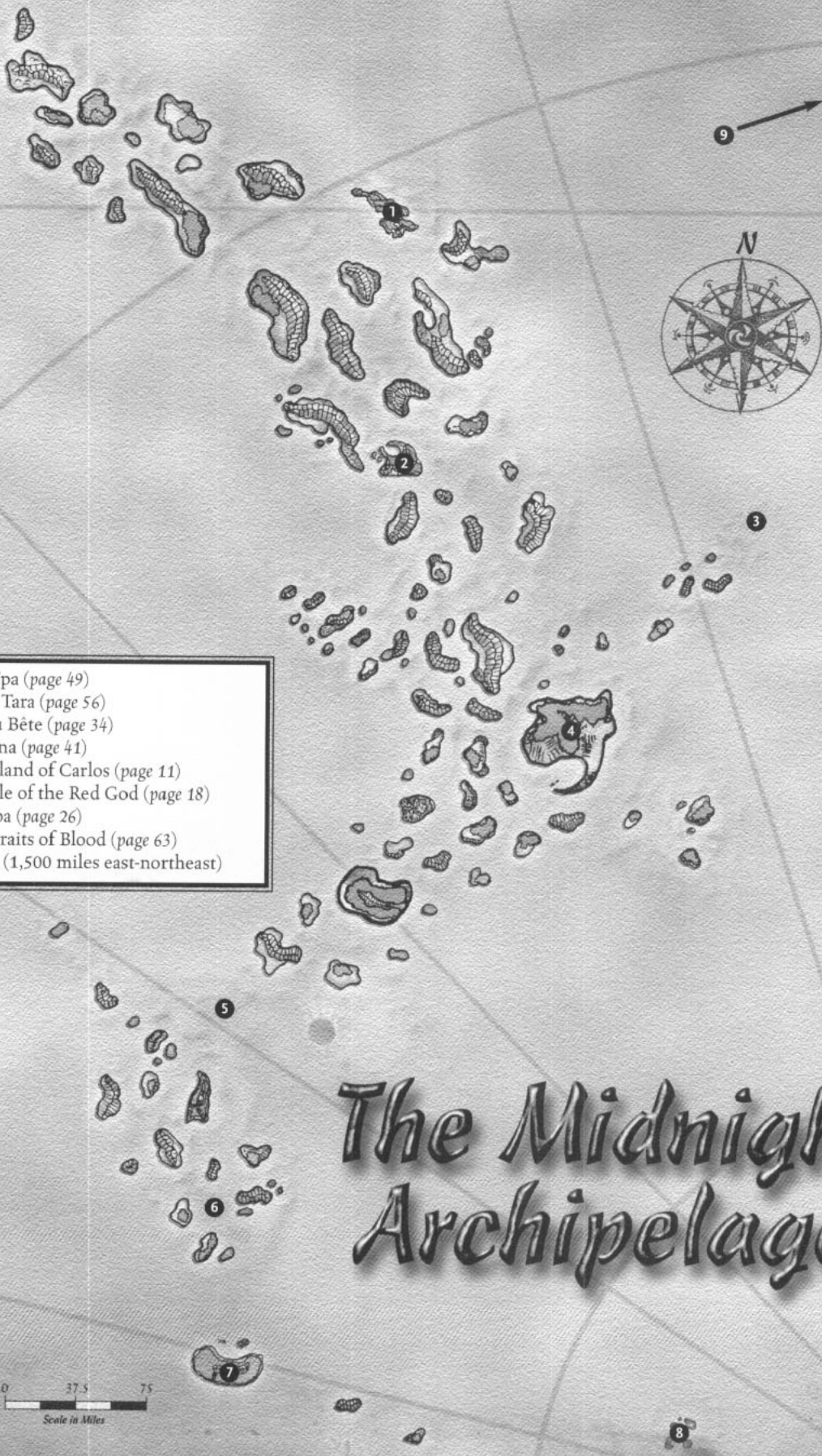
A few unexplored islands are detailed in the next chapter. Others can be developed as the GM sees fit, and used as the site for any number of adventure or campaign ideas.

Campaigns in the Archipelago

Campaigns set in the Midnight Archipelago (or similar locales in non-Théan universes) can encompass a wide variety of themes. Certainly few locales are so conducive to freedom of action. The atmosphere of the Archipelago is similar to the American wild west, or the edges of the Roman Empire. Laws are loose here, and less easily enforced. Might often makes right in the Archipelago, and those who cannot defend themselves are ruthlessly exploited. At the same time, no man lives by another's leave here; freedom is a simple matter of weighing anchor albeit setting sail. Lawlessness combined with opportunism creates an atmosphere where bold heroes can thrive by seeking wealth wherever it hides and thwarting villains who believe themselves above punishment.

Getting There

For any place as remote from civilization, the characters need a motivation to travel and/or stay there. The journey to the Archipelago takes weeks, and is never undertaken without careful thought. Those who stay in the region leave behind everything, casting their fortunes to a land where survival is still a dicey proposition. At the same time, motives for traveling to the Archipelago abound. Syrneth ruins promise great wealth, and one particular ruin might hide an object the characters have coveted for some time. The only way they can claim it is to go there themselves. Besides wealth, exploration



- 1. My'ar'pa (page 49)
- 2. Sange Tara (page 56)
- 3. L'Il du Bête (page 34)
- 4. Marcina (page 41)
- 5. The Island of Carlos (page 11)
- 6. The Isle of the Red God (page 18)
- 7. Kanuba (page 26)
- 8. The Straits of Blood (page 63)
- 9. Théah (1,500 miles east-northeast)

The Midnight Archipelago

0 37.5 75
Scale in Miles

for its own sake could drive the characters to the Archipelago. The idea of discovering a new island holds tremendous appeal for the right sort, and those traveling into the Great Western Ocean may wish to use the Archipelago as a starting point. Sorcerers may wish to study the new forms of magic practiced by island natives, warriors might seek out fearsome monsters to hunt, and characters with ailing relatives may journey to the area in search of the one rare ingredient that will restore their loved one to health. In addition, the Archipelago has become a haven for scoundrels and criminals, a place to hide from the authorities or spend their ill-got gains without fear of persecution. The characters might travel there in search of an old enemy, or perhaps they are criminals themselves, hoping for a new start. Finally, those working for a government or the Vaticine church may find themselves assigned to the Archipelago as administrators, missionaries, or as part of a garrison. Such characters will find the area a hotbed of intrigue as complex as any Vodacce palace.

Regardless of reasons for journeying to the Archipelago, the trip should be full of excitement. Pirates ply the waters of the southern Frothing Sea, looking for wealthy vessels to plunder. Sirens and sea monsters lurk in wait for the unwary while storms rage beyond the portents of mortal control. Few journeys across the water are uneventful, and the GM can easily make the party's trip an adventure unto itself.

Hearth and Home

Once the characters arrive, they will need a home or other base of operations. Roadside inns are at a premium in the Archipelago, and a life of wandering becomes more complicated if "the next village" has forty miles of sea water between it and the party. Those with their own ship might prefer to use it as a mobile headquarters, eschewing the need for housing or other accommodations. This works best for most swashbuckling campaigns, but might not work well for every party. Those serving a government will receive quarters somewhere as a part of their duties. Anyone else, however, needs to find someplace to live: a "headquarters" where they can base their adventures in the islands.

The exact type of accommodation depends on the nature of the characters themselves. Those with notions of civilization will probably want to live in a colony town, preferably one which has been around awhile (*Marcina*, on page 41, has some strong examples). Nobles might commission an estate or a plantation to live, while native characters could let the party stay in their village. The Straits of Blood (see page 63) makes an ideal base of operations for criminals or other characters with a less-than-sterling reputation; it offers many of the comforts of civilization, without all the nasty laws to muck things up.

Those interested in "roughing it" can base themselves almost anywhere. Explorers and archaeologists might establish base camps, where they can stockpile supplies while venturing elsewhere. Such encampment depends upon the characters' survival skills to stay viable — and usually a fair number of armed guards as well. Without the benefits that even a small colony can provide, the characters must learn to survive on their own... making the establishment and maintenance of a headquarters an adventure unto itself. Nothing gets a party's goat like having their stuff stolen — raiding natives, monsters, or pirate attacks can make even the most heavily-armed camp feel vulnerable.

What to Do

Having established a firm base of operations, the characters are now free to pursue whatever adventures the GM has in mind. The obvious candidates are outlined in the "Overview" section above, and most can be fleshed out into an entire campaign with minimal difficulty. The islands in Chapter Two provide plenty of adventure opportunities. For those looking for something a little different, here is a brief list of alternate ideas for campaigns set in the Archipelago.

THE RUN

Archipelago colonies produce a large amount of wealth for their mother nations... with one big catch. They must be transported back to Théah, leaving plenty of opportunity for ne'r-do-wells to rob, sink, or otherwise impair the steady flow of resources back home. The characters could be assigned to guard such a vessel, helping to keep the shipping lanes free of pirates by whatever means are most expedient.

GUERRILLA WAR

Not every native tribe is happy to see outsiders; some have been mistreated by colonial powers, or suffered open oppression at the hands of the Vaticine Church. Some of them might decide to fight back. The characters could participate in such activities, either out of sympathy to their cause or to harm enemy powers back home. Besides fighting alongside the "insurgents," they could provide arms, sabotage colonial operations, or even solicit other tribes to join the cause.

SURVIVAL OF THE FITTEST

The Archipelago makes an excellent locale for a wilderness survival campaign. Characters could portray colonists hoping to build a new life for themselves in an island paradise. They must contend with locals, wild animals, tropical diseases, and raiders, as well as more exotic dangers. What if their island paradise contained an unstable Synchron artifact which must be deactivated, or was the former home to a shoal of sirens who have begun preying on the colony?

SHIPWRECKED

Similar to "Survival of the Fittest," above, the characters could find themselves shipwrecked on a deserted island: the only survivors of the doomed vessels. They would have to find food and shelter, defend themselves from indigenous threats, and plan some sort of escape. Or, having established a new home for themselves a la Robinson Crusoe, they might suddenly be forced to protect it from unwelcome interlopers. Obviously, survival skills would play a huge role in such a campaign, but any island on the Archipelago could provide plenty of chances for more traditional adventuring as well.

THE MOST DANGEROUS GAME

The Montaigne nobility once established a private game preserve in the Archipelago — L'Île du Bête (see page 34). With the coming of the Revolution, it has been abandoned, leaving plenty of "big game hunters" hungry for excitement. The Archipelago could provide an extended safari for the characters, hunting the most terrifying creatures in the world. *Gelingen* monster hunters, itching for a new challenge, could make their way to the Archipelago, perhaps enlisting local characters as guides. Alternately, ecologically-minded characters could work to thwart such cruel sport, turning island hunting expeditions into deadly games of cat-and-mouse... with the local fauna waiting to claim the loser.

CHAPTER TWO:

The Islands

This chapter contains descriptions for nine prominent islands in the Midnight Archipelago. Their Théan locations are listed on the master map, but they may be easily transplanted into other campaigns if the GM wishes.

Infidel's Refuge: The Island of Carlos

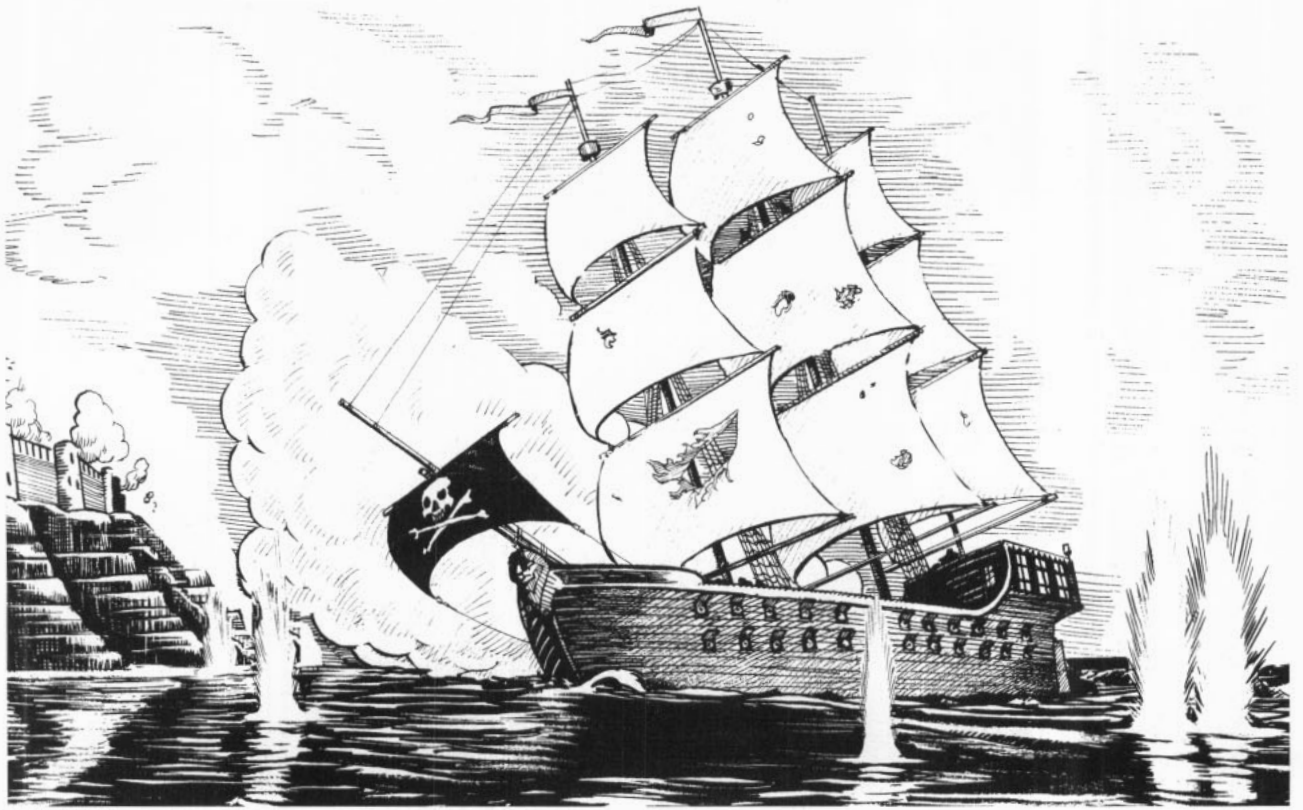
"Rejoice, my friends, for Theus loves and cares for you. Despite sins, despite flaws, He loves you."

History

Three hundred years ago, a village priest named Padre Carlos de Rioja preached a sermon to his small congregation on the topic of love, and declared that Theus had an infinite capacity for love, regardless of a person's flaws. In a rare twist of fate, a local nobleman disguised himself as a commoner and listened in with the congregation that day. Impressed with the priest's faith and eloquence, he mentioned the sermon in court the following week. A member of the Inquisition heard his comments and immediately traveled to the small parish and arrested the priest. Padre Carlos was brought to trial on charges of heresy for endorsing the view that Theus forgave and loved all sinners, including sorcerers. The trial dragged on for over a month, during which time the priest's true

views were overwhelmed by dozens of false reports. The Inquisition claimed he endorsed sorcery and declared it a fit practice for nobles, even though this directly contradicted both Vaticine theology and Padre Carlos's own views. They found him guilty and burned him at the stake for heresy.

Over the next hundred years, a small group of individuals emerged who followed the dead priest's teachings. They were primarily sorcerers who wanted to be a part of the Church despite their unholy powers. They believed that love for their fellow man and Theus was the greatest virtue and that sorcery could co-exist in a pious and holy life. Although the Inquisition hunted them down as heretics, their faith persevered until 1425, when an Eisen priest named Heinrich Volstad gathered a large group of them in a small village in Western Castille. There they intended to codify their beliefs and petition for sanction from the Church. With over a hundred members from Eisen, Montaigne, Castille, Vodacce and even a few Vestenmannanjar, they thought they could convince others of their righteousness and convert new followers. However, as the meeting began, Volstad suddenly warned them of a prophetic vision he witnessed the night before. The Inquisition had discovered them, he claimed, and their only hope lay in fleeing to the west where they could find a land where they could live in peace. Luckily the galleon Volstad had taken from Eisen was still off shore, stocked with provisions. The sorcerers watched the approaching torches of a troop of Inquisitors as they sailed away that very night.



The trip was long and arduous. Disease struck the ship killing most of the crew, leaving the sorcerers (mostly nobles with little knowledge of seamanship) to sail it themselves. Their journey ended abruptly when they ran aground in the dark, stranding them on a strange uncharted island. Volstad declared they had reached their new home. The few remaining crew and the nobles used the ship's wreckage to build shelters and to prepare the land. All hopes of returning to Théah were dashed, but they had the challenge of building a new colony to keep them occupied. Naming the island Carlos after the priest who began their movement — and calling themselves “Carls” — the colonists survived and prospered on their simple island home.

Lying southeast of the Thalusian Islands, Carlos formed a rough oval lying east to west; only luck prevented anyone from noticing that the isle is inhabited. A small volcano and several large hills lay in the northwest corner of the island, but they contained no iron deposits or other sources of wealth. The island hosted numerous trees, but there were no signs of wild life or any animals at all. With no metal other than what they could salvage from the ship's wreckage and no farm animals to help them, the work went slowly. Fortunately, the galleon carried seeds (originally bound for Eisen), so the Carls could plant large tracts of land with wheat, barley, oats, tomatoes, and other vegetables. While they waited for the first crops, the island's fruit trees and abundant sea life provided food.

Unfortunately, the chests filled with books, inks and parchment were lost during the shipwreck. Without those supplies, they were unable to keep accurate records of the colony's history past the first year or so. The colonists quickly found themselves growing more and more dependent upon oral history and allegorical tales told to remind them of the facts. In this new land without ready means of recording

information, the Carls returned to a simpler way of life. They renounced their noble titles and names, preferring to only use their first names. This also helped reduce tensions between the sorcerous nobles and the common sailors who possessed vital survival skills. They also abandoned their various languages and agreed to speak Théan whenever they could. They built a communal culture where they strove to love and understand each other. Decisions were made by a group of three elected elders, who controlled the day-to-day happenings of the village. For difficult decisions, they often put the question before the entire community.

In ensuing years the practice of marriage was dismantled; instead couples were permitted to form and dissolve at will. The entire village raised children. By the onset of puberty, each child was expected to select a skill for which he possessed natural aptitude and cultivate it. While they were responsible for learning skills to ensure the well-being of the group, their chosen skill became their life's work. They would learn it, experiment with it, expand it, and then teach its nuances to others. These skills included farming, fishing, the Montaigne language, rope making, childcare, reading, weaving, music and pottery among many others.

The interbreeding of sorcerous bloodlines became another fact of life on Carlos. In Théah, different bloodlines ran through each nation's nobility granting their possessors sorcery powers. For example, Castellians who possessed sorcery had fire magic while the Montaigne nobles were able to teleport through bloody rifts in space. For the first several generations, Carls married within their own kind, preserving their bloodlines. However, their new philosophy soon led to liaisons between mixed couples leading to tremendous interbreeding in the next generations. Some feared sorcery would soon die out entirely because of the interbreeding. Beginning in the fifth and sixth generations, however,

something unexpected happened: sorcerers with bizarre powers and combinations of powers appeared from mixed marriages. Then in succeeding generations, entirely new breeds of sorcerers emerged. How these powers came to be was unknown, only that they emerged in the families where at least three sorcerous bloodlines mingled. Descendants of a few surviving members of the von Drachen family, who possessed the power of *Zerstörung*, manifested particularly strange abilities.

The Carls used their magic to their fullest extent. Messages moved across the island at the speed of *Porté* sorcerers. *El Fuego Adentro* sorcerers used fire to clear land of crops at the end of the year, signal to others and to amuse children by creating fiery dancing animals. Fate Witches gained insight into conflicts even before they emerged and then acted to ensure peace on the island. *Zerstörung* magic allowed them to dig wells and tunnel into the hills with ease despite their lack of metal implements (this enabled them to create bricks of stone for building rather than wood). *Laerdom* magic was never as powerful as other forms of sorcery, but many objects on the island still bear runes that once served to strengthen them or enhance some useful property.

The stranger powers were also used extensively. One Carl, who possessed the ability to create gold from thin air, spent years making beautiful adornments for each of his fellows. Another could alter a plant simply by touching it and he ensured that all of the island's crops were free from disease or flaw. A third could make blood fall from a clear sky, making her very popular with the fishermen: after a quick shower, they put out to sea and gathered huge numbers of fish that had come to the surface to feed.

However these extraordinary powers did not come without a price. Starting in the sixth generation, the sorcerers began to discover drawbacks: generally matters of inconvenience or aesthetics. For example, when Carlos's *Porté* sorcerers used their power, they perspired blood for several minutes. *El Fuego Adentro* fires tended to flicker with other colors and produce sulfuric odors, and those who created them became obsessed with the flickering flame, ignoring everything else around them. *Zerstörung* sorcerers lost their memories when they used their powers so that even a young sorcerer would likely forget much of his personal life and knowledge. As time went on, more severe traits emerged: misshapen features, twisted limbs, baldness, personality quirks and insanity such as dementia, catatonia, multiple personalities and manic-depression. These were all far more common in those who possess sorcery and mystical powers.

More than anything else, these sorcerous drawbacks were the greatest challenge to the Carls' way of life. As the disfigurements grew with each passing generation, many wondered whether sorcery was a gift from Theus or a curse from Legion. This struck at the heart of their beliefs and became the focus of fierce debate for years to follow. The matter reached a head with Maria, a daughter of Sorte and Vesten bloodlines who possessed the ability to heal others by taking their wounds onto herself. She declared that Theus blessed her with His gift and that its flaw was simply her own weakness. Maria's faith and sincerity, combined with her sacrifice early in life to heal dozens of villagers after a brutal storm flattened half the village, convinced the Carls that sorcery must be divine in origin regardless of how imperfect it became when contained within a human vessel. The divine was too strong, they reasoned, too easily work

through flawed human vessels, thus creating deformities and mental problems. In those terms, even the most grotesque deformities or aberrations were a mark of Theus' power. The greater the affliction, the greater Theus' blessing. The belief continues to this day; Several of the recent elders were completely irrational since the Carls believed their ravings brought them closer to Theus. Most outsiders would look upon these individuals as monsters. Given some of their powers, that might not be far off.

Geography

The island's tropical geography matches that of the rest of the Midnight Archipelago. It contains no indigenous human life, nor did it hold any *Syrneth* ruins or other ancient secrets. It remains undiscovered by both *Théan* explorers and natives of the Archipelago, leaving the Carls to evolve in utter isolation.

Volcano

Several large hills covered with stunted fruit trees stand in the northwestern corner of the island and in the middle of them is a single volcano, Mt. Carlos, that still smolders. The Carls possessing *El Fuego Adentro* bloodlines use the crater as a practice spot because only bare rocks and ash fill this area — allowing them to use their powers to fullest extent without danger to anyone else. Observers of the crater will occasionally see giant birds and other animals created out of flames, giant fireballs and clouds of flame. The volcano was originally extinct, but the extensive use of fire-based magic has re-awakened it. A master of fire magic could conceivably re-ignite the volcano and cause it to erupt. The village uses a number of caves in the hills as storage areas to keep winter food and firewood when not needed.

Fields

The fields are planted with a variety of vegetables and tended by the entire village. They lack fertilizers and the iron to construct sturdy farming implements. Visitors from *Théah*, and *Castille* will find the fields well-tended, but unimpressive. The plants are stunted and lack the flavor found in other locales.

Forests

Tropical trees cover much of the island still, but this does not cut down on the amount of food produced — most of the trees bear fruit. Visitors will find the flora unnaturally twisted and warped. A wasting disease ripped through the island many years ago, and while one of the Carls used his sorcery to cure the trees, they have grown stunted and warped ever since. However, like the fields, the fruit trees are nicely cared for and the villagers cleared space between each tree to allow them to grow properly.

Certain areas of the forest differ significantly from the surrounding territory. The temperature is always several degrees cooler here and the shadows appear much deeper. The Carls avoid these areas without really considering the reason. Even birds and insects do not live within the shadows. Everyone has the feeling of being watched by hostile eyes from the darkness. Strange incidents take place here, beyond the eyes of man: *Porté* holes that rip open without reason, mysterious voices whispering just beyond hearing, and objects or animals simply withering and dying in a couple of breaths.

Village

A group of stone-brick huts near the southern end of the island serve as the major living area for most of the island's inhabitants. The huts are constructed of granite with clay tile roofs and provide excellent protection from the elements. They stand fifty feet from a sandy beach on the southern end of the island — clearly visible to ships at sea. Anyone approaching the island for the first time can easily find the village from the smoke of the fire going in the center (the isle remains uncharted by blind luck alone). However the first sight of the Carls would give even hard-bitten explorers pause.

Most of the villagers are twisted, either in mind or body from rampant inbreeding and extensive use of sorcery. Upon the approach of any visitors, dozens of Porté holes will rip open as the villagers approach from the fields and outlying areas, and several enormous creatures made entirely of flames will rise up over the village. The Carls mean it as a welcoming gesture, but it will cause fear amongst sailors in wooden ships. The villagers will then rush down to the edge of the water and shout out greetings in ancient Théan to approaching ships. While they never carry weapons, many use farming implements such as scythes or sickles which may appear hostile. Their physical deformities speak quite strikingly: a man nine feet tall whose limbs are only an inch thick, a woman with a third arm, several hunchbacks and a number of people covered in blood and scars. If they attacked, the Carls will flee back to the village and regroup there. Then they will turn their powers against the invaders and fight to the best of their meager ability while several Porté masters use their powers to allow the entire group to retreat to the volcano. After a few hours, the Carls will organize into a more effective defensive force. They will avoid using offensive force or attacking their foes for as long as possible, trying to convince the invaders of their good intentions and of the possibility of peace. Even after dozens of their number have died, they will continue looking for the good side of the invaders and working towards a peaceful solution.

The village itself contains several dozen huts, though many of these never see practical use. The huts are for anyone to use, and the village jointly assumes the duty of cleaning and caring for them. When a couple or individual wants to be alone, they go to a different hut and the group respects their wishes. Large debates or meetings take place outside in the area between huts, usually around a large circle of stones for bonfires that serves as the village center. Two slightly larger buildings near the stones house community property such as tools and food. These are not guarded and individuals may take and leave items there as they see fit. Most of the tools are rather crudely fashioned. The Carls are slowly losing their knowledge of more civilized skills.

Isolated Houses

There are several houses set apart from the village, constructed of stone bricks, like the others, but sit further back from the shore amidst the trees. They exist to accommodate anyone who feels a greater need for isolation. These people are not exiles and are still welcome, but they generally avoid others until they have worked out whatever dilemma drove them from the tightly knit-community. The only current inhabitant of the isolated huts is Pierce, one of the few islanders who doubts the rosy picture of the future (see *Pierce's character description for more information*).

Culture and Theology

The Carls' theology is the root of their greatest hurdle. The society they fled from had firmly established that sorcery was an affront to Theus. Knowledge was pure and good while sorcery was a force of corruption; many actually believed those who possessed sorcery were inherently evil. The Carls' ancestors bore sorcerous blood but did not believe themselves doomed for that alone. They developed a belief system where Theus' love for His creation superceded accidents of birth, and any sin could be forgiven, even sorcery itself. When their descendents found themselves cut off from all the texts and writings that codified anti-sorcery beliefs, they justified their abilities until their descendents finally believed that it was a blessing from their loving creator. The very sorcery which grants them their powers also twists their bodies and minds. However rather than take this as a warning, the Carls see the changes as merely signs of their own imperfection as vessels of divine gifts.

However, anyone from outside Carlos will see the matter differently. The Carls possess tremendous abilities, but proof of Theus' disapproval is clear. Those who use sorcery sweat blood, injure themselves too easily, or call upon the fire and brimstone of Legion itself. Théan religious beliefs will prompt Vaticine and Objectionists alike to condemn the society as heresy. Further a number of secret organizations have pledged themselves to the destruction of those who possess it. They will stop at nothing to ensure that the twisted form of sorcery found on the island never leaves it. Even the most liberal explorer will find the mutations and changes wrought by the Carls' blood disturbing at best.

For those playing in worlds other than Theah, a similar dynamic can be facilitated, as long as the Carls' sorcery stem from some sort of evil — a demonic pact, an unholy ritual, or the like. The Carls fled their homes to avoid persecution, but it should be a persecution born of a true danger, with a genuine evil at its root.

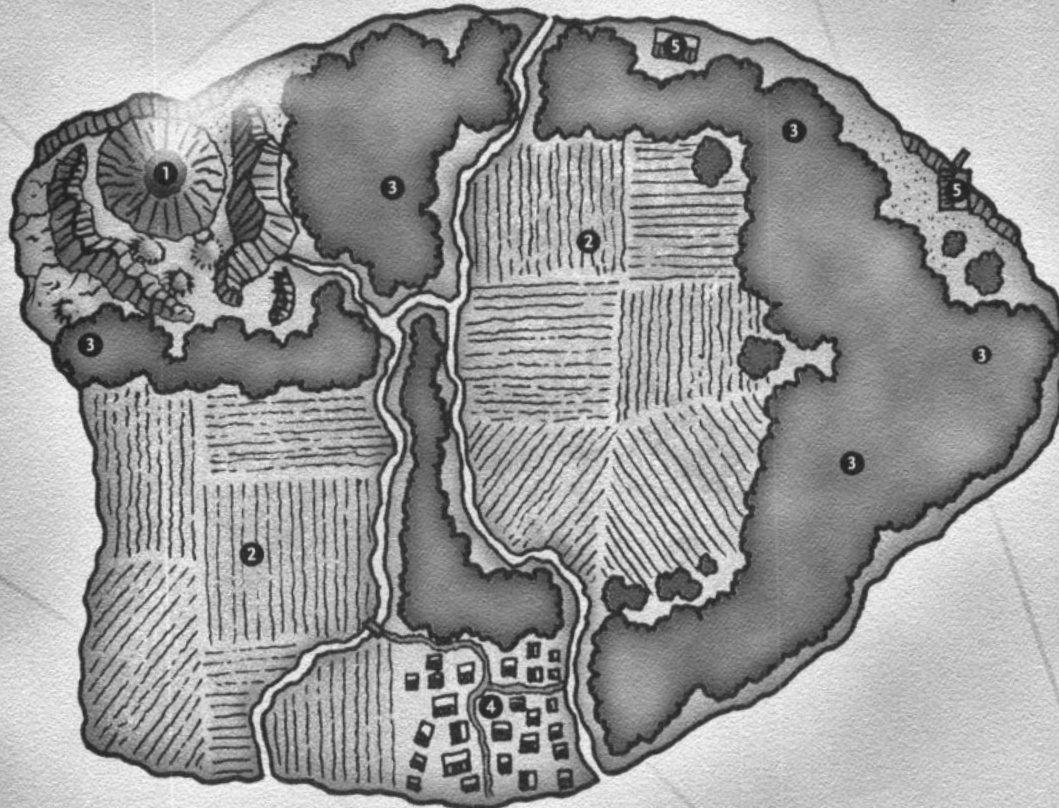
The Nature of Doom

The future of Carlos is incredibly fluid and unchangeable. On the one hand, the identity of the people who discover the island will have tremendous influence upon the future. A group of Explorers or Vendel traders would likely find them pleasant and help them contact Théah; the religious implications would likely not become an issue for them. However, if the Castillians, Eisen or Vaticine Church find the island first, the result will likely be open warfare between a well-equipped force and a group of desperate sorcerers. Those who know of the dangers of sorcery will not allow this threat to go unchallenged.

GM Secrets and Adventure Hooks

- Someone must be the first to meet the people of this island, presumably the players. They will be the first to encounter the twisted sorcery and theology of the island, and decide whether any of the Carls escape the island... and who is informed about it.

The Island of Carlos



- 1. Mt. Carlos
- 2. Fields
- 3. "Cold Spots"
- 4. The Village
- 5. Isolated Huts

0 1.5 3
Scale in Miles

- Swashbuckling heroes are destined to fight against impossible odds such as this island faces. Perhaps the party discovers a potential Inquisition attack on an island in the Archipelago, and naturally attempt to save the innocents there. Only when they arrive will they understand that the Inquisition is not always wrong. If the heroes find themselves unable to support Carlos, but unwilling to walk away, Pierce's distrust of outsiders (see his entry in the "Characters" section) may prompt him to drive them away.
- Any casual observer on the island will easily see that every person wears at least a few pieces of gold jewelry. The workmanship is crude, but the metal is highly refined. When queried, the Carls explain that they were a gift from Theus and freely give some of their gold away. If pressed, they deny further access to the gold. The gold was actually created by a long-dead Carls, but it is unlikely that any cold-hearted villain will believe such a tale. Not when they could torture the villagers until they discover the truth. Even worse, he might take some of the Carls as slaves and force them to use their unholy powers against his enemies... enemies like the PCs.
- Heinrich Volstad is the priest who originally brought the Carls together and to this island. However, he was actually working for a mysterious group who wished to create the precise sort of conditions prevalent on the isle. And he wasn't working alone. In every generation, one or two people were entrusted with the true history of the island and taught the secrets of manipulation, deceit and control. They call themselves the Volstads and they are the true rulers of the island. At least one of the elders always belongs to this elite group, but they rule through misdirection and manipulation. No one outside their group even knows they exist, including Pierce. Some of them are evil and enjoy the power of their position while others are ordinary men and women trying to work for the betterment of their society. They know that the group that created the Carls may still exist outside the island and they know a very specific hand movement used by members of the group to identify each other. But even they don't know what purpose this group has or of their plans for the Carls.

Whatever the group's identity, their efforts on the island could easily involve the players. They could be the *Die Kreuzritter* or the *Rilasciare*, who tried to sink Volstad's original ship and now have no qualms about finishing the job now. It could be a few *Thalusai* (see the *Die Kreuzritter™* sourcebook, or *Heroes, Villains, and Monsters™* page 75) who slipped through the Barrier, and now wish to create a permanent breach by confining sorcery to a small area. Or it could be a secret organization — perhaps orchestrated by *Alvara Arciniega* (see *Heroes, Villains, and Monsters™* page 14), who wish to observe the effect of combining sorcerous bloodlines. Any players who oppose these groups might run across some communication relating to the island. Or their experiences with the Carls may lead them stand against whatever shadowy force brought them into existence.

- The "shadowy" areas of the forest (see page 15) contain one of the greatest threats on the island. There is an invisible Barrier that covers the entire world and keeps out terrible beings. However, sorcery slowly tears into the Barrier and

generations of extensive magical use on Carlos have weakened it so that now it barely functions. Some of the beings from beyond may have broken through and now infest the seas of the Midnight Archipelago. Others bide their time and wait for it to weaken further. The strange occurrences are actually manifestations of the Barrier's weakness and grow more common as time passes. When the Barrier is weak enough, the beings from beyond will attack it with great force and attempt to shatter it, releasing them and all their kind into our world. If this happens, all of Theah will be open to invasion. The *Kreuzritter*, the *Rilasciare*, *Sophia's Daughters*, the *Knights of the Rose and Cross*, and the *Inquisition* would do anything to prevent such an occurrence, and might send the players to turn back the invasion before it is too late. If two or more groups send parties to the island, chaos and violence might erupt. Can the characters from each group unite to fight the real enemy?

Characters

Pierce

The progeny of mixed *Porté/Sorte* bloodlines, Pierce was born thirty years ago and inherited powers from both of his parents. From his father, he gained the ability to see images in spider webs: pictures of things very close by (within thirty feet) of another spider web. From his mother, he gained the ability to teleport at will throughout the island. He can do this without specifically bleeding areas due to his exacting familiarity with the island. While practicing his *Porté* skills as a young boy, he found himself in one of the caves and discovered a journal hidden in a small crevasse. It was so carefully hidden and preserved that a chill ran down his spine. He kept the journals a secret and quietly learned to read *Vodacce* until he could understand what he had found.

It was the diary of Heinrich Volstad kept during the early years of the island. It detailed the journey to Carlos and the care with which Volstad set up the colony. In actuality, Volstad was no priest; he belonged to an association that arranged for Carlos's martyrdom. A century before, they informed the Inquisition of Padre Carlos' sermon and ensured that the fanatics twisted his message. They quietly kept an eye on the heretics, established Volstad as a leader and gathered them together before revealing their location to the Inquisition. The goal had been to gather as many sorcerers together as possible and then force them to emigrate to the Midnight Archipelago. Volstad's treachery extended to poisoning the crew and purposefully running the ship aground. His employers promised to rescue him, but in his later years, Volstad realized that they had abandoned him to his fate. In the final pages, he speculated on the true goals of this secret group. Did they want the sorcerers to die? Did they want to see what effect mixing bloodlines would have? Would they seek to use the Carls as pawns or to simply destroy them?

After reading the journal, Pierce changed. He grew cold and distant and when time came for him to declare the skill he would focus his life upon, he said, "defense." The others didn't know what he meant, but allowed him to choose his

path. Since that time, Pierce has spent all of this time learning how to fight and defend himself and his people. If this mysterious group seeks to enslave or destroy them, he means to stop them. He speaks little, but the others tend to listen carefully to his words. Pierce will be the leader of any defense the Carls establish and will fight to his last breath against the outsiders.

Pierce (d20™)

Human Ranger 4/Porté 5: CR 7; SZ M (humanoid); HD 4d10+5d4+18; hp 52; Init+2 (Dex); Spd 30 ft.; AC 17 (+2 Dex, +5 Unarmored Defense Proficiency); Atks: +9/+4 Knives; SA Two Weapon Fighting, Favored Enemy: Human; SV Fort +6, Ref +3, Will +3; Str 14, Dex 14, Con 14, Int14, Wis 14, Char 14; AL NG; Skills: Balance +6, Climb +7, Heal +7, Hide +7, Intuit Direction +7, Jump +7, Knowledge (General) +3, Knowledge (Carlos) +7, Knowledge (Sorcery) +7, Listen +7, Move Silently +7, Search +7, Spot +7, Swim +7, Wilderness Lore +7; Feats: Track, Provided by Nature, Unarmored Defense Proficiency (Beginner), Willful, Leadership, Full Blooded Porté.

Pierce can use his porté abilities to Walk to any spot on the island without bleeding it. He can also look into a spider web and see anything within fifty feet of any other spider web on the island. Pierce's face is covered by an intricate web of blood-red scars that continue to increase in number the more he uses his Porté.

Pierce — Hero (7th Sea™)

Brawn: 3, **Finesse:** 3, **Wits:** 3, **Resolve:** 3, **Panache:** 3
Reputation: 1
Background: None
Arcana: Willful
Advantages: Théan
Hunter: Ambush 2, Fishing 2, Stealth 4, Survival 4, Tracking 1, Traps 2
Porté (Master): Walk 5, Blood 5, Attune 5, Catch 5, Pocket 5.
Scholar: History 3, Mathematics 2, Philosophy 2, Research 1, Theology 2
Athlete: Breakfall 2, Climbing 3, Footwork 3, Leaping 2, Lifting 2, Rolling 2, Side Step 2, Sprinting 3, Swimming 2, Throwing 2
Knife: Attack (Knife) 3, Parry (Knife) 3, Throw (Knife) 3.

Pierce can use his porté knacks to Walk to any spot on the island without bleeding it. He can also look into a spider web and see anything within fifty feet of any other spider web on the island. Pierce's face is covered by an intricate web of blood red scars that continue to increase in number as he uses his porté.

Giselle

Eight years ago, the Carls received another challenge. The island's greatest Fate Witch, Gabrielle, was asked to predict the future of a newborn child. Gabrielle instead declared that it would be the last baby born on the island. The community reacted with elation, believing that she had foreseen their long-awaited return to the mainland. After Gabrielle's death and with no sign of rescue, a few have begun to believe instead that a natural disaster will destroy them all.

No other child has been born since that day, but time is running out. Two of the young people, Frederick and Tessa, have declared their love for one another and Tessa is expecting a baby. The child is due by the end of the season and still there has been no sign of a disaster or a rescue. The other Sorte mages cannot see any destiny that lies more than a month in the future, but most now doubt the veracity of Gaabrielle's prediction.

Gabrielle's daughter, Giselle is one of the prominent young people on Carlos. A tall beautiful woman, Giselle is known for her drawings and intellect rather than for her sorcery. While she traces her heritage through Vestenmanjavenar, Zerstorung and Sorte bloodlines, she possesses no known sorcery. She will serve as one of the village spokesmen if any outsiders arrive. The villagers hope her calm voice and gentle smile will prevent misunderstandings or arguments.

However, Giselle does possess one power of which the others are unaware. Any drawing she construes becomes a reality. Once she attempted to convince herself otherwise by sketching a ridiculous picture of a gruff old villager named Bernard kissing a fish. Through a series of improbable events, Bernard lost a friendly bet to Jeziah and as payment had to kiss a fish. Giselle never mentioned her power to anyone, partly because she drew a picture last year while daydreaming that showed her on a small boat with strangers leaving a village in ruin.

Giselle loves her people, but she is primarily concerned with saving herself. She will do anything to ensure her survival, but if her vision comes to pass, it will destroy part of her as well. On that day she will vow vengeance against those who harmed her people; her own drive for self-preservation will make her crazy.

Giselle (d20™)

Courtier 3: CR 3; SZ M (humanoid); HD 3d6; hp 15; Init +2 (Dex); Spd 30 ft.; AC 16 (+2 Dex, +4 Unarmored Defense Proficiency); Atks: +3; SA Wealth, Talent, Style and Grace; SV Fort +1, Ref +3, Will +7; Str 11, Dex 14, Con 11, Int 14, Wis 15, Char 16; AL N; Skills: Bluff +9, Diplomacy +9, Gather Info +9, Intimidate +4, Knowledge (Carlos) +8, Knowledge Sorcery +7, Listen +7, Innuendo +7, Perform (Drawing/Sketching/Painting) +14, Search +7, Sense Motive +9, Spot +7, Profession (Farming) +7, Speak Language (Montaigne, Théan, Vodacce [alternately, any three languages from your campaign]); Feats: Iron Will, Gossip, Skill Focus (Drawing/Painting), Skill Focus (Diplomacy), Unarmored Defense Proficiency (Beginner).

Giselle — Villain (7th Sea™)

Brawn 2, **Finesse** 2, **Wits:** 3, **Resolve** 4, **Panache** 2
Reputation: 5
Background: None
Arcana: Indecisive
Advantages: Théan, Montaigne, Vodacce, Appearance (Above Average)
Artist: Drawing 4, Painting 4
Courtier: Dancing 1, Diplomacy 3, Gossip 3, Oratory 1, Sincerity 2, Seduction 2
Servant: Etiquette 3, Farming 3, Fashion 2, Menial Tasks 3, Unobtrusive 2

What Should Not Be: The Isle of the Red God

Located near the southern end of the Archipelago, this small island is known as "Little Avalon" by passing sailors. It is surrounded by gray mist that gives it an eerie cast. The island's blackened volcano rises above the sea, bringing with it the secrets of St. Rose and the creatures of the depths. Superstitious sailors cross themselves and sail on, hoping the isle and whatever lives on it quickly drift beyond the horizon. Brave captains sail to the isle in search of fresh supplies. Both find what they are looking for.

History

In and of itself, the island is unremarkable: one of hundreds scattered across the Midnight Archipelago. To understand its history, begin with its de facto ruler, Dr. Feodor Markov. Markov who grew up under the shadow of Matushka in a small Ussuran fishing village. The people there whispered her name and set places at their dinner tables for her. Even as a child, he couldn't understand the fear and respect they held for a person they had never seen and would never talk to. His father, tall and intimidating, cried like a baby for her during a vicious storm that befell his boat. Feodor soon realized that as long as Matushka watched over her children, the people of his country would not grow up.

He signed on with a merchant ship at fourteen and never looked back. Life at sea was rough but profitable. He read every book he could, and learned the language of every sailor on his ship. He didn't throw his money away on cheap liquor and expensive Jennies. He spent his days in port reading and his nights learning the business of sailing from the quartermasters and captains he sailed under. When the rest of the crew staggered back to the ship, "Frugal Fedya" still had plenty of coins left in his purse.

Feodor soon retired from the sea a rich man. Still, he hungered for knowledge about the world around him, however, so he began to take classes at Dionna University in Vodacce. The study of the world filled him with fire. His professors applauded him as a brilliant student and an excellent scientist. His studies concluded, he traveled to every country he could, still searching for new things to learn. Life as an academic made him heady with power. After several more years of wandering, he returned to the university and settled into the life of a professor.

As time wore on, his theories became progressive. He realized that science was the key to the maturation of humanity. He also saw that his colleagues fumbling around in the dark with their research. He knew that if mankind could master the world around it, even death itself could be conquered. Needless to say, his theories shocked the academic and religious communities; he soon found himself being shunned by academic brotherhoods and at the mercy of radical religious groups. One of them burned his home to the ground. His wife perished in the blaze, though his young daughter managed to escape through a window. Angry with grief Dr. Markov came upon a revelation: the world was filled with children, too, scared of knowledge and learning like all children are. He would be the one to teach them.

With his remaining money, he hired a ship and set sail for parts unknown. He took with him his daughter, his research, and a theory missing one vital element. His contact with sorcerers led him to believe that the so-called "magic" they possessed was an inherited trait. His research confirmed that the blood contained the essence of sorcery. If there were a way to immerse a subject and force the humours of his body to absorb the sorcery, he could transform that man into a paragon while proving that sorcery was no more related to mysticism than blue eyes or dark skin would signify such.

The ship settled on the island Dr. Markov now calls home, originally to re-supply with the vast fruits and wild game within the lush forests. The strange fog that permeated the island intrigued Markov. While the sailors re-supplied the ship, he and his daughter pressed toward the mountain at the center of the isle. As they explored the side of the mountain, Markov noticed the fog was actually steam from the volcanic rocks being cooled by the ocean water and rain.

What happened next is unclear. According to Markov, the mountain suddenly shook and the earth cracked open, creating a violent gush of lava. Markov's daughter was caught in the plume and instantly incinerated. Markov escaped harm, but his horror and grief knew no bounds as he made his way back to camp. That was the story he told, and no one had any reason to doubt him (*For the full story, see "Aleksantros," on page 24*). Facts aside, however, the incident had an additional effect. He still lacked one vital element in his theory of human perfection, and the volcano seemingly provided an answer: he needed fire to force the change. Fire was the element that transformed ice to water, water to steam, and wood to ash. If properly harnessed, he could use it to change a man into a god.

What better place to do transform humanity than an island with an everlasting flame?

The crew of the ship became the subjects of his first tests. He destroyed the vessel with a fire in the powder room, then quietly spirited away the survivors one by one. Soon, new creatures were loose on the island — beast-men borne of Markov's sorcerous concoctions. The Ussuran attempted to blend their human intelligence with the physical characteristics of animals. He had copious amounts of Pyeryem blood — though it is a mystery where he obtained it, since he is not a sorcerer — and by mixing it with animal entrails, he could imbue a subject with enhanced physical power. Unfortunately, it also robbed them of much of their reasoning power, transforming them into bestial brutes with only the barest memory of human qualities. Markov viewed this as a minor setback. He only needed to hit upon the precise mixture of chemicals and the proper subject, and his theory would become a reality.

In this manner, he transformed subject after subject, whittling down the crew and forcing the remaining ones into his confidence. The "beast-men" now roaming the island began to prey on the crew, and Markov convinced the survivors to move closer to the volcano. The elevation would allow them to shore their defenses and perhaps spot passing ships. They helped him carve his home out of the rock and he repaid them by applying his formula to them one by one. The first and most successful was Aleksandros, who quickly became his bodyguard and enforcer. Those who didn't work were killed quickly and publicly.

With his initial supply of subjects exhausted, Markov turned to capturing crew members from passing ships. He sends Aleksandros out in a small rowboat to board passing vessels at night, seizing anyone foolish enough to sleep above-decks. Occasionally, a formal boarding party will arrive on the island, and he allows the beast-men to capture them for him. The creatures that he made all revere him as a god but he looks upon them like his idiot children. He will not rest until his theory is proven completely correct. All he needs are a few perfect subjects.

Geography

Shipwreck Beach

The island has one major beach on the northwest side, marked by the remains of an abandoned encampment. Parts of a ship, called the *Bright Horizon* by the masthead were assembled into a ramshackle camp; the crow's nest juts out from a mast planted toward the edge, and the lower decks were converted into a series of conjoined shacks. The buildings are in to disrepair and there is little salvageable in the remains. The camp has supplies stored in some of the buildings, but the appearance suggests a raid from someone or something. Beds are overturned, guns have been fired, and gashes from missed sword cuts mar the walls. The last inhabitants of this place didn't go peacefully. But if they were attacked, why didn't the attackers make off with the spoils? The only thing of interest is hidden in the crow's nest. Hardy individuals making the treacherous climb find a diary written by a member of the crew. The ship apparently belonged to pirates stopped here to resupply. Shortly before they were ready to sail again, the ship suffered an explosion in the powder room that marooned all hands on the island. The surviving crew made a decent go of it until they were slowly decimated by "strange creatures" that attacked in the dark of night. The diary ends with a scribbled account of a final attack and a disturbing revelation.

"The Captain! He's one of them now! I pray he can't see me up here."

This is the remains of the vessel which first brought Dr. Markov here. The crew were all killed or carried off to be the subjects of Markov's experiments. With "prey" no longer residing there, the beast-men have left it alone, and the elements slowly reclaim the ramshackle structure.

The Red God

An imposing volcano in the center of the island, it can't be missed and is the source of the strange mists. Though the volcano is dormant, small cracks and hot springs exist throughout the island. The underground steam and the reaction of the bubbling lava with sea water cause the near constant fog. War veterans will note how much the mist resembles the "fog of battle," complete with its acrid smell and gray tinge.

Occasionally, underground eruptions occur and cause small earthquakes, which in turn can cause rockslides and other minor natural disasters. The island's inhabitants refer to it as The Red God, for the bright color of the molten rock that sometimes bubbled over the top of the mountain. They claim that the Red God is sleeping now under the rock but it tosses and turns fitfully. The god takes the form of lava and his divinity burns those who try to touch him, but he was put to sleep by a White Knight who keeps his watchful eye on the

god to make sure he doesn't wake and sink the island with his wrath. To keep the White Knight happy, the beast-men bring him any interlopers they don't kill (or eat). In exchange, he periodically sends them new beast-men to swell their numbers. In this way are the best-men tribes kept full and the Red God kept appeased.

The Lush Jungle

A thick jungle surrounds the beach and covers the rest of the flat land of the island. The rich tropical soil allows rare fruit trees to grow in abundance and exotic flowers to bloom. It is a landscape as colorful as a painter's palette and the mist only enhances the bright colors all around. The jungle's beauty is a dangerous one. Strange striped beasts prowl the brush as well, ready to attack unsuspecting travelers.

Wise trackers find small trails that cut through the brush. Most of them run between the central volcano and the beach. Of course, following the trails is dangerous. Someone has set traps on a few of them meant to capture or incapacitate a person. Alert explorers get the unnerving feeling of being watched.

Polymorphistry: Markov's process

Markov refined his process considerably since his first few experiments. A subject is first rendered unconscious then placed in the large metal box. The box swings over to the alchemical setup. Markov or Aleksandros then connects a funnel between one of the air holes in the top of the box, and a large winepress full of the Polyhumour (which consists of ground viscera and parts of whatever animal or animals Dr. Markov wishes to combine with the subject). A supply of sorcerous blood (Pyeryem) is also introduced into the mix. Once the box is about half-full, Aleksandros swings it over the edge of the chasm and lowers it to the end of the chain. The box remains there for a few hours. While this doesn't submerge the box in molten rock, it does cause the Polyhumour — and any occupants — to heat up inside its container. (For roll and keep campaigns, this causes 1k1 wounds every fifteen minutes; a Brawn check TN 25 halves the damage, minimum 1. For d20 campaigns, the damage is 1d6 for the same period of time. A Fort save DC 20 halves the damage, minimum 1. *El Fuego Adentro* sorcerers are automatically immune to the entire process). If the occupant survives long enough, the sorcerous blood mixes with the animal parts suffusing the subject with magical energy. The subject transforms. Wings grow, tongues fork, and feet become hooves. Generally, Markov leaves the box boiling for four hours. When he returns, he retrieves the box and administers medical attention to the subject. Depending on its usefulness to him, he either keeps the creature as a servant or casts it out to one of the tribes. Aleksandros was the first creature made through this process, as well as every other beast creature on the island.

The original animal material comes from various natural creatures on the island: large cats, snakes, wild boars and tree monkeys. Cybela was created using the beagle from the *Bright Horizon*, and Markov wishes dearly for other creatures to use in his experiments. For now, however, the island's native fauna are more than enough.

The Beast-Men

From out of the brush they come, clothed in rags and the furs of the island denizens. Some wear articles pilfered from other victims. Some carry weapons fashioned from trees and rocks. Others carry rusty cutlasses and the remains of muskets better used as clubs. They screech and babble as they attack, but they occasionally form words civilized people recognize. Each is grotesque in its own way. They are basically human but possess little intelligence and their features reflect an animalistic cast. One may have vestigial wings; another may have the eyes of a snake. They are not skilled fighters but can overwhelm their opponents with sheer number. Small clues and hints of their existence should permeate early explorations: spears wedged into trees or harmless snare traps that pull an unsuspecting explorer into the air and upside down. Eventually, they will make themselves known to any intruder.

Three tribes of beast-men live on the island. Each tribe believes it has been chosen by the Red God as his favored people and that the others are foolish children. Markov could care less about their welfare. To him, they are ugly failures of his grand experiment. While initial conflicts with outsiders may prove violent, the leaders of the tribes aren't as bestial as Markov would believe. Outsiders can sometimes prove their worth by passing a test of bravery. If the new member of the tribe can convince the chief that Markov is only a man and that he made them the way they are, the tribes could set aside their differences and storm the manor house.

The tribes are:

- **Windwalkers:** These beast-men stay in the trees and swoop down on unsuspecting prey. They usually began as the topsmen of the ships that pass through. They are light of foot and live in huts built into the treetops. The Windwalkers will put a prisoner against one of their fastest members and hold a race through the treetops. The participants can never touch the ground and must swing and leap to the edge of the jungle.
- **Pebblemen:** This tribe found their home in the rough cliff faces of the volcano. They often pelt attackers with huge boulders they rip from the side of the mountains. They are hardier specimens that remember scraps of gunnery and the angles involved. Outsiders wishing to join the Pebblemen must defeat their strongest warrior, Otuga, in unarmed combat. Otuga is 6 ft. 8 in., 400 pound beast-man that could easily be mistaken for a boulder himself.



- **Bluefaces:** Painting their faces with dyes made from the weird fruits on the island, this tribe stalks the jungle floor looking for food. They are fierce fighters and only eat those who resist. Those meals they fight for are worth tasting. The Bluefaces accept an outsider if he or she can bring back one of the tigers or other predators that stalk the jungle. If the hunter isn't back by sundown, the tribe turns to his companions as meals.

People failing the beast men's tests are taken to that tribe's village. The beast men love having visitors for dinner. They are tied to stakes, the largest one is seasoned and a large cooking fire is prepared. If things reach this stage, only the intervention of a god can save them.

Luckily, the White Knight of the Red God lives just up the mountain.

Beast-Men (d20™)

Medium-Sized Humanoid

Hit Dice: 2d6

Initiative: +0

Speed: 40 ft.

AC: 12 (+2 natural)

Attacks: +1 shortsword

Damage: 1d6+1 sword

Face/Reach: 5 ft. by 5 ft./5 ft.

Special Qualities: Darkvision 60 ft.

Saves: Fort +2, Will +0, Ref +1

Abilities: Str 13, Dex 13, Con 13, Int 8, Wis 8, Cha 8

Feats: Alertness

Climate/Terrain: The Isle of the Red God

Organization: Hunting parties (4–8) or tribes (30–75)

Challenge Rating: 1

Treasure: None

Alignment: Usually chaotic neutral

Advancement: 3–4 HD

Beast-Man Chieftain (d20™)

Medium-Sized Humanoid

Hit Dice: 2d8

Initiative: +0

Speed: 40 ft.

AC: 15 (+2 natural, +1 leather armor, +2 large shield)

Attacks: +3 spear or +2 ranged spear

Damage: 1d8+2 spear

Saves: Fort+4, Will:+0, Ref:+2

Abilities: Str: 15, Dex :15, Con:13, Int: 8, Wis: 8, Cha: 8

Feats: Power attack

Climate/Terrain: The Isle of the Red God

Organization: Hunting parties (4–8) or tribes (30–75)

Challenge Rating: 1

Treasure: None

Alignment: Usually chaotic neutral

Advancement: 3–4 HD

Beast-Men Brutes (7th Sea™)

6 per pack

Threat Rating: 2

Weapons: Small (Clubs, Rough Spears)

TN to be Hit: 10

Attack: +1

Beast-Men Chieftain – Henchman (7th Sea™)

Points: 75

TN to be hit: 20

Brawn: 3, Finesse: 2, Wits: 1, Resolve: 2, Panache: 2

Background: None

Advantages: None

Weapons: Various

Attack roll: 3k3

Damage roll: 3k3 (clubs and cutlasses)

Skills: Climbing 3, Footwork 3, Leaping 4, Sprinting 3,

Swimming 2

Special: At the GM's discretion, any beast-man may utilize 1–2 Boons, as described in the Pyeryem section of the Player's Guide. This Boon may never change (it is a permanent part of the character and cannot be altered). Both chieftains and normal beast-men may possess Boons.

The Manor House

Those fortunate to escape the perils of the beast-men can find a reprieve in the manor built into the side of the mountain opposite the beach. Here, Dr. Markov spends his days in quiet research. A gently sloping path winds around the base of the mountain to the front door. The manor is built on a strange meshing of styles and materials. Dr. Markov constructed it out of things at hand and whatever he could trade for. The grand entrance hall evokes the opulence of Montaigne with a gigantic staircase leading to the second story and archways leading to the other large rooms. The room on the left leads to the dining area. A large circular table once used in a dinner featuring the Princes of Vodacce is in the center. The table is round so each of the princes could keep an eye on the others. Swords, muskets, whips, daggers, panzerhands, zweihanders, harpoons, and any other weapon one could imagine adorn the wall. A sharp observer might also notice one or two rare weapons, such as a Montaigne Puzzle Sword or a dracheneisen helmet. Alexandros, Dr. Markov's bodyguard, eagerly tells any inquiring minds about the strengths and weaknesses of each weapon.

Meals at the manor are prepared by Cybela, one of the beasts the Doctor domesticated. She is meek, but she keeps the house tidy generally trying to keep out of everyone's way. She spends most of her time in the large kitchen in the back of the house, underneath the grand staircase. The rear kitchen wall is actually the face of the volcano. The cooking devices here are heated in large part by the volcanic activity of the isle. Dr. Markov designed and built an ingenious series of pipes which vent heat into the appropriate receptacle.

Dr. Markov entertains visitors in his study, located on the right hand side of the main hall. It contains an extensive library lining the walls as well as unusual artifacts and items

located as conversation pieces throughout. A large and fairly accurate map of Théah hangs on the wall. Markov also keeps his liquor stashes here. He has a versatile selection of fine wines and some rougher faire for old salts. Markov is a charming host, able to drift between topics with ease. Courtier and sailor alike feel quite comfortable around him. If asked he offers to trade any resources that prove useful.

The upper floors contain bedrooms for the residents as well as several underused guest rooms. Aleksandros's room is spartan. It contains a small bed with a chest at the foot, and a place for his clothes. The chest holds rough sailors' clothes and a charter for a ship called the *Rake's Progress*. Cybela's room is barely larger than a closet and is seldom used. In truth, she has taken to sleeping in Aleksandros's room on the floor next to his bed. Markov's room is opulent. It holds a four-poster bed, an antique dressing closet, and a drawn curtain covering the wall opposite the doorway. If the curtain is pulled back, it reveals a painting of Dr. Markov and his late daughter, Cecilia. Markov sheepishly explains he doesn't have the heart to remove the painting while at the same time not wanting to be constantly reminded of his dead child.

The Transotory

The house contains a secret level accessible through two areas. The first is a secret door hidden by the painting in Markov's room. The picture frame holds a small opening where Markov can insert his signet ring. The picture spins open and Markov s through to an iron stairwell leading down. The second entryway is through the study: a hidden door located behind the liquor shelves. Markov rigged a bottle of vodka to open the door when it is tilted downward. He also has a trap designed to disable snoopers: a rigged book on Ussuran history, which activates a small jet filled with knock-out gas (see page 185 of the *7th Sea Game Master's Guide™* or page 170 of the *Swashbuckling Adventures™* handbook). This trigger also sets off a series of bells in Aleksandros's bedroom, warning him that someone is meddling. If the subject falls to the gas, he wakes up in Dr. Markov's secret volcanic lab. He calls it the Transotory.

The lab is carved entirely out of a segment of the volcano, set on a crescent-shaped ledge overlooking the blistering glow of magma far below. It contains a large alchemical setup along the left wall, where Markov distills the fluid he uses in the transformation process. A roughly hewn table stained with blood stands on the right-hand wall. A small rack stands nearby, covered with bloodstained butchers' tools. In the center of the area is a strange contraption. A large metal box hangs nearby, suspended from stout chains with a large winch and pulley. The box can swing out over the edge of the shelf and be lowered toward the molten rock.

The alchemical setup contains plenty of strange potions that Dr. Markov brewed for himself. Has is able to distill elements of different animals and transfer their powers to himself for a shot period of time. If confronted in his lab, he will drink a handy potion to aid himself in combat. Aleksandros needs no such help.

GM Secrets and Adventure Hooks

Secrecy is the only thing keeping Markov alive. Should they learn what he is doing, any number of groups would want him dead. The Inquisition would drop everything to send some warships to blow the manor off the mountain. Sorcerers find the thought of being ground up into soup disturbing, and Théan Pyeryem mages in particular would consider his experiments an unholy perversion of Matushka's arts. The fact that Markov forces his process onto countless innocents should make any hero take up arms without hesitation.

A few individuals, however, may wish to save or continue Markov's work. The beast-men's abilities, if perfected, would prove quite enticing. Kings could wield an army entirely made of superhuman troops (or at least wild beast-men). If you're running a Théan campaign, Alvara Arciniega would take a great interest if he learned of Markov's experiments. While Markov's isolation on the island may keep him out of the public eye, curious members of the ship crews who re-supply may inadvertently stumble upon the island's secrets. If he were ever to learn of such an individual, Aleksandros would make a short but deadly trip away from the island to ensure the loose end stays quiet.

Dr. Markov also needs more blood. He had a supply for his early experiments, and managed to deduce Cybela's Pyeryem potential through her bright green eyes (see "Cybela," page 25), but that stockpile is running low. Each successive transformation has less spectacular results. He secretly contacted passing captains of less-reputable ships, offering a considerable sum to kidnap sorcerers and bring them to him. He pays extra bounties for green-eyed sorcerers... the mark of the shapechangers.

Characters

Dr. Feodor Markov

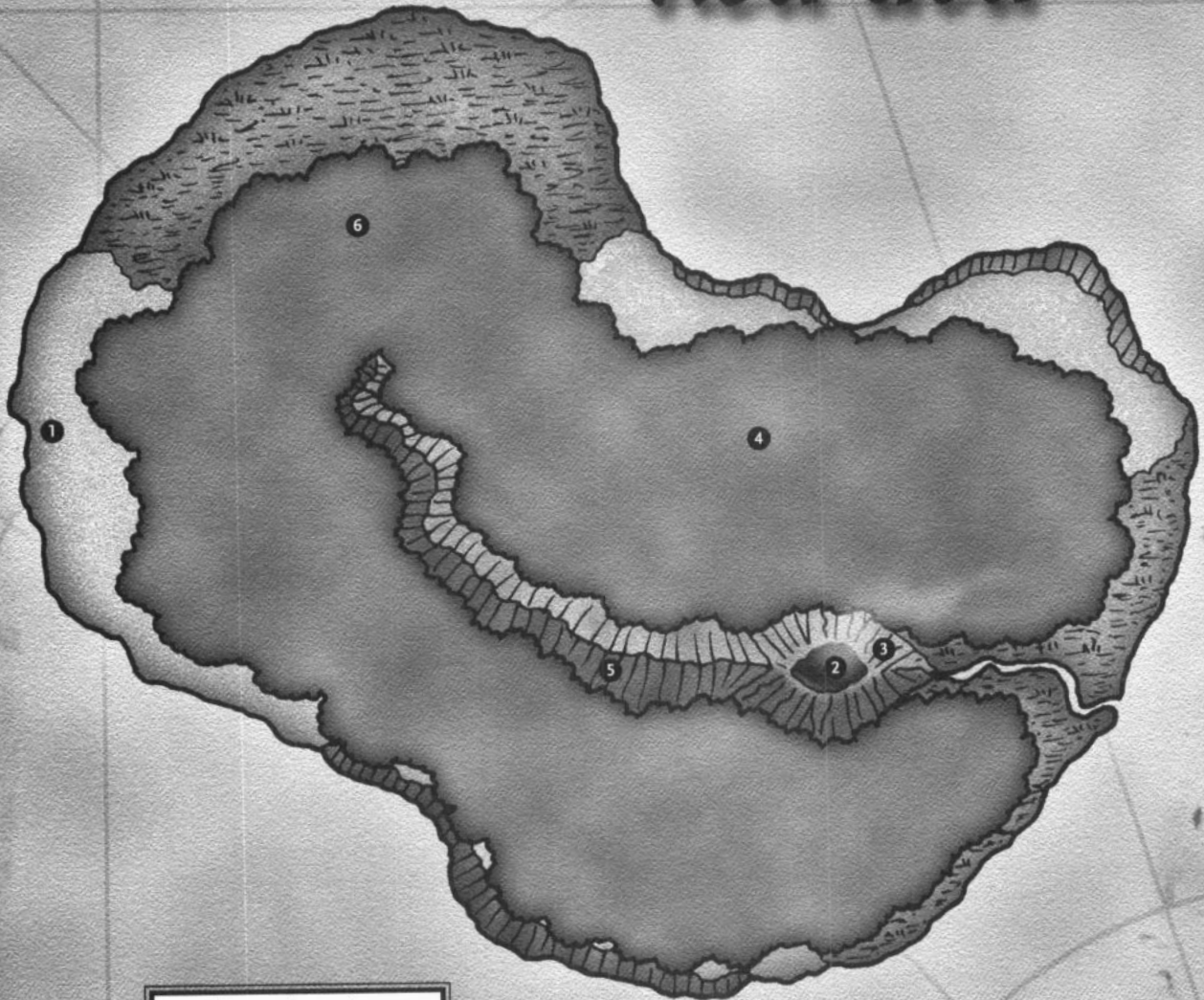
Markov is usually dressed in light robes. He is balding with a thick beard and spectacles which he peers out from. He rarely carries a weapon, but when he does, he prefers pistols to melee weapons. While he is not physically weak, he is neither a skilled swordsman nor a ferocious fighter. He makes up for it by cultivating an image as a god-like figure from the beast-men. He has taught Aleksandros Teodoran so they may have secret conversations with each other.

Dr. Markov is initially friendly to outsiders, but will not admit his hand in island's inhabitants until he reveals the Transotory (or it is broken into). Until that time, he claims he stays on the island to study them. If confronted with the diary from the shipwreck, he will say that the manor was built as a safer position from the attacks and that only he and Aleksandros survived the final assault.

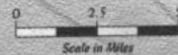
Lately, Feodor hasn't been sleeping well. He hears an old woman whispering in his sleep and he's beginning to wonder if the isolation on the island is driving him mad. He has a rowboat, which he is outfitting for a lengthy sea voyage. He prepared an extract designed to bring the sleeping Red God to life. If it comes to a choice between his children and his work, he causes the volcano to erupt and leave them on the island to burn.



The Isle of the Red God



- 1. Shipwreck Beach
- 2. The Red God
- 3. The Manor House
- 4. Windwalker Village
- 5. Pebblemen Village
- 6. Blueface Village



Markov should be played as cool, charming and collected. The GM might let him slip up a bit if one of the players talks about a subject about which he has strong feelings (such as medical ethics, Theus, or human potential) but otherwise but is charming and disingenuous... right up to the moment where he locks his victim in the transformation box.

**Dr. Feodor Markov,
Reclusive Mad Genius (d20⁺)**

Human Alchemist 10: CR 10; SZ M (humanoid); HD 10d6; hp 33; Init +2 (Dex); Spd 30 ft.; AC 14 (+2 Dex, +2 cloak); Atk: pistol +7 ranged (1d10); SA Brew Potions, Craft Elixirs, Modify Metals; SV Fort +7, Ref +5, Will +9; Str 10, Dex 14, Con 10, Int 18, Wis 15, Cha 15; AL LE; Skills: Alchemy +11/+15; Appraise +13; Concentration +11, Craft +13; Decipher Script +13; Knowledge(Sorcery) +13; Profession (professor) +13; Speak Language (Ussuran, Montaigne, Teodoran, Vodacce [alternately, any 4 languages from your campaign]); Spellcraft +13; Use Magic Device +13; Feats: Exotic Weapon Proficiency (firearms), Road Scholar, Scholar, Spark of Genius, Talkative.

Spells (Potions): 0-level: *cure minor wounds, enlarge, purify food and drink, resistance, virtue*; Level 1: *bull's strength, cat's grace, darkvision, obscuring mist, shocking grasp, spider climb*; Level 2: *barkskin*.

**Dr. Feodor Markov,
Reclusive Mad Genius – Villain (7th Sea™)**

Brawn: 2, Finesse: 3, Wits: 5, Resolve: 3, Panache: 2
Reputation: -40
Background: Vow
Arcana: Talkative
Advantages: Ussuran (R/W), Montaigne, Teodoran (R/W), Vodacce (R/W), Age and Wisdom, Linguist.
Doctor: Dentist 1, Diagnosis 4, Examiner 2, First Aid 3, Quack 2, Surgery 4, Veterinarian 4
Sailor: Climbing 1, Knotwork 2, Rigging 2
Scholar: History 2, Mathematics 4, Philosophy 3, Research 3
Fencing: Attack (Fencing) 2, Parry (Fencing) 1
Firearms: Attack (Firearms) 3, Reload (Firearms) 2

Aleksandros

Dona Pierre Luigi was born from the union of a traveling nobleman and a poor Jenny. He grew up stealing as a means for survival and left his mother the first opening. He soon found himself onboard ship, and bounced around from one crew of scurvy dogs to the next — even serving a tour with the infamous Crimson Rogers. Dona learned a lot from the men he served under, and eventually secured himself a prize ship and crew. Renaming it *The Rake's Progress*, after a painting he saw in a museum once, he set out to make a name for himself on the high seas.

While his piracy profited him and his villainous reputation grew, satisfaction eluded him. He knew he didn't have the charisma or the ferocity to become a true legend, but resolved to leave his mark upon the seas as best he could. Then he took on a passenger bound for the islands and everything fell out the window. He fell in love with Cecilia Markov. He spotted her in a Castillian port and thus of course, instantly smitten. Paying the harbor master to watch his own vessel, he signed on with the girl's ship as a simple crewman.

While her father prattled on over his theories, he found himself drawn to her simple beauty breathing gentleness. She rebuffed his advances, used the same tactics he learned on the seas and took his prize anyway. When he was done, he threatened to kill her unless she kept it secret from the old man. So terrified was she of the ferocious captain, that she held her tongue... until they landed at the isle for fresh fruit and water.

She lured her father away from the rest of the men, but Dona followed. When she told Markov what happened, the old man was unperturbed. He continued on with his theories and only stopped when she roared like a bear and knocked him through a tree. Her strength grew as if by magic and she would have killed him if Dona hadn't stepped from the brush and shot her in the back. The doctor had a strange look in his eye as he watched his daughter's shuddering corpse. Dona asked quietly how she could have gained such strength. Markov laughed, unperturbed at the girl's death, and turned back to the pirate.

"How would you like to be a god?" he asked.

Dona quickly realized that Markov's method was the edge he needed to get his reputation sealed. A man with the power of wild beasts. Something unique. Something to rival Berek's luck or Reis' tight-lipped bloodshed. He agreed to be the doctor's first subject, increasing his physical abilities and transforming his life forever. He emerged from the Polyhumour as a deadly blend of ambitious man, cunning animal, and remorseless killer. The pirate changed his name to "Aleksandros" and helped Markov capture the remaining crew members for his experiments. He has been at Markov's side ever since, killing what needs to die and protecting the man that made him complete.

Aleksandros looks very exotic. His eyes have a catlike bent to them and his wild mane of hair frames a queerly feline face. He regards everyone as a potential threat and acts as such. While he has no formal training, he considers himself well versed in many weapons and possesses a passing familiarity with many styles. He devotes much of his day to practicing his martial skills, combining formal techniques with his newfound animal ferocity. He's biding his time until he defeats a master swordsman. Then he will make his way to the high seas.

Aleksandros' animal features aren't concealed. His upper torso is covered with leopard spots. As a fight drags on, his style gets wilder. He will go from a fencer to a wild animal, throwing away his weapon to kill his opponent with his bare hands. In a true life or death situation, Aleksandros may fight until nothing in his sight is left breathing.

**Aleksandros,
The Deadly Beast-Man (d20⁺)**

Human (technically) Barbarian 8: CR 8; SZ M (humanoid); HD 8d12+2; hp 56; Init +6; Spd 30 ft.; AC 17 (+4 Dex, +3 natural armor); Atk: longsword +11/+6 melee (1d10+3) SA rage/3 day, uncanny dodge 2; SV Fort +8, Ref +6, Will +8; Str 17, Dex 18, Con 15, Int 10, Wis 10, Cha 8; AL CE; Skills: Climb +10, Handle Animal +7, Intimidate +10, Jump +10, Ride +12, Speak Language (Montaigne, Teodoran, Vodacce [alternately, and three languages from your campaign]); Feats: Brawny, Bruiser, Improved Initiative, Large.

Aleksandros, The Deadly Beast-Man – Villain (7th Sea™)

Brawn: 3, **Finesse:** 3, **Wits:** 2, **Resolve:** 2, **Panache:** 3
Reputation: –25
Background: None
Arcana: Reckless
Advantages: Vodacce (R/W), Montaigne, Teodoran, Combat Reflexes, Large, Toughness
Captain: Strategy 2, Tactics 2
Sailor: Balance 2, Climbing 5, Knotwork 3, Rigging 2
Athlete: Break Fall 5, Climbing 2, Footwork 3, Leaping 5, Lifting 3, Sprinting 4, Throwing 3
Dirty Fighting: Attack (Dirty Fighting) 4, Attack (Improvised Weapon) 4, Eye-Gouge 4, Kick 4, Parry (Improvised Weapon) 4, Throat Strike 4, Throw (Improvised Weapon) 4
Fencing: Attack (Fencing) 2, Parry (Fencing) 2
Heavy Weapon: Attack (Heavy Weapon) 3, Parry (Heavy Weapon) 1
Whip: Attack (Whip) 3, Parry (Whip) 1

Cybela

Cybela doesn't remember much before emerging from Dr. Markov's process, other than she used to be pretty. She remembers Fedya and Leksy from the before-time. She was mad at Fedya for something and Leksy hurt her. Then she remembers coughing to life and Fedya cradling her in his arms. Now she keeps everything running smoothly at the house. She's proud of the home she's made and of her skills in the kitchen. She likes to play with the animals on the island, especially big, nasty ones. She can talk to them and joke with them, and she likes them better than other people. While Fedya and Leksy are nice, they don't understand her like the animals do. Her best friend in the world is a parrot named Feather.

Cybela dresses simply and unimpressively. She's always stained with soot or foodstuffs. She looks like a scruffy beagle with distended ears and sad green eyes. She never looks anyone in the eyes and is very uncomfortable in social situations. If Markov or Aleksandros is around, she defers to them in silence. If caught alone, she does her best to politely excuse herself before she says something embarrassing.

Cybela is actually Markov's deceased daughter, Cecile. She was the second person to be transformed, her nearly-dead body brought back to unnatural life by his sinister process. Her sudden strength at the end of her human life came from Matushka (or some similar figure in non-Théan campaigns), who wished to stop Markov from beginning his horrid experiments. Even Ussura's mother-goddess didn't anticipate Dona showing up and shooting her vessel in the back. The entire ordeal snapped Cecile's mind and warped her body. Now, she serves as a cook and maid to her father, unaware of who she was or what took place in the period before her rebirth. Markov occasionally removes a quantity of blood from her, for use in his experiments, though he never says why. Lately, the animals have been telling her to do bad things to Leksy and Fedya: slowly poisoning their food, disrupting the equipment in the lab, etc.

She hears a strange echo in their voice; they sound like an old woman. Even stranger, the old woman sounds familiar. Thus far she has been able to ignore them, but the voices are slowly growing stronger...

She is also bearing Aleksandros's child, a fact that no one knows except her. If his life is ever threatened, she will leap in front of him and reveal this fact. Aleksandros is also unaware that she has seen where he hides his rowboat (and Markov's escape craft) and can lead people to it if she wishes.

Cybela, The Pathetic Creature (a20™)

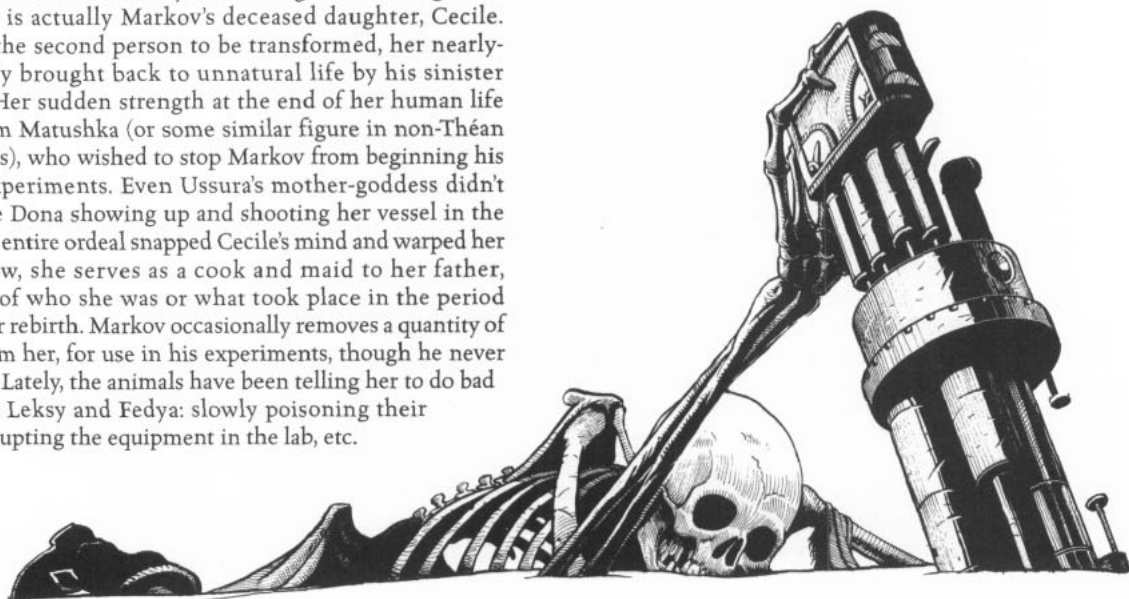
Human (technically) Druid 5: CR 5; SZ M (humanoid); HD 5d8; hp 20; Init –2; Spd. 30 ft.; AC 8 (–2 Dex); Atk: club +2 melee (1d6–1); SA Animal Companion: Feather (parrot), Nature Senses, Trackless Step, Wild Shape (1/day), Woodland Stride, Resist Nature's Lure; SV Fort +4, Ref +0, Will +4; Str 8, Dex 6, Con 10, Int 4, Wis 10, Cha 15; AL NG; Skills: Animal Empathy +8, Speak Language (Ussuran, Montaigne [alternately, any two languages from your campaign]); Profession (maid) +3; Feats: Half-Blooded (Pyeryem), Full-Blooded (Pyeryem), Latent Pyeryem Sorcerer.

Spells: 0-Level: Detect Poison, Purify Food and Drink, Virtue, Flare, Create Water; Level 1: Animal Friendship, Goodberry, Summon Nature's Ally; Level 2: Summon Nature's Ally II, Speak with Animals; Level 3: Summon Nature's Ally III.

(Note: Cybela uses the druid classes from the original *Player's Handbook*™ a manifestation of her latent Pyeryem blood and the transformation at her father's hands).

Cybela, The Pathetic Creature – Henchman (7th Sea™)

Brawn: 2, **Finesse:** 2, **Wits:** 1, **Resolve:** 3, **Panache:** 2
Reputation: 0
Background: True Identity
Arcana: Loyal
Advantages: Ussuran (R/W), Montaigne, Keen Senses
Pyeryem (Apprentice): Parrot 2, Talk 5
Servant: Etiquette 3, Fashion 1, Menial Tasks 3, Unobtrusive 5, Valet 3



Island of Mystery: Kanuba

Although this strange island was settled by Eisen refugees and Avalon explorers a few years ago, Kanuba and its people remain an enigma even to the Théans who live there. Peace may reign among the shoreline colonies, but strange rituals and murderous life forms await the unwary in the interior.

For some, a land of enigmas suits them perfectly. Casual visitors do not frequent Kanuba, and the difficulties inherent in approaching the island deter the governments of other nations from taking it over for their purposes. Those willing to accept Kanuba's limitations find they can do as they wish here, as long as they respect its mysteries.

Others are not so complacent, however. The same mysteries beckon dedicated adventurers and power-hungry villains alike, and Kanuba's mystique hints at plentiful sources of wealth and power. Relatively few Théans have ventured to Kanuba thus far, but every one who visits seems to be searching for something. Despite the number of islanders — and other things — that want them to fail, humans are persistent.

First there are the Kana. Often discounted, sometimes discredited, occasionally ignored entirely, the Kana possess strength and resilience unheard of on the mainland. They are not the ignorant savages some take them for, and may hold the answers to many questions — and mysteries — surrounding the island. For now, no outsiders have learned those secrets and lived.

History

Most of Kanuba's history is veiled in mystery and legend. The natives tell a story about how the child-god Ah, the Earth, created Null, the Sea, wrought of his fearful weeping. To placate Ah so he could sleep, Null created Matt, the Sky, and all the lights she holds. But the goddess Matt did not want to be the only one awake, so she kept crotchety old Null from sleeping with the very light that comforted Ah. The islanders never speak of their place in this pantheon, only that they have lived this way since coming to Kanuba thousands of years ago. They keep no records, relying primarily on an oral tradition. While they value tradition, ancient facts hold no interest for them, so it is impossible to determine Kanuba's history with any accuracy before the arrival of the first Théans. The Kana simply shrug and say that they have always been there.

Théans know little concerning Kana history, though a few tales stand out. One particularly ancient story involves the first *opahkung*, Lenili, a woman capable of bringing down the deadliest predator. This angered the serpents, which considered themselves the greatest hunters on Kanuba, and they sent a lizard — that walked on two legs standing higher than the tallest Kanu — to kill the warrior. After a long and vicious battle, she was gravely wounded, and the lizard roared its triumph to the sky. In that moment, her spear, with which she never missed, crackled with bright white power. Lenili hurled it into the beast's mouth and through its skull. When she retrieved the spear from the dead

monster, the warrior could feel the spear's *lan* or benevolent energy. The Kanu already knew of *opah* — the guiding spiritual force of the universe — but it had never manifested so openly. Lenili consulted with the elders of her tribe, they realized that she had called on *lan* as no Kanu had before. Even since, *opah* has been at the center of Kanu beliefs.

More recently, sometime in the 14th century according to estimates by Avalon scholars, Kanuba was invaded by raiders from a chain of tiny nearby islands. The Kanu repulsed their assaults in the past, but this was different. The raiders numbered over a thousand, and rowed forth determined to conduct an invasion that would break the Kanu for good. The Kanu faced them in the wilds of the jungle, where great beasts roamed and the hungry *nal* plants claimed the unwary. The Kanu knew every inch of their home and fought the raiders to a standstill. The invaders' refused to retreat from such epic assault, and they lasted up to a year in the jungle. Eventually, however, the predators and punitive raids from the Kanu consumed them all.

In Tertius 1665, a convoy of settlers from a variety of nations was beset by a storm that blackened the sky and blinded the crews with frightening winds and torrential rain. When the storm cleared, one ship had sunk and two others simply vanished. In truth, they had merely been blown off course, but the storm had been so fierce that no one knew where the ships were.

The two surviving vessels, an Eisen refugee ship and a group of Avalon loyalists, found themselves adrift without the slightest notion of their position. The two captains decided to stay together for safety and wait for nightfall, when the stars could tell them their location. Fate, however, had other plans; the Avalons' eagle-eyed topman spotted land a few hours later.

The ships came to a slow and gentle halt in the wide sandy shelf extending from the island. Longboats were sent to shore as crews determined how to get out of their predicament. When they arrived, a comedy of errors ensued as they encountered the Kanu and nearly started a small war. Fortunately, impromptu sign language and a few similarities between Kanu and other languages native to the Midnight Archipelago allowed them to begin crude communications. The Kanu allowed the settlers to land, and the two groups began finding ways to communicate with each other.

The settlers found Kanu to be a pleasant and sedate (if uncomfortably warm) place to live. With supplies from the ship, two villages sprung up where the Eisen and Avalon ships had unloaded, and there they remain established to this day. The Théan villagers have learned Kanu and come to enjoy their life. The Eisen ship was dismantled for materials, and the Avalon ship returned to the Glamour Isles to establish a proper trading route. Officially, the island is considered a joint Avalon/Eisen colony, but only Avalon bothers to pay any attention to it. Little has changed since the original landfall. Approaching the island remains difficult at best, as efforts to build a port have resulted in dismal failure. Occasionally, the island sees new settlers or curious visitors, but Kanuba appears as placid as ever.

Geography

Most of Kanuba remains unknown to the Théans who live there, and the natives discourage explorers from probing too deeply into the island's interior. Unsurprisingly, this only piques the colonists' curiosity. Rumors abound of wonders hidden in the thick jungles in Kanuba's center: legends of asprey the size of horses soaring across the night sky and other creatures. Such sightings are invariably attributed to drunks wandering home late at night, or sleep-deprived scholars who need fresh air.

Avalon Colony: New Fenshire

Population: 150

Leader: Lord Mayor John Blackwell

Language Spoken: Avalon (some Eisen and Kanuba)

New Fenshire is one of the odder colonies in the Midnight Archipelago. The Avalon settlers arrived, not as refugees or outcasts like their Eisen colleagues but as patriotic colonists wishing to increase the Avalon presence in the Archipelago to counter Castille's powerful influence.

In some ways, the Avalonians struggle to keep themselves busy. They maintained contact with the Explorer's Society and attempted to do some trading, but the difficulty of getting anything to or from a ship makes their efforts largely symbolic. Further, their fondness for the Kanu prevents them from exploiting the island's potential wealth. After a few unpleasant encounters with nal plants, they have abandoned plans to explore the entire island, leaving the task to Explorers and the Kanu themselves.

Currently, the Avalons farm, study the Kanu, and work on creating a written version of Kanuba while passing on what they learn to Avalon. While it is not the glorious life they envisioned, the Kanu's natural curiosity and friendliness inspire the Avalons — and give them something to do. Avalons have a healthy respect for legends and understand their importance in Kanuban life.

Eisen Colony: Vogeldorf

Population: 325

Ruler: Captain Greta Stausser

Language Spoken: Eisen (some Avalon and Kanuba)

Vogeldorf stands in direct contrast to New Fenshire. The Eisen happily escaped their devastated homeland and are even happier to be as far away from the rest of Théah as possible. The colonists are a mix of Vaticine, Objectivist and varying degrees of atheism, but they all share a desire for tolerance and distaste for extremism. Kanuba, with its friendly natives and natural defenses, is an ideal home for them.

Tired of brutal Eisenfürsten lording over their lives, the Eisen have avoided instituting an official leadership, instead created a pact of mutual cooperation and a small band of guardsmen to enforce the few laws they need. The leader of these guards, a former Swamp Dog named Greta Stausser, has become the closest thing to a central authority in the Eisen colony. She quickly adapted to the Kanuban environment, and has an impressive collection of trophies, including several roots from nal plants. The Kanu are a bit wary of this collection, but she respects their ways and treats nal items with the care they deserve. Most Kanu admire her in turn, believing she has good lan.

The Eisen settlers also differ with their Avalon counterparts in their relation with the Kanu. The people of Vogeldorf regard the Kanu from a polite distance, leaving them to their own devices. As far as they're concerned, the Kanu respect the Eisens' privacy, and the least they can do is return the favor. They had enough of snooping interference in their homeland.

Vogeldorf's most amusing quirk, at least as far as the Kanu are concerned, is that it is virtually overrun with asprey. When the Eisen first landed, they took many of the creatures as pets. Soon asprey swarmed the village, looking for pet humans. Over the past few years, the situation settled down somewhat. Even so, most households have at least one asprey as a pet and there is usually a flock near the town waiting for the opportunity to be adopted. The first few Eisen children born on Kanuba are now becoming old enough to want pet asprey, much to the creatures' delight.

Kanu Villages

Ruler: Elena, Terechai (First-Chief) of the Kana

Language Spoken: Kanuban

Every Kana tribe has its own village, spread out fairly evenly across the island. Each village houses those Kana whose talents make them useful to the tribe as a whole, while other Kana make homes for themselves within a few miles. They host celebrations and other important events, as well as places for friends to meet and gather. For the most part, however, Kana villages are self-sufficient.

Below are two of Kanuba's most prominent villages, and the tribes to which they belong. Ten others exist, following the same general parameters as these two. GMs wishing to add their own tribes are welcome.

die Kreuzritter

The secret society known Die Kreuzritter actually has a Kanuban to thank for much of its success. Grandmaster Kazi, a voluntary exile who left the island some twenty years ago, has helped train the Black Crosses for over a decade. But now he is consumed with premonitions of his death, and has searched for a suitable replacement. Unable to find one on mainland Théah, he reluctantly asked the Order to travel to his homeland (he will not return himself) and find an *opahkung* to fill his shoes. The Knights have since discovered that the Eisen colony is a perfect place to hide some of their secrets. With the Cloaks of Shadows, die Kreuzritter can maintain contact easily with a piece of Terra that few even know of, let alone visit. One of the original colonists had a brother in the Order, and they use his house as a secure hideout. A few homes in Vogeldorf hide artifacts too dangerous to exist but impossible to destroy. The town also makes an excellent place for marked Knights to lie low for awhile (though obviously they can't be seen by any colonists, who would notice new faces in their midst). In addition, the Black Crosses have become quite fond — and protective — of Kanuba. In deference to Grandmaster Kazi, they avoid travelling there in any numbers, and consider the island off limits in their war against the shadows.

LENLIL**Population:** 450

The Lenlil are the largest of Kanuba's tribes, a trait other terrace often attribute to the tribe's well-placed village. The only village found on the western crescent shore, Lenlil possesses excellent *lan* in fishing and plant gathering. The tribe boasts some excellent swimmers and canny terrace; Elena herself belonged to the Lenlil before becoming the Treachery, and still lives in the village. Her successor is Bali, an ebullient *opahkung* as gifted in barter as she is in storytelling.

Lenlil has become even more auspicious recently with the arrival of the Théans. Though one tribe lives closer to the Avalonians, the strangers prefer to travel along the beaches, leaving the Lenlil as the tribe Théans encounter most frequently. Kanu need little from the settlers, but curiosity and interest in their *opah* — particularly the wondrous *lan* borne by Avalon Glamour mages — makes the tribe the primary focus of native-colonist interaction. Trading takes place regularly; Kanu tend to prefer items that elicit awe and wonder over more practical items. Thus, Kanu traders in Lenlil wear the same clothes and use the same tools as their neighbors, but show mirrors off to their friends and tuck pistols in their belts. Muskets in particular seem magical to the Kanu. Not only do these “guns” lack any significant *opah*, but they cannot acquire any even in the hands of the most powerful *opahkung*.

In spite of Lenlil's growing importance, the Kanu there retain a healthy sense of perspective. Théan devices may be enjoyable, wondrous, and even useful, but ultimately, most are just toys. Lenlil matters not so much because of the Théans' trade items, but because of the Kanubans'. The healing properties of *lan* plants make them popular foods and medicine among the settlers. As long as the Avalonians remain convinced that the *opah*-gifted plants are Kanuba's greatest wonders, they won't go looking for trouble.

TARU**Population:** 375

The Taru tribe is notorious the use of *nali* something the other tribes avoid assiduously. They study the dark power to understand it, ward against it, and occasionally control it. Despite their infamy, however, the Taru differ little from most Kanu. Since they live in the island's interior, they make cunning hunters, skilled at bringing down *nal* plants and predators. In most other ways, they are like any other Kanu tribe: noble, friendly, and easygoing.

Under the current *terek*, Denar, the tribe has quietly prospered. Denar is a huge man by Kanu standards, a bit taller than the average Théan and muscled like a Vesten bearsark. For most of his life, he made other Kanu nervous, and as a male *terek*, his situation has only worsened. The tribe loves his stories, but his leadership is accepted rather than embraced. This probably explains why he leans so heavily on his tribe's most powerful *opahkung*, Oraka. Among the Taru, the *terek* leads but Oraka rules. Denar has a heart to match his huge body, but like most men, he's been no match for the beautiful and cunning *opahkung*. Taru *opahkung* also have a long tradition of respect for powerful *opah*, and Oraka is possibly the most powerful on the island. Aside from its current crisis in leadership and its use of *nal*, however, Taru is a fairly typical Kanu tribe.

Culture

Life among the Kanu is fairly simple. Kanu has no word for “ambitious,” although the tribes have recently adopted the Avalon term to describe those who wish to see and do new things. Fishing is often an excuse to enjoy the sea. Storytelling, riddle contests, physical contests like swimming and mock spear dueling, and especially romance take up most of a Kanu's time. Friendship is deeply important to the Kanu, and the word for a Kanu's circle of closest friends translates roughly to “second family.” The people fish, pick fruit and do a small amount of farming. Although their agriculture is not well-developed, the Kanu appear to be skilled at more sophisticated cultivation, as evidenced by crop rotation and fertilizing techniques. They use a system of burn-off to clear harvested areas, turning the charred remains into fertilizer for the next season.

Théans sometimes mistake Kanubans' relaxed attitude for laziness. But on the few occasions when a great deal of work needs to be done, such as when a tropical storm knocks down half the buildings on the island, they learn how wrong that assumption is. When the need arises, everyone pitches in wholeheartedly to rebuild, form search parties, plan defenses, and otherwise get the job done. Kanu work with amazing drive and efficiency — apparently so they can get back to their otherwise relaxed and enjoyable lifestyle.

The Kanu do share Théans' natural curiosity, and sometimes when a Kanu forms strong bonds with a colonist, he leaves Kanuba for to see the friend's home and lands. The rest of Théah is a strange, magical place to the Kanu: a source of endless fascination full of unparalleled wonders. Most travelers eventually return to Kanu, however. The island is in their blood, and their connections to friends and family almost always draw them back. A rare islander will leave Kanuba forever, but such permanent exile usually involves a considerable extenuating circumstances.

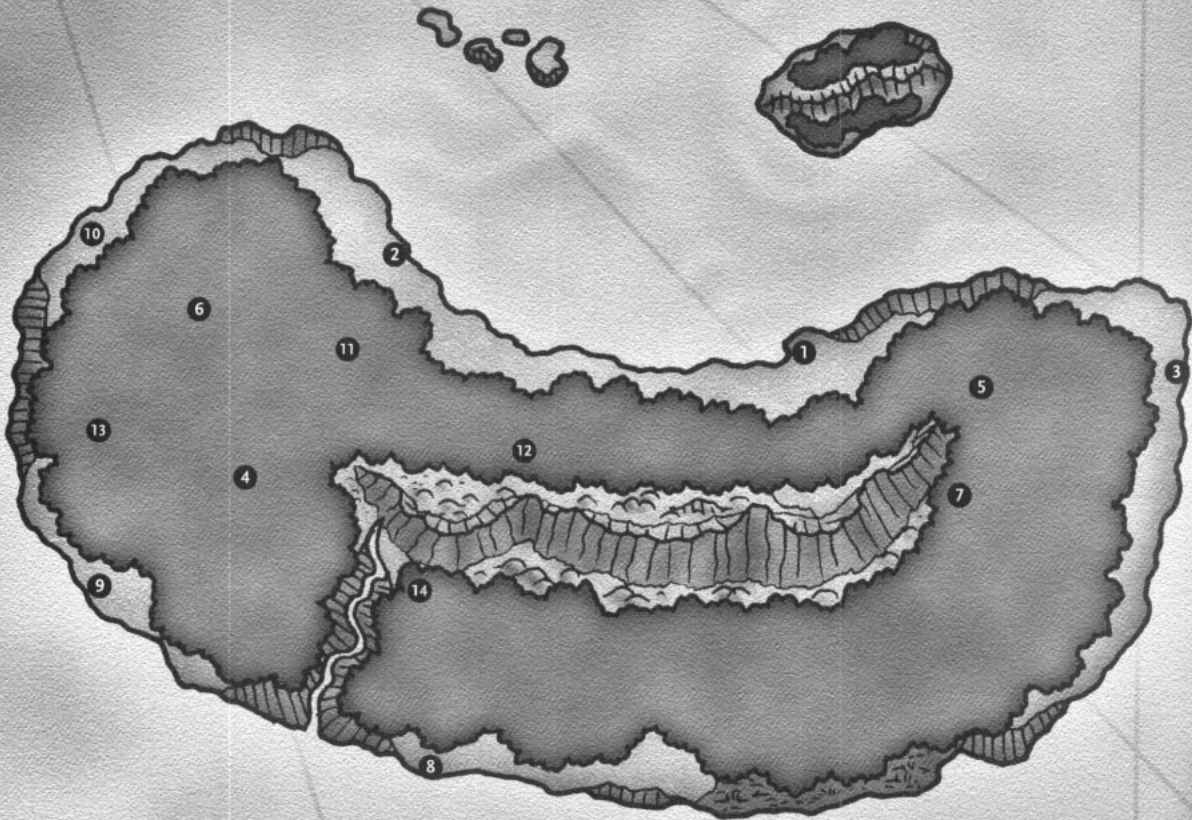
Though they naturally warm to any Théans, the Kanu have become especially close to the Eisen. More than one friendship between a Kanu and an Eisen has led to a bond of *rücken*, the Eisen term for blood brother. It looks comical at first when a hulking Leegstra master has a tiny, half-naked Kanu spearwoman at his back to defend him, but the impression rarely lasts long. Kanuba has its vicious elements, and that diminutive warrior probably fights more fiercely than her gigantic, armored counterpart.

Kanu typically stand more than half a foot shorter than average Théans, with dark short, curly black hair and deep brown eyes. They exhibit tremendous strength, despite their size, and take close notice of the world around them. Kanu society is marginally matriarchal, but this rarely affects decisions other than tribal leadership and possession of powerful *opah* items. Inheritance derives from the maternal line, and women hold a slight majority among the *opahkung* and chieftains, but beyond that gender means little except to lovers.

Government

Tribal chieftains, or *terek*, serve a primarily ceremonial function, and are usually excellent storytellers. *Terek* lead whenever the tribe needs decisive action, and generally let things take their course. The need for strong leadership is rare, but raids from other islands, overgrown *nal* plants,

Kanuba



0 2 4
Scale in Miles

- 1. New Fenshire
- 2. Vogeldorf
- 3. Lenlil
- 4. Taru
- 5-14. Other Villages

or rogue animals sometimes require the terek's wisdom. They also coordinate rebuilding efforts after particularly vicious storms, preside over wedding ceremonies, and determine punishment for the occasional crime. Terek are traditionally women, but certain male terek have earned renown for themselves and their tribes. Tribes choose terek by popular acclaim, often without the prospective terek's knowledge. The only other "leaders" among the tribes are elders, respected for their experience and wisdom. The terek wears a colorful caplet of asprey feathers as a sign of office.

Five times in Kanuba's history, an event affected the entire island sufficiently that a *Terechai*, or First-Chief, has been chosen to speak for all tribes, and if necessary lead them into battle. They developed a contest ages ago to determine the appointment. Contestants are paired off, then face each other in three contests: a storytelling competition, a duel with blunted spears, and a riddle contest to break any ties. Victors move on to face each other, though there are usually few enough contestants that only two or three rounds are required; in the last challenge, there were only two contenders.

The arrival of the Théans sparked the most recent contest, and while not considered a crisis *per se* the Kanu realized that a unified front would be valuable when dealing with the newcomers. The contest became a bitter struggle this time, unprecedented in Kanu lore. A powerful *opahkung* named Oraka wanted with all her soul to become *Terechai*, but a much-beloved terek named Eneli outperformed her during the contest and received overwhelming support. Oraka promised the other tribes that they'd regret choosing a woman with so little power over *opah*.

Religion

The Kanu worship three gods, but only *opah*, the life force of the universe, truly dominates their philosophy. The gods may have created the world, but *opah* created the gods themselves. When Théans speak of Theus, the Kanu nod and understand that these strangers have personified *opah*. Many Kanu do much the same thing, but *opahkung* — those who can touch and wield the balance of creation — view it as a power in all things, that which connects and binds the universe. *Opah* possesses a will of its own, which it expresses through *lan* or benevolence, and *nal* or misfortune. According to Kanu belief, all things have a measure of *lan* or *nal* — *opah* always manifests as one or the other. The *opahkung* has the power to control the *opah* within him, connecting it to the *opah* in other things and evoking it more clearly.

GM Secrets and Adventure Hooks

The Secret of Kanuba

Kanuba has one major secret — but it's potentially earth shaking.

The Kanu are not alone on the island.

A race of mighty creatures lives in the heart of Kanuba, fighting a private war amongst themselves. The sightings of giant asprey are almost exactly correct, for these beings

resemble nothing so much as winged, brightly-feathered serpents. There, the similarity ends. While the asprey are little more than clever animals, their larger cousins, the *cotatril*, are highly intelligent and powerful. One of the last creations of the Setine, the *cotatril* were the apex of their efforts to create ideal guardian beasts. The *cotatril* are brilliant, physically imposing, possess impressive abilities, need little food and water, and ignore the ravages of disease and age. There was just one problem... they were too intelligent.

When the *cotatril* started asking why they should spend eternity as glorified security devices, the Setine realized they had a problem. Destroying their creations entailed too many risks, however. Therefore, they dumped the *cotatril* on an island to the south of an old Tesseran relic, in hopes of diverting Thalussian attention. The Thalusiai were too canny for such a ploy, and soon the entire matter became moot. Between the Sidhe and Matushka, both the Thalusiai and the Setine vanished from the face of Théah; only their creations remained, isolated and forgotten in the heart of Kanuba.

For ages, the *cotatril* explored their world, making the island their home while searching for some sense of purpose. They became legends in some distant lands to the west, particularly among a new race of ape-like beings spreading across the world like wildfire. The *cotatril* themselves were never meant to reproduce, and though they eventually overcame that limitation, it literally takes centuries to create another of their kind. Finally, they decided to return to Kanuba and meditate on what they had learned. By then, the *cotatril* were ancient beings, and their patience extended beyond human generations. For over a thousand years, they rested in their home, debating among themselves about the meaning of existence and what to do about these new beings, these humans, making their way in the world.

Until very recently (as *cotatril* regard such things) they have focused primarily on studying the Kanu who appear to be particularly noble beings for the most part. The great winged serpents never learned to duplicate the strange power of *opah*, however; it seems terribly limited to them, and yet for the humans to develop it so quickly suggested that they had vast potential. For most of the ancient beings it was a source of hope for humanity's future. Relations between the Kanu and the *cotatril* have been rare but friendly, and the terek wear that rainbow-colored caplet as a sign of respect for their ageless neighbors. A few *cotatril* remained dubious about the value of the humans for some time, but were quiescent... until the Théans arrived.

The colonies sent the *cotatril* into an uproar unheard of in their long history. In all their travels, they never approached Théah — the home of the last Razhdost was no place for them to intrude. Now, it seemed that their respect left them unprepared for the challenge of these new humans. The colonists were not, of themselves, evil, but the horrors some had fled were unheard of since the height of the Ssyneth wars. A Porté Master's visit held unique horrors for them, much to the chagrin of the gentler *cotatril*. More and more of the great serpents consider humanity a threat rather than a sign of hope. Few of them will act against the wishes of the majority, but in the last year, two Avalons have vanished mysteriously, right under the *cotatril*'s noses. They know the fate of every other creature on the island, but the disappearance of the two Avalons — one sorcerer and one scholar — was suspicious in the extreme.

The truth is deeply unsettling. The anti-human cotatril interrogated and dissected the two stolen humans, and now believes quite strongly that these clever monkeys walk the same route to corruption and self-annihilation that the Syrnych took. The “good” cotatril are not yet completely aware of their rivals’ crime, but they possess few viable theories for the disappearances.

Meanwhile, the debate approaches a fever pitch. While the cotatril are powerful, they are not immortal — one fell to humans long ago, and three others to accidents. There are millions of humans and perhaps a few dozen cotatril. With their vast knowledge, however, they could unleash horrors of which only the Sidhe or Matushka herself could contemplate. And they know about the rise of Cabora.

The cotatril are already at war... with them. The two sides need only realize that the first blow has been struck. When that happens, the ramifications could destroy Kanuba, and pose a grave risk to Théah itself.

Cotatril (120”)

Large Outsider

Hit Dice: 8d8+40 (76 hp)

Initiative: +2 (+2 Dex)

Speed: 20 ft., fly 50 ft.

AC: 20 (-1 size, +2 Dex, +9 natural)

Attacks: Bite +6 melee, 2 claws +6 melee, or crush +6 melee

Damage: Bite 1d6+4 and poison, claw 2d6+4

Face/Reach: 5 ft. by 20 ft./10 ft.

Special Attacks: Gaze, poison, constrict 2d6+2

Special Qualities: Damage reduction 15/+4 (see below)

Saves: Fort +11, Ref +8, Will +10

Abilities: Str 19, Dex 14, Con 20, Int 18, Wis 19, Cha 12

Skills: Craft (Syrnych devices) +15, Escape Artist +8,

Knowledge (arcana) +12, Knowledge (nature) +14,

Knowledge (science) +16, Knowledge (Syrnych) +16,

Hide +6, Listen +8, Move Silently +6, Spot +8

Feats: Flyby Attack, Side-Step

Climate/Terrain: Mountains, Underground

Organization: Solitary, pair, or unit (1d4+2)

Challenge Rating: 6

Treasure: Syrnych equipment

Alignment: Usually lawful

Advancement: 9–10 HD (Large)

Combat

Damage Reduction (Ex): Heroes can circumvent a cotatril’s damage reduction by aiming at one’s eyes or mouth, which inflicts a -5 circumstance penalty to the character’s attack.

Gaze (Su): Victims meeting the cotatril’s eyes must make a Will save with a DC of 15 or be paralyzed until the cotatril stops looking into the character’s eyes.

Poison (Ex): Bite, Fortitude save (DC 15); initial damage 2d6 hp, secondary damage 2d4 temporary Constitution.

Cotatril — Hero/Villain (7th Sea™)

Points: 300

Brawn: 5–7, Finesse: 3–5, Wits: 4–6, Resolve: 5–7, Panache: 2–4

TN to be hit: 25 (15 on ground)

Attack Roll: 8k4 Claw, 8k4 Bite, 8k4 Squeeze

Damage Roll: 8k2 Claw, 7k1 + Poison Bite, 7k2 Crush

Skills: Ambush 3, Artifact Evaluation 6, Escape 4,

Footwork 4 (2 on ground), Natural Philosophy 6, Occult 5, Shadowing 3, Side-Step 4, Stealth 4, Survival 4, Syrnych Lore 6, Tinker 5, Tracking 4, Trap Lore 6

Note: Cotatril are individuals, and may possess many more skills than those listed above. Feel free to add any Knacks, Backgrounds, or Advantages that seem appropriate.

Special Abilities

Flight: Cotatril can fly at roughly the same speed that horses can run.

Paralytic Gaze: By meeting the eyes of any being other than a fellow cotatril, the winged serpents can freeze a victim in place. This is a Contested Roll based on Resolve. If the cotatril wins, the victim can’t move for as long as the cotatril maintains eye contact. If the target wins, the cotatril cannot use Paralytic Gaze on the target for the remainder of the Act.

Talons: Cotatril all have two extremities each, with five evenly-spaced taloned “fingers” on each appendage. These talons can be pulled back beneath the wings, completely hidden in feathery pockets, or extended up to half the creatures’ length. For a fully-grown cotatril, this means they can reach up to ten feet away. The talons are agile enough to manipulate any object human fingers can control.

Venom: A cotatril’s bite is extremely venomous, as follows: 3k3 Flesh Wounds / 1 Round / 5 Rounds.

Special Note: Some cotatril have access to Syrnych devices. They understand the principles behind these devices, and can use them to full effect. Exact details are left to the Game Master, but assume they know things about Syrnych technology that humans can scarcely fathom. Luckily, Kanuba contains no Syrnych artifacts. Woe be, however, to any human who brings one ashore. He might learn things about its use that he never wanted to know...

Nal Plant (120”)

Medium-Size Plant

Hit Dice: 5d8+15 (38 hp)

Initiative: +0

Speed: 0 ft.

AC: 16 (+6 natural)

Attacks: Grapple +6 melee

Damage: Grapple 1d6+2 melee

Face/Reach: 5 ft. by 5 ft./15 ft.

Special Attacks: Constrict 2d6+4, Bite 3d6+4

Special Qualities: Camouflage, blindsight 25 ft.

Saves: Fort +7, Ref +1, Will +3

Abilities: Str 18, Dex 10, Con 16, Int -, Wis 14, Cha 7

Feats: None

Climate/Terrain: Jungle

Organization: Solitary

Challenge Rating: 2

Treasure: None

Alignment: Always neutral

Advancement: 6–10 HD (Large)

Nal plants are a huge, carnivorous form of flora found within the Kanuban interior. The Kanubans believe they come about as a result of excess nal energy. The plant resembles nothing so much as a giant venus fly-trap, using powered tentacle-like vines to grasp its victims and drag them into its toothy maw. Though incapable of locomotion and possessing only limited

intelligence, nal plants are difficult to spot, and hunt their prey with considerable cunning. The Kanubans cleared them from the "civilized" parts of the island, but the untamed jungles hold numerous specimens, just waiting for an unsuspecting explorer to come wandering by.

Combat

Bite (Ex): If a nal plant has successfully grappled an enemy for two full rounds and constricted for at least one, it may draw its victim in to its mouth, biting for an additional 3d6+4 damage (no save).

Camouflage (Ex): Nal plants look like any others. Noticing one requires a check using Spot, Wilderness Lore, or Knowledge (nature, plants, or Kanuba) with a DC of 30. Nal plants with six or more Hit Dice crackle with nal power, and require no check to find them.

Nal Plant — Henchman (7th Sea™)

Points: 100
 Brawn: 5, Finesse: 3, Wits: 1, Resolve: 3, Panache: 2
 TN to be hit: 30
 Attack Roll: 8k3 Bite, 7k3 Squeeze
 Damage Roll: 8k3 Bite, 6k1 Crush
 Skills: Ambush 4, Parry (Vine) 5

Special Abilities

Concealment: Nal plants aren't easy to spot. Noticing one has a TN of 30, though the Flora Knack can be used for this roll. Opahkung can sense the nal in the plants with a TN of 10, however. A few nal plants have a Brawn Trait of 6 or even 7, but this increase in Brawn is a result of extreme nal buildup and they can automatically be spotted by the black energy flow around them.

Grappling: A nal plant that catches something in its vines can use an Action to automatically make a Damage Check on a bound victim. If it can hold on to the victim for two full Rounds, the plant can drag him into its toothy maw and use one Action to perform Bite damage and Crush damage simultaneously.

Characters

Terechai Eneli

Eneli, the most influential Kanu in generations, is remarkable even among the placid Kanu for her lack of ambition. Gentle and good-natured, she practically fell into the position of Lenlil's terek. Her uncanny ability to defuse arguments and find compromise made her extremely popular; one day she came home from a fishing expedition and found herself declared terek by popular acclaim. The previous terek had arranged the whole thing; she wanted to retire and felt that Eneli would make a remarkable leader. She had no idea how right she was.

Reluctantly at first, but with the encouragement of the tribe, Eneli soon took to the job with a passion. She quickly learned that a good leader made life better for the tribe. Improving the lives of others always made the tall Kanu profoundly happy, and being terek allowed her to organize Lenlil to everyone's best advantage. Eneli rarely did anything more than make friendly suggestions, but her intelligence and charisma gave her words the necessary weight.

The one duty she found distasteful was the terek's position as war leader. Mercifully, she never had to lead the Lenlil into battle as tactics and spear-play came slowly to her. On the other hand, she once slew a nal plant herself, and took her responsibility of protecting the tribe seriously. Becoming the Terechai made her even more keenly aware of that duty. Eneli had no real desire to be Terechai, any more than she had wanted to be terek, but the sinister Oraka was overwhelming all other competition, and she couldn't see any benefit in allowing a covetous tyrant to be the Terechai.

Eneli is an easygoing woman, but keeping the Théans away from the mountains while protecting them is plenty challenging. Oraka and her allies have become a completely new problem, and she has no doubt that Oraka would take great pleasure in ensuring her slow, ugly death.

Even so, Eneli remains hugely popular. Her handling of the Théans has been inspired, and the Kanu now prosper as never before. She has many allies throughout the island, several of whom are fiercely protective of her. Though she hates bloodshed, she has proven herself against everything from serpents to hungry nal plants to an assailant who tried to drag her off. Eneli's attacker ended the battle, and his life, with Eneli's spear through her chest.

Currently, Eneli lives with her beloved husband Azan in the Lenlil village — fishing, telling epic fables, dealing with the Théans, and keeping her rivals at bay. Azan's skill as an *opahkung* is virtually unmatched and he can supposedly force nal plants to still themselves through sheer force of will.

Eneli is fairly attractive and tall for a Kanu, with unusually long braided hair and deep, intensely brown eyes. Her true gift is in her voice. Many Kanu travel across the entire island just to hear her sing. Some say that her tales can make trees weep and stones laugh, and the Terechai has stopped brawls with a single calm sentence.

Terechai Eneli (420")

Noble 12: CR 12; SZ M (humanoid); HD 12d8+36; hp 85; Init +2 (+2 Dex); Spd 30 ft.; AC 19 (+2 Dex, +7 Unarmored Defense Proficiency); Atks: shortspear +11/+6/+1 melee (1d6 +1), pistol +10/+5 ranged (1d10); SA Commanding Presence +3, Wealth, Friends in High Places, Seduction, Taunt, Iron Glare 2/day; SV Fort +7, Ref +6, Will +11; Str 13, Dex 14, Con 16, Int 15, Wis 17, Cha 16; AL LG; Skills: Bluff +14, Climb +2, Diplomacy +18, Gather Information +7, Intimidate +7, Knowledge (Kanu history) +7, Listen +5, Move Silently +3, Perform +14, Ride +3, Sense Motive +10, Speak Language (Avalon, Cotatril, Eisen, Kanu), Spot +5, Swim +5, Wilderness Lore +8; Feats: Altruistic, Expertise, Leadership, Natural Diplomat, Storyteller, Unarmored Defense Proficiency (beginner), Weapon Focus (spear).

Terechai Eneli — Hero (7th Sea™)

Brawn: 3, Finesse: 3, Wits: 4, Resolve: 4, Panache: 4
 Reputation: 77
 Background: Assassin
 Arcana: Altruistic
 Advantages: Avalon, Cotatril (R/W), Eisen (R/W), Kanu, Appearance (Stunning*), Area Knowledge (Lenlil), Keen Senses, Noble, Specialty (Flora, History)
 *Her Appearance Advantage represents her voice, not her physique.

Courtier: Dancing 3, Diplomacy 5, Etiquette 3, Fashion 1, Gossip 3, Memorize 4, Oratory 5, Politics 2, Sincerity 5
Hunter: Animal Training 1, Fishing 3, Stealth 1, Survival 4, Tracking 3, Trail Signs 1
Performer: Acting 1, Animal Training 1, Cold Read 4, Dancing 3, Memorize 4, Oratory 5, Singing 5, Story telling 5
Specialties: Flora 4, History 4 (Kanu)
Athlete: Climbing 1, Footwork 3, Leaping 3, Sprinting 1, Swimming 4, Throwing 1
Polearm: Attack 3, Parry 3, Throw (Spear) 3
Pugilism: Attack 3, Footwork 3, Jab 1
Rider: Ride 1

GM Secrets

The Terechai of the Kanu keeps some of the biggest secrets on Terra. First of all, her position has made her the primary contact between the Kanu and the cotatril. Eneli knows about the missing Avalons and the suspicions of the cotatril leadership, though she doesn't know any more than they do. The First-Chief agrees with the cotatril's reasons for keeping themselves hidden, but if some of them become a threat, the settlers have a right to know it. This places her right in the middle of the cotatril dilemma. The cotatril have promised to begin patrols of their own, but the Eneli wonders how effective patrols will be when even that ancient race doesn't know what happened to the Avalons. She has assigned a few skilled warriors to conduct a watch of their own, a minor detail she neglected to mention to either the Théans or the cotatril.

Eneli also knows about Oraka's scheme to rid the island of the settlers. The Terechai hopes to turn Oraka's nal against her, since many powerful opahkung remain loyal to Eneli. If the beloved Kanu chieftain can defuse the threat Oraka represents without letting the rest of the island find out, so much the better. Tensions are high enough. Should it be necessary, however, the canny Lenlil will reveal the vicious plan to all and put an end to the opahkung's ambitions.

Finally, she is entirely aware of die Kreuzritter. They approached her at Grandmaster Kazi's request, hoping that she could point them to another opahkung willing to join the secret society. Kazi left the island on account of her — he loved her and lost her heart to his rival, Azan — and can't bring himself to face her again. Eneli still regrets the pain she caused Kazi, and her heart leapt when she learned that he still lived. Though she disapproves of some of the Order's methods, the cotatril have told her about the Thalusiai, and she does everything she can to support die Kreuzritter's cause.

With all these burdens on her heart, she desperately wants to be rid of the title Terechai. Eneli hasn't forgotten how she became a terek in the first place. Alas, no likely candidates have arisen, and while Oraka remains a candidate, the position would be a death sentence to anyone ill prepared. So she smiles, juggles the fates of thousands, and desperately hopes she knows what she's doing.

Oraka

The only real competition Eneli had for the position of Terechai was a woman little more than half her age. Oraka always hungered to prove herself, and considered herself a champion of the Taru way. From childhood, she could direct the path of lan or nal with uncanny precision, and used this ability in everything from spoons to spears. Even among the Taru, opah is not to be used lightly, but Oraka's gift knew no bounds. She never sought the position of terek. She didn't need it. By the time she came of age, the gifted opahkung effectively controlled her entire tribe.

Oraka found that she enjoyed her power, the respect that came with it, and the wide berth women from other tribes gave her. Men were another story, but few were a match for her passion. Soon, the shaman's only desire was for more. Taru was hers, and extending her reach into other tribes was literally impossible without some great event to unite the islanders. Then the colonists arrived.

To this day, Oraka seethes at how close she came to her dream, only to fail at the last moment. It all should have been so easy. Naturally, the arrival of these strangers required the appointment of a Terechai, and who better for the role than one so skilled at directing others? Fear of nal and her own lan cleared the field of competition, and the opahkung displayed masterful political skills in her rapid ascent. Everything fell apart when Eneli was convinced to stand against her. The accursed Lenlil terek charmed the judges with her glib tongue, and though she was no match for Oraka in mock spear combat, the clever old asprey outwitted her in the riddle contest.

The cunning Taru refused to accept defeat however, and learned one thing from the situation — patience. In her anger, she threatened Eneli... and made instant enemies of too many opahkung. She realized there was nothing she could do about Eneli's victory, but her rash display of emotion cost her considerable political capital. Over half the island saw the Lenlil win, and to try anything in that moment would have been suicidal. The powerful opahkung thus spent the last few years watching and waiting. Eneli, annoyingly enough, has remembered the threat, but many others have forgotten over the years. Oraka remained quiet and withdrawn, retreating to the Taru village and keeping to herself. Serpents do much the same thing when hunting. Sooner or later, she reasoned, Eneli would falter. When that happens, the Terechai will meet her destiny. Afterwards, who else can the Kanu turn to?

In spite of the nal she consistently manipulates — many live in fear of her three powerful nal spears — Oraka remains an exquisitely beautiful woman. She isn't fond of using her appearance as a tool — such tactics are beneath a great opahkung — but she isn't foolish enough to discount it. Nearly half of her inner circle is hopelessly in love with her, placing an absolutely loyal force at the shaman's disposal. Her skin is perfectly smooth, her body graceful as a dancer's, her eyes dark and compelling, and her face sweet and guileless. Her few tattoos are elegant. It's a pity that so captivating a physique hides so twisted a soul.

Oraka (d20™)

Noble 10/Opah Sorcery 6: CR 16; SZ M (humanoid); HD 16d8+48; hp 110; Init +2 (+2 Dex); Spd 30 ft.; AC 19 (+2 Dex, +7 Unarmored Defense Proficiency); Atks: shortspear +12/+8/+3 melee (1d6 +1); SA Commanding Presence +3, Friends in High Places, Invest Weapon 2, Iron Glare 1/day, Reduce/Increase Lan/Nal 2, Seduction, Taunt, Transfer Lan/Nal 2, Wealth; SV Fort +11, Ref +7, Will +15; Str 12, Dex 14, Con 16, Int 15, Wis 16, Cha 18; AL NE; Skills: Bluff +13, Climb +3, Diplomacy +10, Gather Information +8, Intimidate +8, Knowledge (Kanu religion) +12, Move Silently +2, Sense Motive +10, Spellcraft +10, Speak Language (Avalon, Cotatril, Eisen, Kanu), Spot +2, Swim +2, Wilderness Lore +8; Feats: Expertise, Improved Disarm, Leadership, Natural Diplomat, Precise Shot, Unarmored Defense Proficiency (beginner), Weapon Focus (spear).

Oraka – Villain (7th Sea™)

Brawn: 4, **Finesse:** 2, **Wits:** 3, **Resolve:** 5, **Panache:** 3
Reputation: -21
Background: Vendetta
Arcana: Ambitious
Advantages: Avalon, Cotatril, Eisen, Kanu, Appearance (Intimidating), Dangerous Beauty, Left-Handed, Opah Sorcery, Small, Specialty (Seduction)
Herbalist: Compounds 2, Cooking 2, Diagnosis 2, First Aid 1, Flora 5, Poison 4
Hunter: Ambush 3, Animal Training 2, Fishing 4, Skinning 2, Stealth 3, Survival 3, Tracking 3, Trail Signs 1
Performer: Acting 1, Animal Training 2, Cold Read 3, Dancing 1, Memorize 2, Oratory 3, Prestidigitation 2, Singing 1, Storytelling 3
Specialty: Seduction 1
Spy: Conceal 3, Interrogation 3, Memorize 2, Poison 4, Shadowing 2, Sincerity 4, Stealth 3
Athlete: Climbing 2, Footwork 3, Leaping 4, Long Distance Running 2, Side-Step 3, Sprinting 2, Swimming 3, Throwing 2
Dirty Fighting: Attack (Dirty Fighting) 3, Attack (Improvised Weapon) 3, Eye-Gouge 2, Kick 2, Parry (Improvised Weapon) 1, Throat Strike 3, Throw (Improvised Weapon) 3
Polearm: Attack 5, Parry 5, Throw (Spear) 5

Note: There is nothing supernatural about her Appearance or Dangerous Beauty. She simply uses her gift with opah to keep the powerful nal she uses from distorting her features.

GM Secrets

Oraka is, of course, plotting the downfall of Eneli, but her plans go far beyond a simple coup. She intends to change the face of Kanuba forever. From the Théans, she's learned of kingdoms and royalty, of men ruling their fellows like gods. The Terechai is little more than a negotiator, but if the situation escalates who knows what heights she could attain?

Her perfidy reaches even further than that, however. Some of the cotatril who distrust the non-Kanu approached the *opahkung*, seeking to forge an alliance. Oraka jumped at the chance. With such allies at her side, victory is assured. Who can stand against the deadly Taru when the ancients themselves support her quest for supremacy?

Here There Be Monsters: L'Il du Bête

History

The Island of the Beast is one of the greatest examples of Montaigne decadence and its fall mirrors that of the great nation itself. It was discovered over a hundred years ago by a group of Montaigne nobles searching for a shorter route to Cathay in the East. The island was dotted with ruins and pillars constructed of metal and covered in strange runes. For decades, treasure-seeking Montaigne plundered the island, removing artifacts and small trinkets to show off at court, but the island itself offered few other resources. That all changed when King Leon XI, an avid hunter, traveled to the island in search of game. His advisors neglected to inform him that the island held no wildlife at all. Enraged, he declared that if some sport was not found for him, his advisors would have no need to return to the court. One terrified viscount used his *Porté* abilities to journey to his estates in Montaigne and ordered a stag captured unharmed. Once he had the creature, he brought it back to the island for the king's pure amusement. Unfortunately the sorcery, which enabled him to step across the miles between Montaigne and the island in seconds, drove the poor creature mad. King Leon emerged from his lodgings to see the stag disembowel two servants before bounding into the jungle. He gave a shout of joy and rushed after it.

Thus began a tradition that lasted for decades. Jaded and bored nobles from across Théah paid for the right to hunt down dangerous creatures within the island's confines. As the Montaigne court grew decadent, the nobles demanded more than a simple hunt however. They insisted on more and more dangerous prey, luxurious quarters, gourmet chefs, entertainers, minstrels, mistresses and all of the other privileges available to the ruling elite. These were all provided to the hunters who paid an exorbitant fee to hunt at the world's greatest wild game preserve. Ten ships from the Montaigne navy patrolled the island to keep poachers out.

Another twist began when the hunters became the hunted. A dangerous beast would be brought to the island for every hunter, and if a hunter failed to bag an animal, it roamed freely. These survivors stalked L'Il in search of food, which created a grotesque ecology of predator devouring predator which ensured that only the most cunning and dangerous creatures remained. Luckily the lodgings upon the island were surrounded by wards created by the Syrneath pillars which kept the beasts out and gave the hunters a place to regroup, relax and reequip themselves. Three out of every ten hunters fell to the beasts, but still the hunts continued. The thrill of this most dangerous game was too much for a jaded huntsman to ignore, and L'Il provided a marvelous haven from the turmoil and unrest of the peasants at home.

In 1667, a nobleman named Henri Riche du Paroisse visited the island and afterwards complained to the Empereur that he had been unable to bag any animals there. He bragged about his hunting prowess for hours while

extolling the Empereur with every other breath, carefully neglecting to mention that when one of the beasts charged him, he'd soiled his drawers, dropped his weapon and run squealing back to his quarters. The Empereur finally granted him the island along with the nonhereditary title Comte du Bête — a position which has remained open since 1622 when the last Comte du Bête was devoured by an enormous osprey — and instructed him to improve its wildlife by whatever means he cared to. However, all revenue from the lucrative hunts would continue to go to the throne and any serious drop in them would be repaid out of Henri's own fortune.

The new Comte du Bête immediately implemented a series of changes. He ordered several of the Porté masters to begin transporting sheep to the game reserve, which gave the beasts something to eat other than Montaigne nobles. This also allowed the hunters to use the sheep as bait to lure in the monsters. Martin de Huet, the Master of the Hunt who maintained day-to-day operations on the island for over two decades was disgusted by the plan, but decided to remain silent. Several hundred sheep were brought in as well as a number of pigs. The fact that the animals were seized from the starving peasants upon Riche du Paroisse's lands mattered little to him. Unfortunately, while inspecting the new sheep herds on his first visit to the island, he was attacked and killed by a ram driven mad by the Porté sorcery.

Then in 1668, the hunter's paradise began to unravel. A sorcerer named Malveck secretly lived on the island for years, studying the Syrneth ruins as part of a secret scheme. In the early summer of 1668, he attempted to use a Syrneth artifact to seal all of the doors on the manor houses so he

could hold the nobles hostage. A group of heroes stopped him, but Malveck's activities attracted the attention of the Master of the Hunt, who found an area surrounded by wards that Malveck used. De Huet was impressed at the amount of good game close to the area, and took possession of the Syrneth ruins.

Meanwhile, l'Empereur found a new Comte du Bête, awarding the title to one of his favorite mistresses, Camille Valoix du Martise. The new Comtesse du Bête was an avid huntress and already possessed two trophies from the island. In late Septimus, she decided to journey to the island and inspect it for herself. Unrest was simmering in Montaigne's capital and she felt a hunt would take her mind off the peasant's beastly behavior. In honor of her arrival, the Master of the Hunt ordered a massive spectacle. Rather than bringing a single creature to the island, he ordered all of the Porté masters to find the most fearsome beasts possible, and to bring them to the island at the same time. Whether they killed each other or fled into the jungle, he anticipated a truly memorable hunt. He staged the event at Malveck's clearing at the center of the island. All of the hunters were present to witness it.

The Porté masters ripped open a large rift meanwhile summoning their creatures. Somehow instead of summoning each individually as intended, they fused several together into a single horrifying monstrosity. The thing stood twelve feet tall on two legs and bristled with muscles under a thick reptilian hide. It lifted its head to the sky and bellowed in anger while the Master of the Hunt, the Comtesse and the others watched from the warded area. Then it strode forward until it touched the ward and gazed at them malevolently, before slamming its massive claws down upon the invisible field holding it back. The ward buckled collapsing with a hollow pop. For one instant, everyone stood staring in horror.



Then the creature was upon them. Its claws were able to rend a man in seconds and its hide turned back blades and bullets alike. Within moments, it ripped its way through their midst disappearing into the jungle on the far side of the clearing. Dozens of men lay dead upon the ground in its wake, including the Comtesse du Bête.

That was the end of the Montaigne's game resort. Before the Empereur could bestow the title upon another noble, the peasants rose in revolt and blood ran in the streets. The nobles suddenly had more pressing matters than hunting on their minds, such as escaping Montaigne with their lives. Those who remained on the island quickly fled in the warships maintaining patrol, scattering to the four winds. The new Revolutionary government is preoccupied with other matters and ignored the island since they took power. The beasts that still remain feast upon the sheep, pigs and each other. Numerous creatures still stalk the island... including the unholy beast created by the Porté masters. It killed everything it encountered and holds no fear for anything living. It smashed aside the wards that have kept the other animals out and continues hunting for more prey.

Since that time, at least six hunting parties have come to the island, drawn by reckless daring and a desire to return the island to human control. Only two of them survived to tell what they have seen: beasts hunting noblemen and attacking in broad daylight. They also reported hearing gunshots from elsewhere on the island, but no one knows who could still be there. Still, the hunters continue coming. The beasts don't mind, fresh meat is always welcome.

Geography

The island is several miles across and has no natural ports or harbors. A few hundred feet from the whites of the beach, the island gives way to dense groves of palm trees and mammoth ferns. A humid white mist drenches visitors and limits visibility while strange birds constantly call out, punctuated by the roar of unseen beasts. Two smoldering volcanoes peak above the jungle floor. The southern one is covered with jungle plants while the northern one is bare rock. There are no roads, structures or man-made landmarks in the interior of the island, but metal pillars covered in twisted markings thrust out of the ground in every forgotten corner. These seem unmarked by time, but easily shatter into fist-sized chunks if attacked. Though quite decorative, these chunks have no intrinsic worth or ability. Many of the pillars hold invisible wards to prevent any solid object from passing through them. The Montaigne used these to establish several "manor houses" within the remains of Syrneth buildings: places where the island's guests could relax, store their belongings, and prepare for hunts within the interior. See page 37 for more details.

A large number of beasts still live here and many of them have established their own territories. Lions, bears, boars, ruin monsters and even more exotic beasts all claim a portion of the island for their own. Attacks are fairly commonplace as the creatures vie for the limited food. Several small herds of sheep still remain, moving across the island and providing the only reliable source of food.

The weather on the island is hot and humid with frequent storms that wash over it for hours at a time. Even this doesn't relieve the stifling humidity and the dense jungle smothers any breeze off the shore.

Volcanoes

The southern volcano — called Mont Fumée by the Montaigne — has a thin trickle of smoke rising from it most mornings, which usually decreases by noon. Dense jungles cover the slopes of the mountain and a band of several dozen carnivorous apes make their home in this steep terrain.

The northern volcano — called Mont Cendre — maintains enough heat to continuously smoke and occasionally belch forth a small cloud of ash. There is a cave on the southeastern side some twenty five feet high and one hundred feet deep. All of the walls of the cave are covered with pictograms and images that appear Syrneth in origin. The Grande Bête makes its lair here as well. See below for more details.

Clearing

Near the center of the isle is a roughly circular clearing: the site where Malveck activated a Syrneth artifact which sealed all of the manor houses, and where Martin de Huet threw the island's tragic final hunting party. This area was filled with interlocking wards which prevented anything from entering. As such it was the safest place to summon the creatures for the last great hunt. Unfortunately, the Grande Bête was able to break through the wards with ease and they have not been reestablished.

The artifact that Malveck activated is still here. It appears to be a pool of silvery water in the center of a circle of Syrneth pillars. However, the pool is made of metal and appears to be impervious to damage. The tips of tiny waves in the surface are actually stars in the heavens above; the pool can act as a star chart. There are also two indentations on either side of the pool which act as keyholes of a sort for two Syrneth compasses. When one is placed in an opening, it allows the owner to send a message to the other one telepathically. Each compass also has an arrow always pointing to the other. When both compasses are placed in the indentations and turned, they can raise or lower any barrier on the island (as well as activating other Syrneth artifacts hundreds of miles was; see the module *The Arrow of Heaven™* for more details). The two compasses are currently missing, though others may exist on the island at the GM's discretion.

Ruins

Note: this information is not easily accessed. It is presented to give the game master an understanding of the forces at work here.

This island was originally used by an ancient race known as the Syrneth as a laboratory for some of their most dangerous experiments — tinkering with the most powerful forces on the face of the earth. They created a large series of interlocking wards to prevent anyone from interfering and to contain the energies they were working with. They finally succeeded in creating an artifact that could harness the energy of the stars themselves and remake Théah itself. This artifact was too large to fit upon the island, so it was created on the mainland. Everything on the island was originally part of this enormous project. The buildings the Montaigne used as manor houses served as storage units for fuel and waste products, the pool in the clearing was one of the primary readouts and control units. The two volcanoes were additional control units and readouts, but several malfunctions caused them to overload and rupture. The explosions blasted a fissure into a lava pockets below the surface, which created the mountains. The Syrneth died out eons ago, leaving the site abandoned. The ruins remain, however, far beneath the surface.

Manor Houses

When this island was used by the Montaigne, guests would stay in these structures during their visit. Each of the six manor houses was a Surneth ruin built along the exact same design. They each stood one hundred feet tall and three hundred feet across. A large high-vaulted room filled the entire structure with two large doors, one to the north and one to the south. The stone of the buildings was impervious to any damage the Montaigne could do and resisted any attempts at remodeling. Therefore, they suspended huge curtains from the top of the building, which partitioned the room into different sections. A large central area served as a dining room and common area. Around the edges of the interior, the Montaigne created curtain partitioned bedrooms for the nobles complete with four poster beds and armories. The servants received their own area, roughly twenty feet wide and ten feet deep. Wards surrounded the house and prevented the isle's beasts from entering the building.

That has changed. When the nobles abandoned the island, many of them left their servants behind. The cowed men and women remained in the buildings certain they were safe from harm there. They were completely unprepared when the Grande Bête attacked the manor houses one by one and smashed through the wards within moments. Within a month, all those who had remained on the island were dead... except one. The manor houses now show signs of carnage. The curtains are in tatters, the furniture is tossed about the building, the walls and floors splattered with blood and bones, and a few of the island's monsters now make their lairs there.

GM Secrets and Adventure Hooks

The Beasts

The Porté masters who served on this island were instructed to find the most dangerous creatures in the world. For half a century, they traveled to remote locations across Theah, capturing wolves, bears, lions, crocodiles and ruin monsters of every possible description. The creatures which survived scores of hunts over the years, are now the most terrifying beings to walk the land. They are also hungry. These creatures, while not intelligent, are all extremely cunning or they wouldn't have survived this long, but they are not cowardly. If they see an opportunity, they will seize upon it and fall upon a hunting party.

The island still holds a number of the beasts, a sample is provided below. Others can be derived with the following rules: for the 7th Sea™ system, players, start with the beasts in the *Game Masters' Guide*™ add a point to three of their Abilities and then give them 10 points to split amongst Knacks. For D20™ players, start with the appropriate Dire Animal and then advance them one level. Ruin monsters and other fantastic beasts need no modifications.

L'Il du Bête Bear (d20™)

Large Beast: CR 9; SZ L; HD 16d8+64; hp 144; Init+3 (Dex); Spd 40 ft.; AC 19; Atks: 2 claws +17 (2d4+8), bite +12 (2d8+5); SA: Improved Grab; SV Fort +12, Ref +9, Will +9;

Str 29, Dex 15, Con 19, Int 4, Wis 12, Char 10. AL N.
Skills: Listen +7, Spot +7, Swim +13, Move Silently +5, Hide +5.

Improved Grab: The bear must hit with a claw attack to use this ability.

L'Il du Bête Bear — Villain (7th Sea™)

Points: 100

Brawn: 6, Finesse: 3, Wits: 2, Resolve: 4, Panache: 2

TN to be hit: 15

Attack Roll: Claw 4k3, Bite 4k3

Damage Roll: Claw 6k3, Bite 5k2

Skills: Grapple 4, Bear Hug 5, Stealth 2, Ambush 4, Swim 2

Note: May make two attacks upon one target for every action die

The Forsworn

Captain Victor Dore is an unusual member of the Montaigne navy. Born the son of a tailor, he joined the navy in hopes of seeing the world. Instead he became a second class citizen who would never be allowed to become an officer. He served out his time and resigned. Returning home, he discovered that a disgruntled noble customer had gutted his father for a crooked seam. The shop and all his father's possessions were confiscated. With no prospects, Victor re-enlisted. Near the end of his second tour of duty, his ship was attacked by pirates. They were outgunned and outmanned, but the captain insisted on fighting to the last man. Victor was that last man and managed to rescue a hostage before escaping in a skiff while the pirates secured their vessel. The hostage turned out to be an admiral's daughter and before he knew what was happening, Victor was promoted to Captain.

Still, his common heritage prevented him from enjoying his reward. He was given a leaky schooner named the *Forsworn*, and put on patrol duty around L'Il du Bête. His orders were to prevent anyone from landing on the island without permission of the Navy Office. He's been here for seven years without leave. The other ships all ferried nobles back to Théah, but the Navy Office forgot about his little ship. It hasn't received supplies in almost a year, but Victor refuses to abandon his post: he fears what the Navy does to commoners who disobey orders. He doesn't even know that the Montaigne Revolution has taken place.

Victor is a dull, unassuming commander and his crew are all old men. They will be happy to speak to anyone, especially if they can trade for new supplies. There is a small island only two days away with plentiful fruit and a running spring, so they are in no danger of dying, but they would desperately enjoy tasting salted beef or pork again. Because they are the only boat on patrol and they leave frequently to restock their supplies, it isn't difficult to sneak past them onto the island. They themselves have never actually set foot on the island and can't tell the party anything about it, other than that there are no people there anymore. The crew might actually enjoy it if someone attacked them so they could return to port and declare they'd been overwhelmed.

The Grande Bête

When Camille Valoix du Martis, Comteess du Bête, arrived on the island to inspect it, the Master of the Hunt ordered his men to find the four most terrifying creatures imaginable. They captured a bear from the northern wastes of Ussura, a tiger from the Crescent Empire, a rhinoceros from an island in the Midnight Archipelago, and a ruin monster from the Eisen mountains. Each of these creatures was blooded by a Porté mage and when the hunters assembled at the center of the island, a rift was ripped open. The plan was to summon all four creatures simultaneously, but something unexpected happened. Somehow the four creatures merged to form a single beast. It was over thirteen feet tall and had the broad muscled form of a bear, its hide was striped like a tiger with the toughness of the rhinoceros and was capable of turning aside blade or bullet. It possessed the brute force of the bear without losing any of the speed and agility of the tiger. Its head was topped with a single spire of bone almost two feet long, above a maw filled with razor sharp teeth and blood red eyes holding a rude intelligence.

In its first few minutes on the island, the Grande Bête ripped through a score or more of experienced hunters on a bloody rampage. Now it stalks the island, sometimes tracking down and preying upon large beasts and other times simply lying in wait for anything living to come by. However, it is far more focused now. When it finds a prey, it generally only kills a single large creature or around man-sized being before stopping to feed. Generally after feeding it returns to its lair, a cave in the northern volcano, where it sleeps for twelve hours at a time. It does not sleep lightly, and can be approached if an interloper is careful.

In combat, the Grande Bête will generally charge its opponents offering a goring attack with its horn. Once in close combat, it will focus on using claws or a bite. It is extremely intelligent for an animal, but incapable of higher reasoning. The creature is constantly hungry and in pain from its transformation. The Grande Bête is quite capable of defeating almost any predator on the island. It is intended to frighten and chase a party who must use their wits and skills to evade and escape it rather than a group of brutal fighters willing to go toe-to-toe with it.

The Grande Bête (120")

Large Aberration: CR 12; SZ L; HD 12d10+45; hp 120; Init+4 (Dex); Spd 40 ft.; AC 30; Atks: 2 claws +19 melee (2d6+10), bite +16 melee (4d8+10), horn +17 melee (4d6+14); SQ SR 20, damage reduction 10/+2; SV Fort +15, Ref +13, Will +8; Str 34, Dex 19, Con 20, Int 8, Wis 15, Cha 10; AL N; Skills: Listen +10, Spot +10, Jump +10, Hide +5, Move Silently +5, Climb +10, Wilderness Lore +15, Swim +10.

The Grande Bête — Villain (7th Sea™)

TN to be hit: 20

Brawn: 8, Finesse: 4, Wits: 3, Resolve: 5, Panache: 3

Attack Roll: 7k2 Bite, 8k4 Claws, 8k3 Horn

Damage Roll: 8d3 Bite, 7k2 Claws, 7k4 Horn

Skills: Swimming 3, Tracking 3, Footwork 3, Ambush 3, Climbing 2, Leaping 3, Stealth 2

Special: Tough, Ignores first ten points of damage from each attack.

Note: The creature can only use its gouging horn attack as it charges a foe

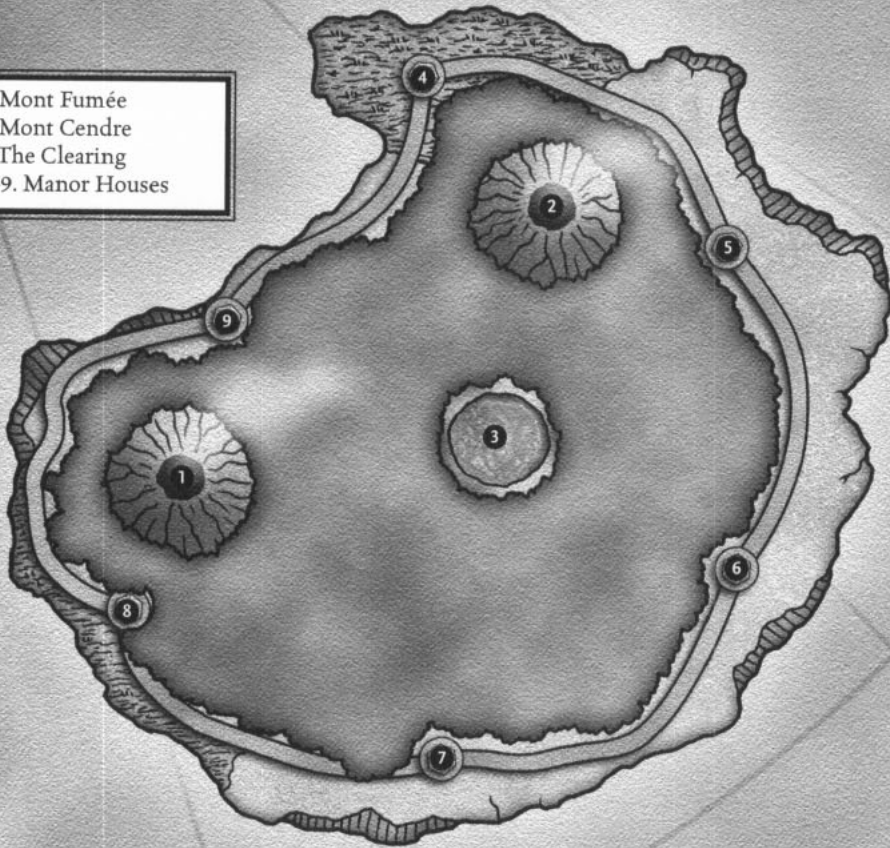
Plot Hooks

The following plots may be used as adventure hooks on L'Il du Bête:

- A Montaigne nobleman named Hubert Valoix du Martise from the government-in-exile in Siegsburg (or a similar locale if you're running a non-Théan campaign) is seeking brave adventurers to find his cousin Veronica. He is deeply concerned with her safety; she was obsessed with the L'Il du Bête and traveled there to discover if anything yet remains. He would like the party to follow her path, and is willing to pay handsomely for any information they uncover. In truth, Veronica has gone back to the island. She was heir to the last Comtesse du Bête and so believes she has a legitimate claim to whatever remains on the island. Hubert is her heir and deeply in debt. He hopes that the party will bring back evidence of her demise, so he can claim the island for himself. If not, then he can at least offer testimony to his creditors that the property he is to inherit has value. In truth, Veronica's ship sank in a storm, but she was able to make it to the island. Martin du Huet, the Master of the Hunt, was outraged that another noble would enter his domain and quickly tracked the young woman down. Rather than kill her, however, he offered to teach her how to survive on the island and showed her around. For the last six months he has instructed her on hunting, tracking, fighting and basic survival skills, skills she has picked up with amazing swiftness. He plans on training her for another few months and then informing her that he plans to kill her. It has been years since he stalked a human target, and he relishes pitting his wits against an equally cunning foe...
- One of the Porté masters who worked on the island is a traitor and a wanted criminal. He is also missing. The players are hired by the current Montaigne government to travel to the island to see if he has used his Porté magic to travel there. If they find him, they are to bring him back to face justice.
- It is possible to set adventures earlier in the history of the isle. Perhaps the players come across a starving village where the livestock have just been taken by a nobleman, who is transporting them to L'Il to feed the creatures there. The party may feel duty-bound to put a stop to his mad scheme and ensure that the village doesn't starve.
- The party hears that the new Comtesse du Bête is scheduling a massive hunt. They would need to meet the new Comtesse at court and convince her to include them in such an undertaking. They could even be involved in the political maneuvering that ended with her in possession of the island, which makes them one of the hunters present when the Grande Bête comes through the Porté hole... In such a situation, killing the Beast is probably not as major a concern as simply surviving its initial attack and escaping the island before Martin de Huet hunts them down.

L'il du Bête

1. Mont Fumée
2. Mont Cendre
3. The Clearing
- 4-9. Manor Houses



0 5 1
Scale in Miles



Characters

The Master of the Hunt

The second son of a wealthy nobleman, Martin du Huet held no prospects of an inheritance. However, he never cared for the wealth and power; his only love was hunting. Tracking prey, the thrill of the hunt, hunter and hunted locked together in a dance where he led the steps, all gave him the only joy he had ever known. He had visited L'Il du Bête over a dozen times, a record which was never equaled. When the Master of the Hunt died in 1653, Martin was chosen as his successor. He dedicated his life to the hunts on L'Il du Bête, tracking down and obtaining the most vicious predators, bringing them to the island, checking the weaponry, and organizing the hunters and servants. He learned to be charming and witty, but only to better fulfill his duties. The Master of the Hunt was the king of the island in all but name, ruler of a paradise only he could truly appreciate.

Until the Empereur named a new Comte du Bête. It is decades since anyone held that title and Martin was shocked when the new Comte turned out to be a sniveling, ineffective man whose tales far exceeded his skills. The thought that he must now obey such a man filled Martin with disgust as did bringing herds of sheep to the island in order to make the hunts easier. Still, Martin loved the island too much to refuse the orders. When the Comte stepped through the Porté portal to make his first visit to the island, the Master of the Hunt insisted that the man inspect the sheep herds immediately while the Porté blood still clung to his clothes. One of the sheep, driven mad by the Porté sorcery smelled the taint upon him and ripped the Comte apart within minutes.

When the Empereur designated Valoix du Martise as the Comtesse du Bête, Martin was still angry. She was a true huntress, though she couldn't match his prowess so he decided to demonstrate his superiority to her. He quietly obtained the Synchronic compasses that Malveck used to lower the wards on the island and arranged to have several blood-thirsty beasts brought in for a hunt in her honor. He was surprised when the beasts merged to form a single creature, but he was ready. He used the compasses to lower the wards as the creature came to them so it looked as if it had the ability to destroy them at will. The Grande Bête ravaged through the assembled hunters and servants, killing dozens of them including the Comtesse herself. That made the Master of the Hunt the sole ruler of the isle again. Rather than lose that position, he ordered the remaining guests to flee the island. He himself remained behind.

Over the next few days, he used the Synchronic compasses to lower the wards surrounding each of the manor houses and allowed the beasts to attack and devour everyone still remaining on the island. The few that the animals missed, Martin tracked down personally and killed. Now, he is the only person still on the isle. Several hunting parties have come and gone, but the beasts and Martin have killed them all. Martin lives in a small hunting blind he constructed by himself years ago near the center of the island. He is above the humid mists which swirl around the trees and can easily spot anyone who comes near to his home. In a nearby cave protected by wards, he keeps supplies for himself including gunpowder, ammunition, and food.

The Master of the Hunt owns several unique possessions. The first is a masterwork, a revolving musket created for him by a Vendel gunsmith. It is fitted with an extremely accurate gunsight and uses a special powder mixture of his own design. He keeps the weapon on him at all times as well as two throwing knives and a pair of loaded pistols. He also keeps a pair of Synchronic compasses he acquired after Malveck used them. By twisting the compasses in certain patterns, he can lower or raise any of the wards on the island. He can also raise wards across the doorways into the Manor houses which cannot be crossed under any circumstances. Martin has practiced enough with the compasses to be able to use any of its powers as a move-equivalent action.

The Master of the Hunt is a tall, thin Montaigne with a hard face and hollow eyes. He gave up his finery in favor of animal skins of the beasts he has killed. He rarely speaks and prefers to watch his foes for several hours before attacking from a distance. He is one of the world's most skilled hunters and has no compassion or mercy. He only cares about the chase and believes that he is the only one worthy of using the hunting grounds he spent his life creating and stocking. He will act against anyone who intrudes into his domain.

Martin du Huet, Master of the Hunt (420")

Ranger 5/Noble 1/Man of Will 2/Highwayman 2:
CR 10; SZ M; HD 5d10+2d8+2d12+1d8+20; hp 90;
Init +3 (Dex); Spd 30 ft.; AC 19; Atks: Repeating Musket
+13/+8 melee (1d12+3); SA: Favored Enemy: Animal,
Second Favored Enemy: Beast, Provided by Nature,
Commanding Presence +1, Friends in High Places,
Wealth, Unstoppable, Fearless; SV Fort +7, Ref +5,
Will +6; Str 14, Dex 16, Con 14, Int 14, Wis 14, Cha 14;
AL NE. Skills: Bluff +4, Climb +6, Craft (Traps) +8, Craft
(Skinning) +8, Diplomacy +6, Handle Animal +7,
Heal +5, Hide +14, History +3, Intimidate +3, Intuit
Direction +11, Jump +4, Knowledge (Nature) +7,
Knowledge (L'Il du Bête) +7, Law +4, Listen +7, Move
Silently +14, Profession (Hunter) +8, Search +7, Sense
Motive +7, Spot +7, Wilderness Lore +10; Feats: Cruel,
Track, Point Blank Shot (Gunpowder Weapons), Clever
Shot, Exotic Weapon Proficiency (Firearms), Alertness,
Deadeye Dick, Weapon Focus (Musket), Heightened
Senses, Odd Sleeping Habits, Sharpshooting Expert,
Unarmored Defense Proficiency.

Martin du Huet, Master of the Hunt — Villain (7th Sea™)

Brawn: 3, **Finesse:** 4, **Wits:** 3, **Resolve:** 3, **Panache:** 3
Reputation: -30
Background: None
Arcana: Cruel
Advantages: Montaigne (R/W), Castille, Noble
Courtier: Dancing 3, Etiquette 4, Fashion 4, Oratory 5,
Sincerity 5
Hunter: Ambush 5, Skinning 3, Stealth 5, Survival 4,
Tracking 5, Trail Signs 4
Scholar: History 3, Law 2, Mathematics 2, Philosophy 2,
Research 2
Athlete: Climbing 3, Footwork 4, Sidestep 3, Sprinting 4,
Throwing 2
Firearms: Attack (Firearms) 5, Reload (Firearms) 5
Knife: Attack (Knife) 3, Parry (Knife) 3, Throw (Knife) 3

Little Elysium: Marcina

Welcome to paradise.

Marcina is one of Castille's important colonies, a rich source of gold, sugar and fruit, with a heavenly climate and with the friendliest inhabitants in the Archipelago. For over a century, the island remains one of the crown jewels of Castille's colonial efforts and a model of cooperation between the native Erego and settlers. The governor is Marcina-born, the soldiers are dedicated and loyal, and the people are friendly.

Today, however, there is a serpent in paradise. A corrupt governor, Pedro del Avila, was convinced to retire by the crown, but his resentment has only grown in ensuing years. Now, he's found the opportunity for revenge in the form of Bishop Pablo Guzman de Gallegos, the island's first Knight Inquisitor. At the moment, they have little power, even when pooling resources. Soon, however, Inquisition reinforcements will arrive from Castille and seize power. When that happens, Marcina becomes a paradise lost.

Little Elysium waits for its heroes.

History

Before the Castillians arrived, Marcina's historical lore centered largely around its legends. The native Erego have many legends, sometimes contradictory ones. They love to debate the merits of various tales and stories, and it wouldn't do to have too small a pool to choose from. There are a few basic tales upon which the Erego agree, however. The High One (or Theus) created the world, sun, moon, stars and spirits. Erego spirits led the tribes to Marcina, where they lived happily throughout their existence. Powerful medicine allowed the Urub, a raider people, to overcome the Erego's spirit protectors. Erego warriors have occasionally been forced to drive back Urub incursions. The rest of Erego history amounts to records of family lines, with special mention of creators of popular games, and warriors or leaders of especial merit.

In 1429 (by Théan reckoning) Castillian explorer Ésteban Guzman stumbled across Marcina during an Urub attack. After some initial confusion, Captain Guzman quickly worked out which people were the invaders and which were the victims and ended the attack with well-placed cannon fire. His efforts immediately ingratiated himself with the natives, and set the stage for the centuries of cooperation to follow.

For the first ten years, Castille considered the island more of a curiosity than anything. Missionaries and scholars visited from time to time, debating with the elated natives and enjoying the leisurely pace of life on the isle. Then in 1440, one of the missionaries was climbing the great mountain in the middle of the island when she slipped and slid several yards. When she rose to her feet, the path she'd cleared glittered, as did her blouse. She literally scratched the surface of one of the richest gold veins in the world. Two others of equal size turned up within the year, and Castille rushed to capitalize on the discovery.

A pattern formed over the ensuing century. Word of Castillian gold shipments reached other nations. Letters of marque were issued in exchange for a percentage of the take. Escort ships would drive off or sink most attackers, though some raids (usually the especially bold or vicious ones) would succeed. The Castillian navy would redouble its efforts to ensure that such acts of piracy never succeeded again. Pirates became emboldened by the prizes to be won. And so it went, until the mid-sixteenth century, when the Castillian Navy grew to three hundred ships — an unheard-of fleet size at the time. Almost entirely by accident, Castille emerged as the greatest naval power in the world.

The colony town of Puerto Grande, initially named in jest, soon lived up to its ambitious appellation. Castillian ships came there to resupply and to enjoy the tropical climate. Other ships came to trade for gold and other supplies as well. Soon, rum and fruit were thriving businesses, and the island's sugar cane, which once grew wild, was actively farmed. Castillian techniques wiped out the dangerous cane spider, and refineries were built on either side of the plantation region. Fortunately, the island was healthy enough to support widespread trading without depleting its own resources.

Meanwhile, the Urub continued to prey upon the Erego and the new Castillian colonists as well. They lacked Castille's military advances, however, and soon found themselves retreating farther and farther into their territory. In 1572, an epic battle took place between Castillian militia and the entire Urub nation on Marcina, led by their legendary chieftain Kaza Suranu. The Urub ultimately prevailed, though it took nearly a week and they could do little more than secure the territory they had left. In response, the Castillians built a series of fortresses that separated the Urub from the rest of the island — *la muralla de Urub*. The Urub made regular probing attacks on the wall, but none have yet succeeded in penetrating it. Most modern Urub remained on a chain of small islands (their traditional home) and launched occasional attacks by sea.

Marcina became peaceful in ensuing decades. Slowly, however, the wealth corrupted a few families, none more so than the Avilas, plantation owners who made extensive use of Castillian convicts and ruthlessly exploiting the natives who worked under them. By the beginning of the seventeenth century the Avilas were the most powerful civilian family on the island, and weren't bothered in the least when the main branch in Castille publicly disowned them, though a few rotten apples there remained in contact with Marcina. The family's greatest obstacles were the succession of Orduño governors who kept them firmly in check. With their powerful naval connections and the loyalty of the people, the Orduños easily kept the Avilas from buying their way to power. The annihilation of the Armada in 1659 brought a sudden shift in power, however. Gubenedor Rafael Soldano de Orduño resigned in disgrace, and was replaced by an Avila puppet.

For several years afterward, corruption festered just beneath the surface of the island. Though they had to be careful how far they went, the Avila family grew fat on skimmed profits and increasing reliance on convict labor. Their legacy of greed and deceit culminated with Pedro de Avila, a bloated, corrupt toad of a man who betrayed his way to the top of the Avila household and bought his way into the governor's palace. For most of 1663, he used Marcina as his personal playground, sending bullies in uniform to

collect anything he desired. He threatened visiting crews, cut corners at the mine, oppressed the natives whenever possible and forced his attentions on any lady that caught his eye.

In Primus of 1664, it all came crashing down.

Maria Suarez, a well-connected half-Erego native, slipped away to Castille and returned with a representative of the crown... and a pair of galleons armed to the teeth. To save face, Pedro was allowed to resign and retire to Santa Valeria. The crown asked Maria to temporarily serve in his place, which she agreed to do, and soon proved herself to be a magnificent administrator. Soon, her assignment became permanent.

Current Events

Two new arrivals have altered the balance of power on Marcina once again. Pedro de Avila never truly accepted defeat, and spitefully wrote to the Inquisition decrying the "heresy" of Marcina's tolerance for the local religious beliefs. In response, Bishop Pablo Guzman de Gallegos arrived to investigate the claims. He's made no attempt to hide the fact that he's also a Knight Inquisitor, and is roundly despised by most of the island. Pablo has found a few disgruntled miners to listen to his rhetoric, however, and has more than 30 Defenders of the Faith serving him devotedly. Rumors abound that he's requested reinforcements, a request that many insist will soon be granted.

Don Tomás Gallegos de Aldana openly opposes the Inquisitor. Though he moved to Marcina shortly before the "Black Bishop," Don Tomás made little impact on the island before the Inquisitor's arrival. Renowned as a patriot and war hero both in the War of the Cross and the recent conflict Montaigne, the war-weary nobleman petitioned the court to serve Castille in Marcina, where he might forget battle and death for a time. Marcina's gentle, laid-back atmosphere served as a balm for his soul, and he settled into the rose nicely emerging as a well-liked if quiet administrator. Unfortunately, the Knight Inquisitor arrived soon after him. It's an open secret that Don Tomás supported of El Vago, and no secret at all that he's got a terrible crush on Governor Suarez. The retired hero and the Inquisitor hated each other on sight, but Don Tomás is too old for dueling or swashbuckling.

Today, peaceful Marcina is as taut as a guitar string. While Avila and the Inquisitor lack the power base to openly oppose the governor, their strength slowly grows. No one knows what will happen when the tension breaks, but unless something is done, "Little Elysium" will never be the same again.

The Erego

The various Marcina tribes collectively known as the Erego are among the most peaceful, relaxed people in the world. Their history is a long, quiet song about the joyous rhythm of normal life, occasionally punctuated by the martial beat of driving off Urub raiders. Their work consists of building simple, easily moved shelters and picking fruits and vegetables. Sometimes they fish. During certain times of the year, they hardly need to pick the fruit — it falls plentifully from the trees, and they catch it in baskets cushioned with hay. This gives the Erego plenty of time for their favorite pursuits: games and debating.

Culture

Erego society is fairly simple, with little change since the Castellians' arrival. Those who still live semi-nomadic lives are organized into small tribes of 30 to 75 people. Each tribe claims a primary village clearing to which they return before each solstice and equinox, spending approximately a quarter of the year there. During each season, they travel through the jungles and grasslands around them, gathering food and trading news with tribes they encounter en route. Occasionally, young members join other tribes during these travels, ensuring that no tribe becomes too insular. Once, they believed this angered the spirits, which caused deformities in the young of the offending tribe. They quickly adapted to the Castellians' explanation of inbreeding, however, given the spirits' routine denials of involvement.

Each tribe has a council of elders: usually the five oldest members, ten warrior-guards, and a chief. The numbers are flexible, and smaller tribes often require fewer leaders. Further, the elders are valued more for their wisdom than their age. Members of the council have been as young as 30. Chiefs are chosen by popular acclaim, and may be of any age or either gender. The power of both the chief and the council are nominally quite minimal; they have no authority in the traditional sense, except for pronouncing sentence on those found guilty of a crime. They suggest a course of action to the tribe based on their collective wisdom and experience. However, the tribe usually follows these suggestions more closely than many Théans follow formal laws. As for the warrior-guards, they do little more than anyone else in the tribe, save for the seasonal hunts. Erego guardians play games that actually serve as martial training, and their battle skills are often quite impressive. They have to be, given the legendary prowess of the Urub raiders.

In the areas of mixed Castellian/Erego settlements, the chief also serves as a mayor, and the village has permanent structures. Popular acclaim becomes an annual vote, though the Erego hardly notice the difference. These towns can have up to 500 people, and fewer than half live nomadically during the seasonal periods. They also have domesticated animals that provide clothing and occasionally meat. The coastal villages do considerably more fishing than the Erego have done in the past, but they take care not to deplete the stock. Some Erego in these villages (particularly in the north, close to the Urub tribes) study Castellian swordsmanship, with Soldano being the most popular style.

One of the most curious elements of Erego society (from the Castellian point of view, at any rate) is that after approximately 250 years of Théan influence, the Erego still have no concept of marriage. Not only have they failed to integrate the idea into their culture, most can't even truly understand it. The men and women of particular ages in a tribe act as a sort of extended family; two may become especially fond of one another, and spend more time together than with others, but only villagers with considerable Castellian connections marry in the traditional Vaticine sense.

The concept of property does exist, but it's fairly nebulous among the Erego. Items typically belong to the tribe. Crafters create equipment, and those most skilled in their use (or those being trained to use them) take possession of them in service of the tribe. Occasionally, someone becomes particularly attached to a spear, tent, or some other piece of equipment, and it will be acknowledged as theirs. This usually comes from a sense of "spirit" to the item — a magic which

certain valued objects supposedly possess. On the very rare occasion that two or more people desire the same item, the tribe holds a contest to determine the true owner, based on the skills of the people and the will of the item's spirit.

On the rare occasions when the entire society must make collective decisions (such as the first appearance of the Castillians or during particularly large Urub raids), a Great Elder Council will gather, consisting of two elders from each of the six largest tribes and one from each of the others. They decide which course of action is best for the entire Erego people, and every tribe abides by their decision. The Great Council takes its time on such decisions if possible, but can act decisively when called upon (particularly against invasion).

Leisure

The Erego love their games. *Tanmara*, or race-stones (moving colored stones along the tooth-hollows of a large animal's jaw bone), spear duels (in which the tips are padded with pouches filled with grass to blunt the blows), mark-throws (tossing sticks to create the most elaborate symbols of the Erego glyphs), and wrestling rank among their most popular pastimes. Shore tribes also love swimming, and the best of them are said to be able to outswim dolphins. They have also enthusiastically adopted *Ajedrez* from Castillian soldiers, which they call the Game of Chiefs. Castillians found this endlessly amusing, until the Erego started beating them on a regular basis. In 1629 one native champion traveled to Castille and won the national competition. The trophy she brought back has been on display in Puerto Grande ever since.

Then there are the *quimaera* races. *Quimaera* are the most bizarre animals on the island, and may well be the strangest creatures in the known world. Each has the beak of a pelican, the body of a lizard, webbed feet on short, muscular legs, small bat-like wings (complete with fur), and a wide, flat tail (also furred). Though they appear reptilian, they bear live young. They cannot fly, but swim extremely well, using their wings for propulsion. *Quimaera* aren't particularly bright, however, sometimes attempting to fly anyway. This effort allows them to stand on their hind legs, which keeps the beak pouch from occasionally dragging. These odd creatures make loyal, affectionate pets as long as they're fed. *Quimaera* aren't good for much practical use, but just watching one can be worth hours of entertainment. Since their bizarre waddle is so absurd, the Erego came up with the idea of racing the creatures. No one takes the contests seriously — the prize is usually something like a single over-ripe banana — but watching a half-dozen *quimaera* all scrambling in the same direction can have an entire tribe crying with laughter for the rest of the day. The term *quimaera* comes from the Castillians; the Erego name is virtually unpronounceable, even among many Erego. Apparently, this was part of the joke.

The other pastime Erego most enjoy is debate. Castillian linguists, after long study, determined that the Erego language has no word for "argument," but several words that mean different depths of debating. Erego routinely discuss everything from how the *quimaera* came to be to the purpose of human existence. They don't have a religion or mythology so much as a set of competing tales and theories. Certain matters have been settled, like the creation of existence by the High One (Theus) and the birth of the *oroi* (spirits) as His first children. (Erego don't discuss the *oroi*'s mother around Castillians.) Likewise, they never debated clear and indisputable facts (things fall, there's a large mountain in the

middle of the island, and people who don't eat get hungry). Everything else is fair game, however, and every once in a great while, a legendary orator will attempt to prove that he or she doesn't exist as a grand jest.

Religion

Like everything else on the island, Erego's traditional faith and the Castillians' devotion to Theus have elegantly combined into the way of *Ortheun*, or "spirit-knowing." The syncretic religion recognizes Theus as the divine creator and acknowledges the value of reason, but also relies on intuition and communion with intermediaries — the *oroi*, or "spirits," of the world. Most of these spirits are somehow connected to natural forces — for example, the Erego recognize *Arkulea*, the great queen of waves, as the same being as the Avalons' Mother Ocean. This doesn't mean that each wave has a spirit. Likewise there is a spirit of *breaia* flowers, but not of a particular *breaia* plant.

Most of the remaining spirits are of those who have come before. The Erego venerate saints and ancestors as *oroi*, and small shrines to various saints (particularly Jerome, Kristoff, Lorena, Maria, and Valeria) can be found in many places across the island. (*Jerome, Kristoff and Maria can be found in the Church of the Prophets™ sourcebook, page 90*). Lorena is the patron of the sea (and often equated with *Arkulea*), and Valeria is the island's one native saint, canonized in 1593 as the patron of the sugar cane. Erego medicine folk rarely encounter saints as spirits, though ancestors are somewhat more common.

Ortheun and its Erego ancestor, *Orodan*, share a tradition in the spirit-healers, or medicine folk. The herbal knowledge of some is supplemented by the power of these *orani*, which can bolster the strength of a fading patient or call the *oroi* themselves for assistance. The Erego deeply respect the *orani* for their holiness as well as their life-saving skills. Few diseases or poisons known to Marcina are beyond the power of an *orani* to oppose, and they were nearly as skilled at mending wounds as the Castillians when they first arrived. Now, some Castillian scholars study *Ortheun* and *Orodan* in an effort to understand this magnificent facility with healing. As a result, a few Castillians have themselves become *orani*. This is still rare, however, and the Vaticine Church frowns on the practice.

Geography

Marcina is divided roughly into four sections. Castillian colonial influence extends across approximately half the island, the Erego maintain a quarter of the island in their traditional way, and the remainder consists of a pocket of Urub raiders and the northern jungle, which remains untamed by human standards.

Colonial Territory

Ruler: Gubenedor Maria Simone Erego de Suarez
Languages Spoken: Castillian (Aldana accent)

The Castillian colony is one of the nation's great prides, a model of adaptation and integration. A few areas that remain entirely Castillian, but most colonists learn from the island while sharing Castillian science and scholarship with the natives. Enormous sugar plantations provide sweets and rum to Théah, and fruit is as easy for Castillians to collect as for the Erego.

Technically, the Castellians rule every place on Marcina that can be called a city, whether Castellian, Erego or somewhere in between. In practical terms, however, the colonial government is more concerned with results and peace than messy details. From mighty Puerto Grande to tiny Santa Valeria, the Golden Rule of Marcina is "whatever works." Marcina's citizens have grown a bit more wary of late, however, in light of Governor Pedro de Avila exploitation of the island's lax attitude. Colonial Marcinans remain low key, but they're not quite as innocent as they once were.

Other than the cities, the most noteworthy properties of the colonial territory are the gold mines and the sugar plantations. The mines of Mt. Oro once held a fantastic source of income for Castille and continue to provide respectable amounts of gold and other metals. The mines are models of safety and efficiency, particularly since Maria Suarez became governor, and the miners rank among the most dedicated in the world.

The sugar plantations are a different story. Though many plantation workers are well-paid and loyal, convicted criminals perform most of the drudgery. Castille imports a fair number of convicts from their overcrowded prison; the number has grown since the nation lost *la Bucca* three years ago. The plantations serve as a "second chance" of sorts, and thieves, petty con artists and simple thugs often discover that Marcina has a lot to offer an honest man. Some even become foremen after serving their time. Before then, however, the work is hard and largely thankless, though the convicts receive better treatment than they would back home.

BARCINO NUEVO

Population: 7,000

New Barcino is a mining town from beginning to end. Since few Erego have the desire or temperament to work the mines, Castellians form the vast majority of the population, a fact that the Knight Inquisitor wants to use to his advantage. Unlike the sugar fields, everyone working the gold mines is a free citizen, and all are well paid. The Castellian government owns the mine, which is another reason that only Castellians work there — patriotism assures honesty that generous pay might not.

Aside from miners and support services Barcino Nuevo holds little of interest at the moment. The citizens worry about the slowly declining productivity, but otherwise, nothing concerns them beyond the occasional brawl and a few rare mining accidents. Bishop Pablo intends to change all that.

He has begun giving fiery speeches about the evils of Ortheun and the importance of diligence and hard work. While he never directly compares the easy lives of the other settlers to the hard-working miners, the Inquisitor has begun planting the seeds of resentment. While most of New Barcino's residents find the bishop disgusting, a few listen to his sermons. He's doubled the number of Defenders of the Faith working with him since his arrival, most from Barcino Nuevo. The storm clouds slowly begin to gather.

LA CORONA DE ORO

Population: 1,000 infantry, 300 artillery crewmen, 400 support personnel, and 2,000 civilians

Marcina's Golden Crown is the toughest Castellian fort outside of El Morro. With a Fortification Rating of 8 (in 7th Sea™ terms), it stands as a monument to clever engineering and constant vigilance. Soldiers from the fort accompany every

gold shipment coming from Barcino Nuevo, but while the gold is in the fort proper it is considered unassailable. That is the entire function of the citadel, and it does its job well. Guards manning the outer wall can spot anyone approaching the fort, by land or sea, before they're within miles of the city. Between the outer wall and the inner wall stands a large field filled with various anti-personnel defenses and a pair of roads which sandwich a checkpoint where armed guards examine everyone and everything before allowing it past. Thus far, no one has penetrated the defense, and a few legendary thieves who tried to cap their careers by defeating the Golden Crown spent their remaining years tending Marcina's sugar fields.

Of course, soldiers can't live on gold. A sizeable town has sprung up around the fortress, providing supplies and entertainment for La Corona's troops. Civilians never enter the citadel, however. Soldiers bring all supplies into the fort in rotating squads of no less than five, and all packages are searched and examined exhaustively before passing through the inner wall. The city has no docks, only a perfectly sheer rock face extending nearly four hundred feet above sea level.

PUERTO GRANDE

Population: 15,000

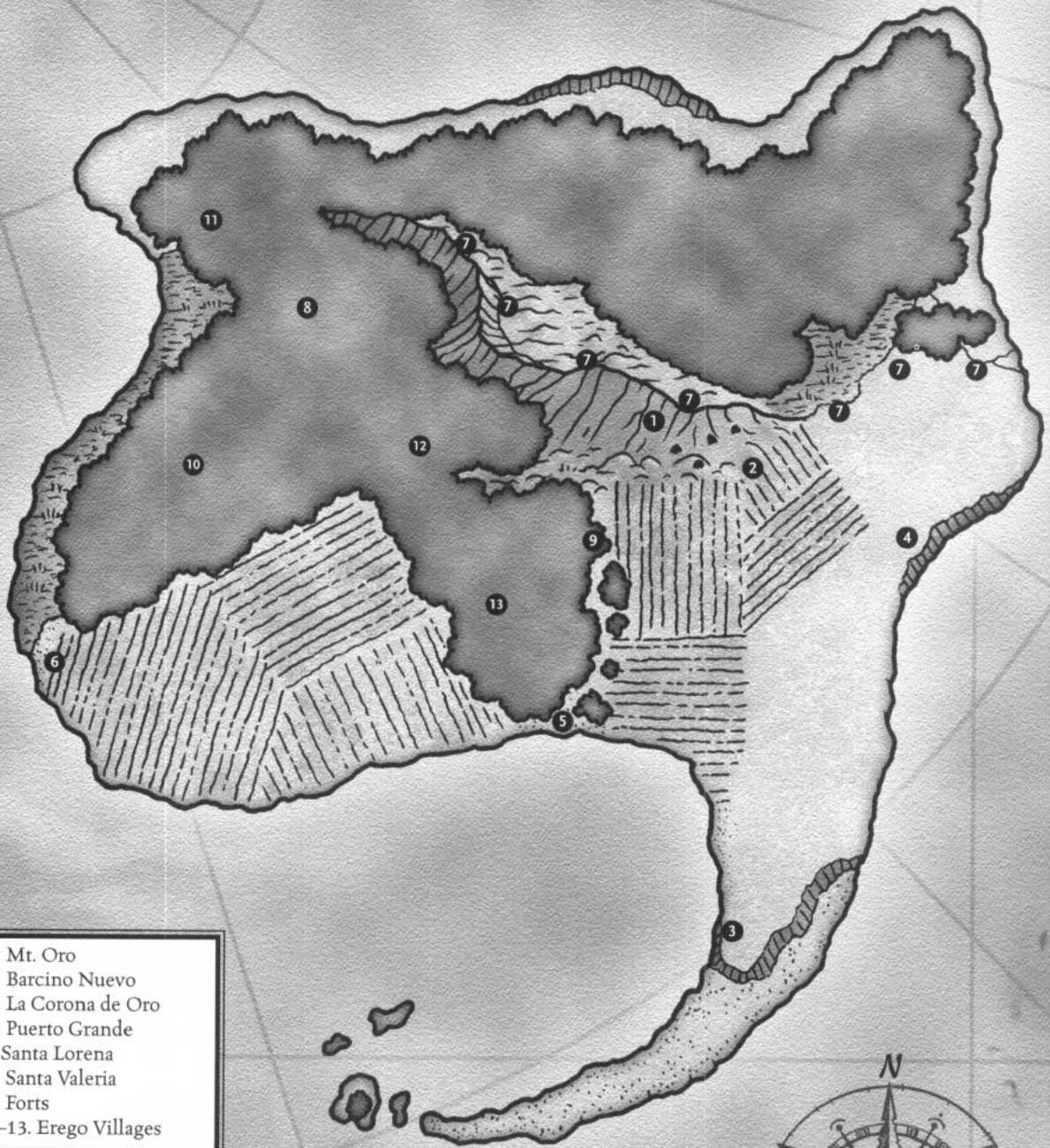
Puerto Grande is the largest port in the Castellian colonies, and certainly the most impregnable. The city has a Fortification Rating of 7 (in 7th Sea™ terms), making it nearly as well defended as legendary Insel. The docks allow any draft ship to enter, though the coastline appears to be the aquatic equivalent of cliffs. After a few yards of rocky beaches, the ground simply... drops off. The city itself is built on a tall hill, and uses the location's naturally defensible position to great advantage. Cliffs surround the hill on three sides, meeting the docks seamlessly. The hill slopes more gently toward the northeast, providing the only land-based access to Puerto Grande. The city has never been sacked, though several pirates tried. No pirate faction that makes such an attempt is ever welcome in Puerto Grande again, so few consider the potential worth the risk. A band of Sea Dogs tried a hit-and-run raid several years ago; the town sent them packing and the Dogs have yet to return.

Aside from the rare *persona non grata*, Puerto Grande is as cosmopolitan as a colonial city gets. People from all over Théah pass through Marcina, stopping for fruit, rum, trade, gossip, and relaxation. As a result, the Great Port lives up to its name. Castellian passion and Erego love for debate combine to make devastating local hagglers, and some of the canniest merchants this side of the Crescent Empire call Puerto Grande home.

A permanent naval presence helps keep the peace in Puerto Grande, along with numerous guards and a surprisingly large number of cannons. By law, Puerto Grande must have three ships in residence, and the preferred defense is five ships-of-the-line. Crews often compete for the right to be stationed at Puerto Grande with its many delights. Currently, two ships-of-the-line and two frigates defend the island, as well as assisting convoys to Castille and hunting pirates in the region. The sailors defend the city enthusiastically, whether on the docks or at sea.

Finally, the city houses the only real university beyond Théah's shores. La Universidad de Puerto Grande is home to several decent teachers, and many travel from Castille to enjoy the university's beautiful locale and unique perspective.

Marcina



SANTA LORENA**Population:** 5,000

Two cities bracket Marcina's sugar fields. One handles shipment by land, the other by sea. Santa Lorena, inaccessible to anything larger than a longboat due to the reefs, is responsible for getting the sugar to Puerto Grande.

If any location on Marcina earns its reputation as an island paradise, it is Santa Lorena. White, sandy beaches stretch as far as the eye can see. The geography guarantees that both days and nights are comfortable year round. The winds, typically from the east, break storms against the tall cliffs on the other side of the island, leaving gentle rains for Santa Lorena. The water is clear, simply placid, and the reefs keep unpleasant predators at bay. The natives long depend upon a device called a *snorkel* to breathe, swim peacefully, and enjoy the vibrant life along the shore. This meditative pastime is popular among the Castellians as well.

The city's one difficulty arises from the recent crisis in her sister city, Santa Valeria. With the former governor raising as much havoc as he can there, disrupting traffic flow and interfering with business. Don Tomás recently moved to Santa Lorena and has helped deal with "refugees" coming from Santa Valeria, but no one's happy with the situation. Don Tomás, in particular, would much rather be in Puerto Grande dealing with the *current* governor.

SANTA VALERIA**Population:** 3,000

Once Santa Lorena's mirror image, Santa Valeria has fallen on hard times recently. Their difficulties stem from a single name: Pedro de Avila. Though the former governor has no official position, he did hold on to one perk from the bad old days: money. The mayor of Santa Valeria is his one old crony who remained in power, and a few well-placed bribes have given him considerable control over the city.

Governor Suarez keeps a close eye on Santa Valeria, which prevents Pedro from pressing his advantage too hard. She has an entire island to govern, however, and must take care not to appear to hold a grudge, something Avila is playing up for all he's worth.

Ironically, one of Pedro's minor scams may prove his undoing. A significant minority of the field workers are serving out sentences for various crimes against Castille, and few of them are happy with their lot. Occasionally a ship will slip into Santa Valeria's docks, leaving the sugar plantations a hand or three lighter. If this happens too many more times, Maria may be forced to take direct action, replacing the mayor and sending a garrison to guard the plantations. Pedro has tried to rile up the people of Santa Valeria, decrying the governor as a tyrant in the making, but few pay attention to such rhetoric. Over a hundred people have left for Santa Lorena since Pedro's arrival, and the situation looks like it will only get worse before it gets better.

Erego Tribes**Rulers:** The Great Elder Council (several chiefs guide individual tribes)**Language Spoken:** Erego (most have Acquaintance: Castellian)

The tribes that remain outside Castellian influence live much as they always have. They consider the land more of a friend than a possession, and hardship is virtually unknown to them. Here, the Erego continue to live in the traditional way,

following *Orodan*, roaming the forests, and returning to their central villages for the seasonal celebrations. The marked locations on the map are the central villages for the six largest tribes.

If the Inquisition takes control of the Castellian-held sections of the island, both sides are in for rude surprises. The Erego have never faced religious persecution before, but if called upon to defend themselves from the Church, they make fearsome foes: they have forgotten more about jungle warfare than any Théans will ever know.

Urub Tribes**Ruler:** Kaza Toron**Language Spoken:** Erego (though they call it Urub, and claim the Erego learned it from them)

Many Marcinans today tend to discount the Urub. While the fortress wall has "contained" the raiders, they remain a fierce, proud, and formidable people. The islands they come from are dangerous places, filled with deadly animals and strange relics from another age. The Urub have adapted to their home, and many islands around them — including Marcina — have come to fear their names. The Castellians feel a certain respect for their courage and daring, though the Erego consider them nothing but savage barbarians. To the Urub, ferocity and courage are marks of true men, and they never truly understood that the Erego hold such viciousness in utter contempt.

The current High Chief of the Urub, Kaza Toron is said to have crossed the River (*see Wild Jungle, below*) on foot just for the chance to kill its voracious inhabitants. Scars cover every part of his body, possibly as a result of that unbelievable exploit, but his fighting prowess remains undiminished. He hopes to succeed where his predecessors failed: overrun the Castellian fortresses, slaughter the foreign soldiers, and reclaim Marcina for the Urub.

Not all Urub live for ferocity and honor, however. The Urub way embraces the adage "drink deep, for tomorrow we may die." Though they play as fiercely as they make war, the tribes take time to enjoy every moment they can. They consider war an honorable pursuit, and their pastimes, while often martial in spirit, match the Erego's for depth and variety. The Urub respect healing, crafts and wisdom, and they have medicine folk whose powers are essentially identical to those of *Orodan* (though the spirits they ally with tend to be more... predatory than the Eregos').

Wild Jungle**Ruler:** None

The northern section of the island not claimed by the Urub remains unconquered and untamable. The Erego speak of savage predator spirits who stalk the land, and no humans of any sort (even the Urub) survive in this region for long. Occasionally, a brave soul or two traverses this deadly, primordial wilderness, but none have escaped unscathed. Absurd stories abound of giant panthers that can stand like bears, fifty-foot serpents that swallow entire expeditions whole, and apes twice as tall as men with scythe-like claws and merciless dispositions. Though rational men scoff at such stories, the deadly fish in the northern river (known simply as the River to the natives), are well documented. They appear in swarms and can strip a horse to the bone in moments.

Characters

Gubenedor Maria Simone Erego de Suarez

Maria is the most popular governor in Marcina's history. Her term is marked by widespread mining reforms and unprecedented improvement in Castillian/Erego relations. It's not surprising that she's been so successful — Marcina's in her blood. She's also the island's first native governor.

The daughter of a mine foreman and an Erego medicine woman, Maria felt the tides of Marcina's politics almost since birth. Gregarious and charming, Maria doesn't suffer fools or bullies, and enjoys showing them the edge of her wit, but she always has a friendly smile and a pat on the shoulder for everyone else, whether her closest friends or complete strangers. Knight Inquisitor Pablo already hate her with a passion.

Maria became the island's governor when she went to Castille to plead the islanders' case against her predecessor. She knocked out the pack of brutes assigned to "protect" her — with her bare hands — then bluffed her way onto a galleon headed for San Cristobal, helped them fight off a pirate attack (two Sea Dogs still display the scars), and charmed her way to an audience with the old king Salvador. Though skeptical, His Highness agreed to send Don Francisco Aldana to Marcina to investigate her claims. The old Don was looking forward to a trip to the "Little Elysium" anyway, and hoped to get a brief, welcome holiday out of the request.

It took Maria two days to convince him otherwise. In short order, Gubenedor Pedro del Avila found himself exiled to Santa Valeria, and Maria (to no one's surprise but her own) received his position "until such time as His Majesty would choose a permanent replacement." A few months later, word arrived from Castille that a permanent replacement had been chosen — Maria. Since then, she's taken to the job with gusto, undoing Avila's excesses within days and restoring Marcina to the paradise it is.

The arrival of the Inquisition and Señor Gallegos proved far more difficult to keep under control, however. They don't have enough Defenders of the Faith to cause any real trouble yet, but Gallegos has already requested reinforcements from Vaticine City. Meanwhile, he's delivering vicious speeches about the evils of Ortheun, and a few Castillians are listening. Their numbers are small, but Maria knows that a show of force can fan the flames of fanaticism. Of course, that show of force has to be successful. Maria's dealt with men like Avila and Gallegos most of her life, and she's confident that she can handle them as well.

Maria is the sort of woman who proves that big can be beautiful. Tall, muscular, and broad-shouldered, she typically wears a traditional Erego blouse with a Castillian skirt, leaving her long black hair unbound. Her intense gray eyes always draw the most attention. Some people, after meeting her for the first time, can describe them in great detail, but will not be able to recall the color of her hair.

Maria Simone Erego de Suarez (d20[™])

Noble 6/Wanderer 4: CR 10; SZ M (humanoid); HD 10d8+30; hp 75; Init 0; Spd 30 ft.; AC 16 (+6 Unarmored Defense Proficiency); Atks: knife +11/+6 melee, +7/+2 ranged; SA Commanding Presence +2, Evasion, Friends in High Places, Seduction, Taunt, Tradesman, Uncanny Dodge (Dex bonus to AC), Ward of the Albatross; SV Fort +6, Ref +6, Will +11; Str 19, Dex 11, Con 16, Int 15, Wis 16, Cha 14; AL NG; Skills: Appraise +5, Bluff +12, Climb +5, Craft +3, Diplomacy +18, Gather Information +18, Heal +8, Hide +4, Intimidate +5, Knowledge (arcana) +5, Knowledge (Castille) +6, Knowledge (flora) +11, Knowledge (law) +11, Knowledge (Marcina) +11, Knowledge (philosophy) +9, Knowledge (religion) +11, Listen +5, Move Silently +4, Perform +7, Profession (cooking) +5, Profession (herbalist) +5, Sense Motive +5, Speak Language (Castillian, Erego, Théan), Spot +6, Swim +9, Wilderness Lore +8 (5+3); Feats: Able Drinker, Appearance — Above Average, Brawny, Friendly (Arcana), Improvised Weapon, Iron Will, Leadership, Unarmored Defense Proficiency (beginner).

Maria Simone Erego de Suarez — Hero (7th Sea[™])

Brawn: 5, Finesse: 2, Wits: 4, Resolve: 4, Panache: 2

Reputation: 47

Background: None

Arcana: Friendly

Advantages: Castillian (R/W), Erego (R/W), Théan (R/W), Able Drinker, Appearance (Above Average), Area Knowledge (Marcina), Indomitable Will, Large, University

Courtier: Dancing 2, Diplomacy 4, Etiquette 3, Fashion 1, Gossip 3, Oratory 4, Politics 4, Scheming 3, Seduction 2, Sincerity 4

Herbalist: Compounds 3, Cooking 1, Diagnosis 1, First Aid 2, Flora 3

Hunter: Fishing 1, Stealth 2, Survival 3, Tracking 2, Trail Signs 2

Scholar: History 2, Law 4, Mathematics 1, Natural Philosophy 1, Occult 1, Philosophy 3, Research 1, Theology 3

Streetwise: Shopping 2, Socializing 5, Street Navigation 1.

Athlete: Climbing 2, Footwork 2, Lifting 3, Sprinting 1, Swimming 3, Throwing 3

Dirty Fighting: Attack (Dirty Fighting) 4, Attack (Improvised Weapon) 2, Kick 2, Parry (Improvised Weapon) 3, Throw (Improvised Weapon) 1

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

Wrestling: Grapple 3, Bear Hug 1

GM Secrets

Maria never lets anyone see her fear, so no one realizes just how much the Knight Inquisitor frightens her. Not for herself, but for Marcina: she's heard about what Verdugo's done to the mainland. The governor has therefore begun to make careful, quiet inquiries in a search for allies. She's also heard of the grinning madman El Vago, who has eluded Verdugo at every turn, and wouldn't be averse to similar aid in her little corner of Castille.

She has one other secret that even *she* doesn't know about — she's inherited a talent for shamanism, but never learned the way of Knowing. If the Inquisition could prove that, they might be able to get away with arresting her. More likely, though, they'd start a civil war.



Bishop Pablo Guzman de Gallegos

Few Knight Inquisitors are so bold as to use their own name as their *post crucem* identity. Knight Inquisitor Pablo is one of them. Though arrogant and overly enthusiastic, no one questions his courage or dedication. Gallegos is sometimes called the Black Bishop behind his back (both for his deep black hair and his taste in garb), which he appreciates. He loves his work with a passion, truly believing that Theus works His will through him.

It is fortunate for Pablo that he has found a socially acceptable position that matches his skills; otherwise, he might be a terror of Reisian proportions. The Black Bishop is a sadist of the first order, a character trait that's hard to miss for anyone who spends more than a day in his presence. He keeps the faithful in line with the fear of Legion, and converts heretics with the fear of Pablo de Gallegos. Pablo particularly relishes the brave, defiant heretics, because he can attend to them personally. Even hardened torturers speak of his methods with shuddering distaste.

He came to the attention of Cardinal Verdugo after breaking a false Vago in La Sierra de Hierro. The Grand High Inquisitor was impressed with the man's devotion, and promised Pablo a position of importance if he could tame the den of heresy called Marcina. The Black Bishop doesn't know what Verdugo has in mind, but he accepted the assignment as the chance to truly make a name for himself.

Thus far, the witch Maria Suarez and her Vago-loving toady Don Tomás have thwarted his efforts, but he is confident that the reinforcements he's asked for will arrive soon. When they do, nothing will stop him from breaking those who mock him or destroying all heresy on Marcina.

The Black Bishop looks every inch the villain, in spite of his holy vestments. His dark eyes are constantly narrowed, his tall, wiry build makes him seem like a living whip, and every expression seems to contain a sneer. He speaks openly of his Knight Inquisitor's duties, as if daring someone to challenge him. Why should one such as he hide in the shadows?

Bishop Pablo Guzman de Gallegos (120")

Inquisitor 8/Soldano 4: CR 12; SZ M (humanoid); HD 12d8+36; hp 90; Init +6 (+2 Dex, +4 Improved Initiative); Spd 30 ft.; AC 22 (+2 Dex, +10 Unarmored Defense Proficiency); Atks: rapier +14/+9 melee, pistol +12/+7 ranged; SA Fanatic Strength, Malediction of Theus, Marshall the Strength, Sneak Attack, The Unstoppable Blades, Untapped Reserves/2, Vanishing Act, Whirling Blades; SV Fort +10, Ref +8, Will +11; Str 16, Dex 14, Con 17, Int 14, Wis 15, Cha 15; AL LE; Skills: Bluff +5, Climb +6, Decipher Script +7, Diplomacy +7, Disguise +4, Gather Information +10, Hide +5, Intimidate +11, Knowledge (arcana) +4, Knowledge (religion) +7, Listen +5, Move Silently +6, Search +5, Sense Motive +5, Speak Language (Castillian, Montaigne, Théan, Vodacce); Spot + (3+2), Use Rope + (2+2); Feats: Improved Initiative, Iron Will, Left-Handed, Recurring (Arcana), Unarmored Defense Proficiency (intermediate), Weapon Focus (rapier).

Bishop Pablo Guzman de Gallegos – Villain (7th Sea™)

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

Reputation: -52

Background: Vow

Arcana: Recurring

Advantages: Castillian (R/W), Erego (ACQ), Montaigne,

Théan (R/W), Vodacce (R/W), Combat Reflexes,

Connection (Confidant — Pedro de Avila),

Indomitable Will, Left-Handed, Membership

(Inquisition), Ordained, Righteous Wrath (three dice)

Hunter: Ambush 3, Stealth 3, Survival 3, Tracking 2, Traps 2.

Missionary: Cold Read 2, Diplomacy 1, Oratory 4,

Philosophy 2, Survival 3, Theology 4

Scholar: History 1, Law 3, Mathematics 1, Occult 3,

Philosophy 2, Research 1, Theology 4

Spy: Bribery 4, Conceal 3, Cryptography 2, Disguise 1,

Interrogation 5, Shadowing 4, Sincerity 2, Stealth 3

Athlete: Break Fall 1, Climbing 2, Footwork 4, Long

Distance Running 2, Rolling 2, Side-Step 3, Sprinting 1,

Swimming 1, Throwing 1

Dirty Fighting: Attack (Dirty Fighting) 4, Attack

(Improvised Weapon) 3, Kick 2, Parry (Improvised

Weapon) 3, Throat Strike 3, Throw (Improvised

Weapon) 1

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

Soldano (Journeyman): Double Parry 4, Tagging 4, Whirl 5,

Exploit Weakness (Soldano) 4

GM Secrets:

Pablo really is faithful, but his sadistic streak holds him more powerfully than even the most fervent prayer. Had he not found Theus, he would become a villain on par with Giovanni Villanova himself.

Unbeknownst to him, Verdugo sees great promise in the Black Bishop. The Cardinal wishes to create a new rank within the Inquisition — a Grand Knight Inquisitor, second only to Verdugo himself — and Paolo tops the list of candidates. Should he succeed on Marcina, he will be in a position to cause more misery and terror than he's ever dared dream.

Coral Kingdom: My'ar'pa

My'ar'pa is a small tropical island of some 5,000 inhabitants. It houses a formerly fractious assortment of tribes, who once warred with each other incessantly. Then, 250 years ago, something happened to change their society forever. Now they stand as a unified nation: peaceful, prosperous, happy, even. All it took was the intervention of an immortal.

History

Like so many other islands on the Archipelago, My'ar'pa's history lacked concrete dates before the arrival of the Théans. Before the fifteenth century, their island was divided into different tribes, squabbling and always in conflict with one another. Then in 1407, a Castillian explorer shipwrecked on the rocky coast during a storm. There were only ten survivors... including a strange Vodacce man with an odd glint in his eyes. The natives were in awe of these "ghosts" and believed that the spirits of ancient myth had returned.

The ship was reported as lost and the island remained isolated until 1631, when an Explorer's Society expedition landed at Maunihu, a small island to the north. The explorers found no inhabitants, but uncovered a human skeleton bearing a bag of Castillian coins and a map of three unknown islands to the south. Six years later the Explorer's Society returned to Maunihu, armed with the map from the previous expedition. They planned to travel southward to the larger island, then on to explore those shown on the map. They vanished, never to be heard from again.

In 1660, a third Explorer's Society expedition traveled to the area. Bypassing Maunihu, they went straight to the larger island. The society team found little in the way of artifacts, but were astonished to discover a fairly sophisticated native culture, with many trappings of a developed society despite a distinct lack of technological acumen. They also found an alien fortress, carved out of living coral. The natives claim that a god lives in the fortress' towers, and that another group of "pale devils" ventured into it without the god's permission. They did not reemerge. Deciding that knowledge of the island was worth more than their curiosity about the fortress, they left without venturing inside, and returned to Théah to report their findings.

In 1663, a Vendel merchant vessel crashed on the eastern reefs of My'ar'pa. Thirty sailors and crew survived. They lived among the peoples of My'ar'pa for five years. Finally, paddling dugout boats, the remaining survivors sailed east in an effort to return home. An Inish privateer later discovered the dugouts floating lashed together with only three men remaining aboard. The sailors arrived home suffering from sunstroke and dehydration, but replete with wondrous tales about the island: huge stone money made of pure crystal, of exotic animals and birds, of artifacts never before seen and jewels the size of a grown man's fist. They also told of a great magician that lived on the island, whom the natives treated as a god. The men managed to catch sight of the mage and his raven-headed daughter once, and were surprised to find them both fair skinned and Thean in appearance. This tale quickly spread throughout Théah.

In 1668, the shaman of My'ar'pa were simultaneously visited with a vision of terrible white ghosts coming to their home harbingers of terror and death. The chiefs and elders of the villages gathered to discuss strategy. The chiefs favored waiting and watching for the arrival of the intruders. The Théans they dealt with in the past seemed harmless, and besides, they trusted in the skill of their warriors. Others were less optimistic. They felt that the intruders could only bring ill, and wished to petition the god in the fortress to unleash his magic against them. The debate raged for months with no one side reaching a majority of opinion.

In spring of 1669, the Explorer's Society launched a new expedition to the island. The augmenting stories about magic and wealth prompted numerous adventuring parties to journey towards the island, and the Explorers wish to get there before its treasures are spoiled.

Theus knows what they will find.

Explorer Society Notes: the Geological Construction of My'ar'pa

Compiled by Lady Cynthia Windebank, 1660.

Unlike other islands in the Archipelago, My'ar'pa exhibits no evidence of volcanic activity. Rather, it appears to have been thrust up from the sea floor. The northern third consists of high, jagged peaks, narrow passes and an area where tons of rock have broken away to form low foothills made of boulders. The middle of the island is flat, and contains good soil for crops. The southern end of the island, comprised of many square miles of an exposed coral reef, provides further evidence of its sub-aquatic origins. More coral lies on the east and west shorelines, making My'ar'pa ill-suited to large ships. Huge masses of broken rock literally spill off the island and into the sea. Thankfully a few miles of safe beaches, accessible by small craft, prevent the island from becoming completely isolated.

The coral coast is most interesting. The island's rock base lifts a huge mass of reef approximately 20 feet from the submerged beds. A coral shoal extends outward approximately 1,000 feet to the open water and follows the perimeter of the island both east and west for some 10 miles. During low tide, the water in the shoal area is just two to three feet deep and rises to approximately eight feet at high tide.

Since the arrival of deep-water Théan ships, the natives devised a type of raft used to haul goods and people from ship to land. When the tide is low, men walk along the top of the coral reef controlling the raft with guide ropes. They literally use the coral as a pier, guiding boats to shore along the length of the shoal. At this coral pier stands one of the most interesting villages in the entire Midnight Archipelago. The natives call it "Ka'atupa Rua," or "Fortress of the Spirit Guardians". The massive structure rises to a height of two hundred feet in some places and, over the years, the island's inhabitants have created a façade of almost fairytale beauty. There are statues, steps, walkways and higher up balconies and windows. Between the fortress and the waterline stand workshops, homes of fisherman and even a communal market. There are also several "men's huts" for the groups of warriors that guard this section of the island.

The building's interior contains miles of passageways, rooms and chambers where Syrneth artifacts lie hidden, and are occasionally recovered during ritualized hunting trips. (Some of these artifacts hang like trophies from the door posts in the warrior villages.) The walls are highly polished with glyphs carved into the coral, and some of the rooms which open up are as large as Théan meeting halls. The My'ar'pans believe that the Guardian Spirits of the island reside in Ka'atupa Rua. They claim the amber "suits of armor" standing in various halls serve as the vanguard of the four elemental spirits whom they believe created the island. The spirits dwell in four specific rooms, scattered throughout the structure:

- **Brown Room:** built on the foundation where the coral meets the bedrock, on the far inland side of the building. Supposedly the home of the guardians of the earth spirit.
- **Blue Room:** this room stands at the most eastern edge of the city where the rock slopes to the sea. At low tide the water turns blue and casts a light glow about the chamber. Naturally the guardians of the water spirit, are said to reside here.
- **Red Room:** this room lies at the center of the city. It is made of polished red coral and its guardians protect the fire spirit.
- **White Room:** this is the highest room in the city; at noon the sunlight filters through crystals in the ceiling casting bright light of sparkling color. Here, the guardians of the air keep vigil.

We have not seen these rooms ourselves. Neither have we ventured past the rooms and corridors closest to the entry. Dangers dwell within its walls, and the previous expedition apparently met their doom somewhere inside. We are not eager to share their fate.

On the highest external point of the coral fortress, lives a reclusive figure, or "*Mā kūpangopango Taipo*," as the villagers call him. Though we have yet to gain access to him, we know that someone certainly resides there. *Taipo* makes his presence known when it suits him. His home appears to be a combination of coral, logs and grasses. He visits the village elders when he deems it necessary. Eerily, this is usually when the villagers need his advice most. We suspect he may be a shipwrecked Théan, perhaps a descendant of the Castillians who were originally. We hope to be able to speak with him before our expedition departs, for he may have great insight into the wonders of this island.

Culture

The native culture of My'ar'pa closely matches those of other islands in the Archipelago. Cut off from the outside world, they developed into a communal culture centered on hunting and fishing. Despite isolation, however, the natives demonstrate a canny understanding of politics and power. Their society is sophisticated, despite their lack of technology, and leaders display a shrewdness that would impress the Vodacce Princes.

The culture is divided between several large villages, each of which contains a different caste or social class:

The Villages

AHI-ATUA AND AHI-ATUA'PA

These villages, the largest on the island, consist of the warrior class. Men and adolescent boys live in large communal houses, known as *tanga mahau* (men's huts) along the rocky eastern and western shores. Their role is to hunt and protect the other islanders from external threats. They come to the villages as young boys, and spend the remainder of their lives there. They are trained in every dimension of hunting and fighting; when they come of age, they use these skills for gathering food and for ridding the island of dangerous predators. In times of crisis, the Council of Nine (*see below*) may request specific forms of aid from them. The only women that are allowed in these villages are concubines or housekeepers; the natives feel that intermingling sexes creates an undue distraction for the hunters. Occasionally, they venture into the coral fortress, testing their bravery against what lies within. Syrneth amulets and artifacts from Ka'atupa Rua hang on the doors of the more prominent warriors. With the arrival of the Théans, many warriors are adding new fighting techniques to their repertoire, which they acquire from visiting sailors.

WHENUA-ALEMAN

This is the farming community nestled in the verdant valley at the center of the island. It houses mostly women and small children. Most houses have elaborate, well-kept gardens containing various herbs and spices which serve a variety of uses. The fields surrounding the village are cultivated with taro, sweet potatoes and mauapa, a bulbous root with an atrocious smell. Most of the island's witch doctors and healers live here, as well as a few warriors too old or invalid to continue their duties.

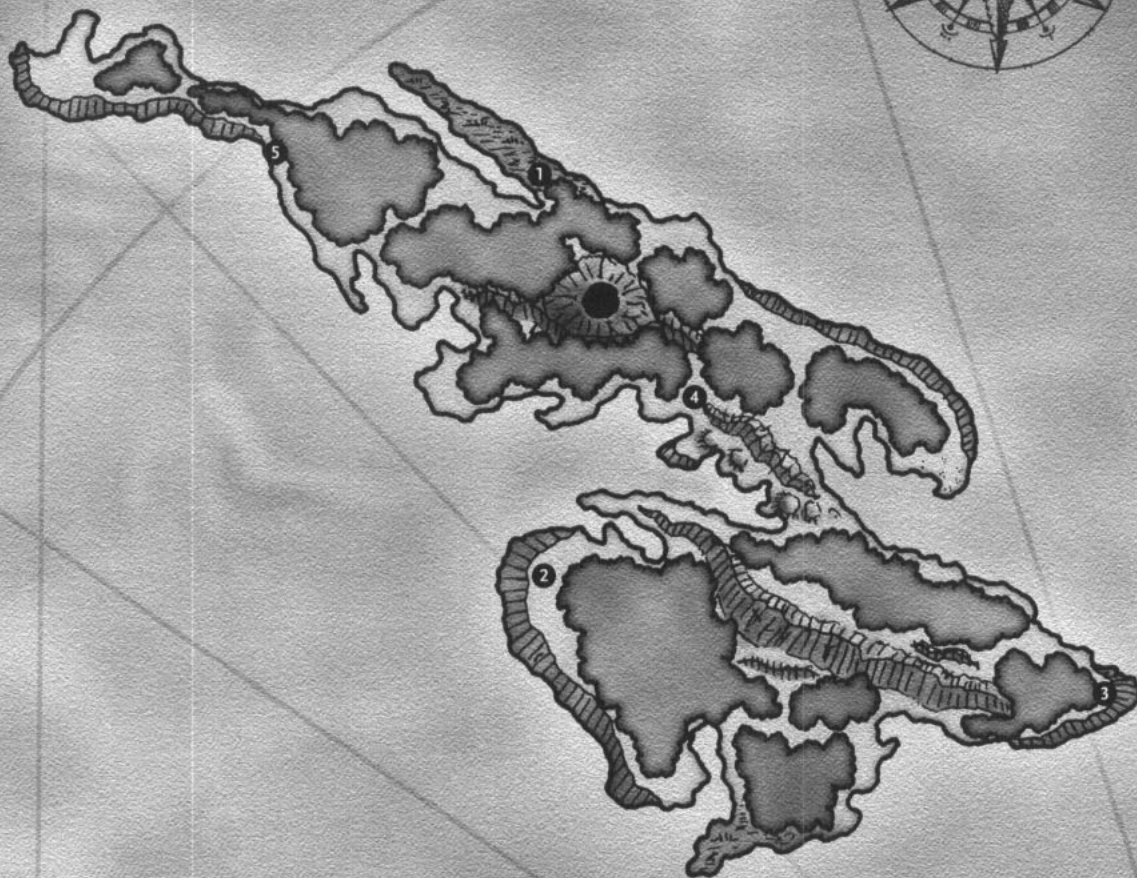
POTO MAUNGA

Quarry workers and fisherman populate this northernmost village, which contains the most balanced population gender-wise. The fisherman cast their nets into the deep waters, while the quarry men labor to extract rock used for a variety of purposes, including the island's highly prized stone money. The native "coins" range in size from three inches to eight feet in diameter and many serve purposes other than simple commerce. Sometimes the stone cutters find more than just rocks in the quarry: the red Eyes of Atuaakapura, semi-precious rock equaling the clarity and quality of a ruby, turn up in fair numbers. The natives wear the stones around their necks as talismans to ward off attacks by evil spirits. Théans are also beginning to prize this stone, and some enterprising visitors have proposed transforming the quarry into a mine. The natives thus far refuse to consider this notion.

Political Structure

The population of My'ar'pa at its peak consisted of about 10,000 people, and included neighboring islands as well as this one. Even though a highly organized and structured government remains in place on the large island, outlying islands have since distanced themselves from the mainland especially since My'ar'pa's population has been in decline over the last several decades. Their cultures remain similar, however, with little variation between mainland My'ar'pa and the smaller island surrounding it.

My'ar'pa



1. Ka'atupa Rua
2. Ahi-Atua
3. Ahi-Atua'pa
4. Whenua-aleman
5. Poto Maunga

The arrival of *Mā Taipo* some two hundred years ago provided some vital stability to the populace. Before he came, political struggles were commonplace, and villages would even war with each other over one issue or another. By means of personal charisma, strategic use of force, and coercion, *Mā Taipo* asserted control over the entire island. He took up residence in the coral "city," organized the people into their current configuration, allowing the squabbling tribes to cohere. So it has remained for two hundred and fifty years.

Each village on the island is lead by a triumvirate of elders, who are responsible for making decisions and organizing the village projects. Any decisions not reached equitably come before the Council of Nine, a gathering of all the elders from the various villages. If they cannot resolve the conflict, the issue goes before *Mā Taipo*, who makes a final decision.

Rank and class govern rules of behavior. The warrior class holds the highest rank. The other villages and some smaller outlying farming communities pay homage to the warriors to ensure protection in times of attack. The quarry men hold second rank and the farming class holds third rank. There is no gender subordination on My'ar'pa. Since they do not understand the concept of marriage, equality and respect between the sexes is commonplace. Young girls are educated in the same tradition as boys. Any inheritable land, valuables and customs pass down through a matriarchal lineage strengthened with fertility festivals. Most young women take many lovers and knowing who fathered a child is inconsequential. New arrivals from mainland Théah consider the custom shocking and vulgar, and Church officials are planning to convert these "savages" with missionaries and, if necessary, the Inquisition.

In addition, the island's population suffered steady decline in recent years. The village elders and the shamans believe the gods are angry, though they cannot say why. While gender has not been at issue among the villagers, some whisper that one or the other may be responsible for displeasing the gods. Their suspicions have begun to affect the island's inhabitants, and suspicion and distrust have slowly leached into the formerly friendly culture.

The My'ar'pans love competition, which they stage through celebrations of elaborate dance and feats of daring. These celebrations, called "tongtongs," last for days. Great honor and prizes of food and stone are awarded to the winners. In order to keep the competition fair, the winners of the previous celebration must refrain from competing, allowing new champions to claim the prizes.

Religion

Like many island peoples of the western sea, the My'ar'pans are polytheists. They pray and give offerings to the four spirits and to *Ma Taipo*, their ruler/god. The most sacred place in all of My'ar'pa is the Mountain of the Ancestors, a large plateau on the eastern-most side of the island. Each year many come to help clean and renew the four huge Spirit Bowls that sit on top of giant pillars of coral. Each bowl supposedly contains the essence of one of the four spirits of My'ar'pa. *HauKaihangas*' bowl is empty except for the air that fills it. *Wai-Kaihangas*' contains water from a sacred well. *Whenua-Kaihangas*' is filled with fertile soil in which flowers grow, and *Ahi-Kaihangas*' glows with fire. Several Théan ship captains have spotted huge torch from sea, and use it as a lighthouse to avoid the island's coral reefs.

Myths and Monsters

Atuakapura

One of the most feared creatures on My'ar'pa is *Atuakapura*, a fire demon that reportedly inhabits the island's torches, lanterns, and bonfires. It is said that he is a living remnant of the fire spirit, *Ahi-Kaihangas*, now trapped in the mortal world. Some believe that if *Atuakapura* could find his way to the Red Hall in the coral city, then he would find companions of his kind and his evil would be eradicated. Only the bravest warriors ever venture into the deep caverns and passages of *Ka'atupa Rua*, bearing torches or other fire sources with the hope of leading the demon home. To date, none have succeeded, but the islanders believe in their efforts keep the demon at bay.

Ma Kupangopango Taipo

For many years the villagers lived in awe of the man known as "Ma Kupangopango Taipo." This pale, grey-haired magician advised the village elders, judged grievances amongst the villagers and ruling the island with a firm hand from his sanctuary atop the coral city for longer than the oldest living members of My'ar'pa remember.

The islanders say that *Ma Taipo* has magic more powerful than all of the islands' shaman combined. He can control the elements, calling upon the four spirits to do his bidding. He can bend the will of the strongest warrior leaving him babbling like a child. Many believe that at night he rides on the wind over the villages whispering seductively to maidens. He speaks with wisdom and grace, however, and his leadership ensures peace and prosperity throughout the island.

He has a daughter, *Lorelei*, who is his mouthpiece when he is not in attendance. She plays the role of a simple healer, disguising her true nature to visiting Théans. She is the only other mortal who knows the secret passage through the castle, the only one whom he trusts with his inner sanctum. The islanders treat her with awe and respect; few go near her domicile unless they need something from her father.

The Coral Fortress

The natives long considered the coral fortress a haunted place, filled with the essence of the four spirits and their unspeakable guardians. The Explorers believe the place has *Syrneth* origins, for the artifacts and trinkets recovered from it are unmistakably *Syrneth*. But the place contains untold miles of corridors and rooms, possibly stretching deep into the earth. The natives avoid the place and the only modern Théans to attempt an expedition vanished without a trace. Certainly, *Ma Taipo* knows the fortress's secrets — at least enough to survive within it — but getting them from him is an entirely different story. Secrets are one thing he can keep.

The fortress is intended as a template for any ruin or dungeon adventure the GM would like to run. It can be as small or expansive as he wishes, and contain whatever horrors or rewards he sees fit to place within it.

GM Secrets and Adventure Hooks

- The Explorer's Society calls upon the party for a mission of grave importance. A field scholar has gone missing. Lord St. John was researching centuries old Castillian archives on a mysterious island. During the research, St. John found references describing a man that fits the profile of a long-dead Numan senator, but the various references with a three hundred-year span. How could the same man survive on a wild island for that long? St. John also read legends about an immortal man and became convinced the island he lived on must also contain such a well with waters of everlasting life. He sailed to My'ar'pa over a year ago and disappeared. The Explorer's Society wants the PCs to go to My'ar'pa, find the scholar, find the mysterious immortal man (if he exists), find the well and any other wonders you may encounter within the coral city.
- The party signs on with a Vendel merchant ship heading for the Midnight Archipelago. On board they meet an odd assortment of people: a Vodacce swordsman with a keen interest in finding artifacts, though he disclaims being a member of the Explorer's Society; a Vandal goldsmith with an interest in something called the Eyes of Atuakapura; a firebrand priest with an opinion about everything, and who makes everyone nervous and mindful of liturgy (the sailors whisper that he has ties to the Inquisition); an Avalon ship's captain, who swears he has a debt to settle with a witch doctor for the sinking of his ship; and a disenfranchised Montaigne nobleman, who has heard tales of a paradise island. They all have one destination in mind — My'ar'pa.
- The party is heading for a more civilized northern island, when they are shipwrecked. They awaken to find themselves captives of a group of warriors. They can't seem to decide what to do with the party. There is much arguing until a strange Théan speaking in antiquated dialect intercedes on the party's behalf. They are free to go — but must perform a service for their rescuer. A group of warriors has defied one of his edicts, and he needs a group of white-faced devils to put the fear of Theus into them...
- The party receives a message promising great reward if they can help a young couple flee from a nearby island. The island is My'ar'pa, and the couple is Barunga and Lorelei. They meet the party's ship, but the journey home is beset with hardships. Lorelei's father is not happy about being abandoned, and would rather drown his daughter than live with such a betrayal. Alternately, the party can reach Théah safely, only to be confronted with Ma Taipo, searching for his daughter and is willing to kill them to find out where she is.

Characters

"Ma Taipo,"

Comte Marc-Ange D'Abime

To many he is a god, to some he is a savior and to others he is a devil. But whatever he is, one thing is certain... he is Thean, and calls himself the Comte Marc-Ange D'Abime. When or how he came to My'ar'pa he will not say. When the first Explorer's Society ships arrived, he had already been there for many years. All he will say is that he washed up on the shores after their ship crashed among the rocks years ago. The villagers had never seen white skin before and, in their ignorance, assumed they were gods returned from afar. Marc-Ange saw no reason to dispel the myth. Over the years, he began to enjoy the privacy and power his newfound divinity brought him. He derived great amusement from his divine status, although he disliked directly interacting with the "savages" who surrounded him. As he began to explore the island, he found that presiding from Ka'atupa Rua made it easier for the villagers to accept his authority and made him and his daughter unreachable. He ensconced himself in the tower, using his abilities to avoid the dangers of the coral fortress, and plotting a secret route through the passages to the tower where he resided. There, he set out to affirm his divine status. Marc-Ange decided early on that these savages were completely unorganized, ignorant and in need of a "firm hand" to guide them. He slowly shaped them from warlike tribes into a single, efficient, unified society. He punished those who disobeyed and rewarded those who followed his instructions. Because of this, the natives listened when Ma Taipo speaks. Today, he is their absolute ruler, a semi-divine god-king whose authority is absolute. He rarely intervenes in the natives' affairs directly, but his decisions are neither questioned nor challenged.

Marc-Ange is in his forties. His hair is a tumble of salt-and-pepper curls, as unruly as the sea. Despite living many years in a tropical environment, he never seems tanned or burned. His pale complexion never changes. His body is solidly built. Standing about 5 ft., 7 in., his broad shoulders, and muscular arms and legs belie the agility with which he moves through the jungle. For villagers fortunate enough to behold his face, his eyes fascinate them with a mesmerizing glint. The outer rims of the irises are a cold gray blending into brown as they stretch toward the pupil. In moments of rage, they look as if lightening could shoot from them. In moments of pleasure, sea waves dance in their depths. He appears easygoing and patient, but when crossed his demeanor changes drastically and he flies into incalculable rage. His voice is deep and clear, his laugh deep and resounding. He jealously guards his solitude. Few Théans have ever seen him and those who do not speak of it.

Marc-Ange D'Abime, AKA Marcus Tulleus (d20™)

Numan (Vodacce) Wanderer 20: CR 20; SZ M; HD 20d8 + 80; hp 180; Init +1 (Dex); Spd 30 ft.; AC 11 (+1 Dex); Atks: short sword +15/+10/+5 melee (1d6); SA: Domination (see below), Evasion, Immortality (see below), Tradesman, Uncanny Dodge, Wanderer's Knowledge, Wanderer's Luck, Ward of the Albatross,

Willpower (see below); SV Fort +10, Ref +7, Will +19; Str 10, Dex 13, Con 18, Int 18, Wis 19, Cha 16; AL LN; Skills: Alchemy +5, Bluff +15, Climb +9, Craft +8, Concentration +15, Diplomacy +11, Handle Animal +10, Heal +16, Intimidate +23, Jump +9, Knowledge (architecture & engineering) +6, Knowledge (arcana) +16, Knowledge (nature) +5, Knowledge (religion) +16, Profession (politician) +10, Ride +19, Scry +5, Search +11, Sense Motive +17, Speak Language (Cathayan, Crescent, Montaigne, My'ar'pa, Théan, Theodoran, Vodacce [alternately, any seven languages form your campaign]), Spot +12, Swim +15, Wilderness Lore +11; Feats: Iron Will, Alertness, Proficiency: Longsword, Dodge, Improved Initiative, Debater, Evil Reputation, Legendary Trait, Indomitable Will, Herbalist, Politicker, Road Scholar.

Combat:

Immortality: Marc-Ange is doomed to live until the coming of the fourth prophet. If Marc-Ange were to be totally destroyed (reduced to -10 hit points), he would re-appear in the streets of Numa. This has not happened to him yet, and he remains unaware.

Willpower: Marc-Ange's willpower save receives the highest score of his save bonuses, regardless of his class.

Domination: Marc-Ange may attempt to dominate any creature or creatures that have a body, including elemental spirits of earth, air, fire, and water. Note that he cannot control the mind or volition of controlled victims, he can simply put their bodies on a sort of remote control under his will. In game terms, he may cause a being to do anything of which that being under normal circumstances physically capable. An unwilling subject (as most of them are) is permitted a Willpower save (DC 20) to tear himself free. Domination may be continued until Marc-Ange loses consciousness, and he may only dominate one creature at a time in this manner. A subject must be within Marc-Ange's sight in order to be dominated, however this need not be natural sight, and Marc-Ange has discovered several Syrneath artifacts within Ka'atupa Rua which allow remote viewing. In essence, he may exercise this ability upon anyone on My'ar'pa.

Marc-Ange D'Abime, AKA Marcus Tulleus — Villain (7th Sea™)

Brawn: 2, Finesse: 3, Wits: 5, Resolve: 7, Panache: 3

Reputation: -75 (My'ar'pa only, 0 in Théah)

Background: None

Arcana: None

Advantages: Thean (R/W), Crescent, Montaigne (R/W), My'ar'pa, Theodoran (R/W), Vodacce (R/W), Keen Senses, Indomitable Will, Legendary Trait, Unbound, Warm Climate Conditioning

Courtier: Diplomacy 4, Etiquette 2, Oratory 4, Politics 6, Scheming 5, Seduction 3, Sincerity 4

Scholar: Astronomy 3, History 4, Math 3, Natural Philosophy 4, Occult 4, Philosophy 4

Athlete: Break Fall 4, Climbing 2, Footwork 4, Side-Step 3, Sprinting 3, Swimming 4

Commander: Leadership 6, Strategy 4, Tactics 4

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

Heavy Weapons: Attack (Heavy Weapons) 4, Parry (Heavy Weapons) 4

Rider: Ride 4

Magic

Special: Domination

Marc-Ange can control 5–7 brutes at one time with no checks.

Alternately, he can control 2 henchman at a time with a contested roll against the henchmen's Resolve. He can control a single Hero or Villain in this manner with a successful context roll against the subject's Resolve. This ability requires his complete concentration. If broken Marc-Ange becomes vulnerable to attack: those attempting to strike him may roll and keep one additional die. This lasts for one round after concentration is broken.

Like Reis and Kherid-din, Marc-Ange is best used as flavor to a campaign rather than direct opposition. He is too powerful and too unknown for PCs to fight.

GM Secrets

Although he appears middle-aged, Marc-Ange is much older. He can trace his life back to the days of Numa, before the coming of the First Prophet. Marc-Ange, then known as Marcus Tulleus, was moving up the ranks as a member of the Numan senate. Ambitious, clever and wealthy, he used people as casually as if they were flowers in his vast garden. He knew his limits, however, and when a small cabal of fellow Senators approached him with an offer to join in their Bargain, he refused. Sooner or later, he theorized, such magic would prove their undoing... and when it did, he intended to be there to pick up the pieces.

When the First Prophet arrived in Numa, Marcus looked at the whole affair with curiosity. How was it that this simple, uneducated man could hold such power that the other senators feared him more than the Bargainers? During the Prophet's trial, a few days before his martyrdom, Marcus Tulleus visited him in his cell. The Senator prided himself on his logical abilities and assumed that a friendly debate with the Prophet would answer some of the questions he had. What began as a friendly discussion, however, soon became heated up and intensified. Tulleus considered the human condition irrelevant. As long as people could be controlled into doing as they should, actions of the heart and soul did not matter. The Prophet disagreed, and used quiet, simple logic to undermine Tulleus's position.

"I do not care how that slave feels!" Marcus finally shouted, pointing to a nearby servant boy. "But I know what is best for him! Thus I should decide his course of action!"

The Prophet smiled serenely. "Oh foolish man, with enough experience you would come to see things differently."

"There's not enough experience in a lifetime to make me see things your way," the senator sneered.

The Prophet nodded. "Maybe not. But as a gift, I give to you the ability to test your theory."

From that point on, Marcus Tulleus has the ability to control people's bodies, making them do as he wishes. He also stopped again, earning a form of immortality similar to that of Koschei or Kheired-Din. As part of the Prophet's gift, he could test his belief over and over again for centuries. Naturally, these abilities proved more of a curse than a blessing. When Numa fell, Marcus Tulleus was forced to abandon his home and wander Théah, seeking respite from his "gifts." He changed identities numerous times. Moving on whenever his neighbors grew suspicious. He was known as the Comte Marc-Ange D'Abime — and had lived for almost 1,500 years — when Théah's first Age of Exploration began. Hoping

to find some answers for his condition, he booked passage on a ship traveling west. The vessel sank off the shore of My'ar'pa, and the immortal senator found himself stranded there.

Disillusioned and tired of the "gift" given him, he retreated into the Fortress of the Spirit Guardians. Legends of his power and god-like stature grew, and he used his divine status to restructure the native society. It provided another opportunity to prove his theories to the Prophet, as well as diverting him from the gloom of his condition. He even sired a daughter a few years ago with a local healer woman. Lorelei has since become his pride and joy, helping him to find peace in his "quiet abyss" as he calls the island.

Recently, however, even her comfort has worn thin. She is now a grown woman, raised on her father's tales of the wondrous lands beyond the sea, and she yearns to leave the island and explore the vast Thean world. Her desires coincidentally rose at the same time the Explorer's Society brought ships to the island. Now, he sits conflicted on his throne. Having tasted godhood, he has no desire to abandon it, but it requires he stay in this tropical prison for the rest of his days. Can he leave the tiny world he created in order to experience a much vaster one over which he has little or no control? The weight of the decision threatens to tear him in two.

Barunga

The day Barunga was born the witch doctors foretold of great feats he would perform. Barunga was lighter skinned — a rarity among the natives — and as he grew he soon towered over the other natives on the isle. The shaman saw this as a sign. As a youth, Barunga could out-swim, out-hunt and outwit all the boys. He was the youngest one ever selected to join the warrior class. Many believed he would buckle under the rigorous training, but he proved them wrong. He learned to hone his mental skills as well as his physical ones, and in spite of his youth, he developed quite a following amongst the younger men in the warrior's village. Today, he stands as one of the island's foremost leaders, and commands the attention of the Council of Nine even though he does not hold a formal position. His youth is no object, for all can see the mark of leadership in his eyes.

Barunga stands six feet tall; His face is angular and his body muscular. He walks with a slightly arrogant stance, back straight and head held high. He rarely smiles and always speaks calmly and succinctly. In battle his calm demeanor dissolves into that of a savage killer. With the influx of Théans onto My'ar'pa, a schism is growing between the old ways under Mas Taipo and the new age to come. Barunga decided that the old ways are better and gives his complete loyalty to the god in the tower. His arguments within the council meetings have swayed many to this cause and have even caught the attention of Marc-Ange. This tall islander may go far, if he is careful... very careful.

Barunga (d20")

My'ar'pa (Kanuban) Fighter 8: CR 8; SZ M; HD 8d10+16; hp 60; Init +3 (Dex); Spd 30 ft.; AC 13 (+3 Dex); Atks: dagger +12/+7 melee (1d4+3), shortspear +12/+7 melee/ranged (1d8+5); SV Fort +8, Ref +5, Will +2; Str 16, Dex 16, Con 14, Int 15, Wis 10, Cha 15; AL CN. Skills: Balance +4, Bluff +3, Climb +4, Intimidate +4, Jump +4, Listen +5, Move Silently +5, Gather Information +2, Sense Motive +2, Speak Language (Montaigne, My'ar'pa [alternately, any two languages form your campaign]), Swim +6, Tumble +4, Wilderness Lore +3; Feats: Blind Fighting, Combat Reflexes, Expertise (Improved Trip), Weapon Finesse (Knife), Weapon Focus (Knife), Weapon Focus (Spear), Weapon Specialization (Spear).

Barunga — Hero (7th Sea™)

Brawn: 4, **Finesse:** 4, **Wits:** 3, **Resolve:** 4, **Panache:** 3
Reputation: None
Background: None
Arcana: Proud
Advantages: My'ar'pa, Montaigne, Appearance (Above Average), Combat Reflexes, Indomitable Will, Keen Senses, Large, Warm-Climate Conditioning
Hunter: Fishing 2, Skinning 1, Stealth 5, Survival 4, Trail Signs 3
Sailor: Balance 4, Climbing 4, Knotwork 1, Swimming 5
Performer: Acting 1, Dancing 3, Oratory 4, Singing 1
Athlete: Climbing 4, Footwork 3, Leap 3, Long Distance Running 3, Sprinting 3, Throwing 3
Wrestling: Bear Hug 2, Break 4, Grapple 3
Knife: Attack (Knife) 5, Parry (Knife) 4, Throw (Knife) 3
Spear: Attack (Spear) 4, Parry (Spear) 4

GM Secrets

Barunga will not admit it, but he dreams of going to sea in a sailing ship and exploring the world. The arrival of the Théans is a dream come true for him. Unlike many of the villagers, Barunga looks at Marc-Ange with hatred. He despises how this man lords over his people and mocks them or terrorizes them at will. Some day he will seek revenge on this old man... and in some ways, revenge is at hand. Barunga has been secretly courting Lorelei. While he finds her a strong-willed and desirable woman, he mainly sees her as a powerful tool. Not only can he take away Ma Taipo's beloved "jewel," but her presence can deter attacks from his fellow warriors.

Drums of Terror: Sange Tara

"Who sent this?" roared Margaret as she sped through the church at Charouse. In one hand she carried a stained, leather bound journal with the Cross of Theus upon it. Her church guards stood emotionless and out of her way, following as she passed from the room.

"What did they look like? Who set this on my desk?" She carried on, cautiously, looking through the journal, to find most pages runny with ink. "Richard, if you are playing a trick, this isn't very humorous!" She nervously went through all the pages, her eyes searching for a word or sentence to reveal something of importance.

"Nothing, nothing at all. Why would someone just send this back?" she turned to one of the stone faced guards "David, you saw nothing?"

"Our watch is you, and we have been with you the entire time."

Her face tensed her eyes racing across the pages. She knew the first parts of Richard's journal: his thoughts of her, before he left Charouse. She could catch small bits like, "twinkling star-", "love of my-", "my reason-." Then she began to find the passages Richard had written on Sange Tara. Small cuts could be read between the watery ink that bled together and down the page. She saw, "Arrived today," "Snails' Pace was unaccommodating," "strangely beautiful people," and "the church is not much to look at." Then her eyes set upon a word that repeated several times very clearly as if it could not be erased from the page "SORCERY." Her mind reeled for a moment as she thought out loud, "What sorcery? There was no talk of sorcery from early accounts of the natives. They were supposed to be merely superstitious!"

She began turning pages again and found a few pages that were whole.

Journal of Richard Valouse

Day 15. I have come to the realization that there will not be another ship for a long while. The Snails' Pace will not return for at least three months, and there is no preset time for any ship, let alone a Vaticine ship, to arrive. I cannot wait to leave the island.

I have seen more of the native people's sorcery. They marked our meager church with the veve again, right below my window. I went out to wash it off and drew the Cross of Theus instead. They washed off the cross and redrew other veves in its place. I spoke with the Hougan and he says it is for my own protection, but I have told him time and again that I do not need his sorcery, I have Theus.

Day 16. I met with Stephan DeGaul, the linguist who came with us, and he said that many of the Tarans are keeping an eye on me. They fear that I might be a Bokor in disguise. I must make sure they know I am a holy man of Theus. How to do this? I'm sure it will come to me.

In my study of their culture, I found out the Tarans have five gods: four they worship and one they fear. They have told me of Whotan and Leshia. They showed me the drums they made for Baneer and introduced me to several women that Mama Hadoo possesses frequently. Yes, possesses. I didn't want to believe it myself. They perform their dances and rituals to have their gods inhabit their bodies so they may perform magic. This is obviously horrible

sorcery that I was not informed of by Luco when he presented reports to the church. I believe he blatantly left this out. Had he told us this in his report to the cardinal, I'm sure the Inquisition would have investigated Sange Tara, not us.

Day 17. Luco says they broke through the door of the old mine last night. He, DeGaul and some of the islanders are going to venture in later today. They decided to wait as it rather sent a sense of dread through all of them. The Hougan asked them not to go in, but Luco seems drawn there.

Day 18. I found that some of the natives sneaked into my room and left a crude knot-work of rope under my bed. I asked about it and they said it was to protect me. I'm not sure if I believe them. I fear they may be trying to help one of their gods possess me. Theus help me.

Day 21. Luco and the others have not returned. I have begun to wonder if they are lost. Our small church seems empty without them and had Stephan decided to leave as well, I would not be left here with the Tarans. I have not slept well these past few nights. I half awoke to sounds of someone standing near my bed last night. I could not rouse myself from sleep, though I heard a horrible voice calling me. The man spoke like a sailor but smelled of soil. Then I woke and no one was there. I believe I may be going mad from lack of sleep and the incessant drumming. Theus save me.

Same Day. I believe they are dead. I dared not go to the natives' bonfire as it drew me to it again tonight. I walked towards it but veered off the path into the bright moonlight. I felt the presence of things in the darkness so I quickened my pace. I felt my heart beating in my throat as I neared the shore. The quiet sound of the waves relaxed me even though I could still hear the drums and yelps of the bonfire. I noticed something moving out of the corner of my eye. I turned towards it to see a figure dancing on the beach. It moved in such a way that sent a chill down my spine. It flapped as if it were a sail in a crosswind. As it got closer I realized it barely touched the ground and the fingertips moved so quickly it made small cracking sounds like several whips breaking through the air all at once. It had no bones to speak of, of that I am certain. I saw it had a beard and brown hair like Lucos. By Theus I think it once was Luco I scrambled to my feet and ran back through the trees to the church. I heard that terrible flapping sound come from all sides. I thought surely the thing had followed me. I ran to my room where I write this now.

They are skin. It is just the skin of the retinue of the church. I know they have perished. One of the husks tried to slip under my door but I bunched linen under it so it could not enter. I can hear them scraping at the door. I wish for sleep but I cannot for fear they will find me.

SWEET THEUS, there is one at the window! It looks like Stephan. The eyes are bloody holes and the mouth is a maw of torn flesh. It raps at the window, slapping all at once against the shutters. Gentle Theus save your servant; I have not forgotten you in this horrid land. Save me from Legion caress! Save me from this unholy magic!

Margaret read nothing more after the last terrible passage. She rose from her desk and drew a deep, shuddering breath, her body cold with sweat. "David, find the Cardinal. I must speak with her at once."

People and Geography

Sange Tara is typical of many islands in the Midnight Archipelago — tropical, formed from volcanic activity, boasting a warm but temperate climate. It consists of a large northern bay called Baie De Miroir (or Mirror Bay) two small islands to the west called Anse de Requin (or Shark Cove), and a great mountain that rests at the southeastern side of the island. When the sun hits the bay at different times of the year it lights up different parts of the island. Anse de Requin is covered with trees bearing the Mebuda fruit that the natives eat for its natural insect repellent qualities. Numerous sharks frequent the deeper waters around the island, and even a few sirens appear from time to time. The main island contains many streams and waterfalls originating at the mountain, which the natives call Fut, (their word for mountain).

The natives are dark skinned, quite slim, living mainly off fish and tropical fruits. Wild pigs live on the island, and visiting Théans bring chickens and goats but these are usually only eaten for special occasions. The climate remains warm and pleasant year 'round, though rain is frequent and hurricane season can flood or destroy the structures on the island. Most of the huts are made from trees, with domed roofs, airy windows and a place for a cooking fire in the middle. The huts may have talismans above the doorways or odd knot work woven into the roof of the hut.

The mountain contains a series of small mines, which the natives have worked off and on over the centuries (see below, and Chapter 3). Several entrances dot the side of the mountain, and the passages are usually very shallow... though lately they have crossed into a much more extensive labyrinth (see below). The mountain was originally volcanic, though it has been extinct for thousands of years.

The Black Ore

The black ore of Sange Tara has odd properties. The ore will not rust, making it ideal to be used at sea. It also has an amazing magnetic pull even when being smelted. On the island, it is usually melted in clay then poured into a mold to be filed down against rock. The ore is attracted to any other metal including dracheneisen. Depending upon the size of the object, the ore can increase the pull towards it dramatically. An arrowhead would have a strong attraction to metal a foot away, a rapier made of the ore would draw in metal from 5 feet away, and a cannon ball would draw in metal from 10 feet away. Metal items beyond that range will still point towards the ore.

If the ore touches an object, the TN to pull it away from metal is 20 (in roll-and-keep terms), and the Strength check has a DC of 20 (in d20 terms). Arrowheads or other missile weapons made of the ore add a +1 bonus to hit (in d20 terms), or reduce the TN to hit by 3 (in roll-and-keep terms) if targeting a helmet, breastplate, or other object made of metal. Rules for called shots apply if the metal item doesn't cover the entire body, and the metal must be at least the size of a gauntlet to engender the bonus. Belt buckles, armbands, and the like are too small to significantly attract the ore.

History and Myth

Many thousands of years ago, five beings of another race, brought the dark skinned Tarans to Sange Tara. According to their mythology, the island was actually much larger then, and held countless people. The gods could not be seen but would often inhabit one of their followers to speak through that person. No one knew who they would choose to possess, so their society never had a priest or priestess just the learned and the ignorant. Four of the gods ruled with benevolence, but the fifth — the god of the earth. Sange, or Baron Sange — was thoughtless and greedy. He claimed the island from the beginning and his power dwarfed those of the other four combined. He brought the other gods to add their followers to his own. The people went into the earth that Sange opened for them, and pulled black ore from the ground for his amusement. The ore had magnetic properties, and it pleased the Baron.

Those who didn't mine for him followed other gods. Some sailed with Lesha, god of travel and gateways, over the waves to bring the ore to distant parts of the world. Others prayed to Mama Hadoo for guidance: she was the spider mother weaving together strands of time. At night the people would sing and stamp their feet for Baneer, the god of music and flesh, and he would make them joyful. Then there was Whotan, the trickster and wielder of weather. He had few followers but they possessed the knowledge and wisdom of many.

The people celebrated their gods at their festivals, hoping to gain favor. During these times, the gods would "ride," or possess their followers, giving them amazing abilities, but they could not remain in such a state long lest they be bound to the body till its death. They would give counsel through their possessed followers, or afforded the people comfort when tribulation came to them, but they always fled within a few hours, returning to the spirit world. The four lesser gods used these opportunities to benefit their followers. Sange, on the other hand, saw them as a chance to commit mischief and mayhem. One could always tell he had taken possession of someone when the hapless mortal started spouting off crude jokes. Sange used his possessed forms to gorge himself on food and complain. Even after riding someone he might use up the person and swallow their spirit, rather than returning them to their bodies. He would show up at rituals for other gods and demand bread or wine. The people managed to appease Sange or he might do something horrible.

Over the years Baron Sange steadily grew worse. He did not wish to share his subjects with other gods, and would try to steal their followers. Though he always failed in his efforts, he would often respond by killing those who resisted his lures. Finally, the other gods could take it no longer. They all inhabited Taran bodies, and sought to destroy Sange once and for all. Their power crackled around him as they fought across the island. Sange Tara shuddered under a relentless barrage of earthquakes, lightning, sound and portals. Though mighty, the power of the Baron could not stand against the remaining four, and he began to suspect his eminent defeat. But rather than concede, he abruptly switched tactics: he leapt into the body possessed by Baneer.

Baneer was caught off guard, but he quickly scarred his body with mystic veve to trap spirits. Sange became trapped in the body with Baneer and could not escape. Lesha opened a gateway to the center of the island's great mountain, and shoved the two in. There, they continued to battle, trapped within the unfortunate host's form. Whotan then placed veve

wards all over the island so that if Baneer should fail, Sange could not escape Sange Tara. Then the remaining three left across the sea to find means of destroying Sange. While they journeyed, Baneer struggled desperately to contain the Baron. He succeeded in keeping Sange within the body, but in the process, the two became bound to it and could not leave.

After scouring the globe, the other gods returned to the mountain with a mystic drum to pull Baneer from the body. They tried several times to free their companion and failed. Then Whotan had an idea: they could pull Baneer into all the people of Sange Tara, leaving the Baron trapped alone in his mortal shell. Lesha opened a gateway to the inside of Fut and the natives entered the mountain where they danced and played their drums around Sange and Baneer. It took many long hours, but Baneer was finally drawn into Whotan's drum with powers of music, joy, and rebirth. Sange remained in the body, but he kept a piece of Baneer within him. Sange's powers of the earth combined with Baneer's powers of the flesh, warping the Baron into a being of death, decay, and unnatural rebirth. Then Whotan and Lesha created a prison of the mountain so even he could not leave. Lesha left mystic portals in the tunnels and Whotan left tricks to confound anyone who would presume to free Sange. The four gods then departed the mountain with the Tarans, while Sange remained, and slowly filled himself with rage at his imprisonment.

In ensuing centuries, the Baron tried to escape his prison. He could not rid himself of the veve on his flesh, so he skinned himself. When that didn't work, he leapt from his torn and bloody body and entered one of the islanders. But he had no powers there, and the energy required to maintain possession left him weak and listless. He drove himself to the brink of insanity jumping from Taran to Taran trying to find a way out. Only his now-skinless body held any real power, and it was trapped beneath the mountain.

Meanwhile, the people carried on, their pantheon now consisting of four gods and a demon. They soon came across the black ore again, and began to mine it as best they could. The ore which impervious to the sea, remained magnetized at all times, and always pointed towards Sange Tara. As the mining continued, Sange took notice, and occasionally abducted a worker from the mines. He thought if he replaced his lost skin with that of a native, he could slip past Whotan and Lesha's tricks. Surprisingly, this plan worked... to a point. He made his way out of one of the mines one day with the tattered skin of nearly a dozen islanders sewn to his flesh, then took his vengeance on Sange Tarans. First, he summoned the bodies of the dead to fight for him. Then he set them lose against the natives. With every Taran that fell another undead stood to join the ranks of his minions. While the Tarans fought desperately to stop this unholy incursion, Sange made his way towards a small boat on the shore and escaped. As he boarded the vessel, however, he inadvertently activated the wards around the islands. Whotan, Lesha, Mama Hadoo and Baneer appeared and possessed the bodies of their followers. They confronted Sange on the beach, and drove him back into the mountain, trapping him again beneath the mines.

It took another century for Sange to escape again. When he did, the cycle repeated itself: his undead followers ran amok before the gods appeared and vanquished him again. Each time, Sange would get a little further past the veve wards with different combinations of stolen skin. The natives continued

to mine the black ore, and continued to lose miners to Sange's temptations and tricks. So it remained for untold centuries drawn by Sange tempting them from deep in the mountain.

Today

The Explorer's Society first arrived on the island about ten years ago. Initially, they found little of interest there and abandoned it to the natives. Several years later the Vaticine Church sent bands of missionaries to several Archipelago islands in an effort to convert the natives to the way of the Prophets. Their latest target is Sange Tara: a priest named Richard Valouse and a small group of five contracted church laborers arrived there in early 1669 to bring the natives to Theus. With the arrival of these new people Sange has awoken... and he believes that these strange pale visitors have what he needs to escape the island for good.

GM Secrets and Adventure Hooks

Sange Tara's Magic and Baron Sange

The magic of the Sange Tara people is a sorcerous form of shamanism, usually conducted en masse around a bonfire. They believe that at night the veil between them and the gods is thinner so they are able to communicate with them more easily. Of course this also means that Baron Sange might send a cackling horror after them. The islanders venture out at night only during an emergency or if performing a ritual; otherwise, they dare not tempt the Baron. Tarans often keep talismans of different items to protect themselves from the Baron's magic: spell ingredients sealed in a leather pouch, a knot work of rope tied around an arm, or an oil with blood and bird claws rubbed on their shoulders.

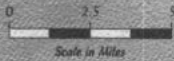
While they dance their rituals, Baron Sange continues to plot mischief. Death, Flesh and earth have been mixed in Sange's mind. In his lunacy he has come to the conclusion that the flesh must return to the soil. He believes all those that walk Terra have come from it and should return there. Sange wants to leave the island and create a kingdom of the living dead on earth. If set free, we will steal the worshippers of all the other gods, swallowing their souls and burying them in the ground as his own.

Luckily, the wards continue to hold. Sange Tara's gods cannot touch the veve of other gods lest their energy be drained from them. Sange constantly tests their boundaries, to no avail. First, he looked through several of the islanders and skinned one and wore its skin lashing it to him with sinew. He ventured toward the shore and he made it into the ward but was drawn back. He had a small success. So he tried it again, this time he pulled skin from different natives thinking it would confuse the veve. He did manage to get a little closer but still nothing. So he buried himself in his cave scrawling thoughts and madness on the walls, and plotting his escape. Every once in awhile he would possess a body to cause mischief, or cobble together enough skin to make another attempt at escape. Lesha and Whotan have always foiled him.

Sange Tara



1. Villages
2. The Mines
3. The Baron's Cave
4. Village/Vaticine Outpost
5. Mt. Fut
6. Baie De Miroir
7. Anse de Requin



With the arrival of the missionaries however Sange believes he has found a way to trick the wards on the island. Flesh from the outside, untouched by the other gods' magic, might allow him to slip past the wards, but until now he could not reach it. Visitors never came to the island and the natives were too well protected from his magic. The missionaries, however, may be just what he needs. More specifically, their leader, Richard Valouse, possesses some ephemeral quality — some core of faith in this strange deity "Theus" — that may unlock the key to his prison. Sange believes that if he can get past whatever is protecting Richard he can use that to get past the wards. When the other missionaries broke into his mountain prison, he slaughtered them and took their skin, allowing him to once again roam the island.

But Richard still has a guardian angel and his faith, which protect him from Sange's attacks. He holed himself inside the church and there he waits, clinging to his belief that Theus will save him. By day, he searches for food, relying on the whatever help the terrified inhabitants land him. By night, he barricades

himself in his church, assaulted by Sange's zombies and flapping husks of his former colleagues' skin. With every attack, Richard's defense weakens; if it ever falls, Sange will take Richard's skin and consume his soul. With the power of the man's faith, he may finally have what he needs to escape the island definitively.

But there is still hope. A few days after Sange escaped, Richard's journal arrived back in Théah, now in the hands of a priest named Margaret Deveau. It was sent there by Lesha who hopes Richard's people will send help before the Baron devours the man's soul. He acted against the judgement of the other gods, however; they fear that Sange might have tainted Lesha's thoughts, drawing in more outsiders for the Baron to use in his escape. Lesha says that only outsiders could take Richard away.

Sange has many powers, and the strength of possessing the Théans has kept the other gods from confronting him directly. He dwells in his former prison in the mountain. Sending zombies and husks to drag hapless islanders back to his lair. The islanders have held rituals nightly in an effort to keep him at bay, but Sange often directly possesses one of their number, disrupting the ritual. The other gods have sometimes intervened, but even their efforts have met with mild success at best.

The Baron's cave is an odd mix of bones, streams and the undead. The catacombs of his prison intersect with the Tarans' crude mines, providing an entryway for enterprising characters. They spiral all over the mountain leading in circles since Lesha set up the prison to keep the Baron confounded. In addition Whotan set many traps in the catacombs, such as large stores of black ore that will pull at any metal and odd winds that sweep through the tunnels with hurricane force. Sange has learned how to trigger some of the traps inside the mountain, and might use those against the intruders.

Nor are traps the only threats. Zombies have buried themselves in the walls and floors, attacking those who venture near. Husks float freely about the caverns, writhing like flames blind and mindless. They will wrap themselves around any living being they find constricting the victim to suffocate him or her. The inner cavern where the

Baron resides is a huge smooth room covered with veve etched or painted on the walls. The floor is littered with candles and corpses. The Baron can find his way around the catacombs fairly well now with the help of the zombies. But player characters can easily get lost inside the mountain. The other gods know their way around the mountain very well, especially Whotan and Lesha since they created many of the traps and catacombs, and may be able to provide help. In addition, the characters might be able to lure the Baron out of his cavern, confronting him in open ground or trapping him inside a possessed form.

The other gods will indirectly aid them in this endeavor, providing help and advice as they are able.



More on Sange Tara's magic, including rules for possession, can be found in Chapter 3.

Baron Sange (d20™)

Medium-Size Outsider

Hit Dice: 20d10 (112 hp).

Initiative: +8 (+4 Dex, +4 Improved Initiative)

Speed: 50 ft.

AC: 26 (+4 Dex, +12 natural)

Attacks: 2 kick/punch +15 melee

Damage: Kick/punch 2d10+7 melee

Special Attacks: Raise the dead, quake

Special Qualities: Fast healing, damage reduction 10/+1.

Saves: Fort +10, Ref +8, Will +9

Abilities: Str 20, Dex 18, Con 17, Int 18, Wis 18, Cha 18.

Skills: Climb +14, Jump +14, Listen +6, Move Silently +9, Spot +8

Feats: Dodge, Multi-Attack

Climate/Terrain: Sange Tara

Organization: Unique

Challenge Rating: 20

Treasure: None

Alignment: Chaotic evil

Baron Sange appears wrapped and sewn into swathes of dead leathery skin. His teeth are rotten and bare; his lips have been torn off. The skin pulls taught over his skeletal frame though it hangs loose around the joints and other areas. In close combat the Baron will fight hand to hand, otherwise he will let his other powers do his work.

Holy items or holy weapons ignore his damage reduction ability, and he can be turned as undead. Other cleric abilities pertaining to undead affect him as well (he is considered a 20 HD creature).

Combat

Raise the Dead: The baron can summon zombies from any readily available corpses. In a densely populated area, such as a graveyard, battleground, plague grounds, or prison, the baron can raise two undead every round. Otherwise the Baron can only raise dead as available. Use the regular stats for a zombie, below for all the undead raised by Baron Sange.

Quake: The Baron is also god of the land so he can cause small tremors and earthquakes. Sange can cast the spell *earthquake* as an 15th level cleric. He never uses it underground, lest he inadvertently seal himself back in, and the efforts of the other gods prevent him from destroying the building on Sange Tara, but otherwise the effects are identical to the spell description in the *Player's Handbook*™. He may use this ability once every 10 rounds.

Possession: Sange may possess mortals, as described in Chapter 3.

Baron Sange — Villain (7th Sea™)

Points: 300

TN to be hit: 20

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

Attack Roll: 4k3

Damage Roll: 3k3

Skills: Dancing 4, Grapple 5, Leaping 4, Oratory 4,

Stealth 5, Tracking 5, Trail Signs 3

Special Abilities: See below

Toughness: Baron Sange ignores the first 20 Wounds inflicted upon him by any blow. Those inflicting less than 20 simply glance off him. Holy weapons (including rune-inscribed weapons) or weapons wielded by someone with the Faith Advantage do not suffer from this restriction. At the GM's discretion, dracheneisen and Synchron weapons may also inflict damage as normal.

Raise the Dead: The baron can summon zombies from any readily available corpses. In a densely populated area, such as a graveyard, battleground, plague grounds, or prison, the baron can raise two undead every round. Otherwise the Baron can only raise dead as available. Use the regular stats for a zombie, below for all the undead raised by Baron Sange.

Quake: The Baron is also god of the land so he can cause small tremors and earthquakes. The quakes will force characters within 1,000 feet to make a Balance check against a TN of 15 or fall prone. The Baron can cause this to happen once every 10 rounds. If the Sange wants to up the power of the quake he will spend a combat action and add 5 more to the TN, forcing a Balance check of TN 20 to remain standing.

Husk (d20™)

Medium-Size Undead

Hit Dice: 2d12+3

Initiative: +7 (+3 Dex, +4 Improved Initiative)

Speed: 20 ft.

AC: 15 (+3 Dex, +2 natural defenses)

Attacks: Suffocate +5 melee

Damage: Suffocate 1d6+3 every round husk is attached

Face/Reach: 7ft. by 7 ft./7 ft.

Special Attack: Constrict

Special Qualities: Constrict, improved grab, immunities, slip through cracks, undead

Saves: Fort +1, Ref +4, Will +6

Abilities: Str 17, Dex 17, Con 13, Int -, Wis 10, Cha 1

Skills: Hide +11, Intimidate +10, Intuit Direction +6, Listen +12, Search +10

Feats: Alertness, Blind-Fight, Combat Reflexes, Improved Initiative

Climate/Terrain: Sange Tara

Organization: Solitary or squads (2–5)

Challenge Rating: 3

Treasure: None

Alignment: Always chaotic evil

Husks are the animated skin of Baron Sange's victims: devoid of form and animated by his malice. The skin dances in a flailing manner snapping and popping at the tips like whip cracks. Husks are humanoid and resemble the shape they held in life — hair, distinguishing scars, and the like. Since the husk is merely spirit-strengthened skin, it is impossible to engage the creature in hand to hand combat or with a blunt weapon. The husk must be cut up for it to lose the spirit residing with it. Husks attack by wrapping their bodies around creatures, squeezing the life out of them like a snake.

Combat

Constrict: A husk deals 1d6+3 points of damage with a successful grapple check against Medium-sized or smaller creatures (see below). Once it had successfully grappled a target, it automatically inflicts 1d6+3 damage every round until the target escapes the grapple

Improved Grab: If the husk successfully attacks, it causes no damage, but may attempt to grapple its target as a free action (rules for grappling may be found in the *Player's Handbook*TM). The target must be Medium size or smaller for this to work. If this effort is successful, it may constrict its victim as detailed below.

Immunities: Husks are immune to all forms of bludgeoning damage. Only slashing or piercing weapons inflict any damage. This applies even to magical bludgeoning weapons. Spells and spell-like effects still cause damage as normal.

Slip Through Cracks: Husks may pass through any barrier with a crack wider than 1/2 inch and longer than 18 inches, including windows, doors, chimneys and fissures.

Undead: Husks are immune to mind-influencing effects, poison, sleep, paralysis, stunning, and disease. They are not subject to critical hits, subdual damage, ability damage, energy drain, or death from massive damage.

Husk — Villain (7th SeaTM)

Points: 150

Brawn: 3, Finesse: 3, Resolve: 2, Wits: 1, Panache: 3

TN to be hit: 20

Attack Roll: 4k3 grapple

Damage Roll: 3k2 crush

Skills: Bear Hug 4, Grapple 4, Leaping 4

Husks may pass through any barrier with a crack wider than 1/2 inch and longer than 18 inches. They take no damage from blunt or bludgeoning style weapons.

Zombie (d20TM)

Medium-Size Undead

HD: 2d12 +3 (16 hp)

Initiative: -1 (Dex)

Speed: 30 ft.

AC: 11(-1 Dex, +2 natural)

Attacks: Slam +2 melee

Damage: Slam 1d6+1

Face/Reach: 5ft. by 5ft. / 5ft.

Special Qualities: Undead, partial actions only

Save: Fort +0, Ref -1, Will +3

Abilities: Int -, Wis 10, Cha 11

Feats: Toughness

Climate/Terrain: Sange Tara

Organization: Solitary or squads (6-10)

Challenge Rating: 1/2

Treasure: None

Alignment: Always chaotic evil

Zombies are the reanimated corpses of the islanders and missionaries. They are in various states of decomposition and rarely use weapons of any kind, instead relying on their filthy claws and diseased bite. Like their master, they behave with gleeful abandon: cackling, howling, and laughing at the terror they inspire. Note that these zombies have nothing in common with the Théan zombies described in the *7th Sea Players' Guide*TM and the *Heroes, Villains, and Monsters*TM sourcebook.

Combat

Undead: Zombies are immune to mind-influencing effects, poison, sleep, paralysis, stunning, and disease. They are not subject to critical hits, subdual damage, ability damage, energy drain, or death from massive damage.

Partial Actions Only (Ex): Zombies move slowly and may only conduct partial actions. They may move or attack, but may only do both if they charge (a partial charge).

Zombie — Villain (7th sea)

Points: 100

Brawn: 4, Finesse: 2, Wits: 1, Resolve: 2, Panache: 1

TN to be hit: 10

Attack Roll: 5k3 claw, 5k3 claw, 5k3 bite

Damage Roll: 2k2 claw, 4k2 bite

Skills: Whatever skills possessed in life, Grapple 3

Characters

Margaret Deveau

Margaret Deveau is a priest in the employ of Erika Brigitte Durkheim conducting the investigation of the mission to Sange Tara. She is a full figured beautiful woman with brown curls and bright blue eyes. Margaret has been in love with Richard for many years, and Richard returns her affection but they have not acted upon it yet, since Richard was preparing for his missionary work, and Margaret needed to remain with Cardinal Durkheim. However since Richard's journal has appeared she has petitioned to go to Sange Tara to find him. There have been no ships to Sange Tara since Richard arrived, nor had any planned to. She is still flabbergasted as to how the journal reached her, and deeply disturbed by its contents. She will do almost anything to ensure the safe return of her beloved.

The cardinal is very busy and will not release Margaret to search for Richard. Margaret will fund her own team to go to the island if need be. She knows of the ore it holds and might expound upon other mysterious riches that lie there to tempt other adventurers to go. It is possible that Margaret's guards may accompany her to Sange Tara. (which would allow players to portray Vaticine guards), but she is anxious enough to pay anyone willing to make the trip.

In non-Théan campaigns, Margaret can belong to any holy order appropriate to the setting.

Margaret Deveau (d20TM)

Théan Priest 12: CR 12; SZ M (humanoid); HD 12d6+12; hp 55; Init +1 (+1 Dex); Spd 30 ft.; AC 11 (+1 Dex); Atks: None; SA None; SV Fort +4, Ref +4, Will +11; Str 10, Dex 13, Con 12, Int 16, Wis 17, Cha 14; AL LG; Skills: Bluff +5, Decipher Script +5, Diplomacy +10, Gather Information +11, Intimidate +5, Knowledge (history) +12, Knowledge (law) +4, Knowledge (mathematics) +10, Knowledge (arcana) +8, Knowledge (religion) +14, Listen +8, Sense Motive +9, Speak Language (Castillian, Eisen, Montaigne, Théan [alternately, any four languages from your campaign]); Feats: Alertness, Altruistic, Faith, Ordained, Politicker, Priest.

Margaret Deveau — Hero (7th Sea™)

Brawn: 2, Finesse: 1, Wits: 4, Resolve: 4, Panache: 3

Reputation: 54

Background: Vow

Arcana: Altruistic

Advantages: Montaigne (R/W) Théan (R/W), Castille, Eisen, Faith, Noble, Ordained

Courtier: Dancing 1, Etiquette 5, Fashion 2, Politics 4, Scheming 3

Priest: Diplomacy 5, Mooch 3, Oratory 5, Philosophy 5, Theology 5, Writing 5

Scholar: History 5, Law 2, Mathematics 4, Occult 4, Research 5

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

Richard Valouse

Richard longed for missionary work ever since he joined the order, and regularly requested to be released from his Montaigne appointment and travel west. However as luck and irony would have it, his prayers were answered at the same time he met Margaret. He delayed his travel to Sange Tara two months for "preparation," but finally bid adieu to his new love and pursued what he hoped would become his life's work. Instead, he found a horror the likes of which he cannot fathom.

After being assaulted by the husks of his fellow missionaries, Richard barricaded himself inside his fledgling church. Each night brings new terrors: figures shambling towards him wrapped in crackling leather stretched tight and sewn to the flesh. Sange hovers around Richard's barricade every night. Several times, he has actually made contact with the priest, but each occasion leaves him weak and drained. But as the days and weeks wear on Richard has slowly begun to degenerate since he is trapped in what he believes to be hell. Sooner or later, his resolve will waver... and the Baron will have him.

Richard Valouse (420")

Théan Priest 8: CR 8; SZ M (humanoid); HD 8d6+16; hp 55; Init +2 (+2 Dex); Spd 30 ft.; AC 12 (+2 Dex); Atks: None; SA None; SV Fort +4, Ref +4, Will +9; Str 13, Dex 14, Con 15, Int 15, Wis 16, Cha 12; AL LG; Skills: Bluff +4, Decipher Script +3, Diplomacy +6, Gather Information +3, Knowledge (history) +4, Knowledge (mathematics) +2, Knowledge (philosophy) +6, Knowledge (religion) +8, Listen +3, Perform +5, Sense Motive +2, Speak Language (Eisen, Montaigne [alternately, any two languages from your campaign]), Spot +5, Swim +3, Wilderness Lore +7; Feats: Faith, Ordained, Priest, Road Scholar, Trusting.

Richard Valouse — Hero (7th Sea™)

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

Reputation: 20

Background: Crisis of Faith

Arcana: Trusting

Advantages: Montaigne (R/W), Eisen (R/W), Faith, Ordained

Missionary: Cold Read 2, Oratory 3, Survival 3, Theology 3

Scholar: History 2, Mathematics 1, Philosophy 3, Research 2

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

Pirates' Paradise: The Straits of Blood

The Midnight Archipelago contains hundreds of small islands which have never been explored. No flag flies here and even the most powerful navy cannot patrol the entire chain. Untold wealth lies within its confines, both from Surneth ruins and the growing number of Théan colonies. Because of this, pirates and other unsavory characters find the area irresistible, dodging each other and whatever naval ships travel these remote waters. But even scurvy dogs need a place to relax and spend their hard-earned guilders. That place is a small chain of islands known as the Straits of Blood.

The origin of the name is the subject of fierce debate. Some say it comes from the odd red color of the reefs that surround the islands, giving the local seas a dark crimson hue. Some say the name comes from the secret red lantern in chain's lighthouse, showing the true way to navigate through the deadly reefs. Some say the red water comes from the sailors that die here. Regardless of how it was named, the Straits of Blood is known to every tarheel on the waves. Few forget the time spent there.

The Straits consist of six islands surrounded. The first one most sailors see is Guivere's Key, home to the Bloody Lighthouse. It is surrounded by the other five, though only two contain docking facilities. The best-known is Bilgewater, a shantytown that combines the worst part of every port into one stretch of taverns, bordellos, and gambling dens. The other port is nearby Tumbledown. Only ship captains and officers are allowed here, away from Bilgewater's rowdy nights and rough streets. The other three islands: Jackie's Rock, Coldwater Isle, and Pebble Beach, contain few signs of civilization, though they all serve a purpose, as noted below.

History

The Straits were first discovered by Captain Anatole Guivere 30 years ago. Guivere was a promising young privateer who gathered a reputation as a gentleman pirate. He always treated ships that surrendered with respect and always left a ship with enough supplies to make it home. Despite that, most ports didn't enjoy being associated with pirates and he found his safe harbors dwindling in numbers. Like many captains before him, he turned to the islands for refuge. His ship's master carpenter suggested the Straits. Before then, sailors steered clear of the blood-red reefs surrounding the chain, since so many had run aground in the area. Guivere spent months searching for a safe way to navigate through the reefs, until he finally devised a cunning plan. He ran several longboats full of gunpowder aground on the shallowest reefs, then set them off. The reefs broke beneath the explosions and he soon had a straight path to the islands.

Guivere then set about building a lighthouse to mark the secret entryway that he devised. During this time, his men settled down on the island that would grow into Bilgewater. Guivere wanted a quieter respite, so he took his faithful dog Jackie and sailed to the adjacent island. Soon, as he sailed back to the mainland and his crew signed on with other seafarers, other ships came to the Straits of Blood. It became a free port where men sworn to no flag could come to relax and

divide the plunder from their latest prize. Where gold was divided, civilization followed. Crew members opened businesses catering to sea folk. Others, unable to return due to injury or illness, drew pay by signing on to man the lighthouse or by building new structures in the burgeoning towns.

Guivere was in the center of it all. The Straits of Blood had gone from a hideaway where he could relax safely to a bustling smuggler's haven. As the years rolled by, he found it harder and harder to leave his home away from home. His small shack that he had built with his own hands turned into an impressive mansion that could entertain entire crews. Other captains lived on his islands now, growing fat and old on the treasures they found or stole over the years. Bilgewater had gone from a series of tents made from sailcloth to a rough and ready town with a bar in every other storefront. There was even a constabulary of sorts, and the isle of Coldwater now saw numerous duels between feuding sailors — settling their affairs with honor rather than carry them into the streets. Guivere learned to enjoy life on the islands, and spent his free time doting on his sole daughter, Annabelle. But even his own flesh and blood couldn't silence the call of the sea and he left for one last adventure ten years ago on Annabelle's 15th birthday.

He was never to be seen again.

Today, Guivere's daughter oversees Bilgewater and the surrounding isles. She has proven a tough yet fair authority in the area. Most pirates understand the basic idea of the town. Have fun, be rowdy, but air no grievances there. That's what Coldwater Isle is for (*see below*). Annabelle travels between the half-dozen isles making sure everything is run as her father wished. She has gone to great lengths keep his dream alive and is probably the only person in all of Théah that could love this hive of scoundrels as much as he did.

Geography

Guivere's Key (*The Bloody Lighthouse*)

The first island every ship passes contains only a simple lighthouse, showing the way to safe passage through the reef. Of course, like the rest of the Straits, only pirates are allowed beyond the reefs. The light at the top of the tower is a false one, designed to lure pursuers into the reef. The true guiding light is a red lantern located halfway down the tower. It is specially hooded and can only be seen where the reef has been cleared away. This is a fairly straightforward path. The lighthouse keepers never ignite the red light unless a ship flying a jolly roger sails nearby. It usually can only be seen at night.

The lighthouse is run by sailors too injured to continue on the high seas or by sailors recovering from illnesses inflicted in their travels. Annabelle pays these men well. She understands that unsavory scoundrels could overtake the lighthouse and misdirect friendly ships into the reefs. In the ten years since her father died, two groups have attempted such a plan and both times the attempt failed. The men running the lighthouse appreciate the money that Annabelle gives them — who else would pay so well for the services of a crippled sailor? — and fight for her with the loyalty of fanatics.

Jackie's Rock

Captain Guivere was fond of his terrier, Jackie, and the dog accompanied him on every voyage the old pirate made. Every sailor under Guivere could tell a different story about the dog. To hear them tell it, Jackie could load the cannons, man the rigging, and seize a treasure galleon all by herself. The crew loved the dog as they did few human beings, and Jackie holds the honor of two taverns in Bilgewater named after her. As the Straits grew to include more men and women, Guivere found that his dog needed a more secluded place to roam free. The small island that would come to be known as "Jackie's Rock" was perfect. It was lightly wooded and the beaches held plenty of driftwood to play fetch with. Guivere planned to build a home to replace the windy shack he lived in, and commissioned a statue of Jackie for the garden in front. He set out on his last sail before construction began, however, and for the first time, his beloved dog did not accompany him. Annabelle later found Jackie on the island living on sea birds and eggs. No one knows why Guivere left the dog behind and indeed, Annabelle herself believed that Jackie was with her master when they departed. When Jackie finally died, Annabelle buried the animal in her favorite haunt and forbade anyone from erecting any other structures on the island. She resides there still, in the house her father commissioned but never saw.

The statue itself is the subject of some legends. It was sculpted by Pascal Vestanzi, the famous Vodacce sculptor. Guivere wanted to show how much his life-long friend meant to him but to go to such an extravagance over a pet raises even the most decadent eyebrow. Some suggested it indicates just how much wealth the pirate had accumulated by the end of his career. A man that can hire Vestanzi to sculpt a dog must have booty to burn. Some also say that the statue holds a clue to the location of Guivere's hoard. Bilgewater residents believe if you insert a locket that Guivere gave to his daughter into the dog's right eye, its jaw will open and give you a map to the treasure. There are even those who make a quick guild off sales of "Guivere's Treasure Maps" to fresh-faced sailors coming to Bilgewater for the first time. These maps lead the sailor all around Jackie's Rock in a futile effort of digging, pace counting, and riddle deciphering.

Pebble Beach

While Bilgewater has a fast and loose feel to it, sometimes justice must be done. One-time offenders usually get a visit from the constable, Artus Sices du Sices, who has no objections to trials at sword point. If an individual is guilty of repeating a crime, the wronged party has two options. He can challenge the offender to a duel on Coldwater Isle or send him to Pebble Beach.

Until recently, Pebble Beach was entirely empty, visited only by the victims of one of Guivere's maps. The constable forbids passage there and has set up a small guardhouse and an old cannon. When a prisoner is sent to Pebble Beach, he receives a small wooden bucket. Before he may return to Bilgewater, he must put a predetermined number of stones in the wooden pail. The prisoner then brings the pail to the guardhouse and the stones are counted. Too few, and the required number is doubled. Too many and the convict is sent back out to the beach without a bucket this time. When the number is correct, the guard fires the old cannon to signal the constable. The boat returns to take the prisoner to Bilgewater.



While Annabelle first devised this punishment system, the constable has added his own personal flair to it over the years. Some of the buckets have holes in the bottom big enough for the pebbles to drop out of one by one. Sometimes the prisoner must bring in pebbles of a specific size or color. Artus also isn't afraid to hand out a quick fencing lesson as needed; his skills with a sword are quite impressive and he has no compunctions about pressing the advantage against lesser fencers. Anything to keep the peace.

Coldwater Isle

Sometimes, the rivalries and bad blood between pirate crews boil over in Bilgewater. The constable and his men can handle the brawls and the pranks, but when men are killed and vengeance is called for, the parties involved can take their blades and board the ferry to Coldwater Isle.

The island was always regarded as a cursed place. The water around it is strangely cooler than the rest of the area, and sirens have been spotted on its shores from time to time. Even the practical Captain Guivere rarely visited the isle. An impromptu graveyard began to form here, in an area known as St. Rose's Garden. The grave markers range from well-crafted stones to rusted cutlasses stabbed into the ground.

The Isle serves another purpose as well. When two sailors feud to the point where it will only be settled by bloodshed, they travel here to fight the duel. One of the town watch takes the ferry out to the isle. The two sailors ride out with him, having chosen their weapons at the docks in Bilgewater. The watchman stops the boat fifty yards from shore, and the duelists must swim to land and continue to travel until they are out of the watchman's sight. They may then conduct themselves however they see fit. The surviving sailor (for such conflicts always end in death) then swims back out to the boat and is taken back to Bilgewater. If neither duelist

returns by sundown, the watchman assumes both fighters eliminated each other and returns alone. While in the Straits, crews must heed the ruling in these duels. The surviving party is in the right, and the constable considers the matter settled.

The legend of Coldwater Isle grows. Once every month, tales arise of a phantom longboat arriving at the island. Under the darkness of the new moon, the spirits of the island's dead muster in St. Rose's Garden. The most wicked spirits may leave the isle on the boat and seek vengeance against those who put them there. While justice may have been served, vengeance never dies.

Tumbledown

Piracy is not a career for individuals that wish to live long, happy lives into their golden years. However, every rule has its exception, and the men and women of Tumbledown live well off the ill-gotten gains of the high seas. Captain Guivere originally settled here when he made the Straits his hideout. Other captains that visited liked the idea of a quiet retreat from the rowdy life of port and soon other houses began to spring up around Guivere's. The houses of Tumbledown were soon host to more polite parties and activities than those in Bilgewater.

The houses here are well built and spacious. They play well to the open air and many have large patios and gardens. Some are more extravagant than others, but that's usually a reflection of the occupant. Tumbledown currently hosts six houses and one tavern. The center of town is marked by an extravagant fountain: a recent gift from Captain Auguste d'Alroux. It came from Charouse, rescued from the fires of the Revolution. While the fountain displays the sun motif of *L'Empereur* surrounding the base, some wag painted each of the faces with clown makeup. As of yet, none of the residents have complained.

THE DOCKS

Though less spacious than the Bilgewater docks, this area can still hold five ships, with another eight in the bay. Berths in the docks are unofficially reserved for the residents of the island. The harbor master is compensated for this treatment with a generous tab at *The Captain's Hat* that never expires. At any time, the docks hold two to four ships belonging to residents. Most of the captains, while officially "retired," can't resist the thrill of the sea for too long, especially with a town full of sailors so near by. All the residents are very rarely home at the same time, but you can easily determine what captains are around by knowing which ships are anchored here.

THE CAPTAIN'S HAT

This tavern stands close to the docks, and is a quiet affair compared to those of Bilgewater. It is well stocked with fine liquor and has an atmosphere more akin to a gentlemen's club than a rowdy sea tavern. The bar gets its name from the garish hat on display behind the bar: a gift from Captain Smith, who claimed he got it from the legendary Captain Justice Rogers. Smith used to say that his housemaid Milady got it as a gift from the old captain for favors of an "improper" nature. Milady overheard the story and decided to teach her master a lesson by making turnip soup for dinner every night for a month. It's the only time Smith ever changed one of his tall tales.

The bar is run by Morgan Feder, Guivere's first mate and trusted friend. He stayed behind on Guivere's last voyage because of his wife, Veronica, who died last winter from a prolonged illness. Feder sold his house and moved above the bar; maintaining the *Captain's Hat* is now all he has to live for.

JORGE OCHOA'S HOUSE

This opulent house was recently purchased by Jorge Ochoa, a Castillian privateer. It used to belong to Morgan Feder and its new owner has yet to really make it his own. He brought some effects from his homeland, and his cooks can prepare spicy Castillian meals that have made him a popular host for dinner parties. He is also teaching himself how to play guitar. Captain Ochoa is more legitimate than most residents of Tumbledown. He used to belong to the Castillian navy but resigned in disgust when his family betrayed his country during the recent Castille/Montaigne war. He began preying on Montaigne merchant ships and selling the supplies to his country at a drastic discount. With the war over, he settled down with his profits here. He has turned his ship, *The Tempered Steel* over to a new captain and plans to enjoy a long and happy retirement.

WAYFARER SMITH'S HOUSE

Wayfarer Smith is the greatest sea captain in the world... according to him, anyway. His house is full of strange artifacts, and knick-knacks from every corner of Théah. He has a story for each one, and is more than happy to share them with any soul who happens by. He is always accompanied by his maid, Gayle, whom he refers to as Milady, even though there are no romantic intentions between them. They make an odd pair: he is just beginning to slip from his prime and Milady is thirty years his elder. Wayfarer is really his first name. To hear him tell it, he first heard his name when he was newly born, and didn't stop crying until he was three. By that time, his parents were ready to ship him off to sea. He is the captain of *Milady's Carriage*, a ship rumored to have strange abilities drawn from sorcery and Syrneth artifacts.

AUGUSTE D'ALROUX'S HOUSE

Commodore d'Alroux's house is very simple for a Montaigne. The windows are always shuttered and he rarely entertains guests. Occasionally, the shrieks of Porté sorcery emanate from the interior. Those lucky few who have seen the inside say Auguste has a collection of Cathayan and Crescent artifacts that rivals Wayfarer Smith's pieces. His ship, the *Lone Traveler*, is hardly ever in port and he has earned a reputation among the other residents as a creepy old hermit. His true love was murdered during the War of the Cross and he hasn't gotten close to anyone since. He is apparently obsessed with finding a safe route to Cathay that doesn't involve the Corridors of Flame.

THOMAS LAUND'S HOUSE

Captain Laund's house is staffed with the finest cooks in the world. He imports foods from every country and no two dinners at his house are ever truly alike. Launds spends his days in the tavern and his nights home eating. His ship *Spicy Serena* is well stocked with provisions, keeping Thomas's girth generous in the extreme. He and Wayfarer Smith have a bit of a feud between them. Launds think Smith is a braggart and a windbag. Smith wonders aloud if Launds needs a ship when his crew can just rig some sails up and ride on his prodigious gut. So far, this rivalry has stayed in good fun and fought only through witty repartee. That could change if either man ever desired something which the other possessed, or coveted the same goal or object.

GREY JACKSON'S HOUSE

Captain Grey, as she is known, has a lot of friends in the Vendel guilds. She sold them her pilfered cargo and they made her retirement comfortable. Her house has many modern fixtures and is the one building that was not built from the tropical woods surrounding Tumbledown. Grey imported everything and still visits the Vendel isles quite frequently on board the *Grey Skies*. She is good friends with Captain Smith and plays Squares with him every week. Grey is a top-notch player, and Smith often jokes that they should play to see if he will ask her to marry him. She's still deciding if she'll throw that game.

Bilgewater

Bilgewater is the main port of the Straits of Blood. Brawls and bedlam are the watchwords here, and someone looking for a quiet night of reading or a good night's sleep would be better off going to Tumbledown or Jackie's Rock. The island echoes with slurred chanteys and indecipherable yelling till the wee hours of the morning. Most activity starts up around noon, so the residents and shopkeepers use the fleeting moments of the morning to restock, relax, patch up the damage from the night before, or even catch a little shut eye themselves.

The town is shaped like two "L"s placed back to back. The main street, known as Cutthroat Row, is stuffed with brothels, taverns, and gambling dens. A single shipwright lives near the docks, and general stores exist behind either side of Cutthroat Row where sailors can buy and sell various forms of ill-got gains. A meeting hall stands at the end of the Row opposite the docks, where the town watch does its job and general meetings can be called in the few instances which require one.

The Straits of Blood



1. The Bloody Lighthouse
2. Tumbledown
3. Bilgewater
4. Pebble Beach
5. Jackie's Rock
6. Captain Guivere's House
7. Coldwater Isle
8. St. Rose's Garden



The other half of the island is a thick jungle known as Caruther's Last Home. Alphonse Caruther was a well-liked member of Guivere's crew. He had given Guivere the name of his first ship and was an excellent swordsman before he lost his right hand. He stumbled into the woods one night after travelling "Launds' League" (i.e., drinking in every tavern in Bilgewater). Two days later, Morgan Feder found the man's skeleton in the center of the jungle. The bones had been picked clean. Since then, Artus Sices du Sices has kept the jungle off limits, though a few reckless sea dogs poke around there from time to time. No one has yet to find the cause of Caruther's demise and no new skeletons have ever been discovered.

The following establishments can be found in Bilgewater.

THE BILGEWATER DOCKS

The docks are located in a deep bay, and can berth fifteen ships, though another twenty can drop anchor in the bay. To avoid excessive tariffs (and bickering) of the Vecini brothers (see below), trade between ships often occurs right on the docks. This trading usually consists of straight barter and no money is involved. The Vecini brothers constantly approach Annabelle about outlawing this practice but she won't relent. They make enough money off the visitors and residents of the Straits that they can stand a little competition.

STERK SHIPWRIGHTS

Kjorik Sveldison is the best shipwright in the islands. He charges a high price for his work, but if you want it installed on your ship, he can do it. While his prices reach upward of two hundred percent of the normal cost, a select few know his weakness. Kjorik has a soft spot for trashy adventure novels. He has every book in the Remy series and is now collecting the *Kadla the Skald* books written by Joern Morden. Someone bringing him a copy of the latest edition will get their repairs done at the normal price. Of course, he will also talk their ear off in his native Vestenmannavnjar about his favorite parts of the other books, and anyone looking for a bargain may have to endure hours of character analysis and plot exposition to get to it.

THE MEETING HALL

The largest building in Bilgewater actually sees the least use. The meeting hall was built from imported Montaigne lumber and is well-fortified. It contains a cistern in the cellar and a supply of food taxed from the Vecinis. Annabelle intends to use it to withstand a possible siege of the Straits. It has not been used as a meeting place since famed actor Wendell Bainbridge brought his production of *Julius and Rowena* to Bilgewater a year ago. Apparently, pirates don't much care for



the theater: Bainbridge was nearly killed when the drunken audience realized that Rowena was played by a man. Since then, Artus turned the place into a makeshift jail and armory for the watch. He maintains his quarters here, and uses the extra space to keep an extensively stocked wine cellar: the best outside of Tumbledown.

THE VECINIS' STOREHOUSES

These four storehouses contain goods bought and sold from docked ships. The storehouses buy their wares from the ships, then sell them to the townsfolk. Guivere originally used them as general storehouses, but the four Vecini brothers took them over soon after arriving on the island. Each is Vodacce, but each is also born of a different mother related to a different Prince. They keep an eye out for any quartermaster selling goods directly to one of the local businesses, and ban offenders (both ship and shop) from ever using their storehouses again. While Fortunado, Gianinni, Leone, and Michelangelo stand together versus outsiders, they often bicker amongst themselves. When a new captain arrives in town, each of them falls over backwards to earn his business, cursing his sibling "competitors" and pulling all manner of dirty tricks. On return trips, that brother must go out of his way to keep the captain's business there, lest the other three swoop in and take the deal. When this occurs, the offending brother swears an oath of vendetta on the other. Nothing ever truly comes of it, but it can be quite comical. The list of "vendettas" between the four of them numbers in the dozens.

DANE'S DANCING HOUSE

This brothel runs under the pretense of a theater and dance hall. Men wishing for the companionship of a lady without the vulgarity of prostitution can simply say to his friends "I'm going dancing, boys." The owner of this house, Len Dane, encourages musicians to play here by offering them free drinks. It was he who arranged for Wendell Bainbridge's troupe to perform at the meeting hall, and he has regretted that decision ever since.

THE SCURVY DOG

This is one of two taverns named for Jackie, Anatole Guivere's dog. Each claims to be the first tavern dedicated to Jackie, and each claims that Guivere gave them his blessing as the "official" one. It's often confused with The Lucky Dog, though the owner constantly corrects the misconception. They do stock better liquor than the other tavern, but don't allow gambling on the premises. The owner is a slightly addled Vaticine who believes that as long as he doesn't succumb to the greed of gambling, all the other sins committed at his tavern will be forgiven.

THE SAILOR'S HAMMOCK

This house of ill repute features large hammocks that stretch from one side of the building to the other. There are 6 hammocks on each wall and each can fit 3–4 people. Curtains can be drawn between hammocks for privacy. The hammocks on the first level are the most expensive and the girls and their customers often bid for them in impromptu auctions.

THE BELLS AND WHISTLES

Grady O'Toole was a master gunner on an Avalon ship for twenty years and lost most of his hearing in the process. He can't hear a person right next to him much less over the

din of a tavern full of pirates, so he devised a system whereby the customers could signal him for drinks: they ring a bell on the table for a quart of beer and whistle for a pint. The locals often refer to the tavern as "The Calliope," marking one of the easiest ways to distinguish permanent residents from visitors.

ROSEWATER PLACE

Rosewater Place is the only caphouse on the island that is officially overseen by a member of the Jenny's Guild. It's named for the bowls of rosewater left around the place to take the edge off the customers' smell. Mistress Malreaux originally came the island to bring all the brothels under the Guild but elected instead to take membership fines from the other owners and put them directly into her own pocket. The other houses don't mind; what she's charging them and putting into her coffers is much less than the dues they'd be paying the Guild.

THE LUCKY DOG

This is the other tavern named after Jackie, Captain Guivere's terrier. A long-standing rivalry exists between the two taverns and occasionally the patrons play pranks on one another to prove which bar is the best. At last count, The Scurvies avenged themselves upon the Luckies (who replaced all the beer in their barrels with bilgewater) by loading all the dice for the games in the Lucky Dog. The next round of pranks is expected shortly. It seems to involve drilling holes in the roof.

THE SMILING CHAMBERMAID

The girls that work here are selected from the most beautiful women in town. When a customer enters, each of the girls presents her self in their best dress wearing a mask. Once their services are purchased, the sailor can pay an additional fee to have the lady remove her mask. More often than not, the customers think the extra money is worth it, but some prefer to leave the mask on and wonder if the girl was the prettiest one of them all.

THE TEETH AND ANKLES

This brothel serves men who only need the service of escorts. The ladies here are unique in that they can actually be hired out of the house and taken on trips. They are well mannered and educated, taught by an actual Vodacce courtesan. They are huge rivals of the Chambermaid's girls and often get into battles of wit in public. While it hasn't come to blows yet, sometimes the men they accompany enter duels on the ladies' behalf.

GUIVERE'S RESTING PLACE

This tavern features relics from the ships that Guivere sailed during his career. The wheel of the *Canard Sans Merci* rests here, as well as a gun from the *Cannonbelle*. The owner, Jacques du Charouse, was the first to begin selling "Guivere's Treasure Maps" to gullible sailors who came into his place. He is large enough to handle the marks that can't take a joke and usually buys a round for the ones who do.

THE COFFIN

This tavern is as quiet as a chapel. Men rarely come here to drink, but to talk business and trade secrets they want no one else to hear. Often, mutinous crews meet here to plot the overthrow of their captain. The barkeep here has excellent

hearing and has become adept in writing down things he overhears in a short hand. He sometimes sells these secrets to interested parties, though his price is never cheap.

THE CAPTAIN'S DAUGHTER

This building is both a tavern and a brothel. A pretty girl sits on a high platform. There is a rope attached to the platform. A sailor can pay a Guilder to climb up the rope and kiss the young girl. The other sailors drinking below do everything they can to cause the sailor to fall by pulling the rope, throwing things at him and distracting him as best they can. If the sailor makes the climb and kisses the girl, he proceeds upstairs to her room. If he fails, he can't try again for the rest of the night, and he has to drink a mug full of wash water. The owner insists the girl on the platform always must look like Annabelle Guivere.

THE SILK SHEETS

Sailors with a taste for the exotic come to this house of ill-fame, populated by women from faraway lands. The brothel contains Crescent women skilled in the dance of the scarves, Kosar outcasts from distant Ussura, and several ladies native to the Midnight Archipelago. The proprietor, a Cathayan named Lin Xiue Shen, began as a working girl in Bilgewater but earned enough money to open her own place. She claims to have carried the silk sheets that line each of the beds here all the way from her native land.

THE ANTE

The biggest gambling house in the Straits is also the roughest. While other taverns allow gambling, this place is made for it. The patrons bet on anything both inside and outside of the house. The building holds all manner of dice games, roulette wheels, and cards but stranger wagers are made as well. Men can bet on which pirate will strike next, what country will win what war, which king will die next, and so on. One of the most popular attractions is the crab races, held in an open pit behind the building. The owner claims he trains the crabs himself, but no one believes him. While The Ante has a no weapons policy in place, knives are generally not considered in violation of this rule.

THE BOSUN'S PIPE

This inn is clean and well maintained. While most sailors make do with stumbling back to their ship or passing out in a bar, many like the idea of fresh linen and a well-cooked breakfast. This inn is run by a husband and wife who met while on board a ship together and half the fun of staying here is watching them bicker.

GM Secrets and Adventure Hooks

- While it hasn't happened, a villainous group of pirates could overtake Annabelle's men on Guivere's Key and sabotage the lighthouse. They could then switch the red lantern to cause ships to run aground and send longboats out to plunder the hulls. Of course, if they have the salt to waylay the lighthouse, chances are they've also overtaken Tumbledown and Bilgewater. While Guivere is a very tough cookie, if she's held prisoner in her own home,

she may ask the PC's for help. A spectacular prison break is always a good way to start off a night's adventuring.

- Coldwater Isle is a thrilling place for a duel. Two pirates step ashore... and one rows back alone. While the duels that go on here often take place between two parties that butted heads in Bilgewater, old rivalries can be settled here as well. Imagine what would happen if someone were falsely challenged to a duel by a deadly Swordsman. They would have until sunrise to prepare to meet Theus... while the crew and/or associates of the wronged duelist would have only a few hours to find out the truth behind the offense and correct it before the sun came up.
- The rivalry between The Scurvy Dog and The Lucky Dog is a humorous and almost legendary feud in Bilgewater. However, people do get in the way sometimes and the antics of the two bars' patrons can complicate the lives of innocent bystanders. Purse strings can be cut, fine shirts shredded, and all sorts of mishaps could befall patrons of those taverns.
- Annabelle Guivere could be the subject of intrigue as well. The straits make an excellent stop on the way West, and ambassadors from Theah's nations might try to woo her into signing a treaty of alliance. The GM could arrange for a dinner at Captain Laund's home, with famous personalities from each nation sitting in for supper. The PCs could represent the interest of the Straits, or could even be one of the national representatives.
- A naïve or land-lubber PC might fall for one of "Guivere's Treasure Maps" that send him to Pebble Beach, but somehow, the PC discovers an actual treasure on the island. How can he get it back to Bilgewater without spilling their secret? And what will happen to the garrison there when the town fills up with gold-hungry pirates?
- St. Roger's Day is marked by masked revelry and wine running through the streets. Everyone wears masks until the end of the evening. The next morning, the PC's awaken to find Artus Sices du Sices ready to arrest them for a horrible crime. He holds the mask of one of the PC's and says he found it near the scene. Who would want to incriminate him? And how did the culprit get his mask?

Characters

Annabelle Guivere

The woman holding together the Straits of Blood is Annabelle Guivere, the only daughter of Anatole Guivere, the famous pirate. She was born on the deck of the *Canard Sans Merci*, and grew up on the sea and in the Straits. Anatole treated his daughter like his first and only boy. He didn't coddle her or dress her in fancy skirts. He taught her how to fight, swear, tie knots, and sail as well as he did. It was the only thing he knew how to do and she was a natural. She ran cannonballs on the deck by the age of eight and manned the crow's nest when she was ten. He beamed with pride when he heard her cuss out a crewmate for bad knotwork and almost

passed out laughing when she dropped a cannonball on another's foot because he called her "Mademoiselle."

When she was twelve, her father promised her that he was no longer in love with the sea and would spend more time with her. For those few years, she lived with him on the Straits and went with him wherever he went. He began to look upon the Straits of Blood as a governor instead of sea captain. She quietly listened as he kept the peace with the townsfolk and slowly brought everyone together. He also turned into a more tender man, buying her dresses and flowers and things that he said her mother would have wanted for her.

She awoke on her 15th birthday alone, with no explanation. Just a handful of questions and a rowboat that could take her to Bilgewater. She climbed in the boat and rowed for the better part of two days, trying vainly to chart the short distance between the two islands. She wept the entire first day and finally collapsed from exhaustion. She awoke at dawn the next morning. The sun was just creeping into the sky and the waves were shining like a thousand angels. In that brief moment, she understood why her father set sail one last time. She returned to the crew her father left behind. They gave her the wisdom she lacked and helped her establish herself as a competent leader. They saw her father's drive and charisma in her eyes and felt his confidence in her voice. They helped her build the house Guivere commissioned and respected her wishes to leave the isle alone.

As she grew into a young woman, she attained a beauty few would have imagined a few short years before. Suitors tried to woo her but she found the trappings of courtly love soft and ridiculous. In her mind, people did stupid things for love. They risked their lives, made fools of themselves and even left others behind because of love. Annabelle vowed early on she would not be distracted by such matters.

Ten years have passed since she became governor of the Straits, and the islands now flourish underneath her watchful eye. She handles problems quickly and efficiently and has even finds time to visit various seedy establishments on Cutthroat Row. Everyone in Bilgewater considers Annabelle one of their own: mother, lover, and daughter of these islands. Annabelle is a dark-haired beauty, dressed in loose-yet-feminine clothes which follow her graceful spirit. She has a few well-made dresses for the rare occasion when nobility visits but she always wears the locket her mother Anatole gave her when she was ten. Though not a trained fencer, she has a natural grace and a penchant for improvising weapons that makes her a respected combatant.

Annabelle Guivere, Tough-yet-Beautiful Governor of The Straits of Blood (120")

Female Human Pirate 8: CR 8; SZ M (humanoid); HD 8d10+1; hp 40; Init +1 (Dex); Spd. 30 ft.; AC 11 (+1 Dex); Atk: Cutlass +9/+4 melee (1d6); SA Ambidexterity, Kick Up, Roguish Style, Sea Legs, Two Weapon Fighting, Weapon Specialization (Cutlass); SV Fort +7, Ref +7, Will +4; Str 12, Dex 14, Con 12, Int 11, Wis 15, Cha 15; AL NG; Skills: Speak Language (Avalon, Montaigne, Vodacce [alternately, use any three languages from your campaign]); Balance +6; Climb +6; Escape Artist +6; Jump +6; Profession (sailor) +5; Spot +6; Swim +6; Tumble +6; Use Rope +6; Feats: Dagger Ride, Hold Your Liquor Off-Handed Accuracy, Quick Reload.

Annabelle Guivere, Tough-Vet-Beautiful Governor of The Straits of Blood – Hero (7th Sea™)

Brawn: 2, **Finesse:** 3, **Wits:** 2, **Resolve:** 2, **Panache:** 3
Reputation: 35
Background: None
Arcana: Willful
Advantages: Montaigne (R/W), Avalon (R/W), Vodacce (R/W), Able Drinker, Left Handed
Courtier: Dancing 1, Fashion 1, Oratory 3
Sailor: Climbing 2, Knotwork 4, Rigging 4
Fencing: Attack (Fencing) 4, Parry (Fencing) 3
Firearms: Attack (Firearms) 4, Reload (Firearms) 2
Knife: Attack (Knife) 4, Parry (Knife) 3

GM Secrets

Annabelle received a letter from her father telling her where he buried his treasure. It isn't in the Straits, but she knows its exact location and has memorized the route there. Two specific items — a spyglass displayed in *Guivere's Resting Place* and a compass hidden in the stairpost at the *Lucky Dog* — combine to form a key which will open the treasure's trunk. Annabelle sees no reason to recover her father's horde until she needs it. Her life is happy enough without stirring up trouble.

Annabelle makes a suitable romantic interest for a PC who perhaps too used to swooning ladies and tavern wenches. She gives as good as she gets and should definitely make any romantic suitor sing for his supper.

St. Rogers Day

Every year around 30 Septimus, the Straits of Blood hosts a unique pirates' holiday: St. Rogers' Day. Captain Rogers was the first legendary pirate, the namesake of the jolly roger flag. High seas tradition holds that no ship can attack another from sunrise to sunset on St. Rogers' Day. Sailors also receive permission to celebrate the birth of one of the most famous men of the sea, and few ships travel any distance on that day. Any vessel that violates these rules is considered cursed and the captain who orders an attack on the last day of Septimus better have a loyal crew behind him.

The celebrations in the Straits are fantastic. At noon, all the townsfolk attend Prophet's Mass held in the town hall. All the businesses are closed, even the storehouses. The Vecini brothers tried to stay open one year but the townsfolk nearly ran them off the island. A visiting priest (usually a ship's chaplain) says mass, hears confession, and gives even the scurviest dog of the line a chance at a clean soul.

Once the sun goes down, it's back to sinning. Cutthroat Row reopens with a vengeance and each tavern tries to outdo the other with the cheapest booze, the loosest girls, and the easiest games to win. The street is packed with sailors who still hold to the no quarrels rule until the next morning. The whole island shakes with a vibrancy that the loudest cannon volley couldn't hope to drown out. The next day Bilgewater completely shuts down while the townsfolk clean up, rest, and try to sort out which unconscious sailors belong to which crew.

Artus Sices du Sices

Artus Sices du Sices grew up accustomed to the finer things in life. As a member of the prestigious Sices du Sices family, he always had a bottle of wine in one hand. Unlike his father, he learned to do more with it than empty it into his belly. Artus studied under the Tout Pres master Xavier du Croix, who maintained that the skill of a fencer lay in the man, not the weapon. A well-trained fencer should be able to defend himself with whatever is at hand. Artus used everything from a goblet to a pretty lady in his own defense. His unorthodox style kept him from joining the Musketeers, so he traveled Théah as an adventurous swordsman, sharpening his wit and his skill alike.

Then the Revolution came and took away his family. Penniless, alone, and hunted by his countrymen, Artus began to use the wine bottles he carried more as they were intended. He remembered little from this period. He does remember that he still was fighting duels. He also remembers not wanting to win them. The first thing he remembers of Bilgewater is drawing his blade in defense of Annabelle. The men attacking her were rough and unskilled but in his poor condition he was barely able to fend them off. She took him to her house that evening and made him a proposition. She could see that he was a great fighter once and that he could be again. She needed someone like him to keep the peace in the Straits and cuff the roustabouts as needed. But he had to want to make himself better. If he wanted to drink himself to death, she offered him a bottle of wine laced with poison. It was the first wine Artus refused in his life.

Since that fateful day, Artus regained the skill and the confidence that made him a great swordsman. He believes that the pirates can't defeat him as long as he fights for a just cause. He's recruited watchmen to help him keep the peace and done an admirable job of making sure the rowdiness of Bilgewater doesn't burn the place down.

Artus patrols Bilgewater every evening after sundown. All of the taverns let him drink for free and while he would never admit it, the brothels give him complimentary services as well. Some might call him arrogant and he would agree. But his confidence is tempered by a drive to keep Bilgewater safe from undesirable elements. He always wears a strange wide-brimmed hat specially weighted to be used as a defensive weapon.

Artus Sices du Sices, Constable of Bilgewater (120⁺)

Male Human Swashbuckler 5/Tout Pres 3: CR 8; SZ M (humanoid); HD 5d6+3d8; hp 34; Init: +3 (Dex); Spd 30 ft.; AC 15 (+3 Dex,+2 cloak); Atks: Rapier +8/+3 melee (1d8); SA Dexterous, Dexterous Strike, Light Footed, Off-Handed Fighting, Protective Stance, Quick Draw; SV Fort +4, Ref +7, Will +6; Str 10, Dex 17, Con 10, Int 12, Wis 15, Cha 17; AL NG; Skills: Balance +5, Bluff +7, Climb +2, Jump +3, Sense Motive +8, Speak Language (Avalon, Castilian, Montaigne [alternately, any three languages from your campaign]), Tumble +5, Use Rope +5; Feats: Able Drinker, Endurance, Hedonist, Improvised Weapon, Expertise, Two Handed Fighting.

Artus Sices du Sices, Constable of Bilgewater (7th Sea™)

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

Reputation: 30

Background: Obligation

Arcana: Hedonist

Advantages: Montaigne (R/W), Avalon (R/W), Castilian (R/W), Able Drinker, Commission, Gentry, Puzzle Sword (Rustproof, Blade Breaker)

Courtier: Dancing 1, Etiquette 2, Fashion 1, Oratory 1

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

Fencing: Attack (Fencing) 3, Parry (Fencing) 2

Tout Pres (Apprentice): Corps-a-corps 1, Double-Parry (Fencing/Improvised Weapon) 3, Tagging (Improvised Weapon) 3, Exploit Weakness (Tout Prés) 1

Artus' Puzzle sword is rustproof (it is immune to the effects of weather), and has the Blade Breaker ability. In 7th Sea™ terms, this means that the wielder touches a hidden button when an opponent has parried, bringing the Puzzle Sword down upon his foe's blade. The wielder spends a Drama Die and makes a Brawn check against a TN of 30; the wielder's Brawn is considered 4 for this purpose. If successful, the weapons shatters and is rendered useless. Heavy Weapons have a TN of 35, and the GM may assign bonuses and penalties where appropriate.

d20™ rules for this weapon may be found on page 173 of the *Swashbuckling Adventures™* handbook.

GM Secrets

While Artus is forever grateful to Annabelle for saving him, he knows that his true love is out there, waiting for him. He is a man of his word, but if the woman of his destiny were to come to the Straits, he would be hard-pressed to keep his vow to Annabelle.

Artus makes an excellent resource to help PCs who have bitten off more than they can chew or as a tough but friendly adversary to characters who live it up a bit too much in Bilgewater. He flirts with the ladies and particularly enjoys besting female swordsmen in duels. If he wins, he never lets them forget who beat them. If he loses, he persistently calls for a rematch.

CHAPTER THREE:

Creating Archipelago Characters

d20™ Modifications

Archipelago characters are considered human, and follow the same basic parameters dictated on page 5 of the *Swash-buckling Adventures™* sourcebook. Kanu and other smaller peoples only add +1d10 inches as a height modifier, instead of the standard +2d10. In all other respects, they use the stats as described in that tome.

Class Skills: Swim and Wilderness Lore

Automatic Language: Native tongue (Kanu, Eregan, etc.)

Bonus Languages: Castillian, Montaigne, 1 Pidgin Language

7th Sea™ Modifications

The process of creating characters from the Midnight Archipelago is essentially the same as that of any Thean character. The Nationality Trait bonus is usually +1 Brawn. They learn other languages based upon their own Language Chart, which appears later in this chapter. They may purchase the Keen Senses, and Warm Climate Conditioning (originally seen in *Crescent Empire™*; reprinted here for the sake of convenience) Advantages for 1 point each, instead of 2. In addition, Kanu may purchase the Small Advantage for 1 point each, instead of 2.

An Archipelago character cannot start the game speaking more non-native languages than the Rank of his Wits Trait, unless they are Acquaintance or Pidgin versions of other languages. During the course of game play, he may learn new languages by spending 3 Experience Points per HP that the language would cost during character creation.

If he speaks a Pidgin version of that language, he can reduce the cost to 2 Experience Points per HP. Similarly, if he has an Acquaintance with the language, the cost is reduced to 1 Experience Point per HP that the language costs during character creation.

Optional Rule

A character of any Nationality may learn new languages in a manner similar to the one described above, spending a number of Experience Points equal to three times the number of Hero Points the language would cost during the character creation process.

Creating Carls Characters

Players or GMs may want to create a sorcerer character born on the island of Carlos (see page 11). However, doing so has drawbacks. Those on the island come from an extremely limited cultural base with no contact with the outside world. Further, once the outside world finds them, they will come into contact with numerous people who will hate and despise them merely for being who they are. It is strongly recommended that they should not be available for use as player characters, although the GM may create NPCs using the rules on the following pages.

Typical Archipelago Native

If you do not wish to create a full-blown island NPC, and need some stats on the fly, use these to represent a generic island character:

d20™ Mechanics

Hit dice: 2d12+3

Initiative: 10

Speed: 35 ft.

AC: 15 (+3 Dex, +2 Deflection)

Attacks: +3

Saves: Fort +4 Ref +1 Will +1

Abilities: Str 15, Dex 17, Con 13, Int 11, Wis 10, Cha 12

Skills: Hide +5, Intimidate +4, Intuit Direction +6,

Listen +6, Search +5, Swim +7, Jump +2

Feats: Alertness, improved initiative

Alignment: Usually neutral good

7th Sea™ Mechanics

Brawn: 2

Finesse: 3

Wits: 3

Resolve: 2

Panache: 3

Arcana: Passionate

Taramonde: Kinso 1, Brito 2, Viso 1

Athlete: Climbing 2, Footwork 3, Sprinting 1, Throwing 1

Dirty Fighting: Attack (dirty fighting) 3, Attack

(improvised weapon) 1, Throw (improvised weapon) 1

Knife: Attack (knife) 3, parry (knife) 3

Carl Nationality (d20™)

Carl characters are considered human, and follow the same parameters dictated on page 5 of the *Swashbuckling Adventures™* sourcebook.

Class Skills: Swim and Knowledge (farming)

Automatic Language: Native tongue (Théan)

Bonus Languages: Montaigne

Special: Carls do not need the Full Blooded or Half Blooded Feat to join Théan sorcery classes. However, for every Théan sorcery class they possess beyond the first, they gain a malady or deformity of some sort. Roll on the following chart to determine the effects:

Roll 1d20 Deformity

- | | |
|-----|--|
| 1-2 | The character is not fully developed physically; his Strength is reduced by 2 and his Strength ability may never be improved; all bonuses to his Strength or Strength modifier are reduced to 0. |
| 3 | The character has suffered a deformity in his legs. His movement rate is reduced by half. |
| 4-5 | The character has a misshapen limb; his Dexterity is reduced by 2 and his Dexterity ability may never be improved; all bonuses to his Dexterity or Dexterity modifier are reduced to 0. |
| 6 | The character has deformed digits (perhaps too many or too few); he suffers a -5 penalty to all Dexterity and Dexterity skill checks involving fine manipulation. |

- | | |
|-------|--|
| 7-8 | The character's bones are brittle, he has hemophilia, or suffers from some other weakening malady. His Constitution is reduced by 2 and his Constitution ability may never be improved; all bonuses to his Constitution or Constitution modifier are reduced to 0. |
| 9 | The character lacks fortitude; whenever he gains a level or calculates his hit points, he is considered to have a hit die one size smaller than the class grants (a d4 becomes a d2). |
| 10-11 | The character is mentally deficient; his Intelligence is reduced by 2 and his Intelligence ability may never be improved; all bonuses to his Intelligence or Intelligence modifier are reduced to 0. |
| 12 | The character lacks long-term memory; he suffers a -5 penalty to all Intelligence and Intelligence skill checks involving specific knowledge. |
| 13-14 | The character is slightly insane and lacks common sense. His Wisdom is reduced by 2 and his Wisdom ability may never be improved; all bonuses to his Wisdom or Wisdom modifier are reduced to 0. |
| 15 | The character's senses are muted — maybe due to misaligned eyes and deformed ears or maybe something in the nervous system never fully developed. Whatever the reason, he suffers a -5 penalty to all Listen, Spot and Search checks. |
| 16-17 | The character is unattractive and lacks the ability to interact socially. His Charisma is reduced by 2 and his Charisma ability may never be improved; all bonuses to his Charisma or Charisma modifier are reduced to 0. |
| 18 | The character lacks the ability to speak. |
| 19 | The character is sensitive to bright lights; he suffers a -2 penalty to every check, save and attack roll made in bright sunlight. |
| 20 | The character suffers from narcolepsy or epilepsy. Whenever he rolls a natural 1 on a d20 for an attack roll, save or check, he fails automatically and falls asleep or suffers a seizure. The sleep or seizure lasts for 1d4x10 rounds (or 1d4 minutes). |

Bloodline Feats

The following feats are available to multi-class sorcerers of the type found on the Island of Carlos. GMs in non-Théan campaigns may forego the Carl Nationality requirement if they choose.

Alter Matter [Bloodline]

You may transmute materials.

Prerequisites: Carl Nationality, El Fuego Mage level 1, Porté Mage level 1, Sorte Mage level 1, Zerstörung Mage level 1.

Benefit: Select one of the following elements: gold, wood, lead, or glass. Once per week you can change any inanimate substance into that element as a standard action. You may alter a number of cubic feet of material equal to your character level divided by four, rounded up.

Special: You may only take one bloodline feat.

Blood Rain [Bloodline]

You may cause a blood-red rain to fall from the sky.

Prerequisites: Carl Nationality, El Fuego Adentro Mage level 1, Porté Mage level 1, Sorte Mage level 1 or Carl Nationality, El Fuego Adentro Mage level 1, Porté Mage level 1, Zerstörung Mage level 1.

Benefit: Once per day you may cause a blood-red rain to fall from the sky, drenching those within a 500 yard radius. Those unused to such an event (i.e. non-Carls) must make a Will save against fear (DC 20) or be Shaken as per the Fear rules in the *DUNGEON MASTER'S Guide*.™ Every round that a character unused to such events remains in the radius of this rain, he must make another Will save. The rain lasts for 3d6 times 10 rounds (or 3d6 minutes).

Special: You may only take one bloodline feat.

Distant Pain [Bloodline]

You may lash out with your powers to attack someone from a distance.

Prerequisites: Porté Mage level 1, Zerstörung Mage level 1 or Sorte Mage level 1, Zerstörung Mage level 1.

Benefit: You may make a ranged-touch attack against any target within your line of sight. If successful you inflict 1d8 points of damage.

Special: You may only take one bloodline feat.

Distant Sights [Bloodline]

You may scry using common objects as your focus.

Prerequisites: Porté Mage level 1, Sorte Mage level 1.

Benefit: As a standard action you may select one of your blooded objects as a focus. Make a Scry check (DC 15 + 1 for every five miles between the you and the object through which you are viewing). If the check is successful you may view anything taking place within fifty feet of the selected object.

Special: You may only take one bloodline feat.

Fate's Price [Bloodline]

You may grant blessings at a price.

Prerequisites: Carl Nationality, El Fuego Adentro Mage level 1, Sorte Mage level 1, Zerstörung Mage level 1.

Benefit: You may grant yourself or another character a bonus die of any standard size from 1d4 to 1d12. This die may be rolled with any check, any attack, any damage or may be rolled and added to the character's AC for 1 round as a free action. The character using this bonus die takes an amount of damage equal to half the amount rolled on the die (rounded up). A bonus die not used by the end of the day is lost. You may grant a number of bonus dice every day equal to your character level divided by four, rounded up.

Special: You may only take one bloodline feat.

Fiery Essence [Bloodline]

When exposed to air your blood catches fire.

Prerequisites: Porté Mage level 1, El Fuego Adentro Mage level 1.

Benefit: When you bleed your blood bursts into flame. You may use this flame to ignite flammable objects (see the rule for catching on fire in the *Player's Handbook*™). As a standard action you may inflict 1 point of damage upon yourself to cause bleeding. You may then make a ranged-touch or standard touch attack against anyone within 15 ft. The attack delivers 1d6 fire damage for every four character levels you possess.

Special: You may only take one bloodline feat.

Sense Ambient Heat [Bloodline]

You are sensitive to the slightest change in temperature.

Prerequisites: Sorte Mage level 1, El Fuego Adentro Mage level 1.

Benefit: By making a Concentration check (DC listed below) as a standard action you may sense variants in temperature. You may use this to detect the presence of living beings, though you only know the general direction and general distance to the being. Undead, oozes, cold-based creatures, and similar types of monsters may not be detected in this manner.

Distance	DC
Within 50 ft.	15
50–100 ft.	20
100–200 ft.	25
200–300 ft.	30
300–400 ft.	35
400–500 ft.	40
greater than 500 ft.	automatic failure

Special: You may only take one bloodline feat.

Stinging Ash [Bloodline]

You may create a cloud of hot, stinging ash to engulf the area.

Prerequisites: El Fuego Adentro Mage level 1, Zerstörung Mage level 1.

Benefit: As a standard action you may create a cloud of stinging ash. The cloud expands 5 ft. in radius (to a maximum 30 ft. radius) for each consecutive round you spend maintaining the cloud. Maintaining a cloud takes a standard action. All living beings suffer 1d4 acid damage for each round they are engulfed in the cloud. You are immune to this damage. This ability may be used once per day. You must make a Concentration check each turn to maintain the cloud (DC 15 + 5 for each consecutive round after the first). If the cloud cannot be maintained it dissipates immediately.

Special: You may only take one bloodline feat.

Carl Nationality (7th Sea™)

Characters from Carlos begin with a 4 point Hunted (Secret Societies) Background (unless the island's existence has not yet leaked back to Théah in your campaign) and begin speaking the Théan language. The cost to learn to speak another language is 3 HP apiece with an additional 2 points for learning how to read a language. The character also does not receive a Nationality bonus to any of his abilities. Instead the player may choose which Sorcerous bloodlines the character possesses, up to a limit of four, from Porté, Sorte, Zerstörung, and El Fuego Adentro. Taking more than one bloodline will cause some genetic weakness (*more about this below*). The character may then purchase Sorcery for any bloodlines he has. If he has only one bloodline, he may be Full-Blooded in that bloodline, but if he has more than one bloodline he may spend 20 HP per bloodline in order to be Half-Blooded in each of them. Next, spend the Sorcery Points on any Knacks under his chosen bloodlines. The listed sorcery is "Carl Native." Furthermore, the character may spend 3 Sorcery Points to purchase a unique Knack at Rank 1, depending on his specific bloodline (see Table 3.1 on the next page). The GM may create new abilities of similar strength as he or she sees fit. These cross-bloodline Knacks are not limited in Rank by being Half-Blooded.

Optional Rule

At the GM's discretion, Twice-Blooded characters from outside of Carlos who possess the required bloodlines may select these Knacks if they wish (without the drawbacks); Knacks may be raised through experience points as normal.

TABLE 3-1: TWICE BLOODED KNACKS

Bloodline	Knack																
Porté/Sorte	<i>Distant Sights:</i> Choose a common object as a focus (mirror, spider web, etc.). The sorcerer makes a Resolve + Distant Sights check to view anything taking place within fifty feet of any similar object. The TN is 10 + 1 for every five miles between the sorcerer and the object through which he is viewing. This sensation is limited to strictly visual sensation, so the sorcerer can see but not hear the scene around the target object.																
Porté/El Fuego Adentro	<i>Fiery Essence:</i> The sorcerer's blood is flammable if exposed to air. He may use it to ignite flammable objects, or fling it as a hurled weapon, inflicting damage depending on his rank in this knack. The sorcerer himself and any objects he is carrying are immune to this damage.																
	<table border="1"> <thead> <tr> <th>Rank</th> <th>Damage</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td>Rank 1</td> <td>1k1</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Rank 2</td> <td>2k1</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Rank 3</td> <td>2k2</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Rank 4</td> <td>3k2</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Rank 5</td> <td>3k3</td> </tr> </tbody> </table>	Rank	Damage	Rank 1	1k1	Rank 2	2k1	Rank 3	2k2	Rank 4	3k2	Rank 5	3k3				
Rank	Damage																
Rank 1	1k1																
Rank 2	2k1																
Rank 3	2k2																
Rank 4	3k2																
Rank 5	3k3																
Sorte/El Fuego Adentro	<i>Sense Ambient Heat:</i> By making a Panache + Sense Ambient Heat roll, the character can sense variations in the temperature around him. He may use this sense to detect the presence of living beings, though he cannot pinpoint their location beyond a general direction and number. The TN of the roll depends upon how far out the character wishes to "probe."																
	<table border="1"> <thead> <tr> <th>Distance</th> <th>TN</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td>Within 50 ft.</td> <td>10</td> </tr> <tr> <td>50–100 ft.</td> <td>15</td> </tr> <tr> <td>100–200 ft.</td> <td>20</td> </tr> <tr> <td>200–300 ft.</td> <td>25</td> </tr> <tr> <td>300–400 ft.</td> <td>30</td> </tr> <tr> <td>400–500 ft.</td> <td>35</td> </tr> <tr> <td>greater than 500 ft.</td> <td>automatic failure</td> </tr> </tbody> </table>	Distance	TN	Within 50 ft.	10	50–100 ft.	15	100–200 ft.	20	200–300 ft.	25	300–400 ft.	30	400–500 ft.	35	greater than 500 ft.	automatic failure
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greater than 500 ft.	automatic failure																
Porté/Zerstörung, Sorte/Zerstörung Or Porté/Sorte/Zerstörung	<i>Distant Pain:</i> Once per round, the character may lash out with his powers to attack someone from a distance. The target must be within sight of the sorcerer, who makes a Revolve + Distant Pain roll to see if he hits (using the opponent's TN to be hit). If successful, the target immediately takes 3k2 Wounds.																
Zerstörung/El Fuego Adentro	<i>Stinging Ash:</i> The character may create a cloud of hot, stinging ash to engulf the area. The ash causes 1k1 damage per round to anyone standing within it. It spreads out from the sorcerer in a radius of 5 feet per round, out to a maximum of 30 feet. The sorcerer himself takes no damage from this ability, but must make a Resolve + Stinging Ash check each round to maintain it. The TN is 10 + 5 for each consecutive round after the first. If he fails the roll, the cloud immediately dissipates. The sorcerer may use this ability once per day.																
Porté/Sorte/El Fuego Adentro or Porté/Zerstörung/El Fuego Adentro	<i>Blood Rain:</i> Once per day, the character may cause a blood-red rain to fall from the sky, drenching those within a 500 yard radius. Those unused to such an event (i.e. non-Carls) will treat the sorcerer and his allies as if he possessed a Fear Rating equal to his Rank in this Knack. The blood rain lasts for 2k2 times 5 Rounds. The effects last as long as the rain does.																
Sorte/Zerstörung/El Fuego Adentro	<i>Fate's Price:</i> The sorcerer may grant anyone (including himself), an extra Drama Die. However, when it is used, the character suffers a number of Wounds equal to the number rolled on the Die; if the Die is used without rolling (for example, to activate a Villain's Hubris), the character suffers 1k1 wounds. At any one time, the sorcerer may have a number of these Drama Dice in effect equal to his Rank in this Knack. If more than one of these Drama Dice are rolled at the same time, the Wounds taken from them are treated as one damage roll. These Drama Dice disappear at the end of the Scene if they have not been used, and inflict damage at that time. These Drama Dice never become Experience Points.																
All Four	<i>Alter Matter:</i> Select one of the following elements: gold, wood, lead, or glass. Once per week the character can change any inanimate substance into that element. This affects one object per Rank in this Knack (if the object is smaller than one cubic foot), or one cubic foot of material (if the object is larger than one cubic foot, such as a wall).																

Disadvantages

For each bloodline a Carl sorcerer possesses beyond the first, he gains a malady or deformity of some sort. Roll on the following chart for every bloodline he possesses past the first:

Roll	Disadvantage
1	The character has a misshapen limb; he loses one permanent point of Finesse (minimum 1), and can never have a Finesse Rank above 3 (or 2 if this result is rolled twice, or 1 if it is rolled three times).
2	The character has a twisted facial feature, sweats blood, or exhibits another repulsive characteristic. People from outside Carlos find him mildly repellent. This character's TN for any roll involving social interactions is increased by 10.
3	The character has deformed digits (perhaps too many or too few), raising the TN for any roll involving fine manipulation by 5.
4	The character's bones are brittle, he has hemophilia, or suffers from some other weakening malady. Any blow which strikes him or her inflicts an additional unkept die of damage.
5	The character has flawed vision, misaligned eyes, or some other visual malady; he loses one permanent point of Finesse and can never have a Finesse Rank above 3 (or 2 if this result is rolled twice, or 1 if it is rolled three times).
6	The character is sensitive to bright lights; his loses one unkept die to every roll made in bright sunlight.
7	The character is mentally deficient; he loses one permanent point of Wits and can never have a Wits Rank above 3 (or 2 if this result is rolled twice, or 1 if it is rolled three times).
8	The character is insane. Roll on the Random Insanity Table (page 78), and apply the effects to the character.
9	The character suffers no ill effects.
10	Roll twice on this table, ignoring this result hereafter.

Carl characters with only one bloodline are created as normal sorcerers.

New Swordsman School: Nahgem Spear School (7th Sea™)

Country of Origin: Kanuba.

Nahgem is the traditional spear-fighting style of the Kanu. It is a frenetic style, full of energy and vigor, and completely devoid of any traces of fear. It teaches its practitioners to throw spears with uncanny accuracy while the target is at a distance and to explode into a frenzied state if their enemy is within melee range.

Nahgem teaches that fear leads to failure and saps the energy of the combatant. During a fight, the warrior can move with blinding speed fast and seemingly wildly. In truth, his movements only seem wild because they mix spear attacks, kicks, and strange footwork to confound and confuse the enemy. Sometimes (especially when an enemy gets too close or too far away) the Nahgem warrior will use the shaft of his spear to pole vault into a new position.

The main weakness of the style is that each of its energetic attacks takes every ounce of energy that the warrior can muster. Because of this, each attack precedes a brief pause while the next attack builds its momentum. An enemy who knows how to anticipate and recognize that pause can make an attack while the warrior is in preparation, catching him off guard.

This school may be substituted for other spear schools practiced within the Midnight Archipelago.

Basic Curriculum: Athlete, Polearm.

Swordsman Knacks: Kick, Pole Vault, Throw (Spear), Exploit Weakness (Nahgem).

Apprentice: Those who have just begun Nahgem learn to cast aside their fears, so that when they throw their spears they will strike true. You get one Free Raise per Mastery Level to resist Fear. You do not gain Membership in the Swordsman's Guild for free when you take this School. Instead, you gain a Free Raise to your Attack Roll when throwing a spear.



TABLE 3-2: RANDOM INSANITY TABLE

D6 roll	Insanity Type
1-2	Affective Disorder
3-4	Dissociative Disorders
5-6	Psychosis

AFFECTIVE DISORDERS

D6 roll	Disorder	Effect
1	Acousticophobia	The victim is mortally terrified of anything louder than the spoken voice. When confronted with his fear, he must make a Will save (DC 25) or flee in terror until he can no longer hear loud noises. If flight is not possible, he will collapse into a catatonic stupor until the stimulus is removed.
2	Aichmophobia	The victim is terrified of sharp/pointy things, because he is afraid of being injured by them. He will not, under any circumstances, handle or possess any such items, and will endeavor to remain at least 5 ft. away from any such items.
3	Pacifism	The victim will not engage in any form of violence, even in self defense.
4	Compulsive Liar	The victim always lies, even if good. He must make a Will save (DC 20) any time he wishes to tell the truth.
5	Hatred of Humor	The victim loathes jokes, humor, and those who tell jokes. He will try to stop or destroy anyone who tells more than one joke or humorous story.
6	Achluophobia	The victim is completely helpless when in the dark. The victim collapses into a mindless stupor and babbles endlessly until he is returned to a well-lit environment.

DISSOCIATIVE DISORDERS

D4 roll	Disorder	Description
1	Multiple Personalities	The victim develops 1d4 multiple personalities. Roll-up a character for each personality, including physical and mental ability scores. The different personalities will only use the abilities/powers of their character class. Further, they will act as if their ability scores are "real." Anytime the character is under stress (combat, intense argument, etc.), he must make a Will save (DC 20) to avoid a personality shift. Whenever a personality shift occurs, determine randomly which personality emerges. Note that the separate personalities are completely unaware of each other's existence.
2	Dissociative Fugue	The victim completely forgets everything about himself and his past, essentially beginning anew with a "clean slate." He instantly develops a new personality and begins at 1st level in another character class. He will never remember his original self, and he has no access whatsoever to any powers/abilities gained in his "old" life.
3	Amnesia: Total	The victim is unable to recall any information about himself, his friends, his history, etc. He retains all class abilities, skills, powers, etc. He simply cannot remember who he is or anything specific about himself. He doesn't remember his abilities/powers in the traditional sense; he just has access to them and uses them "instinctively."
4	Amnesia: Anterograde	The victim retains all memories up to the moment he was affected by this spell. However, he cannot form any new long-term memories. Thus, he cannot gain new class abilities or powers. He can gain levels, but he will only gain the benefit of increased hit points, saving throws, and spells per day.

PSYCHOSIS

D10 Roll	Disorder	Description
1-2	Psychogenic Blindness	Whenever under stress, the character must make a Will save (DC20) or become "blind." The character is not really blind, but his mind completely ignores visual stimuli, rendering him effectively blind. Blindness lasts for 1d6 turns.
3-4	Paranoia	The character believes that everyone hates him and is plotting against him. He maintains no friendships and trusts no one. Whenever he perceives someone as taking action against him (DM's discretion) he must make a Will save (DC20) or attack them.
5-6	Schizophrenia	The character constantly suffers from auditory and visual hallucinations telling him to do horribly nasty things. Once per minute, he must make a Will save (DC25) to avoid attacking someone or something randomly.
7-8	Homicidal Mania	Continually berserk, attacking everyone and everything within sight. The character can act normally one day per week.
9-10	Rebirth	The character's alignment and outlook on life completely reverse. Good becomes evil, evil becomes good, lawful becomes chaotic, chaotic becomes lawful, and neutral is randomly changed.

Journeyman: Nahgem-trained warriors use their spears to change their positions during a fight, vaulting from one place to another. Journeymen have learned how to dodge by quickly vaulting away from an attack. You may use your Pole Vault Knack in order to make an Active Defense, the TN for which is raised by 5. If you succeed, you gain one Drama Die, which must be used before the end of the current combat. Otherwise, it is lost. These Drama Dice can never become Experience Points. You may gain up to three Drama Dice in this manner per battle.

Master: One of the final tricks of the Nahgem style is a high kicking attack. The Master plants the butt of his spear against the ground, and swings his body upwards, launching a powerful kick in the direction of his enemy's face. When you make such an attack, you use your Kick Knack, but you add your Rank in the Pole Vault Knack to both the TN of any Active Defense against your Kick and to the Damage Roll of the kick. Furthermore, for every two Raises you declare and make with this kick, you gain an additional Free Raise as well.

D20™ MECHANICS

This new swordsman school is represented in the d20 System™ by a new prestige class (see *New Prestige Classes* on page 86).

New Swordsman Knacks

(7th Sea™)

Kick: A Kick inflicts 2k1 damage, but raises the TN that you are trying to hit by 10. You must declare a Kick before rolling the attack, and use this Knack instead of your normal Attack Knack. This is the same as the Kick Knack in the Dirty Fighting Skill in the *Players' Guide*,™ but it is considered a Basic Knack for students of the Nahgem School.

Pole Vault: You have taught yourself how to use a pole and a running start to extend the height or breadth of your jumps. This is a new Advanced Knack, which is available from the Athlete Skill. Practitioners of the Nahgem School treat this as a Basic Knack. You must use a pole at least as long as you are tall. By making a roll of Brawn + Pole Vault, you may attempt to add your own height to the height of a leap, or add twice your height to the length of a jump. The TN for this roll is 15. For each Raise you make on this roll, you may add another foot to the height of your leap or two feet to the length. You may not extend the height of your leap by more than the length of the pole, nor can you extend your jump's length by more than twice the length of the pole.

Throw (Spear): When you throw a spear as an attack, you must use this Knack instead of your Attack (Polearm) Knack. This Knack is a new Advanced Knack, which is available from the Polearm Skill. Practitioners of the Nahgem School treat this as a Basic Knack. The Range of a thrown spear is 5 plus twice the thrower's Brawn Rank.

New Civil Skill (7th Sea™)

Medicine Man

Medicine men are the skilled healers and spiritual leaders of primitive cultures. While they do not know all of the surgical techniques of the Théan doctors, their knowledge of medicinal herbs serves them well.

BASIC KNACKS

Diagnosis: Feeling for broken bones and listening for punctured lungs is a healer's most elementary Knack. Without making a diagnosis, how can you possibly hope to treat your patients? The TN for using Diagnosis is 5 + 5 times the number of Dramatic Wounds the patient has suffered. Success with this Knack will reduce the TN for Surgery. Diagnosis requires one Action to use, and can only be used once per patient, per Act.

First Aid: Even without formal training, you can administer simple treatment if the ailment allows for it. The TN for First Aid is the number of Flesh Wounds the patient has suffered. Success eliminates all current Flesh Wounds. First Aid requires one Action to use and may not be used more than once per patient, per Scene. Heroes with First Aid may use it on themselves, with the same restrictions, but they will need to make one Raise because of the difficulty of bandaging themselves.

Flora: You can identify different types of plants and determine whether they have any potentially beneficial (or harmful) effect.

Religious Lore (Own Religion): You know the details of your own culture's religious faith. This Knack is also a Basic Knack for the Priest Skill.

ADVANCED KNACKS

Compounds: You know how to treat plant matter and mix different kinds of flora to produce beneficial mixtures, healing balms, poultices, sleep aids, and the like. Note that such mixtures are not magical potions, but rather the sort of non-magical compounds that any hermit or midwife can prepare.

Quack: Specializing in "invisible" cures (such as sugar pills and colored water) that do more for the patient's ego than his body, you know how to make people feel like they're getting better. If they get some benefit from this, wonderful. If not, then a medicine man can say that the evil spirits making the patient ill are too powerful for him to overcome.

Storytelling: Your voice and mannerisms are calculated to enthrall your audience completely. Storytellers can, in addition, sometimes collect small sums of money for the telling of their tales.

New Advantages (7th Sea™)

Unless stated otherwise, the rules here are for the 7th Sea system. d20™ variations on these rules are described beneath the appropriate entry.

Accurate Spear Thrower (3 Points, 2 for Kanu)

Throwing a spear comes naturally to you, and you hardly ever miss your targets. Years of practice have taught you to adjust your throw to account for range and the wind. You gain a Free Raise for all Throw (Spear) rolls you make.

D20™ MECHANICS

This Advantage is considered identical to the Feat: Weapon Focus (Spear).

Erego Medicine (20 Points, Eregos only)

The shaman power of orani, practiced by the Erego people of Marcina, can be used to accelerate the healing process. Erego medicine men call upon oroi, or spirits, and channel them

into wounded or ill people. Some Erego healers can also channel animal spirits, or the spirits of their ancestors. The Vaticine Church frowns upon these practices, but because they are so far away (and because orani is so often used to ease suffering) there is little they can do about it. For now.

When you take this Advantage, you gain the Medicine Man Skill for no additional point cost, and you get one Rank in each of its Advanced Knacks. You also gain one Rank of the Surgery Advanced Knack, and treat this Knack as if it were an Advanced Knack of the Medicine Man Skill. In addition to these Knacks, you also gain the ability to speak with Oroi, and a new Advanced Knack, called Channel Oroi, which allows you to take their essence into yourself.

ADVANCED KNACK

Channel Oroi: You have learned how to channel the spirits known as oroi, and can call upon them to aid you. Roll your Resolve + Channel Oroi against the TN of the Oroi. If you succeed, you have channeled the Oroi and may use its power.

Types of Oroi

There are many oroi, each of which is channeled using the Channel Oroi Knack. When you first get this Advantage, you know of 1 healing, 1 animal, and 1 ancestor oroi. You may purchase additional oroi at a cost of 5 Experience Points apiece.

The following are examples of oroi, but by no means a comprehensive list. GMs may create more oroi spirits that are comparable in power to the oroi below.

HEALING OROI

Each healing oroi is the spirit of a kind of plant that is used for medicinal purposes. When you channel a healing oroi, each Raise you make on your roll gives you one Free Raise on the related roll for a healing Knack, such as First Aid, Diagnosis, or Surgery. The healing roll must be the next roll you make, and must be a roll to which the particular oroi would be applicable. You gain a Free Raise to your Channel Oroi roll if you are touching some of the plant of the oroi that you are channeling. The TN of the roll to channel a healing oroi is 15.

Sweet Gum: This plant is used to treat damage from acids.

Pleurisy Root: This plant is used to negate the effects of diseases.

Goldenseal: This plant is used to heal damage caused from cuts and slashes.

Arnica: This plant is used to heal bruises and damage from falls and blunt weapons.

Narrowleaf Dock: This plant is used to negate contact poisons.

Lobelia: This plant is used to counteract poisons that are swallowed.

Plantain: This plant is used to counteract injected poisons such as beestings and snakebites.

Cayenne: This plant is used to clear out the lungs, aiding in countering the effects of breathing toxic fumes.

Aloe: This plant is useful in treating damage caused by burns.

Jasmine: This plant is useful in treating damage caused by hot weather.

ANIMAL OROI

Animal oroi are the spirit representatives of animal species. They are more difficult to channel than healing oroi. While you are channeling an animal oroi, you may see through the eyes and share all the other senses of any member of that species (whether or not it is within your sight, so long as you are aware of that individual animal's existence). The TN to channel an animal oroi is 25. If you make two Raises when you make on your Channel Oroi roll, you gain a special power based on the nature of the animal oroi you are channeling. If you are within sight of a member of that oroi's species, you gain a Free Raise to your Channel Oroi roll. The effects of the channeling last for the rest of the Scene.

Bear: You gain 1 extra Rank of the Bear Hug Knack.

Fish: You get one extra Rank of the Swimming Knack.

Fox: Attempts to track you are made at -2k0.

Hunting Dog: You get 2 Free Raises to all of your Tracking rolls.

Monkey: You gain one extra Rank of the Climbing Knack.

Seagull: Your Fishing rolls are made with a +1k0 bonus.

Shark: You gain a biting attack, which has an Attack Knack of 3 and a damage roll of 0k2.

Snake: Add 10 to your Initiative Totals.

Songbird: You gain 2 Free Raises to all Singing rolls.

Turtle: You lose one Rank of Panache but reduce all damage inflicted upon you by 10 Flesh Wounds per attack.

Wolf: Your Ambush Rolls are made at +1k0.

ANCESTOR OROI

Ancestor oroi are spirits of your tribal ancestors. They are difficult to channel, and they do not pass on their knowledge to you, merely aspects of their personalities. The TN to channel an ancestor oroi is 30, and the channeling lasts for the rest of the Scene. You get a Free Raise if you have something that belonged to your ancestor. Ancestor oroi are categorized into archetypes for simplicity's sake. It is possible to have the ability to channel more than one ancestor oroi of the same archetype.

Avenger: You gain the Hot-Headed Hubris and the Victorious Virtue for the rest of the Scene.

Chief: You gain the Judgmental Hubris and the Commanding Virtue for the rest of the Scene.

Explorer: You gain the Rash Hubris and the Worldly Virtue for the rest of the Scene.

Hunter: You gain the Loyal Hubris and the Perceptive Virtue for the rest of the Scene.

Lover: You gain the Star-Crossed Hubris and the Passionate Virtue for the rest of the Scene.

Madman: You gain the Overconfident Hubris and the Fanatical Wile for the rest of the Scene.

Martyr: You gain the Overzealous Hubris and the Willful Virtue for the rest of the Scene.

Mystic: You gain the Righteous Hubris and the Uncanny Virtue for the rest of the Scene.

D20™ MECHANICS

This new advantage is represented in the d20 System™ by a new prestige class (see *New Prestige Classes* on page 86).

Language (Varies)

You can speak more than one language. Each culture on the Archipelago has its own unique language, most with little or no connection to other languages found on the islands. The chart below uses Kanu as a default. Other languages in the Archipelago use the same chart; simply replace "Kanu" with the language in question.

The point cost for a Kanu to learn different languages, or for those whose native language is that language to learn Kanu, can be found on the chart below. Note that literacy increases the cost of the language by 1.

Language	Cost for Kanu to Learn	Cost for Native Speaker to Learn Kanu
Aldiz-baraji	5	3
Atlar-baraji	6	3
Avalon	2	3
Castille	3	2
Eisen	1	2
High Eisen	2	N/A
Jadur-baraji	6	3
Kanu	0	0
Kurta-baraji	6	3
Montaigne	3	4
Ruzgar-baraji	5	3
Teodoran	4	N/A
Théan	4	N/A
Tikaret-baraji	4	N/A
Tikat-baraji	6	N/A
Tirala-baraji	5	N/A
Ussura	3	2
Vendel	2	3
Vodacce	3	4
Yilan-baraji	5	3

D20™ MECHANICS

The d20 System™ rules for island languages of the Archipelago follow the same rules for languages as found in the *Player's Handbook*™. Each culture's languages (Kanu, Erego, etc.) is considered unique; there is no universal tongue in the Archipelago.

Language Acquaintance (Varies, originally printed in *Pirate Nations*™)

A Hero who only wants to learn the basics of a language can become acquainted with it for 2 HP less than normal (minimum cost of 1 HP). The Linguist Advantage is cumulative with this discount. Heroes acquainted with a language understand only the basic concepts of the languages, such as common verbs, nouns, etc. If there is any doubt as to whether the Hero could understand what's being said, roll a die. On an 8 or less, he makes out what is being said. On a 9 or 0, he doesn't understand a word. To signify that the Hero is only acquainted with the language, put and (ACQ) next to it on your Hero Sheet.

D20™ MECHANICS

Normally Language Acquaintance does not apply to d20™ characters. Either they know the language, or they don't. If the GM wishes to use these rules in his campaign, he may make the following adjustments:

A character may purchase two language acquaintances at a ratio of two-to-one (two language acquaintances occupy one slot in the Speak Language skill). When

the character wishes to understand something in a language only he is acquainted with, he must make an Intelligence check, DC 15 (higher for more complex ideas). If he succeeds, he understands what is being said. If he doesn't, he fails. If a character buys a specific language acquaintance twice, he is considered fluent in the language, and automatically understands it (as per the rules in the Speak Language skill in the *Player's Handbook*™).

Opah Sorcery (10 Points, Kanu only)

A Hero with opah sorcery is known as an opahkung — a shaman able to call upon the *opah* in an object. While curses and blessings affect every item an opahkung touches, *opah* is most evident in weaponry.

In combat, when an opahkung uses a weapon, he must keep track of the number of times it hits and misses. For every 5 hits scored on an enemy, the weapon receives 1 lan. For every 5 times it misses an enemy, the weapon receives loses 1 lan. If the weapon has only 1 lan and it misses for the fifth time, then the weapon loses its lan and gains a nal. Once a weapon has nal, it gains 1 more nal for every 5 times it misses, and loses a nal for every 5 times it hits. When a weapon has only 1 nal and hits 5 times, it loses its nal and gains 1 lan instead.

New weapons start with 1 lan and must always have at least 1 lan or nal. Missile weapons such as guns or bows cannot accumulate lan or nal, but a projectile such as an arrow or a spear can. Opahkung (and only opahkung) receive the following modifiers from using a weapon charged with lan or nal:

- A sorcerer (not a shaman, such as other opahkung) struck by this weapon loses the ability to use any Sorcerous Knacks for one Phase per lan or nal, or until the end of the Scene, whichever comes first. This is always counted from the most recent hit, but it is not cumulative. Items treated with Lærdom magic, or other magic weapons such as Twisted Blades, are affected as if they were sorcerers when struck with this weapon. Lærdom-enchanted weapons cannot use their runes, and any currently active runes deactivate. Twisted Blades cannot use their special powers upon being hit by an opahkung's weapon. This effect on a magic weapon lasts just as long as it would if the weapon were a sorcerer.
- For every 20 lan, the opahkung adds 1 to his Attack Rolls when using this weapon. Conversely, for every 20 nal, the opahkung subtracts 1 from his Attack Rolls. Neither modifier may exceed the Hero's Resolve Rank.
- For every 50 lan or nal, the TN to break this weapon is increased by 5.
- When affected by sorcery while holding the weapon, the Hero may spend 1 Drama Die to resist that magic. The Rank of the Sorcerous Knack affecting the opahkung must be less than or equal to the lan or nal invested in this weapon, divided by 50 (round down).
- For every 100 lan, the Opahkung begins each Story with 1 additional Drama Die, which is only usable if the Hero is touching the weapon. For each 100 nal, the GM begins the Story with 1 additional Drama Die, which is only usable if the Hero is touching the weapon. These Drama Dice cannot exceed in number the GM's starting Drama Dice.



In addition, while holding a weapon invested with nal or lan, the opahkung has crackling streams of energy run up and down the weapon and the arm (or arms) with which he holds it, and glowing in his eyes. The energy is white if the weapon has lan, and black if it has Nal.

Weapons are not the only items that exhibit lan and nal. Tools and cooking pots also noticeably exhibit this behavior. These objects gain and lose lan and nal in a manner similar to weapons. They gain 1 lan or lose 1 nal for every 10 times an Opahkung succeeds at a Skill Roll using it, and gain 1 nal or lose 1 lan whenever he uses the item and fails the Skill Roll. The only benefit or impairment from such an item is that for every 20 Lan, the Opahkung adds 1 to his Skill Rolls that involve using the item, and for every 20 Nal, the Opahkung subtracts 1 from these Skill Rolls. Neither modifier can exceed his Resolve Rank.

D20™ MECHANICS

In the d20 System™ this new advantage is represented by a new prestige class (see *New Prestige Classes* on page 86).

Pidgin (Varies, originally appeared in Pirate Nations™)

When two languages are in long-term contact with one another, such as at major ports, a pidgin — an odd mixture of both — often results. A Hero can purchase a pidgin by selecting the two languages to be mixed, and paying 3 HP less for each of them (minimum of 1 HP for both languages together). A Hero who knows a pidgin understands only the simplest concepts of the two languages. If there is any doubt as to whether the Hero could understand what's being said,

roll a die. On a 5 or less, he makes out what is being said. On anything higher, he doesn't understand a word. To signify that the Hero only understands a pidgin of the languages, put a (PD) next to the two languages on your Hero Sheet.

D20™ MECHANICS

Normally pidgin languages don't apply to d20™ characters. Either they know the language, or they don't. If the GM wishes to use these rules in his campaign, he may make the following adjustments:

Pidgin languages may be purchased on a three-to-one ratio (three pidgin languages equals one fluent language). When the character wishes to understand something in a pidgin language, he must make an Intelligence check, DC 25 (higher for more complex ideas). If he succeeds, he understands what is being said. If he doesn't, he fails. If a character buys a given pidgin language acquaintance three times, he is considered fluent in the language, and automatically understands it (as per the rules in the *Speak Language* skill in the *Player's Handbook™*).

Warm Climate Conditioning (2 Points, 1 for Crescents and Kanu)

You are used to warm weather, and do not suffer from its effects as much as others. However, cold affects you more than it does other people. You may not have both this Advantage and Cold Climate Conditioning (see *Ussura™* or *Vendel-Vesten™*). When you take Wounds from warm weather, you roll one less die (-1k0) for Wounds. Unfortunately you are not used to cold climates, so when you take Wounds from cold weather, you roll one more die (+1k0).

D20™ MECHANICS

In the d20 System™ this advantage takes the form of a new feat, Warm Climate Conditioning.

Warm Climate Conditioning [General]

You are used to warm weather, as described above.

Prerequisites: Con 11+.

Benefits: When in warm temperatures (between 90° F and 110° F) and unprotected, you need only roll once per day (instead of once per hour). In instances of extreme heat (over 110° F), you need only make a roll one hour (instead of once every ten minutes). (See the *DUNGEON MASTER'S Guide*™ Temperature).

The Magic of Sange Tara

Sange Tara's magic stems from its relationship with its gods, and on veve line drawings which are infused with their power. In that sense, it is vaguely similar to Lærdom, using icons to invoke spiritual powers. Etching veve in stone, wood the ground, or marking some surface with chalk, powder or paint can make veve, which perform various tasks depending upon the amount and combination inscribed. The skill used for inscribing veve is Taramonde, which is currently is only known by the Tarans. The place where the veve are drawn is called a bonnage. The bonnage must always be created against a continuous surface such as rock, earth, deck of a ship or even a wall. Multiple veve may be inscribed in the same bonnage, their patterns intermingling to increase the potency of the magic. Several people can create a bonnage pattern together, but multiple people cannot collaborate on a single veve. Sange Tara's gods may automatically create the veve bonnage, which are considered unbreakable by mortals.

New Civil Skill (7th Sea™)

Taramonde

Taramonde is considered a special skill, using each class of veve as a knack. The three classes of veve are kinso (warding), brito (identifying), and viso (affecting). Usually, they must work in conjunction with each other to function properly. Creating a veve requires a check of Resolve + the appropriate knack. The TN is specified by the appropriate knack. Veve created by gods (or those possessed by gods) are the sole purveyance of the GM and can only be overcome at his discretion. Each veve takes at least ten minutes to inscribe.

Requirements: You must have the Medicine Man skill, with at least two Knacks at level 4 before you may purchase Taramonde. One of these Knacks must be Religious Lore (Sange Tara). At the moment, only the natives of Sange Tara know this skill; characters wishing to learn it must either be natives of the island, or learn the skill from a native.

BASIC KNACKS

Drawing: A piece of chalk or charcoal can become the tool that you use to bring your imagination to life. Ancient runes or carvings can be copied with accuracy, or a delicate flower can be sketched for a lady friend.

ADVANCED KNACKS

Kinso: This veve is used to trap or create a barrier. Kinso are created in groups of three or larger to create a warded area. The Kinso veve can be drawn two ways: the first ("trap") allows something to enter but not leave, second ("barrier") reverses the kinso and repels something trying to get in. To draw one kinso requires a Resolve + Kinso check with a TN of 5 +5 for each successive kinso past the first. A minimum of three kinso must be drawn to function; that creates a three dimensional area affected by the magic. Kinso veve can never be set more than 10 feet apart; otherwise, they will not function. Trapped beings inside the area are free to move about it, but not through it. The being cannot pierce the ground or be lifted out of the area. Kinso must be used in conjunction with brito to properly function.

Brito: Brito identifies creatures, people, and spirits/gods, and is added to kinso so that the trap or barrier will know what to ensnare or repel. Brito depends upon the name to identify the kinso. It can be a specific name ("James Smith") or a species type ("tigers"). People and spirits require a specific name; animals and non-sentient monsters require only the name of the species. Several names can be intertwined to specify more quarries. The base TN to create on brito is 10. For each additional name added to the brito the TN to create it is raised by +5.

In addition, if a Sange Taran spirit or god's brito is inscribed in a bonnage it will appear inside the bonnage unless it beats a TN of the collected kinso using its Resolve. (Lesha Resolve is 5, Baneer's is 4, Mama Hadoo's is 4, and Whotan's is 5. Baron Sange cannot be drawn from his flesh, and therefore cannot be bound in this manner). This does not affect other gods or god-like beings such as Matushka or the Sidhe. Brito cannot target inanimate objects.

Viso: Viso strengthens or weakens the existing veve. For every viso added to the bonnage, it can either add or subtract one kept die of Brawn to the specified entity. For those involving "trap" kinso, it affects specified entities trapped within the affected area. For those involving "barrier" kinso, it affects any rolls made to penetrate the barrier or aimed directly against people or objects within the affected area. This veve starts at a TN/DC of 15 to create it and increases +5 for each successive viso drawn.

Breaking or Destroying Veve

An affected creature who wishes to pass through a veve requires a Resolve check made against TN of 5 times the number of veve in the bonnage pattern (rounded up). If, for example, a bonnage consisted for four kinso, one brito and one viso, the TN to break past it would be 30. Veve drawn by gods always have a TN of 50 to break, even to other gods. Veve can be erased or destroyed by simply: marring the pattern (smearing the chalk, defacing the inscription with a knife, etc.) is enough to negate the veve. However, those bound by a veve's effects cannot touch or otherwise affect the veve affecting them. If they wish to escape, they must convince someone else to destroy the bonnage.

Some sample bonnage patterns include:

- **A bear trap:** 3 trap kinso (TN 15 to create) with 1 brito (TN 10 to create) for bears and 1 viso (TN 15 to create) to weaken).

- **A ward against Baron Sange:** 5 barrier kinso (TN 25 to create), with 1 brito for Baron Sange (TN 10 to create).
- **A trap for two specific characters, Michael Goodman and Marian Foster:** 4 trap kinso (TN 20 to create), with 2 brito for Michael Goodman and Marian Foster (TN 15 to create), and 2 viso to weaken them both (TN 20 to create).
- **A ward against husks and zombies:** 4 barrier kinso (TN 20 to create), with 2 brito for husks and zombies (TN 15 to create).

New Feat (d20™)

Taramonde [General]

You have been trained in the veve magic of Sange Tara (see page 83), and can create bonnage patterns.

Prerequisites: Wis 13+, 4+ ranks in Craft (drawing) skill, 4+ ranks in Knowledge (Sange Tara faith) skill.

Benefit: You may cast a specialized form of the spell *glyph of warding* (see the *Player's Handbook*™). Instead of creating the glyphs listed in the spell description, you may create one specific glyph (the bonnage) which can either trap or repel entry into a given area. The caster targets either a specific species (if Int is less than 6, or CR is 1 or less) or a specific individual (in any other circumstances), and decides whether the glyph will trap that entity or repel it (it cannot do both). The spell then creates a barrier around the building, set of rooms, or open area no larger than the listed area of effect. The target entity either cannot pass through that barrier, or cannot escape it once it enters (the caster decides which when he creates the glyph). In order to defy the glyph, the entity must make a Willpower save (DC equal to 10 + the caster's level). Otherwise, it cannot pass, and cannot make another attempt to break it for at least 4 hours. The glyph lasts for as long as it remains unmarred; the target entity cannot mar it (or indeed, even touch it), but other characters may. In all other aspects, this follows the parameters laid out in *glyph of warding*.

The glyph may be cast a number of times per day equal to 1 plus the caster's Wisdom bonus. It may not target the same entity or species on the same area more than once. This is considered a spell-like ability.

Special: Sange Tara's gods may use this ability (through possessed mortals, see below) as a 30th-level spellcaster. Note that no books or tomes currently exist detailing the Sange Taran faith; in order to learn the required Knowledge skill, the character must either hail from the island, or journey there directly to study it.

Possession

The gods of Sange Tara have the power to possess unsuspecting mortals. Rules are as follows:

Possession Rules (7th Sea™)

Characters with the True Faith Advantage cannot be possessed by any of the gods. If any other character wishes to be possessed by a god they simply ask to be a part of a ceremony that summons the god/gods and asks for the god to come into them. The ceremony requires at least ten Sange Tarans, must last at least half an hour, and must take place

between sunset and sunrise. At the climax of the ceremony, the character to be possessed must make a Resolve + Taramonde roll with a TN of 25. If successful, the summoned god will appear in the characters' form. The gods will not possess unwilling characters, though Baron Sange may; rules are detailed below. When possessed the character will take on the powers of the god: increasing their Brawn +2, Finesse +2, Resolve +1, and Panache +2. He will still have access to all of his normal skills and abilities, and have all the Knacks in the Taramonde Skill at level 5. Other powers depend to the specific god:

LESHA: GOD OF GATEWAYS

Lesha allows the character to open up portals to familiar places and journey to them. (Note: the Tarans have never left the island because only the island is familiar to them.) This functions as the Master Porté ability with an Walk Knack of 4. The number of people allowed to go through (including the possessed character) equals the possessed character's Resolve. The destination must be familiar to the possessed character: his home, the school where he was trained, etc. After the portal is opened and characters move through, Lesha will leave the possessed character. While possessed, the character will appear erudite and press his hands together in front of his body with the fingertips pointed down.

MAMA HADOO: GOD OF SIGHT

Mama can see into the future the past and all places in between. By invoking Mama Hadoo a character can gain a one-time glimpse into the past or the future, and ask any one question, which must the GM must answer truthfully. However, if the character wishes to know a future event, it will become set in stone and unable to change (Master Fate Witches or Scrying sorceresses may be able to undo it, at the GM's discretion). Mama Hadoo will warn a character before looking into the future about this. After the question is answered, the god will leave the character. While possessed, the character will walk on all fours clicking his tongue when not talking, while his head lolls around.

BANEER: GOD OF MUSIC AND REBIRTH

Baneer can invigorate and strengthen himself and other characters nearby. If a possessed character allows, he may transfer his Brawn and Finesse bonuses into one other character nearby. The bonuses can be divided among multiple characters if the possessed character wishes. The god will only grant this boon once per possession, but does not leave the character afterwards. When Baneer inhabits a character, he tends to be quite lively and rhyme their words.

WHOTAN: TRICKSTER AND GOD OF THE WEATHER

Whotan is the only god that doesn't allow the possessed character to automatically use his power. The character must make a Resolve roll (adding the bonus for possession) against a TN 10 to use Whotan's ability once. Every time a character uses one of Whotan's powers successfully, the TN to use the power again goes up by 5. If the roll ever fails, the character hears a resounding laugh, and Whotan will depart him or her. His powers include the ability to affect the weather, as per the Lærdom runes Stans, Nød, and Vilskap as if cast by a Lærdom Adept with a Rank 4 in all the appropriate Knacks. When Whotan inhabits a character, he will constantly smile knowingly and stroke his chin.

BARON SANGE: GOD OF DEATH AND THE EARTH

The Sange Tarans never call Baron Sange, but he may try to possess a character if he wishes (GM's discretion). Targeted characters must make a Resolve roll, TN 20. If unsuccessful, the Baron (and the GM) gains control of the character (with the benefits outlined above) for 1k1 minutes. He cannot use any other abilities, but will do his best to spread what havoc and mischief he can. He may only attempt this once per character per day, and only between sunset and sunrise.

A possessed Hero is still nominally under the player's control, though the GM may seize control whenever he or she sees fit (and those possessed by Baron Sange are always under the GM's control). If a god does not leave the character by his or her own precedents, then he or she will leave at the next sunrise. A god can only inhabit a given character once a month. The GM has the right to prohibit possession of any character at any time for any reason.

Possession Rules (d20™)

The Sange Taran gods follow the same parameters for possession in d20™ as in 7th Sea™. The subject must be willing, and the ceremony must involve at least ten Sange Tarans; clerics and paladins of other deities may not be possessed. The ceremony must take place between sunset and sunrise, and last at least half an hour. At the climax of the ceremony, the subject must make a Knowledge (Sange Tara faith) check with a DC of 20. If successful, the selected god enters and takes control of the subject. Though still under control of the player, the GM may assert control whenever he or she sees fit... and those possessed by Baron Sange are always under the control of the GM. The possessed character gains a Str +4, Dex +5, Con +3 for as long as the god remains within him or her, as well as a +10 bonus to his Knowledge (Sange Tara faith) skill and the ability to use the *Feat: Taramonde*, as described above. In addition, they gain one of the following powers, depending on the particular god:

LESHA

The possessed character may cast *teleport without error* as a 15th level wizard. This spell only works with destinations with which the character is very familiar; otherwise, it will not function. Lesha will leave the character upon completion of the spell.

MAMA HADOO

The possessed character may cast *commune* as a 15th level cleric. The effects are limited to only a single question, but Mama Hadoo may elaborate on the answer (i.e., use more than just yes/no) if she sees fit. It is otherwise identical to *commune*. Mama Hadoo will depart the character upon completion of the spell.

BANEER

The possessed character may cast the spell *bull's strength* and *cat's grace* as a 15th level wizard once each per possession. In order to cast these spells, the character must sacrifice his Strength bonus (for *bull's strength*) or Dexterity bonus (for *cat's grace*) gained by the possession. The effects last until the next sunrise but are otherwise identical to the appropriate spells. Baneer will remain with the character once this spell is cast.

WHOTAN

The possessed character may cast *control weather* as a 15th level cleric and *lightning bolt* as a 15th level wizard. The first time the character attempts one of these spells, he must make a Wisdom check against a DC of 10. The DC increases by 5 for every subsequent attempt of either spell. If the check fails, then the spell fails and Whotan immediately departs the character's body.

BARON SANGE

No one ever summons Baron Sange, but he may attempt to possess a character at the GM's discretion. The target may make a Will save (DC 20) to resist the Baron's efforts. If successful, he fights off the evil spirit; otherwise, the Baron (GM) gains control of the character (with the increased abilities, feat, and skill, as described above) for 1d10 minutes. He will attempt to wreak as much havoc as he can, but must depart after the allotted time is up. He may only attempt this once per character per day, and only between sunset and sunrise.

If a god does not leave the character by his or her own precedents, then he or she will leave at the next sunrise. A god may only inhabit a given character once per month. The GM has the right to prohibit possession at any time for any reason.

New Backgrounds (7th Sea™)

Backgrounds are plot devices used in the 7th Sea™ system. They have no equivalent in the d20 system; they are simply part of a character's history.

Colonial

You were raised in one of your nation's island colonies, and are therefore considered unrefined and ignorant by many of your mainland brethren. The number of points you have spent on this Background determines the amount to which the prejudice of Théan mainlanders interferes with your activities.

Fascination

You led a sheltered existence as a youth, and had little or no contact with other cultures. During your first encounters with strangers, you became intrigued with something about them: perhaps an item, or a perfume, or the accent. You became fascinated with this thing, and it has become inordinately important to you. The more points you spend on this Background, the more this fascination influences your life.

New Prestige Classes

Erego Healer Prestige Class (d20™)

Erego healers practice the shaman power of orani, channeling the spirits of plants and animals to beneficial effect. Most use this power to heal the sick or injured, though some can also channel animal spirits to boost their physical abilities or ancestor spirits for spiritual insight. The Vaticine Church frowns on these powers, but they have yet to directly move against them.

Requirements

To become an Erego healer, the character must fulfill the following criteria:

Special: Erego nationality. (This requirement may be changed or waived in non-Théan campaigns.)

Skills: Healing 8 ranks, Knowledge (Erego religion) 8 ranks.

Game Rule Information

Alignment: Any good.

Hit Dice: d6.

TABLE 3-3: THE EREGO HEALER

Level	Base Attack	Fort Save	Ref Save	Will Save	Special
1	+0	+0	+2	+2	Chanel Oroï (1 Animal/1 Healing/ 1 Ancestor)
2	+1	+0	+3	+3	Chanel Oroï (1 Animal/1 Healing/ 1 Ancestor)
3	+1	+1	+3	+3	Chanel Oroï (2 Animal/2 Healing/ 2 Ancestor)
4	+2	+1	+4	+4	Chanel Oroï (2 Animal/2 Healing/ 2 Ancestor)
5	+2	+1	+4	+4	Chanel Oroï (3 Animal/3 Healing/ 3 Ancestor)

Class Skills

The erogo healer's class skills (and the key ability for each skill) are Concentration (Con), Craft (Int), Diplomacy (Cha), Handle Animal (Cha), Heal (Wis), Intuit Direction (Wis), Knowledge (Erego religion) (Int), Listen (Wis), Move Silently (Dex), Profession (Wis), Sense Motive (Wis), Spellcraft (Int), Swim (Str), and Wilderness Lore. (See the *Player's Handbook™* for skill descriptions.)

Skill Points at Each Additional Level: 4 + Int modifier.

Class Features

The following are class features of the erogo healer:

Weapon and Armor Proficiency: An erogo healer is proficient with all simple and martial weapons, but not with armor or shields.

Channel Oroï: You have learned how to channel the spirits known as oroi, and can call upon them to aid you. Starting at first level, you may channel one animal oroi, one healing oroi, and one ancestor oroi, chosen from the list

below. When channeling, make a skill check against your Knowledge (Erego religion). The DC is 10 for healing oroi, 15 for animal oroi and 20 for ancestor oroi. If successful, the oroi generates the following effects, as detailed by the specific type below. Channeling an oroi takes one standard action, and no single oroi type (arnica, hunting dog, etc.) may be channeled more than once per day:

HEALING OROI

Healing oroi are applied to specific wounds or injuries. If successful, they immediately heal an amount of damage equal to 2d8 plus 2 points per erogo healer level. If treating poison or disease, the oroi neutralizes the effects. Poison will be neutralized and diseases are removed; all temporary effects will be ended (though any instantaneous or permanent effects, such as hit point damage or ability stat damage, must still be healed normally). The specific type of damage depends on the specific oroi:

Sweet Gum: This plant is used to treat damage from acids.

Pleurisy Root: This plant is used to negate the effects of diseases.

Goldenseal: This plant is used to heal damage caused from slashing or piercing weapons.

Arnica: This plant is used to damage from falls and bludgeoning weapons.

Narrowleaf Dock: This plant is used to negate contact poisons.

Lobelia: This plant is used to counteract ingested poisons.

Plantain: This plant is used to counteract venom such as snakebites.

Cayenne: This plant is used to clear out the lungs, aiding in countering the effects of inhaled damage.

Aloe: This plant is useful in treating fire damage.

Jasmine: This plant is useful in treating weather hazard damage from heat.

ANIMAL OROI

Animal oroi are the spirits of specific animal species familiar to the Marcinans. When invoke, all of them grant a +2 bonus to any Spot and Listen checks made. In addition, if your check exceeds the required DC by 5 or more, you gain the use of an additional ability, the type depending upon the particular oroi you are channeling. All effects of animal oroi last for 1d4 × 10 minutes (1d4 × 100 rounds).

Bear: When attempting to inflict unarmed damage on an opponent with whom you are grappling, you cause 1d8 points, plus your Strength bonus, instead of the normal unarmed attack damage.

Fish: You gain a temporary 5 ranks to your swim skill, or a temporary swim skill of 5 ranks if you do not already possess it.

Fox: All attempts to track you have a DC modifier of +5.

Hunting Dog: You gain the Track Feat, and an additional temporary 5 ranks to your wilderness lore skill (or a temporary wilderness lore skill of 5 ranks if you do not already possess it).

Monkey: You gain a temporary 5 ranks to your climb skill, or a temporary climb skill of 5 ranks if you do not already possess it.



Seagull: You gain a temporary 5 ranks to your profession (fishing) skill, or a temporary profession (fishing) skill of 5 ranks if you do not already possess it.

Shark: You gain a biting attack, which inflicts 1d8 points of damage if successful.

Snake: You add +2 to all initiative checks.

Songbird: You gain a temporary 5 ranks to your perform skill, or a temporary perform skill of 5 ranks if you do not already possess it.

Turtle: Your Dexterity is reduced by 2 for the duration of the effect, but any blow which strikes you has its damage reduced by 1d4 (minimum 0).

Wolf: For a single round, your opponents next round are considered flat-footed when you attack.

ANCESTOR OROI

Ancestor oroi are spirits of the erego healer's tribal ancestors, who lend him aspects of their personality. Upon a successful check, the healer gains two temporary arcana: one virtue and one hubris. Details on each can be found in the *Swashbuckling Adventures* handbook, pages 148–156. The effects last for 1d4 × 10 minutes (1d4 × 100 rounds). Ancestor oroi are categorized into archetypes for simplicity's sake. It is possible to have the ability to channel more than one ancestor oroi of the same archetype.

Avenger: You gain the Hot-Headed Hubris and the Victorious Virtue.

Chief: You gain the Judgmental Hubris and the Commanding Virtue.

Explorer: You gain the Rash Hubris and the Worldly Virtue.

Hunter: You gain the Loyal Hubris and the Perceptive Virtue.

Lover: You gain the Star-Crossed Hubris and the Passionate Virtue.

Madman: You gain the Overconfident Hubris and the Fanatical Wile.

Martyr: You gain the Overzealous Hubris and the Willful Virtue.

Mystic: You gain the Righteous Hubris and the Uncanny Virtue.

New Feat

Additional Oroï [Erego Healer]

You have learned to channel additional oroi spirits.

Prerequisite: Erego healer level 2.

Benefit: You may select 2 additional oroi to channel, in addition to the ones already granted by your class ability. You may take this feat multiple times if you wish.

Nahgem Spearman Prestige Class (d20™)

Nahgem is the traditional spear-fighting style of the Kanu. It is a frenetic style, full of energy and vigor, and completely fearlessly. It teaches its practitioners to throw spears with uncanny accuracy while the target is at a distance and to explode into a frenzied state if their enemy is within melee range.

The philosophy of Nahgem is that fear leads to failure and saps the energy of the combatant. During a fight, the warrior can move with blinding speed fast and seemingly wildly. In truth, his movements only seem to be wild because they mix spear attacks, kicks, and strange footwork to confound and confuse the enemy. Sometimes, especially when an enemy gets too close or too far away, the Nahgem warrior will use the shaft of his spear to pole vault into a new position.

The main weakness of the style is that each of its energetic attacks takes every ounce of energy that the warrior can muster. Because of this, there is a moment after each attack while the next attack builds its momentum. An enemy who knows how to anticipate and recognize that instant can make an attack while the warrior is in preparation, catching him off guard.

Requirements

To become a Nahgem Spearman, a character must fulfill the following criteria:

Special: The character must be taught by a master of this school (usually this school of fighting is only taught by Kanubas to other Kanubans)

Base Attack Bonus: +6.

Feats: Iron Will, Weapon Focus (any spear).

Game Rule Information

Alignment: Any non-lawful.

Hit Dice: d10.

TABLE 3-4: THE NAHGEN SPEARMAN

Level	Base Attack	Fort Save	Ref Save	Will Save	Special
1	+1	+2	+2	+0	Stand Strong Without Fear, Kick
2	+2	+3	+3	+0	Pole Vault
3	+3	+3	+3	+1	The Dance of the Spear, Great Throw
4	+4	+4	+4	+1	Vaulting Kick
5	+5	+4	+4	+1	Master of the Spear, Vault and Throw

Class Skills

The Nahgem Spearman's class skills (and the key ability for each skill) are Balance (Dex), Concentration (Con), Climb (Str), Craft (Int), Escape Artist (Dex), Intimidate (Cha), Jump (Str), Listen (Wis), Move Silently (Dex), Profession (Wis), Sense Motive (Wis), Spot (Wis), Swim (Str), and Tumble (Dex). (See the *Player's Handbook™* for skill descriptions.)

Skill Points at Each Additional Level: 2 + Int modifier.

Class Features

The following are class features of the Nahgem Spearman:
Weapon and Armor Proficiency: A student of this school is proficient with all polearms, light armor, and shields.

Stand Strong without Fear: A student of this school gains a morale bonus to all saving throws versus fear equal to his Nahgem Spearman class. He also gains a competence bonus to attack rolls when he is throwing a spear equal to half of his Nahgem Spearman class level (rounded up).

Kick: The spearman can use his spear as a tool to assist in kick attacks. His kick attack deals 2d6 damage, but the student suffers a penalty equal to 6 minus his Nahgem Spearman class level. A kick is a full attack action that does not provoke an attack of opportunity.

Pole Vault: At 2nd level, the spearman teaches himself how to use a pole and a running start to extend the height or breadth of his jumps. He must use a pole at least as long as he is tall. When making a jump check when making a running jump or a running high jump the maximum distance is increased by 2. Additionally the character may gain a competence bonus equal to his Nahgem spearman level to the jump check.

The Dance of the Spear: At 3rd level, the student gains a dodge bonus to his Armor Class equal to half of his Nahgem class level (rounded up).

Great Throw: At 3rd level, the spearman greatly strengthens his spear hurling ability. When the spearman hurls a spear, he doubles the range increment.

Vaulting Kick: At 4th level, the spearman can end a pole vault with a truly devastating kick. After the character makes a successful pole vault attempt and lands adjacent to or in the same space as an opponent, he can then make a kick attack that is automatically considered a critical threat if successful.

Master of the Spear: At 5th level, the character gains his Wisdom modifier as a morale bonus to damage rolls when wielding a spear.

Vault and Throw: At 5th level, the spearman can end a pole vault by flinging his spear, enabling him to better reach distant opponents. After the character makes a successful pole vault attempt, he may make a ranged attack with his spear as normal.

Opahkung Prestige Class (d20™)

Characters from the island of Kanuba may be endowed with a form of shamanism known as opah sorcery. Such figures are known as opahkung — able to call upon the opah in an object. While curses and blessings affect every item an opahkung touches, opah is most evident in weaponry.

Requirements

To become an opahkung, a character must fulfill the following criteria:

Special: Kanu Nationality. (The requirement may be waived or adjusted in non-Théan campaigns.)

Skills: Knowledge (Kanuban religion) 10 ranks, Spellcraft 10 ranks.

Game Rule Information

Alignment: Any.

Hit Dice: d8.

TABLE 3-5: THE OPAHKUNG

Level	Base Attack	Fort Save	Ref Save	Will Save	Special
1	+0	+2	+0	+2	Invest Weapon (1)
2	+1	+3	+0	+3	Transfer Lan/Nal (1)
3	+2	+3	+1	+3	Reduce/Increase Lan/Nal (1)
4	+3	+4	+1	+4	Invest Weapon (2)
5	+3	+4	+1	+4	Transfer Lan/Nal (2)
6	+4	+5	+2	+5	Reduce/Increase Lan/Nal (2)
7	+5	+5	+2	+5	Invest Weapon (3)
8	+6	+6	+2	+6	Transfer Lan/Nal (3)
9	+6	+6	+3	+6	Reduce/Increase Lan/Nal (3)
10	+7	+7	+3	+7	Invest Weapon (4)

Class Skills

The opahkung's class skills (and the key ability for each skill) are Alchemy (Int), Balance (Dex), Concentration (Con), Craft (Int), Disguise (Cha), Escape Artist (Dex), Knowledge

(Arcana) (Int), Listen (Wis), Move Silently (Dex), Profession (Wis), Sense Motive (Wis), and Spellcraft (Int). (See the *Player's Handbook™* for skill descriptions.)

Skill Points at Each Additional Level: 2 + Int modifier.

Class Features

The following are class features of the opahkung:

Weapon and Armor Proficiency: An opahkung is proficient with all simple and martial weapons, and with light and medium armor, but not with shields.

Invest Weapon: Starting at 1st level, an opahkung may invest one weapon with a sliver of his inner energies, activating the latent ability of the weapon to feel the flow of lan and nal. An invested weapon will remain invested until it is destroyed. The number of weapons the character may have invested increases to 2 at 4th level, 3 at 7th level, and 4 at 10th level. Newly invested weapons start with 1 point of nal. The investment process takes one minute.

Transfer Lan/Nal: Starting at 2nd level, an opahkung can transfer lan or nal from one invested weapon to another. The transfer process takes 1 minute per point of lan or nal transferred. The transfer process also inflicts 1 point of damage per point of lan or nal transferred. At 2nd level, the character may transfer 1 point per opahkung level per hour. This number increases to 2 points per opahkung level per hour at 5th level and 3 points per opahkung level per hour at 8th level. Only similar points can be transferred (i.e. if a weapon currently has lan, only points of lan can be transferred into it. However, if a weapon has only 1 point of lan of nal, then the opposite can be transferred.) Damage inflicted in this manner may only be healed naturally.

Reduce/Increase Lan/Nal: Starting at 3rd level, an opahkung can reduce or increase the amount of lan or nal in a weapon. Both processes take 1 minute per point of increase or decrease. The processes also inflict 2 points of damage per point of lan or nal reduced/increased. At 3rd level, the character may increase 1 point per opahkung level per hour. This number increases to 2 points per opahkung level per hour at 6th level and 3 points per opahkung level per hour at 9th level. Damage inflicted in this manner may only be healed naturally.

Rules for Lal/Nal (d20™)

In combat, when an opahkung (and only an opahkung) uses an invested weapon, he must keep track of the number of times it hits and misses. For every 5 hits scored on an enemy, the weapon receives 1 point of lan. For every 5 times it misses an enemy, the weapon receives loses one point of lan. If the weapon has only one point of lan and it misses for the fifth time, then the weapon loses its lan and gains a point of nal. Once a weapon has nal, it gains one more point of nal for every five times it misses, and loses a point of nal for every five times it hits. When a weapon has only one point of nal and hits five times, it loses its nal and gains one point of lan instead.

An invested weapon must always have at least 1 lan or nal. Missile weapons such as guns or bows cannot accumulate lan or nal, but a projectile such as an arrow or a spear can. Opahkung (and only opahkung) receive the following modifiers from using a weapon charged with lan or nal: a sorcerer (not a shaman, such as other opahkung) struck by this weapon loses the ability to use any spells or spell-like abilities for one round per point of lan or nal, or until the end of the

encounter, whichever comes first. This is always counted from the most recent hit, but is not cumulative. Items treated with Lærdom magic, or other magic weapons are affected as if they were sorcerers when struck with this weapon. Lærdom-enchanted weapons cannot use their runes, and any currently active runes are deactivated. Twisted Blades cannot use their special powers after being hit by an opahkung's weapon. This effect on a magic weapon lasts just as long as it would if the weapon were a sorcerer.

For every 20 points of lan, the opahkung adds a +1 modifier to his attack rolls when using this weapon. Conversely, for every 20 nal, the opahkung subtracts 1 from his attack rolls. Neither modifier may exceed twice the character's level in the opahkung Prestige class.

For every 50 points of lan or nal, the weapon gains a +1 enhancement bonus. This bonus may never exceed +5.

When affected by sorcery while holding the weapon, the character gains a +2 morale bonus to his saving throw. The level of the spell or class ability affecting the opahkung must be less than or equal to the total points of lan or nal invested in this weapon, divided by 50 (round down).

For every 100 points of lan, the opahkung begins each game session with 1 lan luck reroll. He may reroll any one failed check during the game session. For each 100 points of nal, the opahkung begins the game session with one nal reroll, which the GM may use to reroll the one of the character's successful checks. In both cases, this ability is only usable if the character is touching the weapon.

In addition, while holding a weapon invested with nal or lan, the opahkung has crackling streams of energy running up and down the weapon and the arm (or arms) with which he holds it, and his eyes glow with barely contained energy. The energy is white if the weapon has lan, and black if it has nal.

Weapons are not the only items that exhibit the powers of lan and nal. Tools and cooking pots also noticeably exhibit this behavior. These objects gain and lose points of lan and nal in a manner similar to the way weapons do. They gain 1 point of lan or lose 1 point of nal for every 10 times an opahkung succeeds at a skill check using it, and gain 1 point of nal or lose point of 1 lan whenever he uses the item and fails the skill check. The only benefit or impairment from such an item is that for every 20 points of lan, the opahkung adds 1 to his skill checks that involve the item's use, and for every 20 points of nal, the opahkung subtracts 1 from skill checks that involve the item's use.

New Equipment

New equipment is listed in 7th Sea terms. The d20 System™ equivalent is provided in italics.

Spear

Spears are considered a polearm, and are generally out of favor in Théah as weapons of war, but many island tribes, as well as quite a few Vestenmannavnjar, still use them.

D20™ MECHANICS

d20 System™ stats for spears can be found in the *Player's Handbook™*

7TH SEA™ MECHANICS

Spears are 3k2 weapons, which may be thrown. When they are thrown, their Range is $5 + (2 \times \text{Brawn})$.

Lenlil Cream

This greenish cream conceals a man's scent for up to eight hours after being applied. It confounds animals that use scent to track and makes the wearer "invisible" to most animals unless he moves while in their line of sight.

D20™ MECHANICS

Lenlil Cream provides a -4 penalty to any Wilderness Lore check when attempting to Track the user by scent.

7TH SEA™ MECHANICS

Lenlil subtracts two Ranks from the Tracking Knack of anyone tracking the Hero using scent.

Kanu Balm

This aromatic gel is used by the medicine men of Kanuba to heal injuries. It's mixed with common herbs, but the precise ingredients are known only to certain Kanu. The GM has the final word on whether any outsiders are privy to its secrets.

D20™ MECHANICS

Kanu Balm takes one standard action to apply to a character. It heals 1d10 hit points or restores the character back to 4 hit points if the character has less than 4 hit points (whichever is greater), at the character's option.

7TH SEA™ MECHANICS

Kanu Balm takes one Action to apply to a character. It heals 1 Dramatic Wound or all Flesh Wounds the character has suffered, at the character's option.

Spices

In the Midnight Archipelago one need not find gold or jewels to make one's fortune. The many islands of the archipelago have a variety of indigenous flora the markets of Western Théah are eager for, especially spices. Not only are spices desirable for seasoning food, but some of them have magical properties as well. Spices are light weight and take up little space, making them an especially profitable cargo. Some spices are easy to obtain, others range from difficult to nearly impossible to find. Specific rules for the consumption of a spice (if applicable) are provided below the appropriate entry.

Allspice

This very common spice, found on most of the islands in the Archipelago, has the happy property of being able to mimic the flavors of cinnamon and cloves, which are otherwise expensive imports from Cathay via the Crescent Empire. Because it is so common, this makes it less expensive to export to western Théah where it can eventually undercut the price of the Cathayan products. As the name implies, the natives use allspice in just about everything and often chew the individual berries as breath-freshening snacks. The oil pressed from the berries is also used in perfume.

Cacao

Although this spice looks like a bean, it is actually, if native rumor is correct, the seed of a rainforest fruit. The raw beans are mottled green and white, and can be roasted, then ground and steeped in hot water, often with ground capsicum pepper, to make a satisfying hot drink. As yet, the indigenous people of the few islands where cacao grows are not selling enough of the bean to make export possible, preferring to keep the locations of their groves to themselves. But they are happy to share their cacao drink — it is an integral part of their hospitality rituals.

Those trying this drink, will immediately notice that that they feel better, even if they are not ill. Native legends tell of cases where a handful of cacao beans have kept people alive for long periods without food, while other legends tell of people who refused to eat anything but cacao and eventually starved to death. About ten years ago a Vendel Explorer named Meyer van Droost got his hands on few beans and experimented with mixing them with other island products, namely sugar and vanilla. The result (unfortunately known only to him) got him so excited that he immediately set forth into the rainforest to find more cacao. He has not been seen since.

D20™ MECHANICS

The cacao bean adds +1 to any Con-based checks made within an hour after consuming one. For the next hour, the character suffers a -1 penalty to all Con-based checks. At the end of the first hour, the character may consume an additional bean to defer the penalty for another hour (gaining no benefit from the second bean), but thereafter suffers a -2 penalty to the appropriate rolls or checks. He may defer the penalty indefinitely by eating more beans, but cannot gain any benefit from such consumption until he suffers the penalty. Consuming two beans at once will double the bonus, but also double the penalty at the end of the hour. The character cannot gain the benefits of consuming more than two beans at once. Consuming an additional bean while "coming down" (i.e., suffering the penalties) will reduce the penalties by 1, but the character does not gain any bonuses for that consumption.

7th Sea™ Mechanics

The cacao bean will add +1 to any Brawn-based rolls made within one hour of consuming one. For the next hour after that, the character suffers a -1 penalty to any Brawn-based rolls.

Capsicum Pepper

Capsicum is the name of a large family of fruits that grow on short bushy vines on almost all of the islands of the Archipelago. It is a staple in all of the native cuisines. The fruits range in colors of green, yellow and red and in taste from delicately mild to blow-the-top-of-your-head-off hot. In addition to eating it, the natives use it, both internally and externally, for healing almost everything. Rumor has it that they add the hotter varieties to their poisons to insure an especially painful death. The very hottest, a tiny pretty bright orange fruit, is said to cause death all by itself, sometimes by simply by touching bare skin.

D20™ MECHANICS

Capsicum Pepper poison follows the rules for contact poison, found in the *DUNGEON MASTER'S Guide™* or arsenic found on page 168 of the *Swashbuckling Adventures™* handbook. Use whichever mechanic best fits your campaign.

7th Sea™ Mechanics

Capsicum Pepper poison follows the rules for arsenic found on page 185 of the *7th Sea Game Masters' Guide™*.

Coriander

Coriander is an unusual spice in that not only the seeds, but the leaves and stems are edible. The seeds have a mild spicy taste and an amazing preservative effect. The foliage has a zippy green taste and is always eaten fresh as a vegetable. Coriander grows wild on the grasslands of the larger islands and is never cultivated — the unripe leaves have a strong unpleasant smell and the unripe fruit smells even worse!

MECHANICS

Fresh foods treated with this spice take one and a half times the listed time to spoil.

Cubebs

Early Westerners in the Midnight Archipelago were quite excited to find cubebs, since they thought it was pepper, which is an expensive Cathayan import. Indeed, the small black cubebs look much like peppercorns, but that is where

the resemblance ends. While pleasant-tasting, cubebs do not have the same zing as pepper. They do, however, have another valuable property — they enhance the flavor of any other spice with which they are mixed. Pepper becomes more peppery, vanilla more sweet and rich, sugar sweeter and more satisfying. Cubebs are the berries of trees that grow at higher elevations on many of the islands, and are fairly easy to find. The berries must be sun-dried before they can be transported, as they deteriorate quickly when fresh.

Cumin

Cumin comes from the seeds of a low shrub that grows in dry areas. The tiny seeds are often pressed for their oil, which is valuable for perfumes and soaps. The seeds are also ground for use in cooking. Cumin powder has a warm mild taste by itself and is also used to improve the flavor of medicines. It is the only spice known that mitigates the fire of capsicum, and is said to be an antidote to poison (GM's discretion).

Grains of Paradise

These are the seeds of a fruit that grows only in a few of the more inaccessible rainforest regions of the Midnight Archipelago. It is very rare and very expensive, and for good reason. Not only are grains of paradise delicious on almost every food known to Théah, but they are so delicious that they can, rumor says, hold a man enthralled in gustatory ecstasy for up to 10 minutes. Someone so enthralled is thereby vulnerable to both physical and magical attacks.



Note: No one knows if the spice has this effect on women as all the tales specify men.

D20™ MECHANICS

If consumed with a meal, the victim must make a Will check (DC 20). If unsuccessful, the character must continue eating, conducting no other activity for at least ten minutes. If no food is available, he will actively search for more, eschewing all other activities (unless physically threatened or coerced) for that length of time. If the check or roll succeeds, the victim may behave as normal.

7TH SEA™ MECHANICS

If consumed with a meal, the victim must make a Resolve roll (TN 25). If unsuccessful, the character must continue eating, conducting no other activity for at least ten minutes. If no food is available, he will actively search for more, eschewing all other activities (unless physically threatened or coerced) for that length of time. If the check or roll succeeds, the victim may behave as normal.

Nutmeg/Mace

This spice is the large seed of a rainforest fruit, and the Castilian government strictly controls its export. The seeds are roasted immediately after they are picked to insure that they cannot be used to grow a nutmeg tree. (The fact that roasting improves the flavor is incidental.) Castille is so concerned with keeping a tight hold on their monopoly in nutmeg that the penalty for being caught with a raw nutmeg is death. It guards its plantations night and day, and regularly searches workers to ensure that they aren't smuggling any seeds.

Avalon, on the other hand, is so eager to start their own nutmeg trade that they will pay a fortune for even a few raw seeds. So far, however, no one has survived to take them up on their offer. Mace, the webbing found around the nutmeg seed, may be dried and ground to form a tasty spice.

Sugar

Sugar has the reputation of healing almost any illness, maybe because it just tastes good. It comes from the juice of an extremely tall grass that grows at lower elevations on the larger islands. Marcina, is the major sugar producer in the Archipelago, so the port of Santa Valeria is a very busy place!

The grass or stalks of the sugar plants, which grows to 12 to 16 feet tall, is harvested all year round; new shoots sprout almost immediately from the cut roots. Harvesters need to be careful, however, of the venomous cane-spiders, which can grow up to two feet in diameter. The cane stalks are crushed to remove as much juice as possible, then the juice is boiled. And boiled. And boiled. Each boiling concentrates the juice further than the last, eventually causing it to crystallize. Early boilings form the various grades of molasses, which can then be fermented for make rum.

The crystallized sugar is shipped in 10 to 50-pound dark brown cones that can be easily packed in the hold of a ship and will not deteriorate too badly if they get wet. Once they reach their final destination the cones are broken up using a special hammer, and the smaller lumps are then ground fine with a mortar and pestle. Water can be added to boil the sugar one more time to remove the last impurities, leaving pure white crystals to sell to the well-off families of western Théah.

Hoping to capitalize on sugar's universal popularity, Avalon has built a sugar refinery somewhere in the Archipelago. So far they do not have a ready supply route from the fields of the Midnight Archipelago, so a cargo of raw sugarcane will fetch a good price there.

Vanilla

Vanilla is the seedpod of a beautiful orchid. Each flower blooms only for a single day making harvesting a matter of precise timing. If harvesters do not note where each vanilla orchid is, they could confuse the resulting seed with a similar orchid that produces a deadly poison. The vanilla seedpod, which can grow up to 10 inches long, is first fermented and then dried. Its sweet richness has become very popular in western Théah, especially in Avalon, Vendel, Montaigne and Castille, so there is always a market for it.

Vanilla is used in food two ways, either crushed fine and added to a recipe or else soaked for several months in rum to lend its distinctive flavoring. Vanilla oil is also extremely valuable as a base for perfume. The fact that vanilla acts as a powerful aphrodisiac only increases the price.

Cane Spider

d20™ Mechanics

Tiny Vermin

Hit Dice: 1/2 d8 (2 hp)

Initiative: +3 (Dex)

Speed: 25 ft. climb 10 ft.

AC: 15 (+2 size, +3 Dex)

Attacks: Bite +5 melee

Damage: Bite 1d3-4 and poison

Face/Reach: 2 1/2 ft. by 2 1/2 ft./0 ft.

Special Attacks: Poison

Special Qualities: Vermin

Saves: Fort +2, Ref +3, Will +0

Abilities: Str 3, Dex 17, Con 10, Int -, Wis 10, Cha 2

Skills: Climb +10, Hide +20, Jump -5, Spot +6

Feats: Weapon finesse (bite)

Climate/Terrain: Tropical

Organization: Solitary, colony (5-12)

Challenge Rating: 1/4

Treasure: None

Alignment: Always neutral

Advancement: -

A cane spider's poison has a DC 12 for the check, and inflicts a reduction of 1d3 Str as both its primary and secondary damage.

7th Sea™ Mechanics

Brutes

Points: 40 per squad

Threat Rating: 2

Usual Weapons: Bite (Small, plus poison)

TN to be hit: 20

Skills: Stealth 5, Grapple 3

The cane spider's poison inflicts 3k2 Wounds upon being administered.

Artifacts

Note: The following information is intended for GMs only.

The Explorer's Society has discovered numerous strange artifacts in the Midnight Archipelago. Most of them come from the Synchroneth subspecies known as the tessera, but a few have come from other races. While they usually send the artifacts they find back to the mainland for study, some of them end up with patrons and investors as rewards for their aid. The Explorers dislike the practice, but they know that these trinkets provide the money they need for long-term projects such as this one.

Tesseran Artifacts

As the Explorers discovered, thousands of years before the rise of man, other races lived and thrived. One of the most elusive were known as the Tessera, a race of humanoid beings, tall and slender replete with both telepathic powers and the innate ability to generate and control magnetic forces. Their civilization grew up on the volcanic islands of the Midnight Archipelago, particularly those which bore large deposits of ferrous metals and built an advanced culture. These beings revered the number two and duality, perhaps because of the dual poles found in magnetism. Most of their architecture and science was based around multiples of that number. The dimensions of their buildings existed in multiples of two and many of their technological systems worked in pairs to support each other. The most terrible thought to a Tessera was that of being alone.

The Tessera left extensive writings on their ruins, though they are not visible to the naked eye. They wrote in magnetic fields imbedded into the rocks of their structures, which could be detected through magnetic attraction. If quantities of iron filings are used, the fields can actually be seen. This may allow the Explorers Society to someday translate the writings.

However, the Tessera's greatest creations will almost certainly remain a mystery. They constructed fabulous cities that floated upon the earth's magnetic fields like a ship at sea, filled with magnetic cannons, electric generators and force fields. Sadly all of this technology was not enough to allow the Tessera to defeat their enemies. They warred with the other Synchroneth races and lost. In a last effort to escape their foes, they sailed their floating cities to the west. No one knows exactly what they discovered there, but the Tessera attempted to return with a warning of an even greater threat. Only a handful of their race survived the long journey and they eventually perished through inbreeding and attrition. Their greatest artifacts sank into the depths of the seas or were obliterated when they fell from the sky.

For some reason unknown to modern day scholars, the magnetic powers of the Tessera counteracted divinatory magic. In particular, any attempt to use sorcery or magic for divinatory uses always fail — including the Fate Witches' ability to see fate strands. The island and other Tesseran ruins distort the witch's vision of the workings of fate to the point where she cannot see anything clearly.

In addition, none of the magnetic fields upon the island react with non-ferrous metals, including gold, silver, copper and dracheneisen. However, ferrous materials, such as iron or steel, will be very vulnerable to the many magnetic fields in the area. None of the fields were random, but because many

systems have collapsed, the fields now work erratically or for no apparent purpose. As a result, ferrous materials often move about by themselves or experience significant thermal changes. Tools tend to disappear if left unguarded, swords turn on their wielders and one poor individual who refused to let go of his weapon found himself dragged across the length of the island before being dropped to the ground.

Below are seven unique artifacts that they have found at various synchroneth sites, including their original purpose and current use.

Bar

The Explorers have discovered several bars of a black material similar to dracheneisen. Lightweight and almost unbreakable, they have no useful purpose. The bars originally served to transfer a magnetic current to other pieces of machinery. If brought into contact with another piece of metal and slid alongside it, the other metal piece becomes magnetically charged for a short period of time. Several Explorers discovered that by rubbing the bar along their sword blades, the weapon would then parry more effectively for a few minutes.

7TH SEA™ MECHANICS

The bar may be used to magnetically charge any ferrous metallic object for three rounds for each swipe, up to a maximum of 5 rounds. While charged, the object provides a +3 bonus to the target number to be hit when it is used to parry or actively defend against metal objects. The object also provides +1 unkept die to attack rolls against undead creatures. The object is also magnetically charged with a field strength equal to Brawn 1 (i.e. it takes an opposed Brawn check vs. Brawn 1 to pull an object from it).

D20™ MECHANICS

The bar may be used to magnetically charge any ferrous metallic object for three rounds for each swipe up to a maximum of 15 rounds. While charged, the object provides a +2 bonus to armor class when used to parry or actively defend against metal objects. The object also provides a +1 to hit and damage bonus against negatively charged creatures such as undead. The object is also magnetically charged with a field strength equal to Str 9. (i.e. it requires an opposed Strength check vs. Str 9 to pull an object free from it).

Block

One particular site contains several red cubes measuring approximately one meter on each side. These are typically found attached to a large metallic deposit or artifact. They are profoundly powerful magnets and difficult to remove. Indeed, they are so strong that the Explorers still find no good use for them. They have simply broken several of them up into acorn-sized pieces and dipped them into a small amount of molten silver. The shiny magnet may then be strung on a silver chain and presented to a noble as a precious artifact.

The blocks produce a strong magnetic field, Strength 25/Brawn 6. Pulling metallic objects away from them requires a Strength/Brawn check vs. the magnetic field. It is much easier to simply slide the magnet along the metal until it breaks contact.

Deflection Stones

These large rounded stones weigh approximately ten pounds and measure about one foot in diameter. The stones are imbued with a strong magnetic field, which surprisingly has little effect upon small metal objects. However, when any metallic object larger than a knife comes close to one of the stones, it is repelled. If worn around the chest, the stone provides a protective bonus, deflecting metal weapons away from the wearer. Only one stone may be worn at any time.

D20™ MECHANICS

The stones provide a +3 AC bonus, but the wearer's maximum Dex bonus is +8.

7TH SEA™ MECHANICS

The stones add +2 TN to be hit, but also adds +1 TN to all checks involving Reflexes.

Disc

Only two of these objects have been found intact. As soon as the objects on top of them were removed, the discs floated up into the air and out of site. They originally served as part of the apparatus used to lift heavy weights up to the Tesserans floating cities. The Tesserans used focused magnetic fields to direct the discs, but that system has broken down. Now any disc which is not caught will simply float away until it is lost. The Explorers keep an eye out for more of the discs, but without any luck.

The disc measures three feet in diameter, and can lift up to one thousand pounds of material. Unless tethered, however, it will always float straight up, and can only be brought down by adding more than one thousand pounds of weight on top of it.

Lenses

These clear lenses were created from a glass-like substance, originally used to focus magnetic forces in the most advanced Tesseran creations. While the surrounding material is rotted or rusted away, the lenses remain in pristine condition. The Explorers noticed that, when looked through, the lenses magnify the surrounding terrain through a series of distorted and colorful patterns. Though no one has yet realized it, the "colorful patterns" are actually magnetic distortions and forces. The Explorers have not discovered any good use for the lenses, so they cast silver around the edges of several of them and give them to nobles for use as an ostentatious, and impractical, monocle.

7TH SEA™ MECHANICS

The lens increases the target number for Perception checks by 5 when objects are viewed through it. If the user is trying to spot magnetic fields or Tesseran artifacts, the lens instead provides two free raises.



D20™ MECHANICS

The lens provides a -5 penalty for spot and search checks when objects are viewed through it. If the user is trying to spot magnetic fields or Tesseran artifacts, the lens instead provides a +10 bonus.

Lightcubes

These cubes of marble-like stone measure one syrnoot on each side. Most of them glowed quite brightly when first discovered, but their light waxes and wanes for no readily discernable reason. The Explorers sent several back to Théah for further study, but the light dropped down to a faint glimmer when removed from the site where they were found. The cubes were actually a form of light source for the Tessera. They glow brightly in powerful magnetic fields. Once removed from the magnetic fields of the ruins, they quickly fade to a slight glimmer.

Pipe

These chunks of thick walled pipe, usually 4 inches long and three inches wide, hold a magnetic charge, though not a strong one. They used to line much of the city for channeling magnetic current from one location to another. If a pipe is struck by a forceful blow (or hurled at someone), it shatters, leaving a large mass of magnetic thread-width wire that immediately entangles whatever it strikes. The wires will wrap around people (unless a Reflex saving throw, DC20/Finesse check, TN 25 is made), but tend to bind metallic objects such as weapons first. The binding is quite tight, requiring a strength check, DC 20 or a Brawn check, TN 25 to free any entangle persons or objects. If the wires have bound a metallic object, such as a sword or armor, the check to break free has a DC of 30 or a TN of 35.

Postscript: The Isle of the Font

Legends abound in the Midnight Archipelago, from tales of ghostly ships to myths of islands made entirely of gold. Most are dismissed as sailor stories, but with all the wonders the Archipelago holds, more than a few may have some basis in fact. One of these legends is presented below as a brief adventure hook, along with mechanics should the GM decide it actually exists. The information below is intended for GMs only.

Queen Elaine recently heard a rumor from a Sidhe courtier of a fountain of youth lost somewhere within the Midnight Archipelago. She immediately summoned Jeremiah Berek and ordered him to seek out this long lost fable and bring back its water. He has asked several Sea Dogs crews to undertake this quest for his queen, despite being unsure where the fountain lies. But word may have leaked out, and reached who knows how many ears. Besides the medicinal qualities, such a fountain would carry with it the promise of untold wealth: what noble lady or vain courtier would not give everything they had for a chance to turn back the clock?

The Sidhe will happily tell the tale of a fountain that restores a person to their youth. However, their tales do not reveal the truth of the fountain. Instead they dance around the subject, alluding to it in hints and riddles, but never

completely answering the question. Queen Elaine was able to get a description of the fountain for her Sea Dogs and then requested the Queen of the Sidhe ensure that none of her subjects reveal the location of the fountain. Any creature that reveals the location now will have to face the wrath of their own Queen, a fate that few care to try.

The fountain itself lies deep within the Archipelago upon a small rock of an island. The island is a simple hillside only a hundred yards across and bare of all vegetation or signs of interest. At the top of this hillside, a large smoky gray stone lies imbedded into the ground. This rock doesn't appear any different than the others, but if pried up, a passageway is revealed. The stone is actually translucent so a feeble light filters through it to light the corridor.

Anyone who follows the seven foot tall tunnel can tell from the dust and cobwebs that no one has passed this way in hundreds of years, but a thin stream of water trickles down from the opening to the floor (Spot check, DC 25, or Wits + Search Roll, TN 30 to notice). A shelf on the western edge of the isle at the high water mark allows the water to seep into the rocks. The water passes through cracks in the rock, absorbing minerals and passing through Syrneth magnetic fields, until it reaches the passageway, which it follows until it ends at a small pool of water in front of a stone wall. This pool is the fountain which Elaine seeks. It is approximately three feet across and one inch deep. The water is tinted a faint green and the bottom of the pool glows dimly, casting a green glow within the passageway. The overflow of the pool seeps into cracks in the walls and rejoins with the sea. If water is removed from the pool, it refills very slowly, taking at least a month to replenish. Any water taken before reaching the pool will numb a person's tongue, but have no other effects.

In non-Théan campaigns, Queen Elaine, the Sea Dogs, and other particulars may be changed to any group of individual the GM wishes.

Water of the Fountain of Youth

The water of the pool is not magical, but it does have a special property. It does not physically restore a person's youth, as many who hear the rumors have guessed; instead, anyone who drinks even a few swallows of the pool water will find their memories beginning to fade. Anyone imbibing the liquid must make a Fortitude check with a DC 30 or a Brawn Roll with a TN of 40. If the check fails, the victim loses five years worth of memories for every ounce drunk.

Anyone who drinks at least six ounces will lose all of their memories through childhood. Drinking more than that will completely wipe out a person's mind, leaving him infantile and helpless. Even a few drops will cause the person to forget a few hours of memory (and any spells memorized during that time). The Sophia's Daughters use a similar potion, but the water from the fountain is much more potent, and doesn't require any special preparation. The water is almost tasteless, but it tends to numb a person's tongue when drunk.

Queen Elaine knows the fountain's true properties, but has declined to tell anyone about them (though she admonished Berek not to let anyone drink from it). What purpose she might have for its water is up to the GM.

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Islands of Gold™

The Midnight Archipelago

Sixteen Men on a Dead Man's Chest

It lies on the far edge of civilization, a tropical island chain thousands of miles from any land. They call it the Midnight Archipelago; it holds enough wealth to tempt the greatest kings, and enough dangers to turn brave men white with fear. Here, stalwart explorers chart the lost ruins of alien civilizations, pirates carve personal empires in blood and gold, and hidden jungles hold monstrous beings unseen since the dawn of man. From the black magic of Sange Tara to the pirates' paradise of the Straits of Blood, come venture to the furthest reaches of the sea, and see what thrilling adventures await.

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