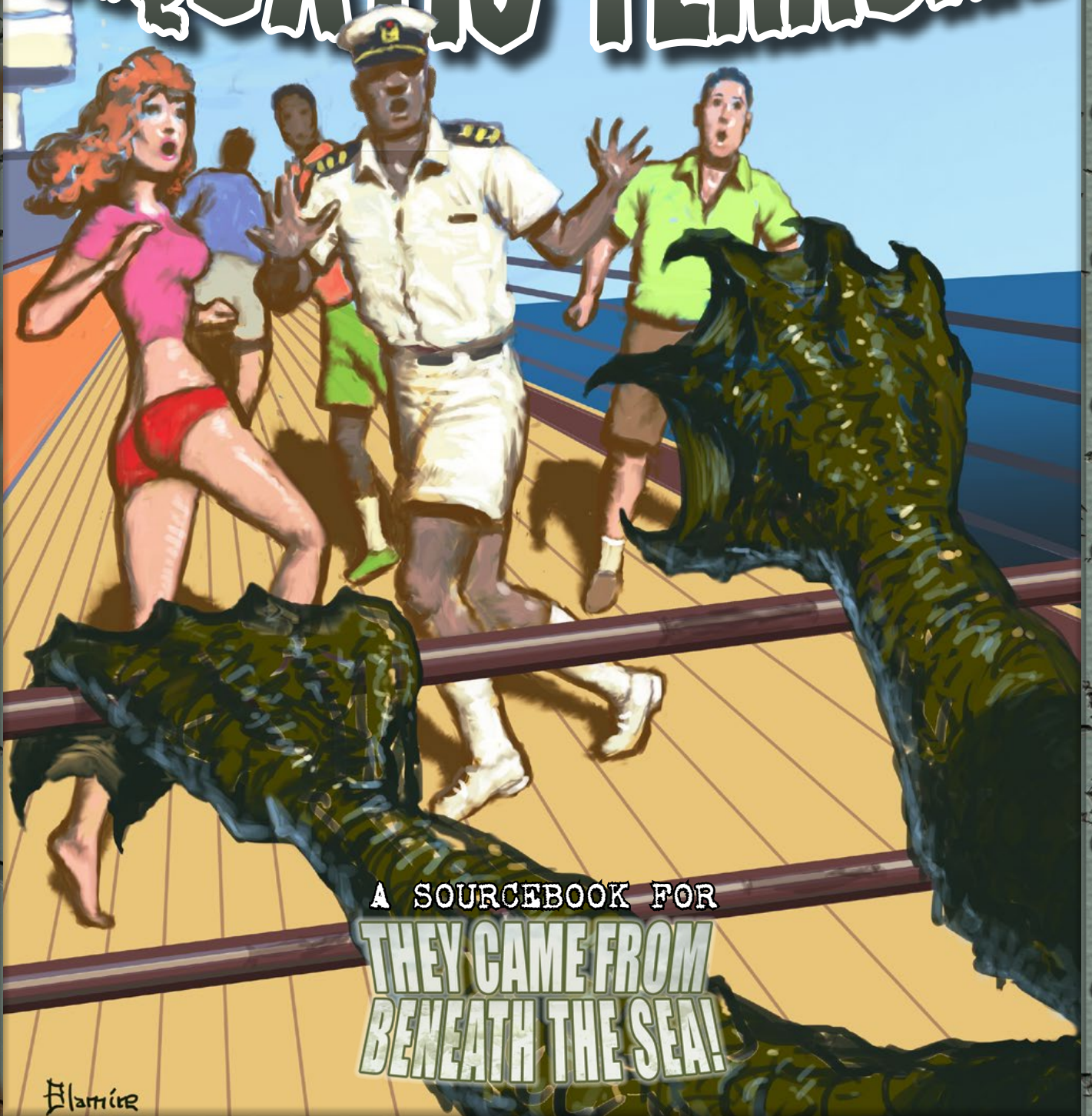


# TALES OF AQUATIC TERROR!



A SOURCEBOOK FOR  
**THEY CAME FROM  
BENEATH THE SEA!**

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# TALES OF AQUATIC TERROR!



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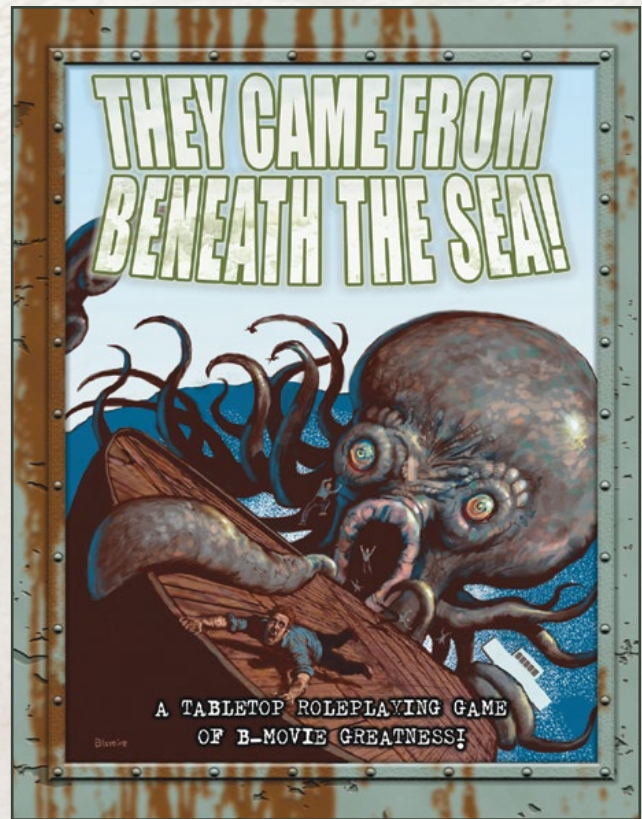
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# TEENAGE SHRIMP VS. CENTOPUS

The lighthouse keeper froze on the outer gallery as the great mass rose from the waves before him, blotting out the stars. The last thing he saw was a cluster of massive tentacles hugging the building like a child with a box of crackers before crushing it - which is what the monster did, the results crumbling to a pile of rubble. The keeper never saw the feminine figure standing on the rocks, arms raised like an orchestra conductor.

. . .

It was only natural that a series of mysteriously destroyed lighthouses brought in Cods Hairigon of the Federal Bureau of Dams, since lighthouses were basically the same thing in tube form. Dr. Dabe Banibar and Dr. Lonna Durene came to assist in "science stuff."

"Cephalopod," said Dabe.

"Bless you," said Cods.

"No, that's what we found traces of," corrected Lonna. "Something akin to octopus, squid, or nautilus. You know, a squirmy, tentacle-y thing."

"Must be really tall and angry to do something like this."

"Possibly the tallest, angriest cephalopod we've ever encountered," confirmed Dabe.

"Why? Why now?" wondered Cods with a deceptively far-off look. The Dam Man decided to have his old pal Professor Limus Mankeason do some checking.

Unbeknownst to them, and completely unrelated, at that very moment, teenager Rosty Newlar, having now learned lots of science herself working with Professor Limus Mankeason, flitted about her controls with the look of one possessed. "Soon. Very soon now, my dear one," she said to something nearby covered in cloth.

. . .

Elderly Limus Mankeason's investigation led him to a lighthouse up the coast, from which he reported to a concerned Cods by phone.

"Professor, don't take any unnecessary chances."

"I'm alright, Cods, I'll only take necessary chances. Listen carefully. There is a woman standing on the rocks with her arms raised."

"Some form of ... television host?"

"Wait! Something's coming!"

"Professor! Get out of there!" yelled Cods as he heard a powerful crash of waves.

"How interesting," was the last thing Limus said before mayhem and destruction drowned him out.

. . .  
Tragedy hung over the team. "Whatever this horror is, it sounds orchestrated. But who is this woman?" wondered Dabe.

"A woman lousy with science," offered Lonna, who then hastened to add, "Well don't look at me." So, they didn't look at her.

. . .  
Newspaper headlines screamed about the terrible events. But the worst was yet to come.

The docks of Coastal City bustled as the giant monster slowly rose, water pouring in torrents from its slick surface, until Centopus was revealed in all its cephalopodan glory; an ancient and terrible malformation of giant octopus, its hundred tentacles writhing independently.

The commander of a nearby naval vessel, Captain Hemp Maxwell, ordered immediate fire but it was quickly evident even heavy guns would have little impact.

It did, however, annoy the Centopus who casually whipped 30 tentacles about a large warehouse to haul itself onto the dock, where it immediately crushed people and vehicles. It continued to use this lash-and-drag method to pull its massive self through city streets. Not immediately evident was the woman perched atop the thing, quite tiny by comparison.

. . .  
Rosty's hand crumpled the newspaper announcing the death of her mentor Limus Mankeason at the hands of a giant octopus. It must have touched her deeply as it took a lot to make her crumple something.

She whipped the material off the covered object, revealing the body of Nyllon Tines, her dead boyfriend, still in motorcycle jacket and jeans.

"I'm not just gonna bring you back to life, Nyllon. With my new science and stuff, I'm gonna bring you back to life and make you giant. Then you can make that big octopus pay. I dug Professor Mankeason."

. . .  
Centopus was the talk of the town because it was destroying the town. By now, Coastal City had gotten pretty good at evacuation, but tanks and planes had little effect on the squishy horror.

. . .  
Rosty pulled a switch and electric bolts shot from impressive science things. Nyllon jolted, but nothing happened. Rosty increased the juice, then the electricity.

It happened. Nyllon began to grow.

Too large for the table, he plopped to the floor, continuing to grow at an alarming rate. He was awake, unsure what was happening to him.

"Hey, Nyllon."

"Hey, Rosty. What's up?"

"I'm making you giant. It's cool. Then you can go fight the Centopus which killed Professor Mankeason and is wrecking the city, plus you were dead, so that's cool."

"Oh, cool," said Nyllon as his head burst through the roof.

. . .  
Centopus continued to lasso buildings and drag itself, leaving destruction in its wake. Cods, Lonna, and Dabe watched in disbelief from a rooftop. Lonna pointed. A woman atop the monster stood up. It was Sherba Greem.

"Newcott! Newcott Waikes! Where are you, phillanderer?!" she bellowed via bullhorn.

In a nearby diner, Newcott Waikes of the Department of Touristry spat coffee and ran outside, gazing up in horror. "Sherba? Sherba, is that you?"

"Yes, it's me," she spat. "I used the same science that stole you from me to control this ancient primordial creature in order to carry out my revenge!"

"But Karsly and I split up! It was just a . . ."  
We never knew what it was "just a" because an enormous tentacle squashed him.

Steady booming footsteps made Sherba, and Centopus' single eye, look up. Striding towards them was Giant Nyllon, still looking the punk only much larger.

Immediately, Sherba pointed and her octopus monster obeyed, whipping numerous tentacles in the oncoming giant's direction. They wrapped around the massive teen and a titanic struggle ensued which seemed the logical thing to ensue. Each took turns tossing the other into buildings, as Sherba watched from the safety of a rooftop.

Eventually Centopus' bulk seemed to win out over Nyllon's, and he was thrown hard into some electrical towers.

Suddenly, the megateen jolted. He began to change, his face and body growing more crustacean by the second, until he fully transformed into the Giant Teenage Shrimp. Of course, he was still in leather jacket and jeans, as it should be.

With a terrifying shrimplike hiss, he lurched, hunched over, and attacked, multiple antenna-like stingers shooting from his face into Centopus. The great cephalopod trembled, stung multiple times. Attempting to retreat, it reared up on tens of tentacles and toppled right onto the building from which Sherba watched. She barely had time to scream "Not again!" before the building collapsed around her.

Giant Teenage Shrimp didn't let up on Centopus who now whipped its way back towards the docks. It plunged into the water, creating great waves before disappearing below.

. . .  
It was Teenage Shrimp Day in Coastal City, so decreed the mayor. Fellow monster fighters Hemp, Karsly, and Clain joined Lonna, Dabe, Cods, Rosty, and Nyllon - normal size again. Overall, a festive occasion.

Until the next threat from those darkened depths.



# INTRODUCTION

"Some of the grains always stick to the sack, like the two of us."

Frank Brooks, *Target Earth* (1954)

Within this book you will find a selection of four stories, written and ready to run at your table, online, or wherever you choose to play games. Each fits within the sci-fi b-movie milieu of **They Came from Beneath the Sea!**, but each tells a different tale, with rescue, drama, danger, and horror in the mix, among others.

Along with the adventures included in this book come ready-made characters, dozens of plot hooks for starting your own stories, and a handful of aliens ready for launch against your heroes. Whether you intend to run **They Came from Beneath the Sea!** at a convention or for your regular gaming group, you'll find plenty of content in the pages ahead for you to explore, expose, and unleash.

**Tales of Aquatic Terror!** contains the following chapters:

- **Introduction** – You'll soon depart this place on a voyage toward certain glory or certain doom, depending on the aquatic monsters you meet on the way.
- **Iguana Take a Cruise** – This story set in Atlantic waters sees three ships come into improbable contact with one another. A German U-boat surfaces, carrying iguanoid cryostasis pods. The US Navy is present, investigating the World

War II vessel. And there by unfortunate coincidence floats the pleasure yacht holding our protagonists. At first things seem peaceful, but then the iguanoids break free from their pods!

- **The Bubble** – This tale of terrible political intrigue starts with a prominent politician visiting Portland, Maine and the protagonists becoming aware of an alien plot to control him, ending with an assault on the Prefecture of the Pod's underwater base!

- **The Voyage of the Rose Marie** – This sandbox of adventure hooks, vivid characters, and plentiful dangers puts protagonists aboard a luxury cruise as it's forced to navigate threats of many stripes and the villainous crab people, who have already taken over the bodies of most of the crew!

- **A Summer of Terror** – Warm Rock, California should be an idyllic pleasure spot, free from danger and weapon experiments. Sadly, it's free from neither. Following body parts washing up on the shore, the military locks down the town and pits the heroes against a variety of foes, forcing them to pick a side or survive a contained, Californian apocalypse.





# FILLET OF SOULS

Dover Fenesscloud was famished and about to tuck into his meal when the fillet first spoke to him.

"You fool! What is wrong with you? Are you so dense you would eat me?"

Dover stared back. A fillet of sole had never talked to him before. And this one chastised him. The rather studious food critic took a sip of water and started over again. That would seem the thing to do. With caution this time, the appreciator of fine epicures let his fork once again hover over the beautifully prepared piece of fish.

"Great flatfish! Are you mad?! I speak to you, admonish you, and instead of responding, you attempt to eat me yet again?! What madness is this?!"

What madness indeed, thought Dover. He had gone quite mad. And just before such a lovely meal too. Such irony for one who lived to eat. But simply because a fellow had gone insane did not mean a fellow also went hungry. Even lunatics need to eat. Again, the shaken diner brought his utensil into play. And again, the cooked piece of fish unleashed its ire.

"What is it going to take?! Seriously! I fear for your sanity that you would continue to attempt to eat something engaging in intelligent conversation with you!"

"Yes. But ... if I engage in conversation with you, it's like acknowledging that a piece of fish - even a nicely prepared one - is speaking with me, so wouldn't that promote even less hope for the state of my sanity?"

The fillet paused a moment, apparently to consider, though it's hard to tell with a piece of cooked fish.

"No. No, it would not. For it must be quite obvious to you now that I am no ordinary cut of carefully prepared fish, but a member of the Fillayian race, from a distant star."

"Why ... why, it's fantastic. Of course. I mean, it's the only thing that makes sense, incredible as it may sound. But how in heaven's name did you choose for your Earth disguise such an awkward thing as a carefully prepared fillet of fish?"

"Because, you ninny, this is what we look like," clipped the arrogant fish piece. "The reason we chose Earth among the millions of inhabited worlds is because yours was the only one that would not require a physical disguise of some sort."

"You mean to say, this is what you look like? You look like a fillet of sole?" Dover could hardly believe it.

"I prefer to think of it, Dover, as a case of one of your primary Earth delicacies bearing an uncomfortable resemblance to us."

"Extraordinary!"

"Embarrassing!" retorted the plated thing. "However, once we got over the sheer humiliation of the thing, we began to appreciate the convenience. And the irony. Don't you see, Dover? One of the universe's puniest, most misunderstood things ... the fillet of sole ... providing the bridge to interplanetary conquest."

"See here, how do you know my name?" asked the self-centered connoisseur, brushing aside the entire suggestion of interplanetary invasion.

"We Fillayians have studied you for some time by way of long-range looking things we call *long-range looking things*. We focused primarily on those self-appointed culinary aficionados who fancy themselves a *right good judge of seafood*. Where better to launch an invasion of 'expertly prepared fish pieces?'" The fillet laughed, quite triumphantly and haughtily considering it was food on a plate.

"But what do you expect me to do? Certainly not help you conquer the Earth?" gasped the affronted Dover.

"On the contrary, that is precisely what I expect you to do. For in return, you shall be allowed to live among us, your new fillet masters, as, let us say, token humans."

"And why in heaven's name should I desire to do that?" sniffed the practiced epicurean.

"Because you will be one of a select few to live in the lap of luxury, with all the finest foods at your disposal on a daily basis."

Dover's eyes lit up; reflections of past feasts all rolled into one glorious collective vision.

"Suppose I was to help you, you - you piece of fish. What guarantee would I have that you wouldn't turn on me when all is said and done?"

"None," spoke the fillet, coldly.

"None?" Dover's considerable eyebrows shot up.

"None. In which case I will, quite simply, control your mind right now and make you a human automaton with no will of its own. We do that, you know."

"You do not."

"Care to try me, noisy eater?"

Something about the way that piece of fish looked at him, though it didn't move and had no

eyes, or perhaps its tone of voice, said this *cooked fish means business*.

"I see you leave me no choice," uttered a defeated Dover, who nonetheless had a cornucopia of fine foods swimming in his gluttonous head.

...

It was two days later when Dover Fennesscloud witnessed his first demonstration of Fillayian takeover. He had his neighbor Barbara Chute over for dinner and, as she grinned with expectation, he emerged from the kitchen with two plates of food: one containing the space fillet he was now familiar with, and another with one of its fellow Fillayians. He placed the latter's plate before Barbara and sat down to watch.

No sooner was his guest ready to plunge an eager fork than energy pulsed from her plate. She froze, staring at the repast she would not enjoy. Her fillet made rapid work of taking control of her mind and, with robot-like deliberation, Barbara picked up the fish piece, carefully deposited it in her purse and walked out the door with nary a thank you.

Dover looked to his plate and imagined the fillet beaming at him triumphantly, if fillets could beam.

...

The test having been successful, Dover now arranged the big event; his annual charity dinner. 400 guests - 400 unsuspecting victims for as many fillets from the stars.

His own personal Fillayian was excited. Once taken over, these 400 would go forth and "hand off" other fillets. It would grow exponentially.

"This is the first test of Fillayian supremacy, of our power. First test for you too, little man."

Dover, by no means little, managed not to grimace as the fillet's laughter filled the large banquet hall, confusing guests as to its source.

Finally, it was time for the main course. An army of waitstaff hustled plates out to the numerous tables. As customary, all waited for Dover's bon appetite before digging in.

He stood at the podium, more nervous than usual, gazing out on that sea of hungry faces. By his side, the arrogant commander fillet waited to give mental command.

As the final table was being served, Dover quickly leaned into the microphone.

"Hurry up and dig in!" he barked, and the cries of 400 skewered aliens filled the room, as he quickly tucked into his alien master.



Blamire

# CHAPTER ONE

# IGUANA TAKE

# A CRUISE

*When the USS Barry pulled alongside the salvage ship that had lifted the old German U-Boat out of the water, the salvage crew looked pleased and relieved to see them. It bothered Seth, but the captain said they had the submarine for six hours before arrival, and he guessed that was long enough. As soon as the Barry had the U-Boat tethered, the salvage made its way back to land. Their attitude rattled Seth; it was like they had seen something. He wished he had voiced that back then. When the science team wanted to board the U-Boat, Seth had a bad feeling, but when the captain said they could go over to investigate, he didn't say anything. So many regrets that day, and nothing he could take back now.*

*Bam!*

*The sound of something heavy slamming against the bulkhead door broke Seth from his reverie. The few remaining crew members and the shocked scientists all jumped. It wasn't the first time, and it certainly wasn't the last. Whatever they were, they were persistent and angry. Seth surveyed the people around him. Six, including himself, remained of a 337-person crew compliment. Two of those were civilians, so four, only one percent had survived the initial attacks. Seth took in a deep breath to hold back the tears of such a loss. It might be one hundred percent if they couldn't figure out how to get out of here before those things broke through.*

*Iguana Take a Cruise* is set in deep Atlantic waters as three ships come into improbable contact with one another. An old German U-Boat surfaces carrying iguanoid cryostasis pods. The US Navy finds the submarine and begins investigations. And the last, a pleasure yacht filled with our protagonists chances upon the situation, but not before the Navy destroyer unleashes mutated iguanoids from the stasis chambers. Out in the open ocean, it seems these hapless pleasure cruisers are the only ones who can unravel what happened and save the sailors from a deadly fate.

## PRODUCER'S NOTE

This scenario is geared toward quick play with a group who has never played **They Came from Beneath the Sea!**, or any a role-playing game. The scenario is self-contained and great for one-offs or convention games. It could also serve as a starting point for new players to jump into a chronicle. The finale is definitive — defeat the mutated iguanoids and escape — but that doesn't mean the story must end there. We provide some suggestions at

the end on how to take the characters forward, leaving a few untouched threads they may want to investigate.

As this is designed for newer players, we include notes throughout the scenario of how to help your players along if they are stumped or get stuck. The scenario is linear in nature, but not everything must happen in a particular order, and some scenes (especially in Act 2) may happen sporadically or not at all. There are some clues and bits of information to find throughout, and we'll call out core clues vs. alternative clues as we go. At the end of each Act, we provide a list of goals for the Act as well as a few tips for the Director. Don't worry too much about the players investigating beyond the scope of the game. The nature of the story limits the characters on purpose, keeping them on task through a small play space, fast pacing, and some unavoidable events.

## SETTING THE TABLE

Because *Iguana Take a Cruise* is designed to introduce players to the game, we expect they need to start making some characters. We suggest they do so together, as it would make sense for them to compliment one another, though the characters don't need to know one another well for this scenario to function. This story is supposed to be fast paced with heavy elements of investigation and combat with socializing included. Having a couple of characters competent in combat is a must, with at least one character competent each in investigation and socialization. Players are likely to have the most fun if all the characters have something to do in combat, even if it's a Quip or Trope that helps the other characters. The characters can come from any background, as they are all thrown together through circumstance on a for-hire yacht. They may know one another, and we encourage some level of knowledge between the characters. The assumption is the characters know nothing of the USS *Barry's* mission, nor the German U-Boat. If a character has a military background, then the mission is too high a security level for the character to know about.

We also provide five characters suited to use in this scenario at the end, which you are free to use. These characters have integrated backstories and a reason they are all on the *Helios* at this time. This might be a good way to get players familiar with the system before making their own characters, or an easy way to throw together a one-off or convention game and get everyone into the thick of it without having to spend a great deal of time on preparation.

## THE HELIOS, THE USS BARRY, AND THE U-BOAT

*Iguana Take a Cruise* is centered on three ships in the mid-Atlantic, hundreds of kilometers off the shore of Virginia. Our protagonists are on a pleasure yacht, the *Helios*, along with its crew and a few other passengers; the *USS Barry*, designation DD-933, is a destroyer class ship with the US Navy and most of its crew is missing or lost, except for the few notable exceptions provided below; and the U-Boat is empty save for the monsters it houses. The *USS Barry* has the U-Boat tethered to it, and when the *Helios* arrives on scene, the crew doesn't have much choice but to tether it as well. The three boats are easily accessible with either rope bridges or short dingy rides and characters are encouraged to explore the two military vessels, especially early on when they both seem abandoned.

Director-controlled characters all have an Intensity 1 toward the player characters, and can serve as Contacts for the characters. Some of the characters we have provided for this scenario have members of either the *USS Barry* or the *Helios* as Contacts. Players can decide that one of these other Contacts is either on the *Helios* or serves on the *Barry* at the beginning of game, or during play, especially if the players created their own characters before the game began.

Below we've detailed the main characters of import between the two manned ships.

### USS BARRY

- **Commander Neil Jackson** (Force 5, Finesse 3, Resilience 5) is the captain of the *USS Barry*. He's a no-nonsense man who isn't excited about his current circumstances. Commander Jackson is a prudent man, and realizes that unusual circumstances require unusual methods. He's ready and willing to conscript the protagonists into helping him deal with the mutated iguanoids, though he is reluctant to share too much information about his secret mission or the U-Boat.
- **Lieutenant Seth Blackwood** (Force 4, Finesse 5, Resilience 3) is the first mate on the *USS Barry*. This is Seth's first assignment as a first mate, and he is eager to please. His quick thinking saved his captain and the few remaining crew members. As a career military man, he is adept at thinking outside the box, and puts that cunning to good use when in a fight or solving a problem.
- **Seaman Joshua Blakely** (Force 6, Finesse 3, Resilience 3) is a sailor on the *USS Barry*. This is Joshua's longest assignment on a ship, and he was already tired of life at sea before the *Barry* intercepted the U-Boat. He has temper problems that have hampered his ability to rise in rank and while he is self-aware enough to know this is true, it doesn't stop him from blaming everyone else in the world. Joshua has survived this long on pure spite and the fact that he was below decks hiding from work when the mutant iguanoids first attacked.
- **Sergeant Franklin Humberdink** (Force 4, Finesse 5, Resilience 5) is a marine assigned to the *USS Barry*. Franklin is part of a special ops group, a conjoined effort between

the Navy and the Coast Guard to protect the United States from alien incursion or aquatic threats. He joined the crew of the *Barry* as part of its direction to retrieve the U-Boat. He wasn't aware the scientists were planning to open the iguanoid pods, and would have advised against it. At least Lieutenant Blackwood seems competent enough and saved what he could of the rest of the crew. Not much. Humberdink is a hard man with strong opinions about civilians and their place in this mission, which is none at all.

- **Dr. Jamila Nazari** (Force 6, Finesse 3, Resilience 3) is a civilian scientist assigned to the *USS Barry* along with a team lead by Nathaniel Jones, who tragically was the first to die when he opened the cryostasis pods holding the mutant iguanoids. Jamila is intelligent, her work as a xenobiologist and alien systems expert the best in her field. Albeit the field consists of her and five other scientists, four now that Nathaniel is dead. Jamila is more than happy to help kill the mutants especially if it means she can study their remains. Though she is adamant that true iguanoids should not be crossed.
- **Dr. Linda Forsythe** (Force 3, Finesse 4, Resilience 3) is the third civilian scientist in the team of three assigned to the *Barry* who were supposed to help secure the cryostasis pods and examine the iguanoid technology. She is a living computer, and was sent to collect data and ensure that it is stored safely. She is not nearly as intelligent or self-confident as Jamila, though she is quick witted. Her goal is to get out of this situation alive, the data be damned. She supports the protagonists in their decisions as long as they have offered to take her with them when they leave.

### THE HELIOS

- **Chuck Hoseman** (Force 3, Finesse 4, Resilience 4) is the captain of the *Helios*. He is the kind of guy that takes whatever comes at him. He's unflappable, but not because of a will of steel so much as him being high for ninety-percent of his life. His scatterbrained nature would have gotten the protagonists dumped into the sea, if not for his much more capable and amiable wife, Sarah. Chuck doesn't trust the military or anyone associated with "The Man," but takes Sarah's lead in all things.
- **Sarah Hoseman** (Force 5, Finesse 4, Resilience 4) is Chuck's wife and his first mate on the *Helios*. Where Chuck is a mess of drug fueled incompetence, Sarah is a level-headed entrepreneur who knows that a woman captain is less appealing than a fun-loving man in today's atmosphere. So, she lets Chuck play as the captain, while she runs the ship as his first mate. She's been running for-hire yacht cruises for about five years and has seen a lot of things. She knows about iguanoids, maybe more than the military is comfortable knowing, meaning she won't divulge such information unless she is sure she's alone.
- **Lisa Hanover** (Force 5, Finesse 5, Resilience 4) is Sarah's cousin and a marine photographer. She often takes free rides on the yacht to catch perfect photos of marine life while out and about. She's gregarious and talkative, insisting on taking photos of nearly everything she sees using her trusty Nikon F.

- **MaryAnne Russet** (Force 3, Finesse 3, Resilience 6) is a passenger on the *Helios*. MaryAnne is a pilot by trade, and served as a WASP during the war. Her husband of 15 years recently died, and she is using the yacht as a final send-off to Russel Russet as she spreads his ashes in the Atlantic. She would have flown out to drop the ashes, but Russel loved the open sea and boating, and so is taking the yacht to honor him. She's a tough, older woman with a lot of sass and a snarky personality. Everyone on the *Helios* loves her.
- **Ferdinand** (Force 3, Finesse 4, Resilience 3) is on the *Helios* by accident. He was supposed to be catching a passenger Ferry to the Eastern Shore but stepped on the wrong boat, which has absolutely ruined his day. He's trying to make the most of the beautiful sights, but he can't help lamenting how much his situation sucks. He isn't the brightest or the best at well, anything, but at least he has some good cheer. And he makes for good iguanoid fodder after everyone has decided they like him.

Additionally, the main antagonists for this scenario are iguanoids (p. 176, **They Came from Beneath the Sea!**) and mutated iguanoids. The mutated iguanoids are larger and bulkier than their counterparts and look more human than iguanoid. They have the following traits and special rules.

**Skills:** Athletics 3, Close Combat 3, Command 2, Enigmas 1, Integrity 2, Pilot 2, Science 3, Technology 3

**Attributes:** Intellect 2, Cunning 3, Resolve 2; Might 5, Dexterity 2, Stamina 4; Presence 2, Manipulation 3, Composure 2

**Health:** 9

**Super Soldier:** The mutated iguanoids do not have mesmeric influence, as they are too much like the humans with which they spliced. Instead, they are resistant to damage, halving all damage taken by any source other than damage from an electrical burst. Additionally, they have a strong survival instinct and run away if brought below 4 Health levels. If the mutated iguanoid drops to 0 health through damage of any type other than an electric charge, it falls prone and goes into a catatonic state where it begins to heal its wounds, 1 per turn until fully healed, at which point it goes on the hunt again. Only electricity can kill a mutated iguanoid.

**Weakness:** While the mutated iguanoids have any damage from an electrical source, their Might is decreased to 2.

## PREQUEL: A SECRET WAR

During World War II both the USA and Germany had independent encounters with the iguanoids, specifically through finding cryostasis pods and attempting to understand them. While the war raged on land and over sea, a secret war was waging under the waves between US and Nazi submarines to locate and analyze iguanoid technological specimen. Submarines suspected of carrying tech would target one another, and the two nations stole, and counter-stole intelligence related to the undersea creatures over the years. Eventually, the US lost their last submarine carrying iguanoid technology in an attack from the iguanoids themselves.

The Nazis, already suffering great losses at the technologically advanced people's hands, had given up the fight.

What the USA didn't know was that the Nazis had begun genetic experimentation on iguanoids and humans, attempting to convert the cryostasis units to use with humans. They were successful in only one thing, using the cryostasis units to preserve their grotesque experiments. The results of which are terrifying half-iguanoid, half-human monstrosities with a thirst for blood. The Nazis, terrified of their own creations, put them all on a single submarine and sank it in the mid-Atlantic to never see them again.

Last year, the US Navy pin-pointed the lost U-Boat's location, and believed it held all the information on the iguanoids the Nazis had collected, along with several crates containing Nazi gold, or a scientific project misleadingly dubbed Projekt Goldmedaille. Military scientists began a salvage mission, and when the submarine was finally brought to the surface, the USS *Barry* was tasked with bringing the submarine home for further examination. While none of the scientists were supposed to explore the lost submarine until it arrived at a secret military shipyard in Chesapeake Bay, they couldn't help themselves. What they found was everything they expected, and so much more. They inadvertently opened the cryostasis chambers, unleashing the Nazi mutants on the unsuspecting naval ship.

## STRANDED AND AFRAID

*Iguana Take a Cruise* starts when the *Helios*, on a routine day-long pleasure cruise, is dragged off course and loses gas. The Nazi mutants are rampaging through the USS *Barry* when the *Helios* drifts into its vicinity. The destroyer isn't huge, but there are only three mutants. The characters should have time to investigate and find out what is going on before they find out they aren't actually alone on the ships. Director controlled characters are there to help set the tone. One or more of the *Helios* passengers might mysteriously disappear as they get attacked by mutants. And eventually, the characters run into the remaining crew of the USS *Barry* who are holding out until they can get help.

Both the iguanoids and the US Navy converge on the location, and the characters may choose to try run away or wait it out until one or the other arrives. But no matter what they choose, the mutants aren't letting them go without a fight.

*Iguana Take a Cruise* is both a survival mission and a race against time. The characters have a couple of options for how to spend their time before *something* catches up to them, but there is no escaping the inevitable. The mood should feel eerie, but enticing enough to cause exploration and investigation. Never let the characters forget that there is no escaping the three ships, and while they can hide, they certainly can't run.

## ACT ONE: DEAD IN THE WATER

Our protagonists start the adventure on the *Helios* as part of a day-long pleasure cruise. The day starts off normal with passengers mingling and enjoying drinks as Chuck and Sarah Hoseman navigate them through the beautiful Atlantic waters, showing off porpoise pods playing in the waves.



Elsewhere, off screen, iguanoids have received a beacon alerting them to the location of cryostasis chambers opening. They deploy ships to that location, but they have no idea that the pods are in transit, and therefore overshoot the USS *Barry* and the U-Boat. These ships cross the *Helios's* path and create strong currents that drag the yacht off course.

Sarah and Chuck struggle against the current, but cannot pry the *Helios* out of its strong grip, and making the attempt wastes fuel as they keep trying to course correct away from the effective rip tide. Sarah is an elite navigator, and eventually gets the *Helios* loose, but by that time, she's nearly out of gas. She only has enough fuel for course correction, but the ship might as well be dead in the water. She tries to radio the Coast Guard for help, but her weak radio signals can't pick up anyone listening.

Within moments, the *Helios* drifts into view of the USS *Barry*, and Sarah uses the last of her fuel to navigate to the naval ship in hopes they can help. The destroyer does not answer her hails, but everyone can see crates labeled "Projekt Goldmedaille" with a swastika emblazoned on the side sitting on the *Barry's* deck. The Navy ship is eerily silent and seems totally abandoned. They can also see the U-Boat tethered to the *Barry's* port side.

Chuck suggests going on board to use the Navy's superior radio system to call for assistance. And to just see what's in those crates over there. Reluctantly, Sarah agrees and everyone from the

*Helios* makes their way over to the *Barry* out of morbid curiosity. Once on the ship's deck, move to Act Two.

### DIRECTOR'S NOTES

- The opening Act is the character's introduction to one another and the ship's captain. Give them time to socialize and learn about Sarah, Chuck, and some of the other passengers before setting them off course.
- Encourage the players to use this initial time to establish some roleplay between the group, attempting to work on aspirations or reinforce their established relationships.
- Once they see the *Barry* people are going to want to investigate immediately. Let them. This Act moves quickly into the next at this point.

## ACT TWO: A DAWNING REALIZATION

When the characters arrive on the *Barry* it becomes obvious that no one is around, and something happened here. There's smeared blood on the deck and signs of struggle, but no bodies

or footprints to indicate what might have caused the issue. The players are likely to want to investigate the two boats, so let them. It's okay if they split up, and if they don't then the rest of the *Helios* passengers do. As they investigate and get deeper into the ship, they eventually find where the crew of the USS *Barry* have barricaded themselves in. That should be the last scene in this Act, so be sure to let them do some exploring before bringing it up.

During the investigations, you may want to run a few of these alternative scenes to help set the tone that something is just not right here. When investigations are mostly concluded, or the players seem like they are at a loss for investigating further, you can run the core scene listed here to move the plot along.

- **Alternative Scene #1:** A scream echoes through the halls of the destroyer's inner corridor which abruptly cuts off. Everyone converges on the location only to find a smear of blood. A quick head count reveals that Lisa is missing. Chuck says he was the last to see her, as she wandered off alone.

**Note:** This could be any of the passengers on the *Helios* except Sarah. Try to use someone the characters are not attached to.

- **Alternative Scene #2:** A sound echoes through the corridor. It sounds like someone running. When the characters turn to investigate, no one is in sight. The footsteps seem to echo away from them, pounding loudly on the metal walkways. If the characters attempt to follow the sounds or investigate, it leads them to the exit (the open deck of the *Barry* or the escape hatch on the U-Boat). No other *Helios* passengers were on this boat with them, they were all on the other one.

**Note:** This scene can happen either on the *Barry* or the U-Boat.

- **Alternative Scene #3:** Another scream echoes through the halls of the *Barry* this time from a storeroom in the lower deck. This time when everyone arrives, they find Sarah standing at the door, her face pale and grim. Inside the room are bodies, stacked high, wearing US Navy uniforms. The ones you can see are all horribly wounded, dismembered, beheaded, gutted, and otherwise violently murdered. Blood smears come from both sides of the walkway leading into the room.
- **Core Scene:** After searching through the entirety of the USS *Barry*, the members of the *Helios* convene at one point where they cannot pass through. A bulkhead door remains firmly shut, the wheel and levers seem jammed. Claw marks mar the outside of the door, indicating that something has tried to claw its way in. When the characters talk, they hear noises from the other side of the door. Moments later, someone from the other side opens the door and the group is confronted with Commander Neil Jackson and a small contingent of sailors who had barricaded themselves within. It's clear the characters are not who the Commander was expecting, and his confusion turns to concern as the characters tell him who they are. At this point, the characters should have a chance to have a conversation with the Commander. He won't reveal who or what attacked them, though he tells the characters about three monsters roaming the ship. He suspects that they have exited into the sea since the characters have spent so long on the ship without being attacked.

The following are some Core and Alternative Clues that the characters find as they investigate the U-Boat and the *Barry*. Characters should earn Core Clues whenever they enter a new part of a ship, and if they'd like to learn more, can roll to investigate to learn Alternative Clues.

## CORE CLUES

- The Nazi Gold is unopened and untouched.
- The *Barry* is not currently running its engines. It seems to be dead in the water.
- The U-Boat is tethered to the *Barry* and there are rope bridges between them. The U-Boat's hatch is open.
- The U-Boat seems to have been recently salvaged and has water and slimy sea scum covering the floor and walls.
- The U-Boat houses strange alien looking technologies, far beyond the comprehension of the passengers on the *Helios*. Three empty pods stand against one wall.

## ALTERNATIVE CLUES

Use either Enigmas + Intellect or Humanities + Cunning to uncover, one clue per success.

- Someone started an S.O.S. call from the *Barry* at some point, as it is still broadcasting.
- The *Barry*'s munitions are the latest and greatest the US military has to offer, including carrying nuclear warheads and some missiles that are so far advanced as to be unidentified. (Characters with a military background recognize them as experimental anti-submarine missiles.)
- The *Barry*'s fuel gauge reads that not only is it mostly full, but that it has backup stores of fuel which the *Helios* could use to leave.
- Blood pools in various locations throughout the *Barry*, but no bodies are around. There is no blood on the U-Boat.
- The open pods on the U-Boat are clean and dry on the inside, they look to have been opened recently.
- There are no corpses on the U-Boat, and it appears to have been abandoned before it sank.
- Marks on the inside of the U-Boat indicate something heavy was moved through here, possibly the crates possibly containing gold, but maybe something else. These marks are especially evident in the alien technology room.
- A small light on a control panel in the alien technology room of the U-Boat is flashing red.

## DIRECTOR'S NOTES

- This Act should take a while. The characters should have a chance to learn everything they can about the *Barry* and the U-Boat as they wander through the empty halls. Give them reasons to feel nervous, but they won't see the mutated iguanoids until the next Act.
- If the players feel stuck while exploring, toss Core clues their way that might make them want to dig deeper. Remind them they have two ships to explore as well.
- End this Act with finding the sealed bulkhead door.



# ACT THREE: WE'RE NOT ALONE HERE

After finding the remnants of the USS *Barry's* crew, the characters have a few options. Sarah Hoseman immediately asks for fuel enough to get her back to Virginia Beach, a request readily granted by the Commander. Chuck leaves with Seaman Joshua Blakely to refuel the *Helios*.

During this Act, the characters have a chance to talk with the remaining members of the USS *Barry* to learn what they can of the issue it is facing. In the initial conversation, they can learn the Core Clues (listed below). They won't get much more than that out of anyone, not until after the first iguanoid attack. Despite everything that has happened, the military personnel are reluctant to discuss the details with civilians, or those without sufficient security clearance. After the iguanoids attack and everyone realizes that they are still on board, they are far more interested in disclosing information. The players cannot make rolls for Alternative Clues until after the attack.

**Note:** If Jamila or Commander Jackson are a Contact for one of the characters, the players can roll (Path rating + Appropriate Attribute) to get them to open up to the characters before the attack. Treat this as a successful roll for gaining Alternative Clues that either might know.

- **Combat:** As the characters are talking with the Commander and others, a mutated iguanoid attacks. It's especially poignant if the mutated iguanoid attacks immediately after Jamila imparts her information about the mutants being particularly difficult to kill to the group. The mutants are unarmed and use their incredible strength to their advantage by attempting to grapple their opponents and dismember them if possible. Represent this by attempting to deal as much damage as possible in the grapple. If the characters can put the iguanoid down, rather than run, then the crew of the USS *Barry* tells everyone to run. When they make it to a safe place, the characters can press the *Barry's* crew for more detailed information.

Give the characters a moment to discuss what happened and what they should do now that they know that the mutants did not actually leave the *Barry* like the Commander thought. Their options are limited, but they know that the Navy is on its way, and that the *Helios* is gassed up and ready to leave.

## CORE CLUE

- The USS *Barry* was supposed to escort the submarine back to a military base, but after the attack, they didn't have enough crew left to run the ship, so they barricaded themselves in until help could arrive.
- The creatures attacking them are Nazi genetic experiments.
- Jamila tells the group that the mutants are particularly difficult to kill, as they are resistant to normal wounds. Only a shock from an electrical charge can kill them. There are electrified batons on the U-Boat.

## ALTERNATIVE CLUE

Persuasion + Presence or Empathy + Presence to uncover, one clue per success.

- The Nazis spliced human and iguanoid DNA together to make these monsters to make super-soldiers.
- The US government thought the U-Boat they found would have information on iguanoids in general, they were not expecting to find the mutants.
- Jamila reveals all she knows about the iguanoids. Let the players read the iguanoid entry on p. 176 of the core including the specials.
- The scientists were supposed to study the iguanoid tech, but accidentally opened the pods. That was not part of the mission.

## DIRECTOR'S NOTES

- This Act should feel fast paced. It's okay if the characters don't get a lot of information from either the scientists or the Commander before the mutants attack. But be sure to remind them that these characters might be more open to discussion after the attack happens.
- Let the characters decide how they want to escape from the other two mutants before starting the next Act. If they do not make that decision before attempting to retrieve the batons on the U-Boat, then remind them of their leave options once the chase starts. For our purposes, the *Helios* gets enough fuel from the *Barry* to make a reasonable escape, make sure this is clear to the players.

# ACT FOUR: THE ESCAPE

The moment the characters try to leave the USS *Barry* the mutated iguanoids attempt to stop the group from leaving. This immediately prompts a chase scene. The characters can absolutely stay and fight the mutants off, but without electrical damage, the creatures stand back up again to chase them moments later.

The logical options are: make it to the U-Boat to get the electrical batons and attempt to stand and fight, escape to the *Helios* and leave, or retreat to the store rooms in the *Barry* and wait until the Navy arrives. All options are valid here, and the players should have decided a plan of action before the chase starts.

Intersperse monster attacks with attempts to evade the mutants, making it feel more like a chase than just a slog of fighting mutants and running before they catch up again. Have players roll Athletics + Dexterity (or Stamina) to evade the mutants and stay out of their reach as they race through the destroyer. Other options are Athletics + Cunning to close doors to slow the mutants down, or Enigmas + Dexterity to move in patterns that the mutants cannot predict.

## DIRECTOR'S NOTES

- Only have mutants attack at the beginning of the chase and when players fail on actions to evade the monsters. If even one person fails a roll, the mutants catch up to that character and attack. Encourage the players not to leave anyone behind, even Director controlled characters, though they may be tempted to do so.

- Make a single roll for the Director controlled characters, and if that fails, decide who fails in the moment. This is a good way to entice the players to have their characters go back for someone they care about.
- Once the characters make it to their destination, make it clear that they have accomplished their goal. Characters who make it to the U-Boat find three batons that are normal weapons with the Ranged Tag and deal electrical damage.

## ACT FIVE: NEVER SAFE

This Act has different scenes depending on how the characters choose to escape in the previous act. We've listed what happens here based on the three options players could choose between from the previous Act.

**The U-Boat:** The characters arm themselves with the electric batons and make a stand in the U-Boat. They must fight all three mutants at the same time, but with electrical weapons, it should be much easier. In the middle of the fight, the non-mutated iguanoids arrive to investigate the signal from their cryostasis pods. They enter the space where the fight is happening, but are unsure of who to help, so mostly stay out of it. When the fight is over, the iguanoids want answers. What happened to the iguanoids who were in those pods?

What are the mutants? How did it happen? The characters can attempt to convince the iguanoids that they had nothing to do with what happened on the U-Boat and offer them answers with a Persuasion + Intellect or Presence action. If they learned about the Nazi experiments from Jamila, they gain +1 Enhancement.

If the characters convince the iguanoids, they tell the group that they are taking the U-Boat and leaving, letting everyone else go. Otherwise, the iguanoids become enraged by the loss of their brethren and attack. In the case of a fight, the iguanoids have come armed with weapons that are one Scale higher for purposes of attacking the characters.

No matter what, you may wish to prolong the scenario by using "The Commander's Request" scene. Be sure to read that scene, as it might need to happen in between the iguanoids arrival and when they either attack or attempt to leave. Otherwise, move on to the epilogue.

**Escape on the *Helios*:** The characters and anyone who decided to leave with them putter off on the *Helios* feeling safe. Give the player characters some time to discuss what happened before two of the mutated iguanoids come over the side of the yacht and begin to attack. The *Helios* is equipped with a few different ways the characters can create electrical attacks. It has electricity running throughout with cables the characters can try to cut or break with an Athletics + Might action. Consider these improvised weapons that have a 1 Complication the character must buy off or take a



damage as she electrocutes herself. Once they have defeated the mutant iguanoids, move on to the epilogue.

**Hiding on the *Barry*:** Characters hiding on the *Barry* have a chance to chat with the other characters before they hear noises that are distinctly different from the sounds of the mutants scrabbling at the door. They hear voices and the sounds of motors outside. Commander Jackson says that this must finally be the Navy to the rescue. Instead of finding the Navy, the characters find iguanoids who are looking for their missing brethren. The characters can attempt to discuss what happened here with the iguanoids using a Persuasion + Intellect or Presence action. If they learned about the Nazi experiments from Jamila, they gain +1 Enhancement.

If they are successful, the iguanoids say they want to take the U-Boat and leave. If they are not successful, the iguanoids go into a rage and attempt to kill the characters. The iguanoids have come armed with weapons that are one Scale higher for purposes of attacking the characters.

In either case, the iguanoids being on the ship attracts the mutants who immediately attack both humans and iguanoid alike. The iguanoids are not good fighters, but their technology is superior, meaning that if the characters tell them about the electrical weakness in the mutants, they can electrify their weapons, and distribute electrical weapons to the characters.

This has taken enough time to give the Navy time to arrive, and the iguanoids attempt to leave once more. If you want to prolong the interaction, you can use the alternative scene “The Commander’s Request.” Be sure to read that scene, as it might need to happen in between the iguanoids arrival and when they either attack or attempt to leave.

**Alternative Scene, “The Commander’s Request:”** Commander Jackson is nothing if not prudent. He realizes that finding live iguanoids is a rare occasion and he can’t just let the creatures leave. He wants to capture them alive for study. He asks the characters to help him in this endeavor. Characters don’t have to go along with the plan, and players might even want to convince the Commander that this isn’t a good idea. If they want to convince him to stave off this plan, they can attempt Persuasion + Manipulation actions against him. Failure results in his immediate suspicion if they later agree to the plan.

If the players decide to go against the Commander’s request, then when the iguanoids have a chance to leave, the characters need to enact some sort of plan to get them safely off the ships. This can be anything, from attacking the sailors attempting to capture the iguanoids to providing a distraction. If the players choose to use a plan other than attacking, have them take a teamwork complex action to plan and execute their actions using two or three milestones and set it against a capture clock for the Navy capturing the iguanoids. Complications could be anything from losing time on the clock, tipping their hand to the Navy, having a character hurt or captured, or loss of one or more iguanoids. The capture clock is a narrative milestone that has a set amount of time, which is lost through failed rolls and Complications that are not bought off.

## DIRECTOR’S NOTES

- If the characters are in a scenario in which they encounter the iguanoids, encourage them to try talking rather than just getting into a fight.

- If the players are conflicted about helping the Navy trap the iguanoids, have them look at their Origin and Ambition Paths, along with their Quips to determine how the characters might respond. Remind them also that the characters are at the mercy of the US Navy, and might not want to get into trouble with them by going against their wishes. If it’s a one-off game, that doesn’t matter as much.
- If the players are unsure of how to get electrical weapons in the advent that they didn’t go back to the U-Boat to get the electrical batons, let them take a Technology + Cunning action to come up with a way to create an electrical weapon, or a Humanities + Cunning action to think of telling the iguanoids about the mutant’s weakness to electricity.

## EPILOGUE

This is the end. The story might end in the previous Act, the mutant iguanoids are dead, the protagonists have gotten away, and the iguanoids have come to take their technology. Which is a fine ending for a one-off or a convention game. But if you were using this scenario as the start of a chronicle, you might want some loose ends to entice your characters with for future sessions. We’ve included several such lines and hooks to help you along.

- If the characters escaped on the *Helios*, they notice futuristic ships zipping above the water toward the USS *Barry* and the U-Boat. The winds they kick up are unnaturally strong pushing the *Helios* toward shore at a fast clip. Was that same wind what knocked them off course originally?
- If the characters helped Commander Jackson capture or collect the iguanoids, Jackson rewards them by threatening violence if they tell anyone what they saw here. He’s mostly jovial about it, but there’s truth in his jest. He then tells them to expect to hear from him again.
- If the characters escaped on the *Helios* or remain on the USS *Barry* and help Commander Jackson capture the iguanoids, within two days, they each receive a summons to the David W. Taylor Naval Ship Research and Development Center in Potomac, Maryland to report to Commander Jackson. Jackson is pleased with their work and ability to work under duress and offers the group a civilian position in the Navy for expeditions and research of alien or aquatic species. The pay is okay, but the offer comes with a threat that if they don’t take it, the Navy may have to do something about the classified information that they know.
- If the characters helped the iguanoids escape the Navy, they give them a small electronic box as a reward. The box contains a homing beacon which the iguanoids can use to find them again in the future, allowing them to come to the protagonists when they need human help. They don’t often need human help, but they prefer to make humans take care of human-created issues, allowing them to concentrate on finding the rest of their brethren.
- If the characters helped the iguanoids escape the Navy, they are left with a bunch of angry military types they need to explain themselves to. They may even get arrested and questioned about any ties they may have to the iguanoids. Once

able to clear their names, they will be under the watchful eye of Naval intelligence which might cause problems if they get contacted by the iguanoids in the future.

- The protagonists witness Dr. Jamila collect samples from the dead mutated iguanoids and put them into her bag. They can try to confront her about it, at which point she deflects and says that she just wants to compare them to normal iguanoid specimen to ensure they aren't a natural evolution. Dr. Jamila could become a friend in the future who helps the characters investigate other marine life-forms in her role as a xenobiologist. Or she could become an antagonist as she works to continue the Nazi's experiments on iguanoid genetic splices.

## DIRECTOR'S NOTES

- None, this is the end!

# STARRING CAST

The players may choose to make their own characters, but they are free to use the ones provided below. These characters are geared toward this scenario, and have interconnected stories to give them reasons either to know one another personally, or to know of one another through mutual acquaintances.

## GEORGE MILLHOUSE, REPORTER

George Millhouse is a struggling reporter who has been working out of Virginia Beach for the past year and a half. He writes for a small paper called the Beach Star which mostly discusses movie star sightings at a beach with no movie stars. George grew up in Norfolk and went to school for journalism and publication. He moved to Virginia Beach for a job as an on the spot reporter for the local nightly news. He lost his job there when he got into a violent disagreement with long-time anchorman Dan Davids over how to pronounce "euphemism." George threw a punch and Dan fired him on the spot and promised he would never get a job in the area again. True to Dan's word, George was blacklisted by every station in the states of Virginia, Maryland, or North Carolina.

George decided to submit news articles to papers under a pseudonym, at least until Dan found out and got him rejected. Now, he could move far away from friends and family, or do what he does, which is write culture pieces for the Beach Star and look for a break that shakes Dan's black mark against him. George heard through his Beach Star contacts that Agnes Haldenke is in town and looking to hook up with producer Lawrence Blossom. Agnes is notoriously hard to get interviews with, but George has a sure-fire in. He knows Fanny Smithwick, who happens to be Lawrence's personal assistant. He's sure that if he can introduce the two, Agnes gives him an exclusive. This could be his big break, his way to step out of the cloud Dan Davids has placed over his career for years.

So, George is on a pleasure cruise on an oversized dingy. He doesn't even like the water, much less boating, but he's determined to get a story even if he's a little green around the gills while he gets it. He has invited Fanny Smithwick along with him, though she doesn't know why. A little white lie won't hurt, and he's sure she'll thank him for the opportunity to meet Agnes. Now if he can only catch her alone without interrupting the actress's time with her sister.

**Long-Term Player Aspiration:** Get a position as an anchorman

**Short-Term Player Aspiration:** Secure an interview with Agnes; Keep Fanny happy

**Paths:** Archetype: Mouth; Origin: Suburbia; Ambition: In Love

**Skills:** Athletics 3, Command, Culture 2, Empathy 2, Humanities 2, Larceny, Persuasion 3, Technology 1

**Attributes:** Intellect 3, Cunning 2, Resolve 4; Might 3, Dexterity 2, Stamina 2; Presence 4, Manipulation 4, Composure 2

**Trademarks:** Best Buddy (Persuasion), Creative Narrative (Culture), Cultured Warrior (Culture), You're hearing it here first, folks! (Humanities)

**Relationships:** Agnes Haldenke (respect 1), Roger Turner (rival 2), Barbara Lively (unknown 1), Fanny Smithwick (friend and crush 3)

**Connections:** Professor Humes (journalism professor), Lawrence Blossom (producer and love interest's boss), Chuck Hoseman (drinking buddy)

**Tropes:** Investigative Reporting, Press Pass, Blissful Ignorance

## QUIPS:

*I'd question my own sanity if it wasn't one of my favorite things...*

*That's not the biology I had in mind...*

*Without an answer...we'll only have a lot of questions...*

## AGNES HALDENKE, MOVIE STAR

Agnes Haldenke was born in Wisconsin in a time when living in Wisconsin meant farming and not much of anything else. She had big dreams of being in the spotlight and did everything she could to get out to California and plaster her face on the silver screen. She's always been certain of herself, and long days of hard work helped to make her tough as nails when dealing with an unforgiving industry. Her down-home attitude and natural beauty won the hearts of movie executives and she picked up several supporting roles early. She earned a reputation as easy to work with, giving her additional opportunities. She hasn't yet landed a leading lady title, but she's sure one is just around the corner.

Agnes puts on a sweet and unassuming demeanor, but she's slyer and more intelligent than she lets on. She is preoccupied with her look, but only because she thinks that this is the way film stars should act. Deep down, she's still the woman who woke up before the sun to milk cows and scrape fresh dung out of stalls. She's currently in Virginia Beach taking a small vacation with her sister, Barbara Lively, who moved to Maryland last year to pursue a career in marine biology. Agnes doesn't understand Barbara's obsession with the sea, as they grew up as far away from it as possible, and any time Agnes gets into the water, she ends up with a rash or a sting, or unsightly blemishes.

Visiting Barbara is only a small part of why she's come to Virginia Beach. Of course, she wants to catch up with her sister, who she feels is disappointed in her choice to be an actor. She wants to show her that she isn't like all the others and still loves her family deeply. It's only an added bonus that she's heard there is a pro-

ducer in Virginia Beach, Lawrence Blossom, looking for the next Marilyn Monroe, and she plans to be there to find. The yacht trip is a distraction, but a welcome one after trying to balance both family time and her search for a way to get in to see Mr. Blossom.

**Long-Term Player Aspiration:** Land a role as a leading lady

**Short-Term Player Aspiration:** Impress my sister Barbara; Contact a new producer

**Paths:** Archetype: Everyman; Origin: Life of Privilege; Ambition: Community Leader

**Skills:** Aim 2, Command 3, Culture 1, Empathy 2, Humanities 2, Persuasion 3, Technology 2

**Attributes:** Intellect 2, Cunning 3, Resolve 2; Might 3, Dexterity 2, Stamina 3; Presence 4, Manipulation 4, Composure 2

**Trademarks:** Charmer (Presence); I Am the Manager (Command); I Know What You Want (Manipulation); Got the Groove (Persuasion)

**Relationships:** George Millhouse (suspicion 1), Roger Turner (attraction 2), Barbara Lively (sibling love 3), Fanny Smithwick (who? 1)

**Connections:** Phyllis Riebald (actor's union rep), Dan Davids (local news anchor), Commander Neil Jackson (family friend)

**Tropes:** Catch Phrase, Honesty is the Best Policy, I Don't get Paid Enough for This

#### QUIPS:

*I don't know much about science or monsters but... I'm willing to learn...*

*Wake me when the world is saved...*

*Not to be nosy, but... do those eyes belong to you?*

### ROGER TURNER, COAST GUARD

Roger Turner joined the Coast Guard at an early age. He has always loved the sea and wanted to protect his nation in the best way he knew how. It helps that his father is career Coast Guard and simply expected Roger to follow in his footsteps. Roger wasn't opposed to his father's expectations for him and allowed the man to direct his life into the military, excelling along the way. Roger seems like a simple man on the outside; he spends his days working, exercising, and caring for his pet cat, Shadow. That's what he wants people to know of him. In truth, Roger is part of a special division in the Coast Guard which protects the nation from alien and underwater threats in conjunction with the Navy. His daily work isn't just saving boaters and patrolling waters but fighting off alien incursion and rescuing people from underwater threats that they are better off not knowing about at all.

Roger just started with the team three months ago, but he has already been on several covert missions to gather information or fight off undersea monsters. If he does a good job, he looks to get promoted to a team captain position within the year. Roger has made good friends with a local marine biologist, Barbara Lively, who provides his team with a great deal of ecological support, even if she has no idea what she is doing. He's worried that her determination to find and catalogue all aquatic species is going to get her into trouble someday, so he endeavors to protect her as best he can.

Fanny Smithwick is another story. He met her at a club, and they became friends. She doesn't know about his secret life, no one does, but he's aware that she would like to date him. He's conflicted on it though, as he worries that her entanglement with him might expose her to alien threats. So, when Fanny asked him to come on a cruise as a buffer between herself and George Millhouse, he saw a perfect opportunity to push those two together rather than let her push the other man away. He was surprised to see Barbara and her visiting sister on the cruise with them, but it's a small marina and there couldn't possibly be anything to such a coincidence.

**Long-Term Player Aspiration:** Rise in the ranks of the secret Coast Guard division

**Short-Term Player Aspiration:** Convince Fanny to date George; Ensure the safety of the cruise-goers

**Paths:** Archetype: G-Man; Origin: Military Brat; Ambition: Best Friends

**Skills:** Aim 3, Close Combat 2, Command 2, Culture 1, Enigmas 2, Integrity 2, Pilot 1, Technology 2

**Attributes:** Intellect 2, Cunning 3, Resolve 3; Might 3, Dexterity 4, Stamina 3; Presence 2, Manipulation 2, Composure 3

**Trademarks:** Cut through red tape (Integrity), Not Good at Giving Up (Resolve), Nothing to See Here (Command), Talent for Destruction (Technology)

**Relationships:** George Millhouse (respect 1), Agnes Haldenke (respect 1), Barbara Lively (best friends 3), Fanny Smithwick (just friends 2)

**Connections:** Blakely High Football Team Class of 1950 (childhood friends), Sergeant Franklin Humperdink (unit commander for special operations), Sarah Hoseman (first mate of the *Helios*)

**Tropes:** Seen Too Much, That's Above My Pay Grade, This Will Self-Destruct...

#### QUIPS:

*Like the math whiz said, count me in.*

*There's more than one way to skin a cephalopod...*

*There's something about the smell of fish that just gets me going.*

### BARBARA LIVELY, MARINE BIOLOGIST

Barbara Lively was born to the Haldenke residence in Wisconsin a few years after her older sister Agnes. All her life she lived in Agnes's shadow, the other woman being far more outgoing and gregarious than she. Barbara spent her time in books and magazines dreaming of a life far away from the dairy farm and her dull life. She went to university in Boston for animal husbandry, aided by her in depth knowledge of dairy farming. But she soon realized she needed to get further from her roots and took up ecology. After graduation, she was selected for a graduate program, the first woman to be accepted, in Maryland for marine biology, as her background in husbandry and ecology were an eclectic mix the university desired. While there, she married another graduate student, and the two of them now spend their time collecting, cataloguing, and studying various marine species.

Barbara has a quiet intelligence about her. She doesn't show off or proclaim how smart she is, but she's often the most intelli-

gent person in the room. This leads a lot of people to underestimate her, often to their own detriment. Her work is demanding, though she doesn't mind hard labor. She keeps in shape by swimming and lifting free weights she stole from her husband.

Barbara wanted to show Agnes what the open ocean is like and give her sister her love for the sea. She's always felt like she's lived in Agnes's shadow, and this is a way to show her sister that she is her own woman now and maybe impress her while she's at it. Well, that and she has long desired the freedom to take a boat out whenever she wanted. She got the name of the *Helios* from her good friend, Roger Turner, and she's got an ulterior motive of making friends with him to tap for impromptu sea voyages. She was surprised to see that he had chosen to take a cruise today as well, but not as surprised when she saw Fanny come aboard with him. Fanny has long been trying to get Roger to notice her, but he was oblivious to her advances. Barbara hasn't done anything to help Fanny because she doesn't necessarily trust the personal assistant of a big movie producer any more than she could throw her.

**Long-Term Player Aspiration:** Discover a new marine species

**Short-Term Player Aspiration:** Impress my sister Agnes; Make friends with the *Helios's* captain

**Paths:** Archetype: Scientist; Origin: Life of Privilege; Ambition: Family Man

**Skills:** Athletics 1, Command 2, Close Combat 3, Culture, Enigmas 2, Integrity 2, Medicine 2, Science 3

**Attributes:** Intellect 4, Cunning 3, Resolve 3; Might 3, Dexterity 2, Stamina 3; Presence 3, Manipulation 2, Composure 2

**Trademarks:** Blinded by Science (Science), Professor Oddball (Culture), Force of nature (Close Combat), The smartest person in the room (Science)

**Relationships:** George Millhouse (who? 1), Roger Turner (friendly 2), Agnes Haldenke (sibling rivalry 3), Fanny Smithwick (wariness 1)

**Connections:** Dr. Jamila Nazari (xenobiologist at the marine lab), University of Boston Alumni Association (top of the class), Eunice Smartly (president of the knitting club)

**Tropes:** Eureka!, Shake it Off, Weird Science

#### Quips:

*There's enough science in there to ice a cocktail...*

*Never did care for seafood...*

*If you're going to defeat a fish, you'd better start thinking like one...*

### FANNY SMITHWICK, PERSONAL ASSISTANT

Fanny Smithwick grew up poor. A generational type of poor that came not from any one member of her family's personal failing, but from the lack of opportunity and education one needs to advance their situation. She spent a lot of time around people in the same situation as her, and as a child learned how to survive on literally nothing. She also vowed when she was old enough to begin high school, that she would do everything in her power to escape her situation. She fought several uphill battles that were based solely on her gender or complexion, but she persevered and

eventually got a job as a secretary in a big office downtown. It paid better than both her mother's jobs put together.

Lawrence Blossom, at the time an executive in said office, saw Fanny's determination and dedication to her work and saw in her a potential for more than just secretarial work. He had her transferred to his desk and started training her to chat up his clients. Just a suggestion here, an affable comment there, and by the time they stepped into his office, Fanny had primed his clients to all sorts of deal making they would have never been open to without her influence. Fanny, not being stupid, realized that she was providing a vital service and demanded a raise, which she got, as well as a promotion: personal assistant. Fanny organizes every moment of Mr. Blossom's day, from appointments, to when he eats, and with her help he has made a ton of money. Lawrence trusts Fanny implicitly, as her intuition has brought him the best and most lucrative clients. In this all, Fanny is a survivor, always has been, and she's looking for a way to gain her independence from Lawrence in case he decides he can do his work without her.

George invited Fanny on a one-day pleasure cruise for undisclosed reasons. She is aware that he seems to have a thing for her, and she's used it on occasion to get juicy celebrity gossip from him. So now that has come to a head, and he's invited her on a date. Although she suspects there's more to it than that — George is only this excited when he has a story, and she certainly isn't the story. She invited Roger Turner to sit in as a buffer between herself and the overzealous George. Roger, being too thick-headed to realize that she'd rather date him, has agreed to come as a friend. He really is dense, but at least he's good to look at.

**Long-Term Player Aspiration:** Earn the respect of other executives in Lawrence's office

**Short-Term Player Aspiration:** Get Roger to notice that she likes him; Find out what George is really up to

**Paths:** Archetype: Survivor; Origin: Street Rat; Ambition: Lone Wolf

**Skills:** Aim 2, Athletics 1, Close Combat 3, Enigmas 1, Integrity 2, Larceny 1, Persuasion 2, Pilot 1, Survival 2

**Attributes:** Intellect 2, Cunning 3, Resolve 2; Might 3, Dexterity 3, Stamina 4; Presence 2, Manipulation 2, Composure 4

**Trademarks:** Analytical Awesome (Enigmas), Is That All You Got? (Close Combat), Untrusting Community (Survival), Up My Sleeve (Larceny)

**Relationships:** George Millhouse (distrust 2), Roger Turner (friend and crush 3), Barbara Lively (who? 1), Agnes Haldenke (respect 1)

**Connections:** Lawrence Blossom (boss and movie producer), Lisa Hanover (hometown community friend), Li Na Liu (karate instructor)

**Tropes:** Last Man Standing, Tools of the Trade, Voice of Reason

#### QUIPS:

*We'll cross those T's when we come to them...*

*If being right works when I go to bed...it still works at breakfast...*

*I'd like to stay, but I've got a date with the rest of my life...*



# ROCK OUT AT MONSTER BEACH

Dody did the twist. So did Jersey. Together they did the twist.

Music blazed over darkened dunes as hip swinging teenagers gathered like mayflies at a place where mayflies gather. It was a good spot, their spot, the spot where teens gathered. They had it to themselves and the bonfire throbbed with heat.

Difty Danners jumped over it of course, as always, with nary a care what was singed, and scars to prove it. Shaky (as Sheila Sherbett's friends called her) shook faster than she'd ever shook before and would have become airborne had she been more aerodynamically sound. Belly Waston drank beer and laughed, then drank beer and laughed again. Funny guy that Belly. Tube Tillis scooped up his surfboard and ran into the night, drawn to pounding surf like an arm to a sleeve. Chat Chattins scratched his pointy little goatee as he squatted by the fire, thinking up poems he would never say (that would only diminish them). By his side, creepy-cool Shongra (no last name) peered inscrutably through large shades, every now and then saying "cool" in a quiet flat voice. Because everything was cool.

Dody and Jersey continued to twist. They would get engaged later that night as they did every night. Fretty Nussence would dedicate a new song to them on guitar, each one sounding the same. Beer and soda pop flowed like water at a sewage treatment plant. Belly called for hot dogs, laughing and screaming as he did. Belly loved hot dogs. Skinny little Ruda Pines toasted marshmallows as though she had a personal grudge. She started roasting wieners too.

"How could she hold so many sticks?" pondered Chat before he went onto something else a half-second later. "Cool," thought Shongra, making a mental note to say it aloud later.

Just the start of another perfect night on the beach.

Till the doc blew in.

He and his wife. His dutiful, mindful, safe wife. Dr. Sandy Tradeshaw and Sally burst in like things that didn't belong, with his distinguished gray temples and rolled-up sleeves and her yellow dress and home-cooking. If they were any more square, giant kids would play blocks with them.

And here they were, crashing in all excited but not Shaky Sherbett excited, the bad kind, where

people would eventually have to do something or care about something. The bad excited.

"Hey man!" said Chat with uncharacteristic volume, then he forgot about it and thought about something else. Shongra didn't even look at them.

"Listen to me!" cried the shirt-sleeve scientist, finally using words they could understand but still easily ignore. "You are all in great danger!"

"No way!" chirped Belly, spitting beer. "The hot dogs are ready, see?!"

"Oh, Sandy, it's no use!" screeched the uncool scientist's wife. "It's like they're all... hopped up on stuff!"

"Look, what's your scene, dad?" requested Vit Vanners, the coolest guy in the world. He was the only one to approach them, and it gave Dr. Tradeshaw some hope.

"I don't know, but I can tell you what yours is if you don't listen. Death will be your scene. Man."

"Get this guy," chuckled the coolest guy, and for the first time the wild crazy kids paid attention. Difty even turned the radio off to a chorus of groans.

"Listen! There are monsters on the way, even as we speak! You all must leave the beach at once!

"Monsters!" belched Belly.

"Get him," squawked Shaky.

"Back to science class, professor," said Dody and Jersey in unison, a trick they often showed off.

"He is a professor," defended Sally. "That's how he knows."

"Hey, not a bad looker for a professor's wife," snickered Difty.

Dr. Sandy Tradeshaw glared at him, but stuck to his mission. "An underwater lab was experimenting on various sea life to see if it could be increased in size to end world hunger."

"Hey, that's you, Belly!" chortled Ruda with a giggle.

"There was an accident down there! Now they're loose and headed this way!"

"Doc, what have you been taking and how can I get some?" quipped Difty, looking for approval.

"Now hold on, wait a second," urged Vit in a moment of odd clarity. "What if the doc's right?"

Chat looked over and gave his blessing with a goatee twitch. Shongra said, "Cool."

This royal decree that the strangers be listened to didn't last long. Tube Tillis's bloody surfboard came gliding silently out of the black of night and impaled Fretty Nussence just as he stood.

"Wow," said Shongra.

Fretty fell against the radio switch, blasting the rock and roll once again as a menagerie of aquatic horrors began lumbering from the darkness into the light of the bonfire.

Of course, when the music cranked, Shaky resumed mad gyrations beyond her control. A grotesque cluster of massive opening and closing tentacles scooped her up and slithered off without her missing a beat.

Jersey snatched up Fretty's guitar and wielded it like an off-key mace as a rotund scaly thing with many flapping fins rolled into him. He slapped each fin away with the guitar, keeping beat with the raucous radio.

Dody managed to yank Shaky from her loathsome captor and planted the gyrating teen in a safe spot.

At the start of the onslaught, Chat had risen and spread his arms with a restrained, "Hey now, be cool, man," as a shark-headed crustacean clattered over and bit his head off.

That was enough for Shongra who said "Bye, guys" and ran off into the night.

Vit Vanners stood his ground, shielding Ruda from the beasts. "I know I'm only eighteen," he declared with a self-consciously heroic stance, "But I think this is like the defining moment of my life, okay?" and with that he met a bloated snake-thing with numerous crab-claws on the ends of skinny flailing arms and took it to the ground in a life-and-death grapple.

Ruda rushed to the fire, grabbed up burning marshmallow sticks and started jabbing them into every monster she could see. "You know what burning marshmallow feels like?! Do you, monsters? Kinda sticks with ya, don't it!"

Dr. Sandy Tradeshaw hadn't been idle. Far from it. He was, of course, more prepared than the hapless teens. As the first creature lurched into the light, he whipped out a squirt gun with a test tube attached and began spraying a solution that burned them.

"I hadn't much time, but it's amazing what you can whip up with the right lab and a little gumption," he barked.

Sally, not to be outdone, watched his back, and when a giant-headed jellyfish man threatened him, she grabbed items from her purse and jammed them lethally into the thing.

As quickly as it had begun the terrible war on Monster Beach was over, with the remaining creatures stumbling back into the sea.

"Let's rock!" called Belly as he emerged from under a beach blanket and bit into a hot dog.





Elamire

# CHAPTER TWO

# THE BUBBLE

*The camera dollies forward across the deep blue of the Atlantic Ocean, swinging in an upward arc onto Willard Beach, and beyond it, the city of Portland, Maine. Bustling nightlife stretches back into the distance, oblivious to whatever drama unfolds by the waterfront. Our view, however, captures it, as the camera zooms in and tilts down to a small fire surrounded by a group of shadowy figures.*

*We never see their faces, shrouded as they are by their garments. However, these are no cultists' robes. Some rely on upturned collars to conceal their faces, while others wear full headscarves and resemble colorful ninjas. All of them stand back from the small orb of light surrounding a fire barrel, as an unconscious shape is dragged forward with a bag pulled tight over its head.*

*The bag is pulled abruptly back to reveal Captain Timothy Sewester. His cracked and sea-hardened features are grizzled and stoic, even in unconsciousness. One of the conspirators and the two burly shapes holding the captain in their arms exchange nods. A third shape comes forward, carrying a large, glass bowl, covered in a ceremonial cloth, embroidered with golden characters from an alien language.*

*The hooded figures drag Captain Sewester forward as the conspirators place a bowl, carefully, on the ground in front of him. A ceremonial cloth is lifted from it and folded, with ritualistic precision. "Aouraphoun!" cries the shape holding the cloth. The assembled figures respond with the same unknown phrase, in several different voices, each watching on with a sense of anticipation and excitement.*

*The burly captors plunge the captain's head into the water contained within the glass. The cloudy water swirls around violently when Sewester's head enters it. His body twitches and spasms as the two burly figures hold him down. After a few moments, the captain's body ceases to struggle, and his head is withdrawn from the bowl.*

*His eyes snap open, a feeble smile spreading across his grizzled face.*

*"Aouraphoun..." he says.*

...

*The Bubble is a production set in Portland, Maine, USA. The protagonists must uncover a conspiracy headed by the shadowy fins of the Prefecture of the Pod (see **They Came from Beneath the Sea!**, p. 187). The city itself is in a state of high excitement as the sitting senator, who also happens to be Secretary of Defense, is on a tour of the North Eastern states to campaign for re-election.*

The protagonists must stop the Pod from gaining control of such an influential politician, even following them to their underwater lair to do so. This scenario can serve as a one-off adventure, the beginning of a longer story or as the capstone of such a campaign, where the protagonists have already faced the machinations of the Pod and their minions.

## PRE-PRODUCTION

While *The Bubble* is designed to be usable by any group, additional notes for starting groups and Directors have been provided. Whenever the characters are confronted with a task, examples of how to resolve it are listed, in case you want to give struggling players a nudge in the right direction. Dice pools are also included as quick reference. Your players will likely produce new and unanticipated resolutions, which shows that you're doing a fantastic job of getting them invested in the scenario. Feel free to follow the creative solutions that people produce through play rather than forcing them into the preset outcomes suggested in this outline. They are, after all, only suggestions for play and not what must happen at every table. Play the game that offers the most enjoyment to you and your group.

Throughout *The Bubble* you'll find a distinction between Core Clues and Alternative Clues. Core Clues are critical to the scenario and are the key elements needed to allow play to continue. You may wish to negate rolls for these and simply allow them to be found by the protagonists as they search an area rather than leaving it up to chance, depending on the levels of failure you, and your players, are willing to accommodate in a fun story. Alternative Clues, on the other hand, provide additional risks or rewards for elevated levels of failure or success, perhaps pointing the way to an Alternative Scene where additional help in the coming scenarios can be gained. Some of them even provide interesting ideas that can be carried forward into future adventures with the same group of protagonists if you wish. The scenario comes complete with the outline of some core scenes, however, feel free to include any number of alternative scenes in order to facilitate your own twist on the story, give more insight into the particulars of your adventure and the characters in it, or simply to allow the characters to gain useful items, equipment, or experiences to enrich their play.

## STARTING YOUR STORY WITH THE BUBBLE

A new game always starts with character creation and you should use this opportunity to discuss with your players the sort of game you want to run, either a more light-hearted, humorous, B-Movie feel or a darker path with more horror and life and death situations. It's useful to establish how the characters came to be in Portland. Are they following leads from their backstories or are they simply a group of locals who come to be aware of the great conspiracy? Ensure that each character has strong motivations to get involved in the action.

Scientists employed by a local university or marine research facility have detected strange vessels passing through the ocean nearby. Survivors are employed as security for such facilities or other local establishments. G-Men are escorting the senator and may even be one of his personal bodyguards. Everymen clean the university or work in its extensive cafeteria or the local diner. Mouths are plucky journalists looking for the scoop on the Secretary of Defense's latest speech, or perhaps they're his personal aides, writing his upcoming speech. Ultimately, be guided by your players on the sort of characters they'll have the most fun portraying. An important thing to do is to ensure that their character has personal links woven in around the story, characters that are friends, enemies or even lovers of theirs, and locations of special significance. Consider their Archetype when weaving these facets into the characters. For example, an Everyman would likely be more attached to places in the local area, such as the seafront

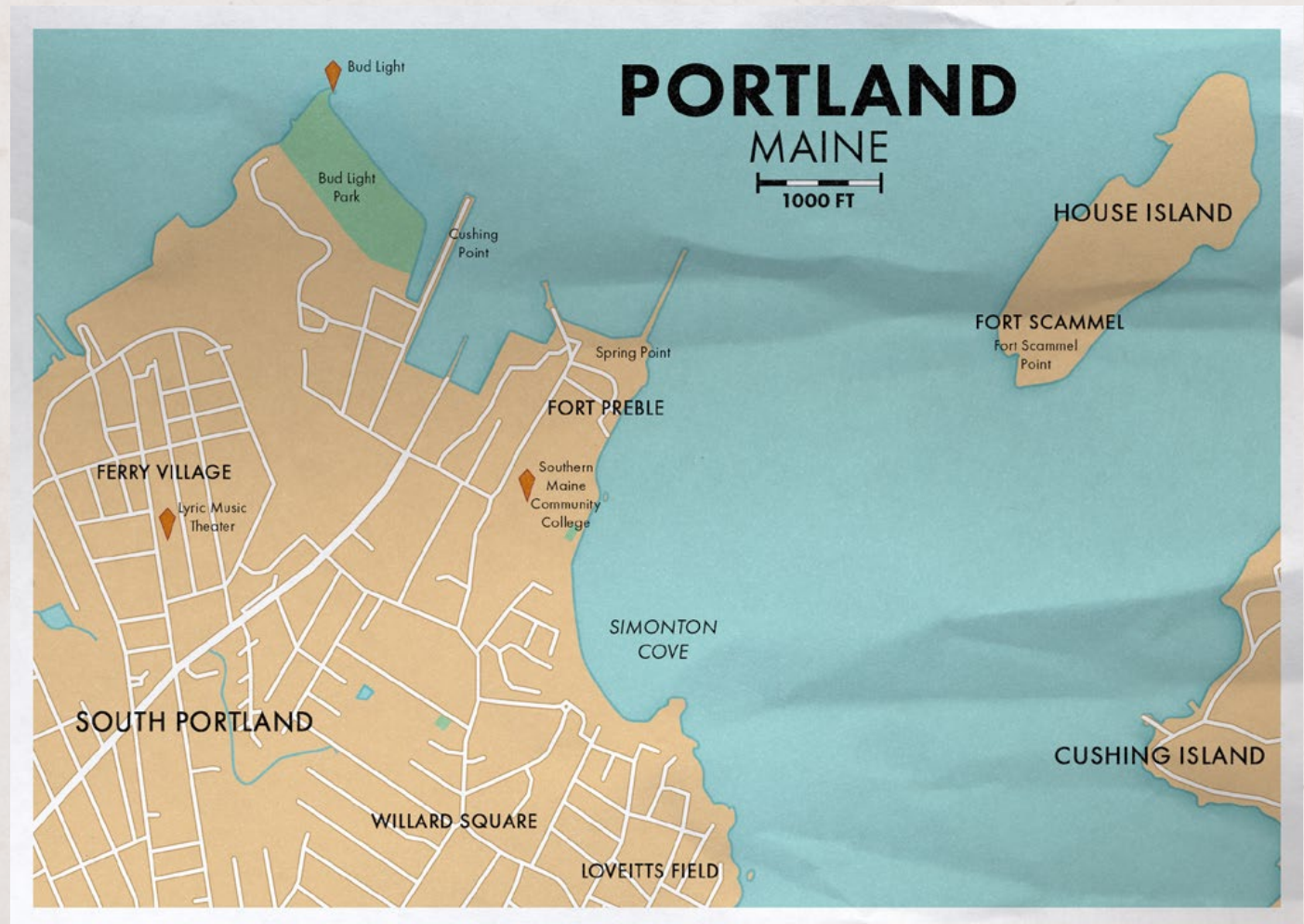
diner she eats in with her family every Friday night. A Scientist, on the other hand, may be a devotee of Dr. Alora Priest and be desperate to impress her. Make sure that you take stock of the setting details and the supporting cast before opening discussions with the players as they rely on you to offer useful suggestions for relationships around the skeleton of a character that they imagine.

To simplify this process, or if you want to run the scenario as a one-shot with quickly generated characters, players can use the pre-made characters from one of the other scenarios in this book, weaving some new personal elements into their biographies and Paths.

## PORTLAND, MAINE - GATEWAY TO THE ATLANTIC

Portland is a city on the Atlantic coast of the northeastern USA. It has a reasonable amount of shipping trade passing through its docks and several beaches to the north and south. While nearby Boston dwarfs it, Portland is large enough to attract the attention of national politicians, while retaining a small-town vibe and feel. It is in such places that the alien menace is most threatening, away from the full glare of the big city, the most nefarious and sneaky of the alien threats can hatch their bizarre plots to destroy humanity's world.

This scenario focuses on activities in South Portland, around Willard Beach and the visit of a senator to the city where he has decided to make a speech about his party's commitment to safeguarding





## DIRECTOR'S NOTES

The end of every act lists your objectives under the Director's Notes — what you must accomplish to enhance the mood of the scenario and prepare for subsequent acts. Try to keep them in mind as you go. Other than that, just enjoy whatever path your players choose to walk.

the shores of America against the terrifying, red menace. He has men looking for a prime location from which to make his announcement to the waiting press and it has been suggested to him that making it from the Atlantic itself may be symbolic and act as a framing device.

The area around the beach has several local businesses, including the Oceanview Diner, warehouses belonging to local shops and international trading companies as well as the Captain's Cruises, a tourist service offering cruises in the Atlantic with the famous Captain Sewester, an old war hero who, rather dubiously, claims to have personally depth-charged over 100 U-boats in the Atlantic.

Other notable locations in the campaign include Salty Sal's, a restaurant and bar at the far end of the beach known as a watering hole for merchant sailors, and the headquarters of Incognito Shipping, a front for various intelligence agencies and government security forces, assigned to protect and assist the senator while he's in the city. The city is also home to a large contingent of the US Coast Guard, based along the banks of the Fore River where it flows into the Atlantic.

Most of the Director-controlled characters have a starting attitude intensity of 1 toward the heroes and can be chosen as individual contacts as normal. Players can select their characters' contacts during character creation or fill them in during play for more narrative flexibility. If a character has a hidden agenda that would alter their attitude toward the protagonists, it is specifically stated in the descriptions below.

## SUPPORTING CAST

- **Senator Andrew Derrick** (Force 7, Finesse 5, Resilience 3) is what the Byzantines would call "born in the purple." His father was a senator and his grandfather was a general, he has been raised as the next and crowning step in a political dynasty stretching back to the old colonial days. He is suave, confident, and incredibly charismatic, with a prize-winning smile and a team of consultants and speech writers monitoring every angle of his appearance and every word he utters. Getting near him requires contending with an over the top security detail or careful planning.
- **Stephanie Browne** (Force 5, Finesse 6, Resilience 2) is Senator Derrick's personal assistant and closest aide. She is a permanent fixture at his side and anyone looking to speak to him must go through her. A thick wad of papers pinned to a clipboard is constantly tucked under her arm and she has an encyclopedic knowledge of the senator's appointments going back years.
- **Sheriff Vincenzo DiFranco** (Force 3, Finesse 2, Resilience 3) was an Italian prisoner of war who was released

on good terms following the armistice. Since then, he has enjoyed the freedom that being an American offers him. He especially enjoys the favor of several local families from the old country who have ensured that his pension fund is well stocked so long as he continues to look the other way to their ventures down at the docks.

- **Theresa "Sally" Salina** owns **Salty Sal's Restaurant** (Force 2, Finesse 3, Resilience 5). She inherited the place from her father who was a well-known face among merchant sailors. Photographs of Salvatore Salina and his various vessels line the walls of this tavern and eatery. Sally serves some of the best fish in the city and at a price that doesn't trouble the wallets of the old sea dogs too harshly. This, and its attractive, sea-front location make it one of the most popular spots in the area.
- The **Oceanview Diner** is a haunt for surfers, students and passing police officers patrolling the area. "**Greasy**" **Pete Butters** (Force 7, Finesse 4, Resilience 5), a local college sports star, known for his lightning speed and dim wits, can always be found behind the counter here. Some say he earned his name for being greased lightning on the football field, others for the ridiculous amount of pomade that finds its way into his hair. Many college girls frequent the diner to enjoy a milkshake and stare at the dreamboat behind the bar.
- **Captain Timothy Sewester** (Force 3, Finesse 4, Resilience 2) has been living and working in the docks for most of his life. He started out his career on a fishing boat but saved up to buy himself a fleet of glass bottomed boats and yachts that he uses to offer tours of the bay and the various coves and beauty spots down the coast. He is the instrument of the Pod's plan to spirit Senator Derrick below the waves. Any time the protagonists encounter him, he should be chugging relentlessly on water from a hip flask, which they may think contains whiskey.
- **Maud Sewester** (Force 1, Finesse 3, Resilience 3) married the captain around 20 years back and the two have been living happily ever since. She now spends a lot of time around the docks, wondering why her husband doesn't come home some nights.
- **Captain Mabel Payne** (Force 5, Finesse 4, Resilience 6) is captain of the Portland Coast Guard. A veteran of the US Army, Mabel's stocky frame and gruff demeanor often cause people to mistake her for a man. She is immensely diligent, and her patrol boat can often be spotted gliding up and down the Bay searching for potential problems. She warns anyone who listens that something's not right around the waters of Portland, but most denounce her as a paranoid old GI with a thousand-yard stare.
- **Dr. Alora Priest** (Force 4, Finesse 7, Resilience 4) has made a name for herself as one of the leading marine biologists in the world. Her study of marine mammals is one of the cornerstones of contemporary thought on the subject and some of the students treat the older Englishwoman as a sort of celebrity. She is a member of F.I.S.H. (see **They Came from Beneath the Sea!**, p. 211) and the land-based leader of the conspiracy against Senator Derrick. She is working in South Maine Community College while claiming to be conducting research in the area that sees her go out to see most evenings.

- **Special Agent Felix Campbell** (Force 5, Finesse 5, Resilience 4) is the public face of **Incognito Shipping** a front for government agents operating in the city. He is a facilitator who knows every safe spot to stay for visiting G-Men and can provide them with weapons and equipment as required by their current assignment. Felix is also the East Coast Ballroom Dancing Champion and takes any opportunity to show off his dancing skills.
- **Sterling Steele** (Force 4, Finesse 6, Resilience 5) is a local legend, a motorcycle riding, leather jacket wearing, devilishly handsome man who often frequents the local haunts. Nobody is sure where he lives or what he actually does for a living, but he always has enough money to pay for food and drinks, not to mention to keep his hog sparkling and ticking over with gasoline. There are various stories around the student body that Steele has beaten up groups of 10 or more drunken sailors harassing the locals, but he neither confirms nor denies them.

## THE PROLOGUE: FINS IN THE SHADOWS

“Extra! Extra! Read all about it! Secretary of Defense arrives in Portland!” calls a young newsie from his stand next to the long pier at the north end of Willard Beach. As our view pans out slowly, a small crowd of frat house college boys wearing matching colored jackets walk past. They laugh at a bad joke told by their leader, “Greasy” Pete Butters.

Two men in suits wander menacingly into view. Their eyes obscured by government issue sunglasses and walkie talkies in their hands. The bulge of a gun is visible on both of their shining leather belts. One speaks a muffled sentence into his radio and the pair move on, glaring suspiciously at the locals who give them a wide berth.

A scurvy, sour-faced sailor limps into view as they go, tattoos and war wounds visible on his arms, watching the two security agents with undisguised disdain. He shakes a gnarled fist in their direction and spits some chewing tobacco at his feet. He is intercepted by a grizzled, gruff looking woman in a Coast Guard uniform. She pushes him out of shot and glowers after him, following the path he takes.

One by one, the protagonists enter the shot. Allow the players to describe their character as they take center stage, introducing themselves to the audience. If there is reason in the story, two characters may appear together to emphasize that they are linked. Titles flash up underneath each as the camera closes on their heroic poses. “Starring... the player’s name, as... the protagonist’s name.” Use this as an opportunity for the characters to be described physically and for each player to get the limelight for their character. This helps break any ice at the table.

Once each of the protagonists has been introduced, we move back in to the young newsie. He accepts a coin from a passer-by, handing them a folded newspaper. The view continues to zoom, beyond him, to his stand and the stack of newspapers on top. From the shadows behind it, a dark fin slithers into view and slides a copy from the top of the stack, a shiny, golden coin left in its place...

## WHODUNNIT!?

In *The Bubble*, the Prefecture of the Pod has hatched an evil plot to kidnap and enslave the Secretary of Defense using their neuroplankton swarms. They are aided and abetted in this cause by Dr. Priest and two to four others of the cast above, which the Director should choose to best fit their story. The other Director characters and the protagonists are manipulated at any turn by the traitor characters to hinder the protagonists’ investigation into the plot to take Senator Derrick. The protagonists themselves may be exposed to infection by neuroplankton (rules for which are in **They Came from Beneath the Sea!**, p. 188). If a player is infected, it may be best to communicate with them secretly to avoid suspicion from other players, especially if it is a feature you wish to make long use of in the scenario. If not, there are many ways that neuroplankton can be expunged from a protagonist’s system, one of which would allow a protagonist character to showcase their special skill in medicine that they may not otherwise get to use.

Directors should decide if Dr. Priest’s supporters are aiding her willingly or if they too are infested with neuroplankton. If the latter is the case, protagonists could gain valuable information and allies by freeing them from the infection. However, they may simply be paid by F.I.S.H. or duped into believing their fiendish and self-defeating doctrine.

*The Bubble* is a story about plucky protagonists triumphing against awesome odds and overcoming one of the most dangerous conspiracies in **They Came from Beneath the Sea!** with a combination of guts and smarts. They should leave feeling that they have not destroyed the Pod, only slowed or hindered them, leaving room for the reappearance of the deadly threat and their land-based allies as an ongoing nemesis.

## ACT ONE: THE BIG ANNOUNCEMENT

The story begins with the protagonists going about their usual, daily business around Willard Beach. The Director should give each player a short scene or two to introduce their character and let them touch on relationships. They are interrupted by suited G-Men or by political aides of Senator Derrick, informing them that their presence is required for a rent-a-mob to hear a big announcement. Feel free to offer small payments or compensation for lost wages to uncooperative characters; whatever is required to secure their participation in this event.

Upon arriving at the docks, they are taken to the Captain’s Cruises, where Captain Sewester awaits them at the boarding ramp to a large yacht, flanked by Coast Guard patrol boats. Captain Payne is lecturing him and Stephanie Browne about security and telling tales about spotting strange vessels in the bay. Both Sewester and Browne rebuff those concerns, citing the presence of Captain Payne’s people on top of the detail Senator Derrick already has as reassurance enough that the senator will be safe.

Suddenly, a limousine flanked by government agents (one of which could be a protagonist assigned to the senator’s detail



through Incognito Shipping) pulls up to the boardwalk amid scenes of excitement. The protagonists now get their first glance at Senator Derrick in action. The consummate politician, he is be all smiles, shaking hands and kissing babies, as befits a man of his station and position. Inform one or more of the protagonists that suited individuals, appearing out of thin air, hand them a small American flag. They see several of them pop up, enthusiastically waved by the cheering crowd around them, as a mob of press flashbulbs erupt around the senator. A camera crew loads their equipment onto the ship while the crowd are distracted by the senator's arrival.

Among the crowd is a selection of the cast above, at the Director's discretion, only Senator Derrick, Stephanie Browne, Captain Sewester and Captain Payne must be present. The protagonists should be encouraged to interact with the Director characters to gain insight into the events about to unfold as each has their own view of the senator and may also offer up pieces of information like those found in the clues below.

If encountering the senator, he does his best to charm the character approaching him. He may even pose for a handshake

photograph with them for the local press. Any character with high Presence or any local celebrity may be targeted for such a photo-op by the senator and his aides. If the character is a Mouth and attempts to grill the senator on his political record in any way, he attempts to rebuff the questions with practiced poise and move on. His staff then seek to shield him from further questioning from that source, even physically standing between them if necessary. If a character succeeds in persuading the senator that they are worth being friends with, he invites them to gain an exclusive by accompanying him on board. The senator assures them that this is one boat ride they'll be pleased to have taken.

In any case, the protagonists are selected to board the vessel and be part of the crowd to hear Senator Derrick's big announcement. Captain Sewester theatrically sounds the ship's horn and pilot the vessel out into the bay, giving a glorious view of the city's skyline as the sun sets behind it and the lights begin to spring into life.

As Senator Derrick makes his announcement of Operation Harbor Wall, the yacht runs aground, striking something that throws those on deck off balance.

## CORE CLUES

- Payne has witnessed mysterious vessels coming and going in the night. She also claims that a small group of people meets these vessels on the beach, retreating when her people approach.
- Captain Sewester has been avoiding going home in the past few days. His wife is concerned that he has taken to drinking and he repeatedly chugs from a hip flask. He insists the flask contains only water.
- The senator's big announcement is of an upgrade to the Coast Guard vessels and facilities in wake of increased activity from the Red Menace. He announces Operation Harbor Wall, which involves increased military presence in coastal cities to prevent spies and foreign agents from penetrating the country unnoticed.
- Captain Sewester was determined that it be he who would take the senator out into the Bay. Some of the locals say that he knew about the senator's plan to make an announcement from the Bay itself before it was announced.

## ALTERNATIVE CLUES

Assemble an appropriate dice pool for a protagonist to roll to uncover these clues, one clue per success. Note that the search may require talking to a particular character or searching a particular place, at the Director's discretion.

- Captain Sewester might have a drinking problem, but a few of the locals point out that he's definitely been drinking water like a fish any time they've seen him, sometimes guzzling a full pint glass like he was dying of thirst.
- Choose one of the traitor characters. They are seen heading to the beach at night, dressed in a mysterious black cloak.
- Dr. Priest spends a lot of time at the Harbor but refuses to eat any of the famous fish dishes at Salty Sal's or order any of the same for anyone she meets.
- Sterling Steele found a weird object on the beach. He's been working on it in his shop but can't quite figure it out.

## DIRECTOR'S NOTES

- Keep the pacing of the first act slow. Use it to introduce the characters most important to your story going forward. Introducing some of the weird characteristics of Captain Sewester and other traitor characters may help the protagonists spot others as the mystery unfolds.
- The device in the possession of Sterling Steele is a weapon called *Raaurak's Ray*. The rules for it can be found in the Prefecture of the Pod section of **They Came from Beneath the Sea!** (p. 187). Scientists can help Sterling get it working with a Technology + Intellect roll, with two levels of Complication due to the advanced, alien technology. Failure on the roll results in their poking and prodding damaging the weapon and rendering it useless. Directors may wish to decide if Sterling is a traitor who wants to use the weapon against the protagonists or a helpful hero who may give it to them to aid their quest.

- Once the protagonists have had their fill of exploring the area and talking to Director characters, have them rounded up by the senator's aides and hustled onto Captain Sewester's boat.

# ACT TWO: PART I, COMMOTION ON THE OCEAN!

*"My fellow Americans, we stand at a crossroads in history, where we can choose to head down a dark road of ignorance and poverty or walk into the light of freedom. From this, our vantage point in the Atlantic, we can look back and see our country, like a jewel on the horizon, shining a light into the darkness of the world. In the far distance, nothing. Just trackless ocean as far as the eye can see. But, my friends, there is a threat over that horizon. One that is alien to everything we stand for and will not stop until its tyranny covers the entire world like the biblical flood! But we, this ark of freedom we call America, will not be pulled beneath the waves. We will stand firm against the rising tide of inhumanity and godless immorality beyond our shores. Like the eagle that is our symbol, we shall rise above..."*

A dull, grinding sound fills the air as the protagonists gather in the crowd to hear the senator's announcement, oversized cameras and radio microphones are focused upon the lectern as Senator Derrick sways with the boat rocking heavily beneath his feet. A cry goes up from some of the passengers. Those knowledgeable about seafaring suspect the boat has hit something, but with a successful Survival + Intellect roll they discern that it is more like something crashed into the ship from below, causing it to lose balance in the water.

A pair of gunshots ring out as one of the traitor characters fires a concealed weapon into the air from within. At least one of the protagonists should be able to see which character does this. The sudden shots spark a panic throughout the small area of the boat's deck, even causing some extras to be knocked unceremoniously overboard, or to leap overboard in an attempt to escape the gunfire. Captain Sewester bursts forward, as security agents surround Senator Derrick. The captain urges them to take him below deck where it's safe from this would-be assassin. The agents protecting the senator hurriedly usher him out of sight.

If a protagonist can wrestle the assassin to the ground and apprehend them, putting their life on the line for America's Secretary of Defense, they immediately gain the trust of Captain Payne, when she hears of it. They also gain the respect of Special Agent Campbell, who assists them in restraining the traitor.

Any protagonist who follows the senator below arrives just in time to see a strange, robotic arm dragging him through a glowing hole in the ship's hull. The senator's security detail lies scattered around the floor, lifeless and defeated. The hole reseals itself, as though it was never there, and the sound of something detaching from the vessel follows quickly.

As Captain Payne's Coast Guard vessels swarm around the stricken vessel and the remains of Special Agent Campbell's security forces haul the would-be assassin to a secure room, the protagonists have a chance to search for clues on the boat as it returns to Portland.

### CORE CLUES

- The scattered speech notes of Senator Derrick include reference to Operation Harbor Wall and his plans to triple the coastal defenses of the United States.
- Captain Sewester dropped his flask in the commotion. It contains drinking water. He is desperate to have this returned to him and begs for it back.
- The assassin character is both incredibly thirsty and unaware of why they just fired shots into the air. This character is infested with neuroplankton.

### ALTERNATIVE CLUES

Assemble an appropriate dice pool for a protagonist to roll to uncover these clues, one clue per success. Note that the search may require talking to a particular character or searching a particular place, at the Director's discretion.

- A quick check of the ship's radar detects another vessel heading due east before disappearing below detection depth.
- The assassin character was one of the people who has been meeting with Priest at Salty Sal's.
- The security guards below deck are dead, with scorch marks on their chests rather than bullet holes. One of them, who has been smashed backward against a bulkhead and is soaking wet as though hit with a powerful water cannon (protagonists who discovered *Raurak's Ray* in the first act recognize the burn marks as consistent with its blasts).

## ACT TWO: PART II, THE INTERROGATION

Upon returning to Portland, the assassin character is hauled off in handcuffs by the coast guard to be interrogated, all the way roaring, "I was framed!" Where this takes place can be decided by the Director but try to ensure that the protagonists are all present, if not involved. If they earned her trust in the previous scene, Captain Payne may deputize them as coast guard officers to assist in the investigation, since they're the only people she has decided, in her eye-twitchingly paranoid wisdom, are not corrupted by the aliens.

The security services, of course, suspect the hand of the red menace in this kidnapping of a senior US government official and their questions lead in that direction. It is up to the protagonists to help Captain Payne uncover the truth by holding the prisoner and denying them water long enough for the parasites inside them to die.

While under the influence of neuroplankton, the assassin does not under any circumstances give any truthful or helpful information to the protagonists. They may even attempt to lead them astray with grand talk of Soviet conspiracies and KGB plots. However, they do demand water more desperately with each passing question. Build this tension for a brief time before the character croaks and gurgles and begins to vomit forth a stream of cloudy goo from their mouth, nose and eyes, falling unconscious.

Further analysis by a Scientist character is possible, with a Science + Intellect roll. Add one Complication if the analysis does not take place using appropriate gizmos, gadgets and laboratory equipment. A successful roll reveals that the liquid contains thousands of microscopic, and quite dead, creatures, designed to overwhelm the mind of any host and render them subservient to an unknown, alien master. Failure leads the Scientist to pronounce it to be fish paste used in cooking.

Once the assassin regains consciousness, they reveal that Dr. Priest is responsible for poisoning them with the neuroplankton and that there were others. Protagonists can speculate over the identity of the traitor characters if they wish at this point. However, searching Dr. Priest's abandoned laboratory in the college is the key to uncovering several alternative clues and the true identities of the traitors. This is a heavily investigative and puzzle solving act, where the protagonists must use their wits to uncover the traitors' identities without compromising the fact that they're on to them.

Captain Payne asks the protagonists to wait until nightfall and hijack or stow away on whichever vessel is sent to gather the traitors. This could allow them to rescue Senator Derrick and save America!

### CORE CLUES

- The behavior of the assassin is a more extreme reflection of the behavior of Captain Sewester, he must also be infected.
- Captain Sewester can be freed from the control of the neuroplankton by a Scientist character with an extended surgery lasting eight hours. Roll Medicine + Intellect for each of the eight hours, with a cumulative difficulty of ten (see complex actions in **They Came from Beneath the Sea!**, p. 89). If they do not roll enough successes in the eight-hour period, Captain Sewester suffers permanent brain damage and is incommunicative for the rest of the story. In his office, the protagonists find instructions of the coordinates to take the boat for Senator Derrick's kidnapping, written by Dr. Priest.
- Dr. Priest departed on a ship while the protagonists were offshore, supposedly on a research mission. Her vessel sailed into international waters and has not been heard from since.
- A search of the assassin's home reveals a note in Priest's handwriting indicating that their cabal meets at Willard Beach after dark when the senator is taken, in order to be "liberated by our great allies".
- Plans, indicating an amphibious assault against Portland by an alien force, are discovered in Priest's lab. They indicate that the senator's plan to triple the number of coastguards on the sea would thwart this evil scheme.



## ALTERNATIVE CLUES

Assemble an appropriate dice pool for a protagonist to roll to uncover these clues, one clue per success. Note that the search may require talking to a particular character or searching a particular place, at the Director's discretion.

- The names of all the traitor characters are discovered on a list held in Priest's lab safe, the doctor's birthdate is the combination.
- A strange keyring is found, with an oval stone attached to it that glows green when squeezed. For the moment, it has no other effects, but it comes attached to a note saying, "SQUEEZE ME – for our escape."

## DIRECTOR'S NOTES

- This Act is the payoff to the build-up from Act One. The kidnapping should feel like a shocking, all action affair with the situation moving quickly and highlighting the confusion and diversionary tactics used by the Pod.
- If the players have forged any other strong bonds with the Director characters or extras, feel free to include them on the mission to save the senator. Note the appropriate Cinematics that could tie in with these, such as Kill the Extra in the Cinematics section of **They Came from Beneath the Sea!** (p. 130).
- Do not be surprised if the protagonists have a focus on ensuring that Senator Derrick's proposals go through, even if he is not around to enact them. Even have Special Agent Campbell and Captain Payne promise to push the government to go ahead with the plans regardless. The seeds of the Pod as a devious opponent and long-term threat can be sown in the following acts when the true purpose of their actions is revealed.
- Protagonists can choose between apprehending the traitors immediately and stealing their cloaks to take their place or waiting to ambush them when the alien craft comes to take them. The choice is theirs, but you may wish to present these two options using a key ally such as Captain Payne, Special Agent Campbell or whoever the protagonists seem closest to if they are confused as to how to proceed.

# ACT THREE: THE GREAT BUBBLE!

In this Act, the protagonists access the alien submarine and travel to their base beneath the sea, where Senator Derrick is being held. If they choose to ambush the F.I.S.H. operatives at the beach, they engage in combat with them as normal. The traitors are armed only with regular weapons, appropriate to their role in the community. Some may have only their fists; others may attempt to flee rather than fight. In any case, hold off on bringing the alien craft into play until the situation with the traitor characters has been resolved.

Once the protagonists are in place, ready to meet their new alien masters, a dim light appears in the water. At first, it appears

to reflect lights from the beachside businesses, but is quickly revealed as a large, tube shaped vessel. It surfaces smoothly and quietly and hovers toward the protagonists.

If any of them discovered the oval stone in the previous Act, they find it reacts by glowing a faint red in the presence of the vehicle. If they squeeze the stone, the door on the craft opens. This is the first sighting the protagonists get of one of the dreaded Prefects of the Pod, striding to meet them in a landwalk suit, described in the Prefecture of the Pod section of **They Came from Beneath the Sea!** (p. 187). The Prefect does not know, nor care, which puny humans are supposed to be collected here. It has a list of names and even photographs, but it does not truly recognize one human from another. The large, whale-like creature may even remark "You all look the same to me" before inviting the protagonists aboard.

The protagonists find themselves confined to the topmost section of the tubular vessel, the rest of it is submerged and only the Prefect can access it. The ship takes them due east, to a location deep underwater.

Through viewing ports on the outer hull of the alien craft, the protagonists see all sorts of marine life floating by. Some regular fish but getting more alien and disturbing as they approach the Bubble. Feel free to utilize other aliens from the Threats chapter of **They Came from Beneath the Sea!** (p. 161) who may be working for the Prefecture of the Pod. They are used as sentries and guards on the outskirts of the world's most advanced city.

The Bubble itself is an enormous, tree like structure built into a great canyon in the seabed. A maze of tubes and tunnels, connecting small, domed, bubble like structures which glow with a mysterious, white light. The domes themselves are not made of glass but are force fields generated by the aliens' hyper-advanced technology.

Scientists viewing this sight may marvel at the things they could learn with adequate time to study even a small amount of the systems being put in place, as a result, they may inspect the structure more closely than others. They see several docking stations where vessels like the one they are aboard, and other, sleeker, military looking vessels, are coming and going. Whales and dolphins also swim in and out via connecting doors. Scientists who succeed on a Science + Intellect roll understands that whales and dolphins should not be able to survive for long at these sorts of depths but note the air that fills the domes of the Great Bubble.

Protagonists are offloaded in a dry dock area. Dr. Priest is awaiting them and immediately identifies them as traitors, forcing them to flee via into the huge city, hunted by the Prefects and their allies.

Keen eyed protagonists quickly discover ways to blend in with the other humans who are prisoners/slaves in the city, such as donning the jumpsuits they wear, which can be found in large quantities in the dispensary. They also see theme park style maps conveniently on the walls of some rooms and corridors, lit up on massive screens with a glowing, red "YOU ARE HERE" highlighting their current location. The sign also features helpful photographs of smiling humans enjoying all the wonderful treats the Prefects have to offer them, helped along their way by beaming, friendly looking cartoon whales. A beaming dolphin's face can be found on adjacent posters with a speech bubble reading, "Danny the Dolphin says: No



Littering; No Loitering; No congregating in groups larger than Four; No unauthorized use of Pod facilities; HAVE FUN!"

Note, that avoiding Prefects on the hunt requires only one success on a Larceny + Dexterity roll as they see all humans as the same. However, avoiding Priest and her human guards requires two successes.

- Discarding their ostentatious cloaks and finding the jumpsuits worn by the humans in the city is essential. These can be discovered in the **Dispensary**, which is the first bubble after the **Docking Port**, where the protagonists arrived and where they can escape later in the Act.
- Passkeys can be obtained from other human servitors by pickpocketing them with Larceny + Dexterity, or convincing them to part with them using Persuasion + Presence or Persuasion + Manipulation. The passkeys allow the protagonists to open certain doors. A good place to get access to those would be in the **Recreation Area**, which is little more than a large bar where humans can eat, drink, and talk among themselves. No alien allies of the Pod would be lowered to serving humans and so the protagonists may find the denizens in that area helpful if they are able to impress them. Without appropriate passkeys, protagonists must either wait for others to open doors for them and risk being stopped by security or sneak through inside crates/boxes being transported from one place to another.

- Alien weaponry can be found in a small **Armory** and adjoining **Guard Barracks**, which is guarded by several prefects. The protagonists see pristine copies of *Raurak's Ray* here and may wish to replenish its ammunition with a fresh power cell by stealing one. Anyone caught stealing here may be taken to the **Slave Cells** in the lower part of the complex or be forced to flee before more security arrives to capture them. The landwalk suits being used by the Prefects in the area are also stored here, and Scientists may examine them with Technology + Intellect to gain an insight into their functioning. If they do so, give them the outline of this technology from the Prefecture of the Pod description in **They Came from Beneath the Sea!** (p. 187). There is an elevator in this room that leads to the Laboratory.
- The rest of the city can be accessed via a monorail style train which arrives at a platform marked as **Access Station 141**. This area is of little use to the protagonists other than as a place to hide. Humans are not allowed to access the train unaccompanied by a guard. Protagonists may also note that the air and power for this sector of the city is coming in via pipes in this station and being funneled to the various domes.
- The largest number of Prefects can be seen gathering at the **Temple of Raurak**, who is a deity worshipped by the Pod. Humans are not permitted access to this area, regardless of passkeys or excuses given. The only way in is to sneak.

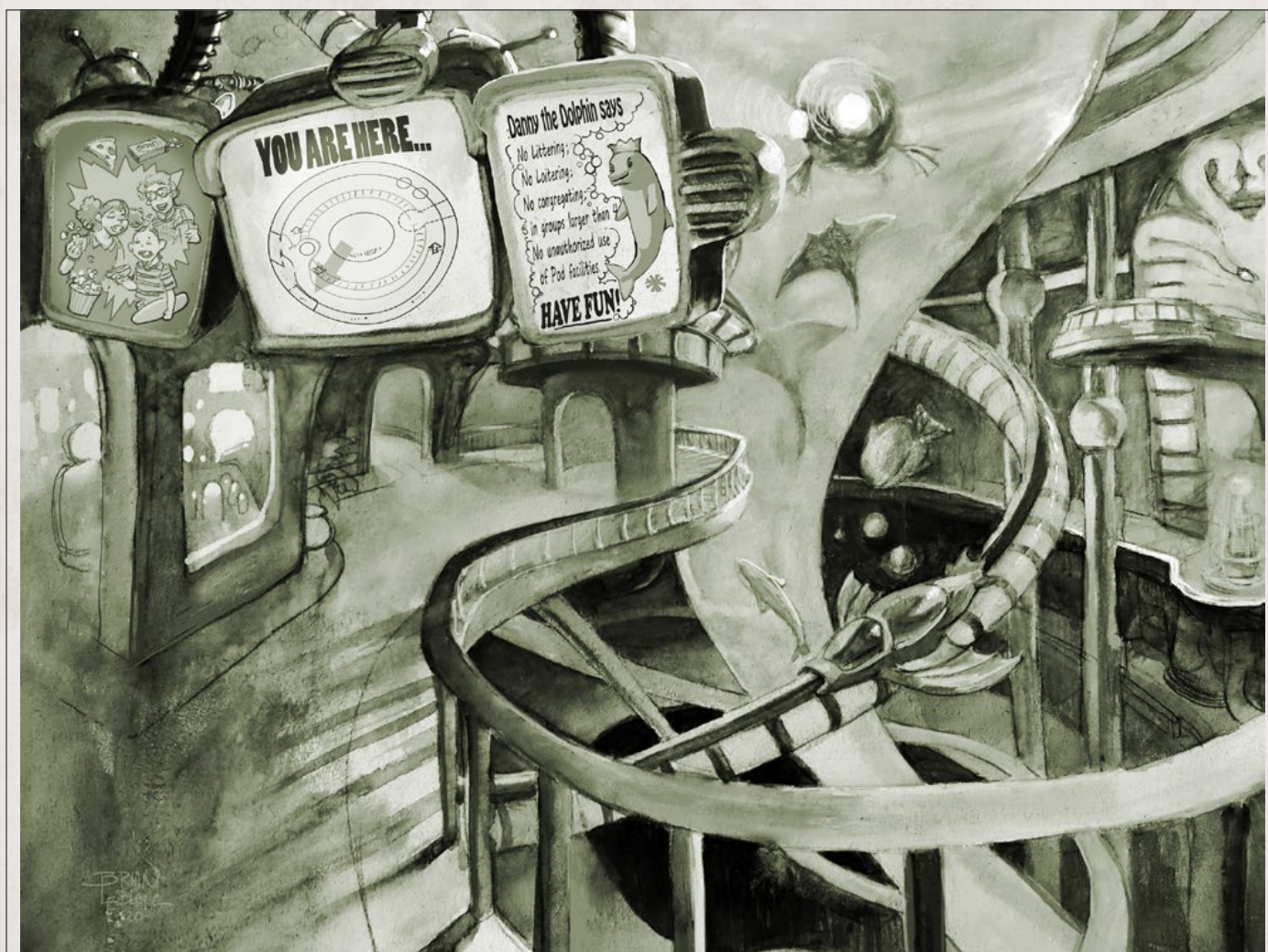
While there is no real benefit to doing so, accessing this area gives the players insight into the weird religion of the Prefects and their belief in the drowning of the world as their destiny, in an event they call “Aouraphoun”. During their travels, they may hear Prefects say this word to one another as a form of greeting, or in leaving one another. The Prefect holding ceremony here pontificates about the end of the world of humanity and the dawn of the great future for the Earth’s true masters.

- The **Control Dome** is where the overseers of the area monitor comings and goings from the dock, the access station, and the various domes. Protagonists may spot security cameras in the domes and hallways, the feeds for these go into massive banks of monitors in this area. If the protagonists did not find the oval stone (which they need to hijack a craft and escape), they can find one here and steal it from the Controller’s store. If they fail to acquire one, they must come up with another method of escape, such as the escape pods located in the docking bay, threatening a Prefect to pilot their craft or deploying the Ally of Convenience Cinematic, detailed in **They Came from Beneath the Sea!** (p. 126). This dome is located at the heart of the complex and can be used to access just about any other area apart from the docking port and slave cells.

- **The Laboratory** is where Senator Derrick is being held. It can only be accessed via the Control Dome or the elevator in the Guard Barracks. The door in the Control Dome is guarded by two Prefects and the elevator in the Guard Barracks can only be accessed by using the Chief of the Guard’s Passkey or sneaking into the elevator with him. Senator Derrick is lying unconscious in the single cell that stands in the center of the room, surrounded by a force field. Scientists can disable it using the alien apparatus in the area with a successful Enigmas + Intellect roll. Other Archetypes must roll with an additional level of Complication to do so. The Laboratory itself appears to be unguarded once inside but a search of the room reveals several Core and Alternative Clues. Feel free to editorialize with sensational revelations here, such as photographs of whales walking on the moon in robotic suits and flight schedules for research teams giving flight times to South Africa of around 4 hours.

### CORE CLUES

- There are detailed files on the F.I.S.H. organization, allowing the protagonists to gain intimate knowledge of that terrestrial threat for a continued campaign.
- A small tank containing the milky substance that the protagonists now recognize as neuroplankton sits on a table in the room.



- A list of names of government officials is on a computer screen. Derrick's name is marked as "Obtained."
- Flooding and sea level projections are stored in a database here, indicating that the Pod's long-term goals are to use Global Warming to flood the earth and force the human race into subservience to them.

### ALTERNATIVE CLUES

Assemble an appropriate dice pool for a protagonist to roll to uncover these clues, one clue per success. Note that the search may require talking to a particular character or searching a particular place, at the Director's discretion.

- The information of Dr. Priest's next assignment after returning to the surface is detailed, providing a hook for a future adventure.
- A stealth belt is found which generates a field that renders a protagonist invisible. The field can be extended to other protagonists, but they must remain in physical contact with the belt.
- Upon freeing Senator Derrick, the protagonists notice that his hair is wet.
- There is a map showing nuclear fallout projections resulting from full scale nuclear war on the surface. These are also factored into the global warming projections and show that it would vastly accelerate the flooding, while leaving the Prefects safe beneath the waves.
- There are medical files here detailing the procedure to disable and remove neuroplankton from infected hosts. A Scientist in possession of those files gains two Enhancements to any attempt to perform the procedure.

Upon returning to the Docking Port with the senator in tow, the protagonists are confronted by Dr. Priest and a suitable number of human guards, trying to prevent their escape. Note that none of the Prefects come to assist them in this endeavor and only move to assist after two combat rounds of Dr. Priest loudly wondering why none of the guards are coming to help them.

If you wish to ensure that Dr. Priest survives for future adventures, you may want to assure this now by having her removed from the action by diving into a waiting sub or into a torpedo-like escape pod that shoots her to the surface. This may also be an opportune moment for a protagonist with the Fan Favorite Cinematic in **They Came from Beneath the Sea!** (p. 130) to declare her as a Fan Favorite villain to gain the associated bonus.

Once Dr. Priest and her minions are subdued or escaped, describe the Prefects beginning to enter the Docking Port in their landwalk suits. They may even fire off inaccurate blasts of their ray guns to see off the fleeing craft commandeered by the protagonists. If any of your characters have a piloting skill, ascertain the bumpiness of the ride by having them roll Pilot + Dexterity. If none of your characters have the requisite Skill, they must roll Enigmas + Dexterity with two Complications to pilot the ship safely. A failure results in the ship crashing into part of the alien structure and damaged, increasing the level of Complication by one each time. If the craft is damaged three times, it is rendered unusable.

### DIRECTOR'S NOTES

- During their travels in the Bubble, have guards constantly searching for the protagonists, who must disguise themselves using the outfits in the dispensary or by using the stealth belt which can be found in the Laboratory. If the small group of humans commanded by Dr. Priest finds them, they try to apprehend the protagonists. If they are spotted by a Prefect while trying to access the laboratory, they try to capture and implant them with neuroplankton. While the Prefects want Senator Derrick back behind his desk doing the Prefecture's work, the addition of the protagonists as agents wouldn't go amiss either.
- If you have protagonists who are primed for combat but haven't yet been able to deploy their skills, this Act is the perfect opportunity for them to do so. Allow them to heroically punch out their human pursuers or even blast the Chief of the Guard off his robotic legs with *Raurak's Ray*.
- The *Raurak's Ray* guns which are available in the Armory are usable by the Protagonists in the same way as the one that Sterling Steele found.
- When escaping, note that the controls to pilot the vessel are underwater, as is most of the ship itself, keeping it secure from human hands. Anyone seeking to pilot it must roll Athletics + Stamina at Difficulty 2 to hold their breath long enough to activate the ship and get it on course. After which, they can dive down to make course corrections etc., as normal. If this is simply not working out, have the protagonists roll Enigmas + Cunning. If successful, they discover a lever that drains the water from the pilot's area.

## ACT FOUR: THE HIDDEN FIN

When arriving back at Willard Beach, Captain Payne and Special Agent Campbell meet the protagonists. The latter, looking to ensure the safety of the senator, invites him to take a car back to Incognito Shipping to be spirited out of the city. However, Senator Derrick informs them that he has another arrangement should his safety be compromised and is going to that facility instead. At this point, the protagonists may already suspect that he is infected with neuroplankton and wish to take him into custody, but the security services on the scene do not allow this to happen.

As the senator departs the scene, the protagonists overhear him asking one of his aides to contact the president to arrange a meeting and then asking if he has any water that he could drink. If they were unsure before, the characters should now be clear that the senator has been compromised and that the Pod allowed them to leave so that he could return to work in their service, possibly even infecting the President of the United States.

With these events having occurred, the protagonists may collectively roll Persuasion + Presence to persuade Captain Payne and Special Agent Campbell to pursue the senator before he can return to Washington DC.

The senator's car pulls up to the Oceanview Diner and he immediately goes inside with his security detail.

Upon entering the diner, the protagonists find that the senator and his entourage are not within, only "Greasy" Pete staffs the diner, washing used milkshake glasses in a sink full of soap suds.

If "Greasy" Pete is not already exposed as a traitor from the list in the Bubble or with the protagonists as an ally at this point, he joins the group in the following scene. They must convince the dim but patriotic football star to tell them where Senator Derrick's entourage have gone. Have a protagonist roll Persuasion + Presence to achieve this. Grant an Enhancement if they mention the safety of the nation in their pitch to him and another if he has been their ally for the entire story. Success grants them access to the secret government bunker behind the door in the back which appears to outsiders as a permanently broken freezer. Failure means Pete asks them to leave, and they must coerce him in another way to reveal his secret.

Opening the freezer with the pass code known to Pete reveals a hi-tech facility within. The senator, two security guards and two Prefects of the Pod are inside, arranging the next phase of their nefarious plan to accelerate the fall of humankind.

Both Prefects are equipped with landwalk suits and ray guns, on top of their alien powers and use them to full effect to try to win this battle. This is the climactic scene and should be treated as such with full on action sequences and over the top moves being used on both sides. Stress to the protagonists that if they do not prevail here, then America and the World will soon be underwater and all of humanity will be jumpsuit-wearing slaves in the Great Bubble.

## DIRECTOR'S NOTES

- While the protagonists might not wish to kill the senator, in desperation, the Prefects might just try to murder him with a blast of their ray guns. As a reflexive action, allow a nearby protagonist to pull Senator Derrick into cover if they see a Prefect preparing to kill him. This action can be resolved using the rules for Defending in **They Came from Beneath the Sea!** (p. 91). On failure, the protagonist can choose to take the hit in place of the senator. On a botch, the senator is hit and takes damage as normal.
- Other human allies may have been convinced to come and assist. If the protagonists contacted authorities to send backup, have them arrive three rounds into the combat to swing it in their favor. Bear in mind, if the protagonists kill the senator, it is difficult for them to prove that he has been infected as the neuroplankton would void his body when he dies. Have one of the Director characters, most likely Captain Payne or Special Agent Campbell, impress upon them that the senator must be taken alive for the threat of the Pod to be taken seriously at the highest levels of government.
- Pete summons the authorities as soon as he sees aliens in his diner, or, if he was one of the traitor characters, aliens that he has just betrayed. Remember, the first instinct of the police is to protect the senator and hinder anyone who they

perceive as attacking him. As an action, he may attempt to order arriving police or soldiers to attack the protagonists and must roll Persuasion + Manipulation against the protagonist with the highest dice pool in that roll. If he is already subdued before backup arrives, at least two of the arriving humans attempt to drag the senator to safety, away from the Prefects.

- The senator can be subdued and knocked unconscious in much the same way as a regular human. Allow your players to be creative in how they might wish to take him down in a non-lethal fashion. Perhaps there is a stack of boxes that could be toppled on top of him, "Greasy" Pete may intervene with his famous Portland Pulverizer tackle, or the senator could be simply knocked unconscious and handcuffed. Allow for the most appropriate plan to take the fore and be sure to reward particularly innovative or humorous suggestions with experience.
- If the senator is taken and it seems that the combat is going against them, the Prefects trigger a self-destruct mechanism in their facility and try to flee using a hidden amphibolyer. If they reach it, it bursts through the roof of the diner and flies east, out to sea. If they are killed or otherwise subdued, G-Men come to spirit them, or their corpses, back to secret government labs for study before the facility can detonate.

## EPILOGUE: THE ENEMY REVEALED!

As the protagonists run from the Oceanview Diner, it explodes in an eruption of blue fire which then sucks back in on itself and takes all the Prefect technology with it, leaving a perfectly rectangular crater where the Diner once stood. "Greasy" Pete may lament the loss of his employment and observe that the owner is going to kill him, but the protagonists can take this as a moment to celebrate.

With the aliens captured, killed, or fled, the protagonists have successfully saved America from the immediate threat posed by the Prefecture of the Pod. However, the Great Bubble remains and until it is destroyed, the threat always remains.

The senator, if he is still alive, is freed from the influence of the neuroplankton and can tell the president of the threat beneath the sea. This leads to the creation of a secret organization to battle against the alien menace. Protagonists could choose to become operatives, contacts or even opponents of the new agency. The bill to triple the Coast Guard numbers is accepted unanimously given the level of danger.

Consider with your players, where the characters may go from here. In the intervening time between the next adventure, suggest some outcomes that may be suitable for them.

- **Scientists** may be invited to join the research efforts on the Prefects to inform them for future adventures against

the Pod. Directors can choose to reveal some of the secrets about the Prefects of the Pod and their innate abilities at their discretion.

- **G-Men** can be signed up to operate within the new, shadowy organization whose goal is to identify alien threats and protect humanity from them by any means necessary. They may gain information on some of the other alien threats and their abilities and technology that prepare them for your next adventure.
- **Everymen** try to return to their normal life but find it difficult to do with their new knowledge. Each day they find themselves drawn to the sea, staring out, expecting to see something emerge that they stand ever-ready to fight in defense of their family and their home. Their experiences drive them to rally the community together to fight anything that may appear.
- **Survivors** are hired out as independent contractors by the new shadow organization. Vanishing from the public eye

and going off grid. Always waiting for the man in black that may be sitting inside the next diner they visit to give them another dangerous mission to save the world. It is likely that such characters spend their time honing their combat skills and helping others to do the same as they travel in a random patrol route up and down the coast.

- **Mouths** rebel against the idea of a shady, secretive organization keeping all this knowledge to themselves. Journalists may wish to expose the danger to humanity, actors may want to cash in on their experiences and make movies based on them. Either way, the secretive government coverup does not sit well with them, and it's likely that steps are taken to keep them quiet.

All the above are simply examples and players should be encouraged to consider what their characters might do after their experiences. These discussions should then be woven into upgrading their characters for their next adventure!



# THE GLASS BOTTOM

The Timburgs had operated their glass bottom boat tour for several years. It gave Toddd the freedom to fish on days off, and Sheba the leisure to paint seascapes which she sold in a shop on the pier. It was all well-rounded and tidy; oceanic day job nicely in synch with their number-one passions. Best part was, the tourist thing was only weekends.

If Toddd (yes, he referred to himself as "Toddd in 3-D") often found his patience worn thin by the clientele with their annoying peccadillos, and Sheba had even less. At least Toddd could pretend. Her painting reflected the needs of an extremely private person. Serene watercolors were the escape from boorish tourists. In a way, the Timburgs' love of the ocean was a wall between them and humanity.

...

It had been a particularly long Sunday of hideous Hawaiian shirts and loud shorts so this Monday was an especially welcome gasp of relief.

So, they found themselves in a cove they hadn't tried before on a picture postcard day; Sheba with easel and canvas at the stern, Toddd fishing off the bow. The silence, so important to each, seemed particularly pronounced in its

nothingness. Sheba considered it a result of the lack of birdsong from the trees a hundred yards off. That was mildly odd, but it was almost as if the water wasn't lapping the hull of the boat. Indeed, not a breath disturbed that glassy surface.

Toddd did not notice. He was the soul of stillness when he fished. As though his concentration drew them towards his line. It was as close as he came to meditation.

Sheba began roughing in something that might be called a sketch. She liked to jump in, start painting, see where it took her. The particular blue-green of this water captivated her and she thought about capturing that unique color with a buildup of several different hues. She'd never seen it quite like this.

The painter was set up at the starboard corner of the stern so that her materials could be laid out on the bench before her as she gazed at the picturesque cove across the port side. The only movement below, her that was peripherally aware of, was her own reflection in the water beneath the glass bottom. It was something one no longer noticed after a while.

But she did. For one strange moment her reflection had not been in synch.

Sheba stopped painting to stare down there, but saw nothing out of the ordinary and realized it must have been a passing fish, perhaps headed for Toddd's line.

She went back to her blue-green water beneath pink-beige sand beneath warm-green trees and it wasn't a minute later before she once again paused. This time she was certain her reflection had been off a bit. She was more aware now, from the corner of her eye, and found the arm movements to be slightly more vigorous than her own. Of course, the idea was insane.

Sheba placed her brush down on the palette and crouched at the glass bottom. Her reflection naturally, did the same. They stared at each other.

. . .

Toddd had dozed off. The great fisher, so lulled by the unnatural stillness of the cove, had mentally left his post. Sheba saw this, smirked, shook his shoulder and Toddd immediately began reeling in.

"Relax. It's me."

"Oh," said Toddd, a bit chagrined.

"I was going to ask you if you've noticed anything odd about the water. Like maybe your reflection?"

Fearing sunstroke, the fisher studied his wife. "Why don't you just sit down and relax a moment?"

. . .

At Sheba's insistence, her husband found himself crouched beside her, staring down at their reflections in the glass bottom.

"Okay, so what am I supposed to see?"

"I don't know," she complained, frustrated. "It wasn't moving when I was, well, not exactly."

"Reflections have off days too you know," he chided. Toddd had that frustrating way about him. But Sheba persisted.

"It was like there was a movie of me, but it didn't quite match."

Toddd stared at her now. "Seriously, you need a nap. Just lie down-"

That was all he managed before she yanked his fishing hat down over his eyes.

. . .

Sheba couldn't nap. If anything, she was edgier than ever. What was usually her cherished relaxation had become something disturbing and unnatural. Again and again she caught her reflection "disobeying," but never when she looked directly at it. Oh, they were sneaky, they were, those mirror images in water. More

than once she snapped an "Ah-ha!" its way, to no avail. The reflection had no shame.

Her painting became increasingly disjointed, the colors off. Everything seemed out of balance. Where was the nature? The serenity?

In frustration, she plunked her brush in the water can and fell to the deck, hanging over that glass bottom, staring hard at her water-self. She moved in closer. The impassive face did likewise. Did Sheba really look like that? So cold, so soulless. And yet... the corners of the mouth. She swore she saw them turn up ever so slightly, like an aquatic sinister Mona Lisa. Was Sheba making that face too?

Sweat beaded rapidly on her brow like a plague. Her eyes locked with those cold orbs of blue-green, a shade she could never quite capture. One could lose oneself...

. . .

Toddd was not having a good day. It wasn't fair. All week he put up with people just for this beloved hobby. The man had trophies. Yet not a single nibble broke that placid surface.

Maybe something was wrong. Maybe Sheba was right. This water was so cold, so uninhabited.

He realized he'd been at it for hours and hadn't heard from his wife since that reflection distress. If something was wrong with this water...

. . .

Toddd left his rod in the holder and rushed astern. To his relief, he found his wife standing there, briskly painting away. He felt foolish. He didn't know what he'd expected to find.

Sheba greeted him warmly and he looked at her painting.

"Hey. That's good. I like that ... blue-green color you got there," Toddd remarked.

"Darling, I'm getting something to drink, can I get you anything?" asked his wife.

He looked surprised. She never called him darling. "No, I'm fine, thanks." As she went below, Toddd's eyes came to rest on the glass bottom and he observed his reflection. Squinting, he crouched down, slowly bringing his face closer...

. . .

The engine revved and the boat started moving from the cove. The sun was lower now, the painting, paint supplies and fishing gear stowed. Sheba smiled at Toddd at the wheel who beamed back at her as he increased speed and took them farther out to sea.

Back at the cove, the water seemed still as glass. The only movement came from the two figures gesticulating agitatedly just below its surface, so desperate for attention.





Blamir

# CHAPTER THREE

# THE VOYAGE OF THE

# ROSE MARIE

"Upon entering one's cabin, the first order of business was a quick look at the Passenger List laid out on the table alongside the dining reservation card, telegrams, and the first batch of invitations. On a two- or three-class ship, the names usually included only those in one's own class, minus some celebrities or a recluse that explicitly asked not to be listed."

- Theodore Scull, from *Cruise Magazine*

*The Voyage of the Rose Marie* is a sandbox full of story hooks for groups to use in their own games and tales. The characters and situations, though possibly not all the locations, are exportable. Using every idea in this scenario would make for a story stretching over many sessions, but it is also possible to pick and choose, if the troupe feels a shorter adventure would be more fun.

The *Rose Marie* is a cruise ship with a full itinerary on a six-week round tour from New York, to various cities in the Mediterranean and back to Boston. Every passenger has a story to tell and not all the crew are human. Threats lurk in every corner of the luxury liner, and others might clamber on board at sea, or at one of the several ports of call.

There are no limits on the type of character players create for this scenario. Anyone who has a reason to be on a cruise, whether as a passenger or a member of crew, can get involved in these stories. Most of the characters outlined below would work fine as player characters if the troupe are so inclined, though some Directors might wish to insist all player characters be human. All characters require rounding out with Aspirations, Paths, Skills, and Trademarks before coming into play.

• • •

*Welcome Aboard the Rose Marie, flagship of the Sunshine Anchor Line*

*First Class, Cabin Class or Tourist Class, we assure all our passengers of our attentive, personalized service and top-notch entertainment.*

*Whether you are enjoying a cocktail in one of our elegantly appointed bars, relaxing on the sun deck or competing in a tennis or deck quoit tournament, our staff are standing by, ready to satisfy your every whim. In the evenings we have three sittings for dinner, followed by first-rate dance bands and party games in the ball room. We have*

*two heated pools filled with healthful sea water in which you can gambol to your hearts content.*

*We start from New York, calling at Barcelona, Marseilles, and Naples, returning via Marseilles, Genoa, Livorno, and Barcelona, finally arriving in Boston. Passengers will join us at several points along the way and some will choose to sojourn in Naples, Marseilles, or Barcelona, enjoying the delights of those lively cities and the peaceful countryside surrounding them, rejoining us on our homebound journey.*

*As experienced travelers among you are aware and the rest will be delighted to discover, an ocean voyage is the gayest, most relaxing holiday in the world. We provide a brilliant selection of activities for your enjoyment, with high spirited companionship in spacious luxury. The glorious tonic effect of the clean sea air will surely sharpen your appetite for the gourmet delights we offer in our elegantly appointed dining rooms.*

*Your safety and enjoyment are our primary concern, so we ask you listen closely to all crew instructions and to take part in our evacuation drills. We shall try not to keep you from your leisure activities one moment longer than is necessary. Please learn the location of the muster points which our friendly crew will point out to you.*

*We have pleasure in attaching our itinerary and a copy of the Passenger List.*

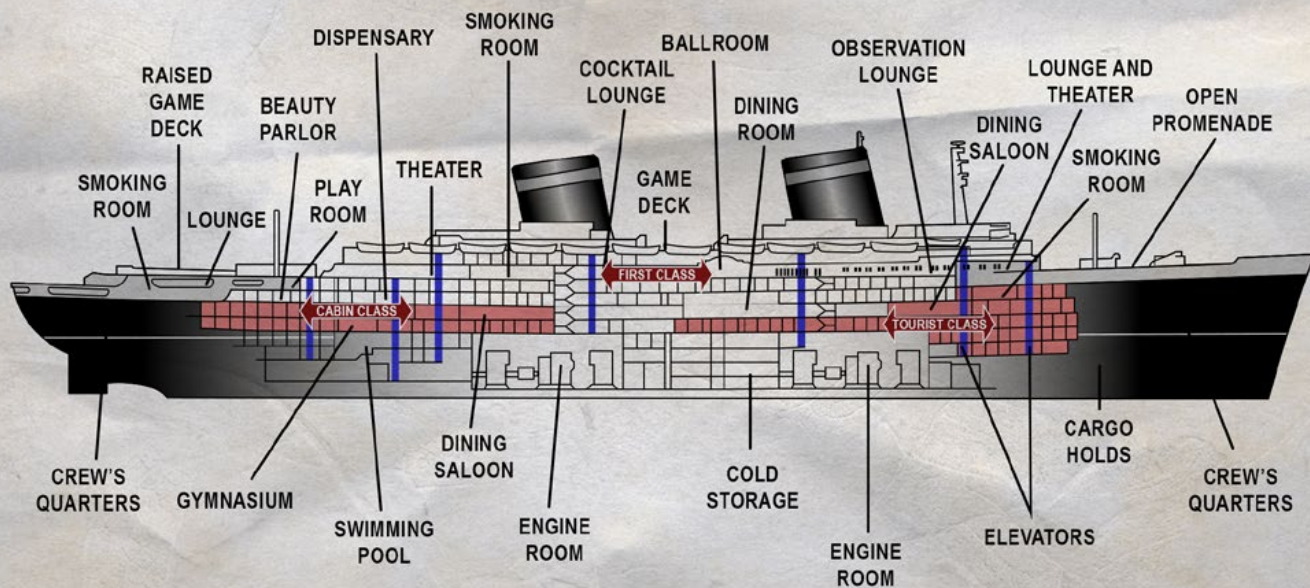
• • •

## ANATOMY OF A CRUISE SHIP

The *Rose Marie* carries three classes of passengers:

First Class passengers enjoy the height of luxury with private suites of elegantly appointed rooms and personal maids and valets to pack, unpack, and take care of all their needs. First Class public

# Welcome ABOARD THE ROSE MARIE



rooms are on a par with the best restaurants and ballrooms in the world. These travelers are the rich and famous, stars sailing between continents, politicians with diplomatic meetings overseas, and magnates on business or expensive vacations.

Cabin Class Passengers have comfortable en-suite rooms, albeit smaller and in less desirable locations than those in First Class. They have allocated staff, but these are responsible for passengers in a run of cabins, rather than being at the beck and call of a single individual or family. The public rooms are well-appointed and spacious though a notch below those in First Class.

Tourist Class Passengers have private cabins with shared facilities. Staff make up the beds and clean the rooms but do not provide personal service. Public areas are pleasant, but occasionally somewhat crowded.

There are no firm barriers between the deck areas devoted to the different classes although the amount of space and degree of service offered increase with the class of passenger. All passengers come together in competitive games and the healthy saltwater indoor and outdoor swimming pools. Dining rooms are separate, with much of the evening entertainment open to all, although First Class passengers get the best seats and tables.

In general, the center of the ship contains the best accommodation. Being closer to the vessel's center of gravity, this area suffers less from the constant movement associated with a sea voyage. Below the waterline, from fore to aft are the cargo holds, engine room, cold stor-

age, and lower levels of the indoor swimming pool. In addition, there are some Tourist Class and staff cabins to the fore and the gymnasium sits directly above the swimming pool. These rooms have no natural light. The next two decks are Tourist Class and staff accommodation. Above these sit Cabin Class rooms, both private and public; two dining saloons, bars, two theaters, a dispensary, the doctor's office, the purser's office, and other administrative areas. Next up are the First-Class suites along with more public and administrative facilities including observation lounges, games decks, sun decks, beauty salons, barbers, cocktail lounges, and smoking rooms.

As a general rule, the crew quarters are fore and aft, Cabin Class facilities are toward the aft of the ship, and Tourist Class to the fore. First Class lies between the two. Many passengers only associate with their own class and the ship's design facilitates this, but there are areas where all guests may mingle and, frequently, passengers invite a friend or member of their entourage to their cabin, to dine, or to enjoy the facilities associated with their class of accommodation.

## INTRODUCTION TO THE CAPTAIN AND HIS CREW

**Captain: John Lukey** (Force 3, Finesse 4, Resilience 3)

Captain John Lukey has been the officer in charge of the Rose Marie for nearly 10 years. He prides himself on running a tight ship. Until recently, the Rose Marie sailed backward and forward between New York and Marseilles, carrying a combination of passengers and cargo. Passengers, although they enjoyed relaxing

and having fun on board, bought berths on the ship primarily because they needed to get from A to B.

Three years ago, the *Rose Marie* had a refit to bring her up to date and this latest voyage is the first time she has run as a pleasure trip. It's a new-fangled idea and the captain is determined to make a success of it. He is a forward-looking man and believes these new 'entertainment cruises' will become increasingly popular in the future. He is proud to be a pioneer of this new enterprise.

The captain's main motivation is to make a success of this cruise. He must keep the ship running smoothly and the passengers happy. The captain understands the passengers are customers and the customer is always right.

**Ship's Doctor: Deliverance Hawkins** (Force 2, Finesse 5, Resilience 3)

Deliverance believes she has been fortunate to get a job as ship's doctor on the *Rose Marie*. She is highly qualified and has an excellent bedside manner. She understands that, on a cruise like this, some of her patients have little wrong with them. Some of them just need someone to talk to and listening is part of her function.

As an agent of the Federation of Intelligent Sealife and Humans otherwise known as F.I.S.H (see **They Came from Beneath the Sea!**, p. 211), she is delighted to be working at sea and hopes she will be able to smooth over failures of communication between humans and any intelligent aquatic life they might encounter. Deliverance is excited by the idea that she might encounter some of the species she supports. She is, of course, operating in deep cover and no one on the ship knows her affiliation.

Deliverance was not one of the first wave of F.I.S.H. operatives. She joined up three years ago via one of their outreach programs. She is not a leading scientist or even a medical specialist. She is a general physician with some training in field surgery. F.I.S.H. targeted her for recruitment less for her scientific qualifications than because her sympathetic nature makes her an ideal candidate for the position of ship's doctor on a luxury cruise.

**Head Steward: David Rupp** (Force 3, Finesse 3, Resilience 4)

David is a crab person (see **They Came from Beneath the Sea!**, p. 185). When he took up his position, he wasn't a crab person, but the original David Rupp was killed discreetly by the crab person who stole his identity. As head steward, he had a lot of input into choosing his team and about 80 percent of those he supervises are crab people. Being head steward has enabled David to negotiate effectively on behalf of his team and all the stewards enjoy at least three "coffee breaks" during their 10-hour shifts.

David's agenda is quite simple. Firstly, he must keep his own identity and those of his crab people staff a secret. Secondly his instructions are to 'recruit' some of the famous and influential passengers to the crab people cause. Vanessa Rubio and Generoso Rossetti are primary targets, Vanessa because of her influence in small mouth society and Leonard because of his obscene fondness for seafood, especially crab sandwiches. David has some of his best personnel assigned to their cabins. He does have some flexibility, however, and anyone he catches eating his smaller kin becomes a possible target for conversion.

Notably, although the humans on board regard David as having higher status than the rest of the stewards, the crab people leader is actually Vincent Rochester, one of the pool attendants. There is some tension between David and Vincent. To preserve

his cover, Vincent always defers to David in public, reserving his chastisement for those times they are free from small mouth gaze.

**Purser: Simon Thompson** (Force 2, Finesse 4, Resilience 4)

Simon Thompson runs the purser's office with the aid of Mandy Cleavers, his personal assistant with whom he is having a torrid affair. Simon is a perfectly normal human being, if avaricious. He has his fingers in the till and has embezzled thousands of dollars from Sunshine Anchor Lines. He has become so confident he is above suspicion that he has taken to short-changing the passengers, or "guests" as the captain prefers to call them as well as offering truly atrocious deals on currency conversion.

Despite this, being the purser is not madly profitable. Simon is certain he could do better for himself elsewhere and cultivates friendships with wealthy passengers, like Amy Hollenholler and Stuart Rutjes. Mostly he delegates anything involving Cabin Class and Tourist Class passengers to Mandy as he lacks patience with those who are less well off.

Simon and Mandy are excellent dancers and, in the evenings, passengers can often find them in the ballroom demonstrating their moves to crew and guests alike.

**Chief Engineer: Tormod Ceanadach** (Force 3, Finesse 4, Resilience 3)

Tormod is a dour Scotsman who takes his responsibilities seriously. He is committed to keeping the engine room in good running order and takes pride in showing passengers around the working parts of the ship. Tormod is an excellent engineer and quite handy with improvised weaponry when situations turn nasty, but he is not socially competent. Of course, he must sit at the captain's table for formal dinners and heads up his own table on other occasions. Tormod tends to say the wrong things to the guests, if he speaks at all. Mostly he plays it safe by answering stupid questions with grunts. He can be perfectly articulate when talking about things that interest him (i.e. engines and anything to do with the mechanics of the ship), though some find it hard to understand his thick Scottish accent.

**Pool Maintenance: Vincent Rochester** (Force 5, Finesse 2, Resilience 3)

In human terms, Vincent is a low status maintenance guy. He is, however, chief among the crab people and in charge of their overall strategy. Mostly he acts through David Rupp, believed by the humans on board to be Vincent's boss. Vincent deals with all issues regarding the *Rose Marie*'s swimming pools and is usually found hanging out around one of them. He keeps a low profile and many of the passengers and crew think he is a bit simple. In truth, he is a top-class strategist who keeps in close touch with the Prefecture of the Pod (see **They Came from Beneath the Sea!**, p. 187). Not all the crab people aboard approve of this association, but they assume someone high up mandated it and none dare defy the will of Rochester.

## FIRST CLASS PASSENGERS

**Amy Hollenholler** (Force 2, Finesse 5, Resilience 3)

Mrs. Hollenholler is a wealthy widow. Her beloved husband died three years ago and, since then, she has kept herself entertained by travelling on luxury cruises. This is her first adventure on the Sunshine Anchor Line. Being filthy rich, she has no short-

age of offers of romance (and more) from young hopefuls but, at the grand age of 56, she has achieved a form of independence she enjoys.

Apart from travel, Mrs. Hollenholler is a rabid consumer of mystery novels. She has a particular taste for Agatha Christie. She fancies herself as an amateur detective, one who can get to the bottom of any mystery and would relish any chance to help the captain and crew solve any murders or jewel heists that take place in the course of their travels. It would be nearly as much fun as Murder on the Orient Express!

**Stuart Rutjes** (Force 5, Finesse 2, Resilience 3)

Stuart Rutjes is a dealer in diamonds on his way from New York to Antwerp on business. He intends to leave the ship at Genoa (where he has business) and proceed to Antwerp in a rented car. Stuart is travelling with a case full of his wares and has deposited a large sum of money with the purser. Although he is travelling for business, he sees no reason not to make his stay on the Rose Marie as enjoyable and as relaxing as possible. He likes to keep himself in peak condition and takes daily walks, 10 times briskly around the deck, as well as swimming in the pool and playing deck quoits and, when the weather permits, tennis. These activities bring him into contact with Cabin Class and Tourist Class passengers, and, as he is not a snob, he is genial in his manner toward them.

Stuart is a practical man, and some find him lacking in imagination. He is an expert in his field though, perhaps, not the most astute of businessmen. He does not care greatly for the arts but enjoys the luxuries of life aboard the Rose Marie. He has presented the captain with a rather lovely necklace for his wife. The captain was reluctant to take it at first, but Stuart insisted the gift is a mark of respect and he expects nothing in return.

**Vanessa Rubio** (Force 2, Finesse 5, Resilience 3)

Vanessa is a movie star, on her way to attend Cannes Film Festival where she expects to pick up an award or two. She is in her early twenties, beautiful, talented, and temperamental. She travels with a large entourage including her manager, Georges Dubois (rumored to be her lover), her hairdresser, Generoso Rossetti and her make-up artiste Pauline Mayr. Dubois has his own First-Class cabin but Generoso travels in Cabin Class whilst Pauline has Tourist Class accommodation.

Vanessa loves attention and turns heads everywhere she goes. She expects the crew and her fellow passengers to cater to her every whim and can throw tantrums if they fail to do so. Georges is the only person who can calm her down. Vanessa rarely ventures onto deck as the wind plays havoc with her hair. She is fussy about her diet and the ship's cook has been tearing his hair out as she rejects everything he presents. The slight seasickness she suffered in the first 24 hours and whenever the seas are slightly less flat than a mirror does not help. Dr. Hawkins has been visiting her in her cabin daily to ensure she is able to take sufficient nourishment to maintain her skin tone.

**Senator Tobias Darling** (Force 2, Finesse 3, Resilience 5)

Senator Darling is travelling with his beautiful wife and three obnoxious kids. It's a working holiday for him as he has scheduled meetings with foreign politicians and business leaders in Barcelona, Marseilles, and Naples. He is a member of Committee on Government Operations, but his current remit is more social and commercial. He hopes to make close ties with foreign government

and business leaders over dinner and around the swimming pool.

His wife, Jennifer Darling, is an ex-starlet who had supporting roles in a number of movies prior to the birth of her first child, William (12), closely followed by Daisy (11) and John (9). The family occupy a large suite in First Class and expect the rest of the passengers to treat them with respect bordering on reverence. The children run wild all over the ship, barely controlled by their governess, Margaret Sharpe who is travelling in Tourist Class.

The family caused problems for the captain on their first day by insisting their nanny accompanies the children in First Class areas while Miss Rubio should go to the Tourist Class salon to have her hair done as the likes of Pauline Meyr should never be permitted in First Class areas.

## CABIN CLASS PASSENGERS

**'Vitas Varnas' (real name: Vitaly Demidov)** (Force 2, Finesse 5, Resilience 3)

Vitas is a moderately successful actor, travelling to Marseilles from whence he will take a train to Cherbourg followed by a ferry across the English Channel to Margate to perform in repertory theater for the summer season. Vitas is friendly on the surface but reluctant to talk about his past. At one time he was working undercover for the Russians, who assisted him in emigrating to New York in his mid-teens after he became orphaned. Displeased with the way history is painting the USSR, he has broken contact with them and does not believe they will catch up with him.

Vitas watches the newsreels and reads the papers and has become aware of recent sightings of a variety of previously unknown creatures from beneath the sea. He is not sure why they have suddenly come into such prominence. Perhaps it is something to do with the nuclear tests which, for the most part, seem to have taken place at sea, or perhaps they are the leftovers of a horrible Nazi experiment. Vitas has read a lot of theories and is keen to explore the mysteries behind these sightings and to help humanity in any way he can.

**Generoso Rossetti** (Force 2, Finesse 5, Resilience 3)

Generoso, an Italian-American, is chief hair stylist to Vanessa Rubio. He is having a lot of trouble on this voyage because the wind and seasickness are making a terrible mess of his boss' hair. He had hoped to be able to enjoy the holiday atmosphere of the cruise, but is not getting much time to himself.

One thing he has been able to enjoy is the food. Generoso is fond of seafood, and the chef's crab salad is the best he has ever tasted. He can't get enough of it. And the frito misto is to die for, in the stylist's opinion.

Generoso's sexual attraction to men is a part of his personality he feels obliged to keep a secret, whether at home or abroad. He keeps this hidden even from his employer and worries constantly that someone will find out.

**Leonard McKnight** (Force 4, Finesse 3, Resilience 3)

Leonard works for the CIA and is on board on business. His current mission is to keep an eye on Senator Darling. His instructions are twofold. First, he must guard the senator from any assassination attempt or attempt to kidnap his obnoxious kids. Second he must report back on any un-American activities. Although Senator Darling is highly thought of in government circles, it is known

that contact with foreigners can have strange and undermining effects on the best of all-American citizens.

Senator Darling refuses to travel with a bodyguard so Leonard must be certain not to make his protection of the politician too obvious.

## TOURIST CLASS PASSENGERS

**Howard Glover** (Force 2, Finesse 5, Resilience 3)

Howard is a freelance journalist. His lack of success in selling his work explains why he is travelling Tourist Class. He's aiming to complete the entire round trip and has a portable typewriter to chronicle any gossip about the celebrities and politicians on board. It's problematic for him as they tend to stick to the First Class areas most of the time and Howard's ticket doesn't entitle him to be in those places. He is attempting to get around this by losing at tennis to Stuart Rutjes and cultivating a relationship with Generoso Rossetti. Both these gentlemen are able to invite him to First Class activities. Howard plays along with Stuart but is considering blackmailing Generoso.

Howard is in debt. He had to borrow money to get on this cruise so getting an exclusive story in exchange for his investment is vital. He talks to anyone he thinks can assist him with getting the lowdown on any celebrity, politician, or dire threat from beneath the sea.

**Katie Calderon** (Force 4, Finesse 3, Resilience 3)

Katie is a schoolteacher who has saved up for many years in order to afford this once-in-a-lifetime round trip. She finds everything on board the ship, and in the ports, utterly delightful. She can barely contain her excitement. She loves to sit up on the deck watching people and the scenery pass by. She happily chats to anyone.

Katie is a sympathetic soul and keen to help anyone who has a problem. She secretly hopes to find love on this journey to what she considers the most romantic destinations in the world.

**Margaret Sharpe** (Force 2, Finesse 2, Resilience 6)

Margaret is a nanny travelling with the Darling family to take care of their obnoxious children. She is down-to-earth and realistic about her prospects. She does not take much pleasure in the cruise and spends most of her time trying to find out what mischief her charges are engaged upon.

Margaret has had a hard life and does not approve of an excess of frivolity. Katie has tried to befriend her on the grounds that both are qualified to work with children, but Margaret finds the overenthusiastic schoolteacher tiresome and has taken to attempting to avoid her.

**Pauline Mayr** (Force 3, Finesse 5, Resilience 2)

Pauline Mayr is Vanessa Rubio's make-up artist. She hates having to do the stupid white lady's face every single day but it's her job and she's good at it. It's also given her the opportunity to travel on a high-class cruise ship. Although, to be frank, her fellow passengers and even the crew treat her like the help, which isn't right because she's a professional and working for a famous actress who is supposed to be beautiful (but wouldn't be half so beautiful without Pauline and Generoso) and talented (which, in Pauline's opinion, she isn't).

Pauline is trying to enjoy the cruise but, as a woman of color, it is not easy for her. Her fellow passengers look down on her, and she's been ordered off a First Class staircase she was using to get to her employer's cabin. Taking the long way around got her into trouble for being late. She is painfully aware of the contrast between the luxury of this ship and the conditions in which her ancestors were transported to the Americas. She had hoped to enjoy herself, but the cruise is just making her miserable.

And Generoso is not a lot of help. It's not fair; he's in Cabin Class while she must remain in Tourist Class when not waiting hand and foot on that talentless actress.

## THREATS ON BOARD

It's a sad fact that life at sea in this setting is beset by alien menaces. One can't enjoy a cruise in peace without the threat of crabs or seaweed ruining your day.

### CRAB PEOPLE

Eighty percent of the cabin staff, stewards, and stewardesses, are crab people. Passengers may notice they have a strange way of walking, never moving directly forward or backward, but only sideways. Most of those they serve explain this away, after all, they have to move unobtrusively on a constantly moving surface. Many assume the sideways movement helps them keep their balance or avoid bumping into things.

Crab people are highly conscientious and no passenger has cause to complain about the way they perform their duties. Cabins are always scrupulously clean and personal possessions tidily stowed away. No crab person will steal from a passenger. Even small amounts of loose change are carefully replaced on the nightstand. Attempting to share a friendly joke with these cabin staff invariably leads to misunderstanding. Respectful and dutiful to a fault, they do not seem to understand humor.

The crab people are on a recruitment drive and, while they won't attempt to crabify every single person on the ship, they will certainly attempt to make two or three recruits. The protagonists should become aware of their strange behavior and may work out a way to combat them. Coming across the crab-stewards on their coffee break would be a terrifying experience as this is when they reveal their true forms.

### THE SLIME IN THE SWIMMING POOL

*Coleofasciculus chthonoplastes* (blue green algae), a form of black slime, has taken up residence in the indoor swimming pool. The maintenance staff are aware of it as it has proven impossible to eradicate using normal chemicals, even in double doses. The indoor saltwater pool is, however, one of the main attractions of the Rose Marie and many of the passengers enjoy their health-giving plunges and frolicking with their friends in the naturally healing waters. The captain is, therefore, reluctant to shut it down.

Normal pool maintenance demands the staff drain the saltwater pools at weekly intervals (more frequently if there has been an accidental or deliberate spillage of organic matter as occasion-

ally happens with children and undisciplined persons aboard). The steward team then scrub the Delft tiles thoroughly and replace the water with sea water taken from the ship's environment.

At the start of the cruise, this works fine for the outdoor pool, but the grout in the indoor pool has been colonized by a particularly persistent purulent slime. There are no botanists among the crew, but Dr. Hawkins has examined the slime and informed the other ship's officers it is a form of algae. Without more sophisticated laboratory equipment, she is unable to analyze it further, but she believes it has mutated into a form previously unknown to science. It seems to be fast-growing. The crew have had to empty the pool twice as often as usual because what starts as a slight staining of the grout on a Monday develops into a greenish-brown ooze covering the surface of the pool by Wednesday evening. Dr. Hawkins has declared it presents no danger to human health, but it is unattractive and puts the passengers off their healthy plunges and frolicking.

The crab people, on the other hand, regard the new algae as a delicacy and serve it to one another during coffee breaks.

For the first week, the outdoor pool remains free of slime but subsequently, the crew detect small quantities. The theory is that it spreads from the indoor pool on a swimmer's body or, perhaps, on inadequately laundered clothing. By the third week, two of the Darling children present to Dr. Hawkins with ear infections. She is delighted to discover the slime is growing in their ears. She has prescribed standard antibiotics to deal with the infection, but the children's condition fails to improve. The senator, who must put up with their whining, is unhappy. He complains to the captain who expects the doctor to find a cure. Either that or they'll have to put the brats ashore at the next port of call and call in a specialist.

## MUTATED COLEOFASCICULUS CHTHONOPLASTES

This form of black algae has buried itself deep into the grout in the indoor saltwater swimming pool. Spores spread readily on contaminated equipment, clothing or even on wet human bodies. It is a particularly resistant strain and repeated treatments of chlorine bleach have failed to eradicate it.

The crab people find it delicious. They are working on cultivating it and drink it as soup or, during their coffee breaks, as a sort of tea. Because they regard it as a special delicacy they have been less than diligent in their attempts to eradicate it. Pincer-written recipes for new ways to use the algae have been circulating below decks and one of these might fall into the hands of a protagonist.

Commercially, this is a problem for the captain as passengers have been complaining that the water in the pool is slimy and unattractive. Until recently no one regarded it as a threat to human health, but Dr. Hawkins has recently isolated the organism in swabs taken from the Darling children's itchy ears.

## GOALS

The black algae has no goals. It just grows and evolves. The crab people want to cultivate it and their efforts facilitate its spread. Recently it has mutated and can now grow inside human orifices. It's starting with the children's ears, but this is only the beginning.

## SYSTEM

The volume of algae doubles every 24 hours. Scrubbing with chlorine bleach removes it initially but, once it embeds itself, the only way to get rid of it is to drill it out. Closing the swimming pool long enough to remove all the tiles and treat the slime thoroughly would do the trick, but the officers are reluctant to try this solution as they would have to close the pool for the remainder of the voyage, and this would lead to complaints.

Once the algae creates a biofilm in the ear, there is no known treatment, though Dr. Hawkins is diligent in her search for a cure. Until a cure is found, the volume of algae doubles every 24 hours within the orifice, just as it does in the swimming pool. It can be drained or scraped out, but any remaining algae continues to grow. Depending on how effectively it is removed from its foothold, within days or weeks it spreads down the Eustachian tubes into the tonsils, adenoids, mouth, and nostrils from whence it drips in a most unattractive manner, potentially contaminating anyone or anything with which it comes into contact. Should it get to the stomach, the acid gives the alien organism pause, which could point toward a potential cure. Perhaps an antibiotic based on an acid would do the trick? The ship does carry the recently discovered isonicotinic acid hydrazide in case one of the crew should show signs of tuberculosis.

Untreated the algae kills a victim, painfully, over the course of a month.

## THE THING IN THE HOLD

The Oblique (see **They Came from Beneath the Sea!**, p. 199) lies dormant in the hold. At any point during the voyage it could awaken and stalk and absorb a crew member or passenger. Right now, it resembles a puddle of water. Woe betide any member of the crew who decides or has orders to mop up that particular puddle. A takeover attempt is almost inevitable. The most likely victim is, of course, one of the stewards. One day, Florence Jepson, a steward known to one or more of the heroes, fails to turn up for work and her body turns up, totally desiccated in the hold where her boss sent her to clear up a spillage. Her remains are now in the morgue and Dr. Hawkins is seeking the captain's permission to conduct a postmortem. The captain opposes this idea, feeling it would be less disruptive to the cruise if the doctor goes on seeing to the living. He hopes to offload Florence's remains discreetly at the next port and hand them over to the proper authorities for return to her family.

Meanwhile, Florence's friends, especially Patrick Wilde, her secret crab person lover, have reported seeing a strange creature snooping around crew quarters. It may even try to get into the cabin Florence was tending so carefully which, of course, is the cabin assigned to one or more of the protagonists.

## THE LONELY PILLBUG

A lone gigantic pillbug (see **They Came from Beneath the Sea!**, p. 172) has taken a liking to Howard Glover, the freelance journalist. It followed him on board in order to get closer to him. Wary of approaching humans too closely it has been passing him notes, hiding them under his serviette in the dining room or slip-



ping them behind the mirror in his bathroom. Sometimes it types messages on his typewriter whilst he's out of the room, leaving them for him to find upon his return. The messages are signed 'from your secret admirer' and contain terrible warnings about something called the Glowing People. Howard may choose to share these notes with one of the player characters.

The pillbug is not difficult to track down. Careful surveillance of any of the places where it leaves notes for Howard meets with success. It seems harmless though no one would describe it as cute. It introduces itself as Josie Pillburger and, if encouraged, entertains anyone in earshot with its atrocious puns. Though it does go on about these Glowing People, whatever they are. No one seems interested, though Dr. Hawkins is keen to learn more of them and will, if not discouraged, subject Josie to close questioning.

Josie's natural weapons make it a formidable foe and it weighs into any combat in support of Howard and anyone else who has befriended it.

## THE HORRIBLE STORM

The publicity rarely mentions this, but the peak season for holidays in the Mediterranean coincides with hurricane season. Like other modern liners, the Rose Marie is well-stabilized and

unlikely to sink, but a tropical storm could make life unpleasant for landlubbers on the passenger ship.

The Rose Marie runs into Tropical Storm Edna after the final luncheon sitting, blowing itself out in the early hours of the next morning. Few attend dinner and many have a bad night. When the skies clear and the sea is like glass again, passengers drift up on deck to breathe the bracing sea air and look at their surroundings. To their horror they see a massive head rear up out of the water about 100 yards ahead of the ship and 50 yards to port. This is a king sea serpent (see **They Came from Beneath the Sea!**, p. 165). Unless the characters spontaneously witness this, they become aware of it when a random passenger or crew member sets off an alarm.

## REACTIONS

The deck immediately becomes crowded with passengers pointing, panicking, or photographing and crew pondering what to do about this monstrosity. Those on the ship watch the king sea serpent and the king sea serpent watches the ship.

Deliverance Hawkins wants to study the creature but has great difficulty persuading anyone to capture it. The captain is solely concerned for the safety of his ship. Senator Darling sees it as a threat and demands the crew attack it. Howard Glover is taking frantic notes. No one on board knows what it actually is.



## WHAT HAPPENED?

Tropical storm Edna played havoc with the iguanoids' control of this monster. The roiling waters brought the serpent into close contact with a flailing blue whale and the serpent interpreted the whale's behavior as hostile. Chasing the whale through the turbulent water took the serpent out of the range of the command crown. Now the serpent is confused, looking around the horizon, bits of obliterated whale floating around it.

The serpent can see the ship and the tiny creatures riding on it, but it won't spontaneously interpret the ship's actions as hostile. If those on the ship decide to attack it they are in for quite a fight!

Meanwhile, the iguanoids are aware they have lost one of their resource-intensive weapons and are looking for it. If the ship fails to interact with the monster, the iguanoids pick it up the following lunchtime. From the point of view of a person on the Rose Marie, it looks as if the monster just got bored and swam away. If the ship attacked the serpent, the iguanoids wish to extract reparations. If the ship has managed to capture the serpent, the iguanoids enter into negotiations in order to get their monster back. Dr. Hawkins, of course, takes the side of the iguanoids. The crab people could take either side (they have no horse in this race).

## WHAT'S WITH THESE ICEBERGS?

The lookout sights the first iceberg about 350 miles off the coast of Newfoundland. The crew respond appropriately, and the ship avoids a collision. Scarcely 20 minutes after it disappears behind the stern, another iceberg appears. The crew, once more, follow standard operating procedures. Then there is another iceberg but this one is more difficult to avoid. This goes on until someone might even get the impression someone or something is deliberately manipulating the icebergs into the path of the Rose Marie. An astute individual might notice that all the icebergs look identical.

## REACTIONS

Tormod, the chief engineer, becomes concerned as all these maneuvers are using fuel designated for other purposes. The captain becomes concerned as dodging the icebergs is causing the ship to fall behind schedule. Howard Glover has opened a book on where the next iceberg might appear. David Rupp and some members of his team are watching carefully. One might even think they know something about what is going on.

## WHAT HAPPENED?

The Prefecture of the Pod are using their advanced technological systems to construct and move icebergs. They are aware that Senator Darling has been studying a recent article in the New York Times that spoke of scientists' fears about gas emissions leading to far reaching environmental change. The Pod believe the senator is thinking of urging his colleagues to do something to reverse this. The icebergs are part of the Pod's strategy to convince him, and other influential surface dwellers that the increasing use of fossil fuels is harmless, profitable and an entirely good thing. Some of the higher-ranking crab people on board are aware of the Prefects' scheme and have agreed to support it in exchange for a promise of advanced weaponry at some future date. It is im-

portant to note a crab person's rank among his or her own people bears no relation to their position on board the ship. David Rupp is well-respected and has done much to bring more of his people on board, but Vincent Rochester is in a superior role.

## AN INDUSTRIAL DISPUTE

The characters become aware that no one is cleaning their cabins and it is impossible to find any of the stewards when you want one. The presence of the Pod has revealed an ideological split within the ranks of crab people. Some are happy to work with the Pod in exchange for their advanced technology. Vincent Rochester falls into that camp. David Rupp, on the other hand, feels supporting the Pod in this way is selling out on crab person ethics. The crab people are now in a state of civil war which prevents them from carrying out their stewardly duties.

From the point of view of the genuine humans on board, this appears as an industrial dispute between two factions of cabin crew. The reasons for this split are difficult for mere humans to understand but the captain is keen to recruit any passengers and crew to help get those blasted stewards back to work.

## DR. HAWKINS INVESTIGATES

The crab people and the ship's doctor are aware there is some kind of 'entity' manipulating the icebergs. The crab people do not confide in the passengers or crew, but they might want to work through the doctor. Dr. Hawkins believes she can communicate with the advanced beings moving the icebergs around. She finds this exciting and is reporting back to F.I.S.H. by encoded radiotelegraph.

The Pod are prepared to do a deal. They start with vague offers of advanced weapons and promises of assistance 'at some point in the future' in exchange for the promotion of the use of fossil fuels (so profitable in and of itself). The Pod are willing to negotiate further but will insist on infecting at least two humans with neoplankton swarms as a guarantee of co-operation. This could lead to interesting bargains between the protagonists and supporting characters on board.

## THEY ARE STEALING THE CHILDREN

William Darling, the senator's oldest child has disappeared. His nanny, Margaret Sharpe, is almost as distraught as his parents. The two younger Darlings have no idea where he is but reveal that they were all playing hide and go seek just before William disappeared.

Unless someone watches the children on board the ship carefully, they disappear, one by one, over the next few hours. After that, no more children disappear.

## REACTIONS

The senator is making a great deal of fuss and insisting the crew drop everything to search the ship from bow to stern. Leonard McKnight, the undercover CIA operative takes a lead on this, as he is responsible for the safety of the Senator and his family, though he does not wish to break his cover. Whatever they do, William does not turn up. A careful search reveals a faint slime trail leading from one of the lifeboats to the rail. William's windcheater is still in the lifeboat.

Whatever created the slime trail has definitely left the Rose Marie.

## WHAT HAPPENED?

The Suspended have taken William to their underwater realm. They continue to entrap children for as long as the ship remains within a 10-mile radius of the point from which William disappeared. Once the ship moves out of this range, the kidnappings stop. If the ship returns to search for missing children, the kidnappings recommence. If the Suspended run out of children, they start to kidnap younger adults.

As no one has ever been able to work out the Suspended's motivations for anything, no one knows why they want the children.

Meanwhile, as the Suspended have also been stealing young from the Prefecture, the Pod are independently planning an assault on the Suspended fortress and have called upon their crab people allies to assist them.

## POD VS. SUSPENDED

If those on board the ship previously made a deal with the Prefecture of the Pod, they could request assistance with this new problem. The Pod are amenable to any such deal.

Even if those on board the Rose Marie had no previous dealings with the Prefects, their presence is detectable due to the seismic activity caused by the preparations to storm the Suspended fortress.

## DR. HAWKINS' SECRET

If the good doctor has managed to make contact with any intelligent aquatic life, she attempts to persuade them to assist with rescuing the children. She could also communicate (via coded radiotelegraph) with F.I.S.H. for information concerning slime trails and disappearing children. Deliverance's contacts in F.I.S.H. are aware of the Pod's battle plans.

## THE SYMPATHETIC STEWARD

Rosie Beaks, a crab stewardess, has formed a kind of relationship with Margaret Sharpe. Although Rosie's primary loyalty is to other crab people, she has worked closely with Margaret and does not like to see her distressed. It is, after all, possible (if frowned upon) to form bonds with the slave species and if the slaves are to be successful, their offspring must be preserved. Rosie is keen to locate the slave children and tries to persuade the leadership to assist the humans in their rescue attempts. Vincent Rochester listens to Rosie and is willing to call in his allies in the Prefecture of the Pod to assist in an assault on the Suspended.

## CALLING IN CONNECTIONS

Several characters aboard (such as the senator, Leonard McKnight, possibly one of the protagonists) could arrange for the provision of a suitable advanced bariatric vehicle capable of transporting humans to the fortress in the depths of the trench.

## THE BATTLE ROYALE

Underwater, the Suspended resemble giant eels and, devoid of their slime armor are easy targets unless they are in their well defended deep sea fortress. The Pod, like other mammals, require air to breathe and, although their technology is advanced and they are able to take breathable air into the depths with them, they are

not so nimble when operating under the vast pressures encountered in the deepest parts of the ocean where the Suspended keep their fortress and their captives.

The fortress is in one of the deepest trenches in the Atlantic Ocean, buried in the ocean floor. Coming within a mile of it, rescuers receive telepathic images of a fantastic underwater city, full of compellingly beautiful art and architecture in which humans and their Suspended playmates frolic. Everyone looks happy. Especially William Darling who, in the telepathic visions, pleads with anyone in telepathic earshot not to rescue him as his life in the undersea city is so absolutely happy and perfect in every imaginable way.

Arriving at the fortress, not much is visible other than mud, deep sea burrowing creatures and slime. This reality is at constant odds with the idyllic telepathic vision the Suspended are projecting. The contrast between the two is disorientating, adding a notable complication of 2, until all Suspended are dead, fled or sufficiently distracted to drop the telepathic interference.

William Darling is one of about two dozen identical blobs of slime. Well, not quite identical, some of the blobs are bigger than others, but it is not possible to tell which one William is in without opening them. Opening the blobs underwater, at immense depth, would doubtless kill whatever is inside. Unless some clever technological solution can be found.

## OUTCOMES

Several outcomes are possible. The characters could assist the Pod in defeating the Suspended, at least for long enough to rescue William Darling, either alone (if they have been able to identify him) or along with other victims. Alternatively, the characters could use the battle royal between the Pod and the Suspended to sneak off with one or more blobs. The Pod are not especially interested in the blob contents, apart from some cetacean-shaped blobs which contain their own offspring.

The battle royale is spectacular. The Suspended are the home team, and operate better in the deep-sea environment, but the Pod's technology is infinitely superior. The characters and Director should decide who wins or elect to have the characters themselves escape with the blobs while the Pod and the Suspended suffer mutual annihilation, ridding the Rose Marie of two powerful antagonists.

## WHAT'S IN THE BLOBS?

Opening the blobs presents a problem. It takes some analysis in the lab to work out how to penetrate them and release the occupants. The Pod have the technology but a sharp blade coated in a mild acid (taking care not to harm the occupant) would do.

Assuming someone finds a way to open the blobs; One blob contains a seahorse person in human form who is delighted to be on board a ship headed for the Mediterranean. She introduces herself as Amanda Clarke and is genuinely grateful to those who rescued her, staying on board to gather information before leaping over the side as the Rose Marie nears Italy. Half a dozen blobs contain humans who appear to have died of old age and an approximately equal number contain humans in perfect health who are unable to remember much of their time with the Suspended. One of these is William who is less than delighted by his reunion with his parents who are not nearly as generous with ice cream and

other delicious treats as were the 'lovely mermaids' with whom he frolicked in the undersea city of his telepathically induced dreams. Dr. Hawkins notes his nasty ear infection has cleared up. Other disemblobbed humans remember less of the undersea city and some seem to have been emblobbed for centuries and need assistance in coming to terms with the modern world.

William remembers much of his telepathically induced experience because he did not spend long in the Suspended fortress. The longer a person has spent in the fortress, the less they remember not only of their time there but also of the world from which they came. Although they are perfectly healthy physically, any human who has spent more than 10 years in a blob, has profound difficulties with their memory and in adapting to life on the surface. After rescue, they retire to their quarters in states varying from acute confusion to profound depression. On Dr. Hawkins' recommendation they receive basic care, assistance with activities of daily living and are handed over to psychiatric facilities at the next port of call.

## OPPOSING THE CRAB PEOPLE'S AGENDA

It is possible for the protagonists to expose the stewards as crab people and oppose their agenda. It is certainly possible to prevent the crab people from 'converting' any passengers to their cause. However, as at the start of the voyage, 80 percent of the stewards on board are crab people, it proves difficult to get rid of all of them. Captain John Lukey strongly opposes any such course of action, even if he can be persuaded that 80 percent of his stewards are a danger to the ship and its passengers. The captain points out, whatever their origins, these are the best stewards he has ever had on board, their diligence and efficiency is exceptional. Furthermore, the company needs stewards to cook, clean, serve food and generally look after the passengers and their needs. He will not simply sack them all.

It would be possible to confine any crab people identified as ringleaders in the hold and hand them over to the authorities in Barcelona, or any other port of call. Nobody opposes this (provided their crabiness can be proven which should not present much difficulty). This is not too much of a problem for the crab people as any left simply carry on with their own agenda, though they become wary about "converting" more humans.

The real problem is finding replacement crew. There are plenty at the ports of call who would welcome employment on the Rose Marie but, while cooking, cleaning, and serving at table are not uncommon skills, there is a certain amount of training involved before they can meet Rose Marie standards. It is difficult to persuade the captain and other senior members of the crew that a large proportion of their skilled domestic staff are alien monsters. If this news got out, it would be highly detrimental to the reputation of the Sunshine Anchor Line which the captain and his allies are keen to preserve. A mass sacking could also generate a costly lawsuit and the take-on costs of hiring new crew would make the cruise far less profitable.

The alternatives to operating with a large proportion of crab people in the crew are to terminate the cruise (which all the officers oppose) or to continue short staffed, degrading the luxury experience for the passengers. Any protagonist caught trying to instigate

one of these 'solutions' is likely to find themselves negotiating their own passage back home as they are no longer welcome on board the Rose Marie. Some characters might find this preferable to remaining in close contact with potentially life-threatening aliens.

Of course, there are agencies, like the American Science Army (see **They Came from Beneath the Sea!**, p. 152), who oppose threats coming from beneath the sea. If the protagonists can contact these, and if these forces can overcome objections from the shipping line (so much easier if you can get a senator and/or a CIA man to back up your claim that crab people have replaced many of the crew) they may well step in to counter the threat posed by the crab people. This terminates the cruise and the Sunshine Anchor Line may have to face some difficult questioning in court as they seem to have facilitated the betrayal of the human race.

## WARM WATERS OF THE MEDITERRANEAN

At the end of an eventful transatlantic crossing, the Rose Marie enters the calm and protected waters of the Mediterranean. Some passengers are getting close to their final destination. Others look forward to the enticing sights awaiting them in this historic center of the world. Will the guests and crew enjoy a little relaxation in this charming environment, or do the terrors lurking in the depths have designs on the famed cities of the Middle Sea?

### BARCELONA

Barcelona is a bustling, industrialized port city. Any surviving blob occupants are handed over to the appropriate authorities here. If there are any unrecovered kidnapped children, it is possible to enlist the aid of the appropriate local authorities or even the embassies. The majority of passengers give themselves over to sightseeing on solid land and shopping while a portion of the crew enjoy shore leave.

Josie the gigantic pillbug also leaves the ship in Barcelona. It shadows Howard Glover to a bar where it meets up with half a dozen other gigantic pillbugs and loses all interest in keeping human company. Oddly, Howard says he misses his 'secret admirer'.

### MARSEILLES

Marseilles is a city under construction. Bombardment flattened it during the Second World War and rebuilding, using massive reparations from East Germany, West Germany, and Italy, is proceeding apace. A portion of the passengers disembark and travel onwards to the French Riviera. Some rejoin the Rose Marie on its return voyage. Marseilles itself has a reputation for organized crime and is experiencing a huge influx of immigration from France's former North African colonies. Passengers without specific business in the area or onward travel arrangements mostly prefer to sit on the sundecks and enjoy the pools rather than stepping ashore.

## NAPLES

The Bay of Naples is sensationally beautiful and many passengers head to the sundeck to watch Vesuvius looming in the distance, topped by a thin stream of smoke. Then brightly colored buildings backed by impressive rocky cliffs enter the picture. The weather is warm and balmy, and everyone seems more relaxed.

### PASSENGER OVERBOARD!

Amanda Clarke, the seahorse person, waits until Capri appears to the starboard before jumping overboard. She endeavors to do this while no one is watching but, doubtless, someone sees her and raises the alarm. One she believes herself to be out of sight, she takes on her seahorse form and proceeds to her people's headquarters to deliver her report.

On disembarking in Naples itself, good-natured chaos and barefoot children begging for loose coins (the purser has reminded everyone to keep a close eye on their possessions) surround the passengers. Senator Darling leaves the ship here as he has business in Rome. His wife and children are whisked off to a luxury hotel in the Sorrento area. The ship empties out as the Darlings are not the only family spending time in the area and many others take day trips to the ruins of Pompeii, to peer into the crater of Vesuvius or experience the delights of the island of Capri.

## GENOA

Some passengers take a daytrip to the monastery at Montserrat but, as the Rose Marie does not stop in Genoa overnight, many prefer to tour the beautiful old quarters where ancient buildings still stand. In addition to opportunities for shopping and fine dining, Genoa houses a famous maritime museum and families love the aquarium. The tanks are full of creatures of the Ligurian Sea including a number of seahorse people, as keen to observe the humans passing through as the humans are to view the impressive displays. Perhaps some of the passengers suddenly remember nice Amanda Clarke who disappeared so mysteriously rather less than a week ago.

## LIVORNO

The district of Livorno stretches out along the coast of Tuscany. Much of it, including the cathedral and the synagogue, fell victim to Allied bombing during WWII. Rebuilding continues apace.

The stewards all want to go onshore in Livorno, though no one on board is quite sure why. The actual reason is Vincent's faction of crab people have important contacts in this city where the Italian communist party was founded around thirty years ago. The stewards gain shore leave without much of a problem as many of the passengers climb onto busses for a tour of Pisa, Florence, and Siena. It's a long day but, after so long at sea, many passengers feel the effort is worth their while.

On leaving Livorno passengers may notice there has been a sudden turnover in the cabin staff. Most of David Rupp's allies have left and the vast majority of the stewards are now faithful to Vincent Rochester. David Rupp is having difficulty controlling his staff and the captain has noticed. David is holding up well, but he has gone to the ship's doctor for compulsory counselling. Dr. Hawkins learns his true identity and expresses horror because he is opposing the Pod (whom she supports). She arranges to have him put ashore and Ray Perkins, his second in command (totally faithful to Vincent Rochester) replaces him.

## THE RETURN VOYAGE

Some of the previous passengers are absent on the homeward voyage. Stuart Rutjes is off selling diamonds in Europe and Vitas Varnas is having a successful repertory season in Margate. Senator Darling has decided it would be expedient to have his wife and children flown back to Boston. After the scares of the outbound journey, Jennifer refused to set foot on 'that horrible ship'. The captain is distressed by her attitude and fears for the reputation of the Sunshine Anchor Line. The senator will not fly. He does not admit to this, but he is frightened of confinement in a small metal tube hurtling through the air. Whatever perils the Rose Marie might conceal, it must be better than an airplane!

Howard Glover has acquired a parrot called José. He seems to miss his secret admirer and says the parrot is good company. The creature squawks loudly, in apparent appreciation of its own atrocious puns (in English and Spanish). Some find this amusing, but it's been keeping Tormod awake at night and he is determined to kill it, and have it served for dinner.

Something took place in Livorno that changes the composition of the crew and the atmosphere on board the ship. There are far fewer disputes amongst the stewards. Rupp's faction have left, and their jobs have gone to less diligent small mouth staff picked up in various ports of call. The chief steward is now a crab person called Ray Perkins, one completely faithful to Vincent Rochester and keen to pick up the Pod's technology. The crab people have agreed to attempt no further conversions on the homeward voyage. Most jump ship mid-Atlantic, picking up the promised prefecture technology. The Rose Marie continues, making the best use it can of what staff it has left. Most of these are human, though few are American citizens. All of them are overworked.

Two days after the departure of most of the crab people, Vanessa Rubio contracts a private helicopter to take her, along with her entourage back to the States, complaining bitterly about the decline in the level of service. Several First Class passengers follow suit. Many more would do so if they had the necessary funds or connections.

The Rose Marie limps back to Boston, unserviced and dirty, missing half her crew and nearly half of her passengers. John Lukey and senior members of his crew are desperately trying to work out how they are going to explain this to the shareholders of the Sunshine Anchor Line.



# THE SHACK BY THE SHANTY BY THE SHED

It was a marvelous beach for seashells and Nova asked for little more. For her, vacation meant access to scads of the little beauties and in three days she'd gathered close to forty. Not a mere collection mind you, these were building supplies for a variety of art objects lovingly constructed with glue and a lot of patience.

Since her best friend Nelda was an avid swimmer, the little rental cottage provided the perfect spot for a getaway from the rat race and desperately needed peace and quiet.

The "shack," as the quaint hand-carved sign above the door indicated, was a modest, comfortably worn rental a stone's throw from a boarded-up shanty beside a small shed housing maintenance supplies and electrical generator. They were the only three structures in the cove, tucked neatly into a ring of hills and swathed in a clean white beach.

Nova was working on the weathered porch as Nelda ran up, towel-drying her hair. The swimmer looked at the strange conglomeration of shells, carefully constructed by her friend. Nova called them abstracts because she didn't know what they were.

"Omelet?" asked Nelda.

"What? Oh. Sounds good," said Nova who probably hadn't even noticed the sun dipping low.

...

As they ate on the porch, dark clouds began rolling in.

"Uh-oh. I knew our luck was too good," murmured Nelda.

"I love thunderstorms," chirped the shell-builder.

"Sure. You're not swimming."

...

An hour later and winds had picked up and darkness descended, forcing the ladies inside to batten down hatches. If the generator failed, they had candles, matches, and flashlight ready, plus Nova lit a fire in the fireplace.

The first flash of lightning brought thunder ten seconds later, so it wasn't close yet. Nelda opened a shutter to peer out.

"Oh, that lightning show on the horizon. Beautiful."

They opened the front door to watch the distant silent flashes. The ocean looked like an alien world.

The next flash revealed something dragging itself up onto the beach, a dark form that moved awkwardly.

"What-what is that?" asked Nova in alarm.

But Nelda was already across the porch and down the steps. Her friend followed uncertainly, and the two women ran across the sand in the light rain as thunder rumbled and sheet lightning flashed. The storm was considerably closer.

It was a man. At least they thought it was. A scuba diver to be precise. He lay there, no longer floundering, just at the edge of the crashing waves.

"Help me get him in the house," snapped Nelda to the hesitant Nova.

. . .

It had taken some effort to drag a full-grown man in a scuba suit in the rain, up the beach, onto the porch, and into the house. There had been no sign of the man's craft or possible companions in that dark choppy sea.

They managed to free the unconscious diver of his gear, including speargun, and laid him by the fire, propped against a pillow. He looked about 30, clean-cut, with a flattop haircut. Navy perhaps?

It was another half-hour, still, when he showed signs of life. He opened his eyes. Wide. And then his mouth.

"I... I..." was all he could manage.

Both women moved closer. The man was barely audible, understandably.

"I... I..."

"It's alright," said Nelda, sympathetically. "Just rest now." And he did.

"Did you see the look in his eyes?" observed Nova. "That was... terror."

"He's in shock," offered her friend. "No wonder, after a diving mishap in a storm like this."

. . .

A scream the marked his next awakening.

Nova had been writing, Nelda reading, when the peace was shattered. They had grown used to the fury outside, and the storm had made the shack all the more welcoming.

In an instant, they were by the diver's side. Again, his eyes stared, his mouth moved.

"I..." came the familiar refrain, repeated several times.

"He can start a sentence," quipped Nelda, "but he sure can't seem to finish one."

"He seems eager to tell us something." Nova looked more concerned than her friend. Thunder cracked in tandem with a lightning flash. The storm was overhead. Wind pounded the ocean, kicking up a constant wall of noise.

"I hope those shudders hold," remarked Nelda as she walked towards one.

"Nelda!" Nova's voice was so sudden, her friend spun about. "Be... be careful."

"Uh, sure," responded Nelda with a curious look as she continued to one of the windows. She

was just securing the shutter when a loud scrape was heard, even above the storm. "What was that?" wondered Nelda. "Right outside the window."

"I don't know." Nova's response was quick and hoarse. She glanced at the terror-stricken eyes of their unexpected guest. If only he could speak.

Again, came the loud scrape outside the window, a kind of tortured dragging sound. Nelda frowned inquisitively at Nova, then reached for the shutter.

"Nelda, no! Leave it! Please leave it!"

Nelda wondered just what she thought was out there. "Look, maybe it's someone who needs our help," the strong-willed swimmer stated as she turned and yanked the shudders open, revealing an immense eye staring in at them.

Nelda jolted back and Nova let out a cry.

"Eye! Eye!" screamed the diver in shock as both women simultaneously realized just what he had been trying to say.

Nelda slammed the shudders back and latched them, stepping away from the impossible horror. The image of that terrible eye, rolling about, like a nosy neighbor craning to see what you've got, hung in their minds as they tried to remain calm and rationalize.

"What the hell was that thing?" stammered Nova.

"Nothing I've seen on my deepest dives," declared her swimmer friend soberly.

"Mister? Mister, you've got to try to tell us what's going on here," reasoned Nova with their unresponsive charge.

"I'm going to peek out that door," uttered Nelda.

"Are you crazy? Wait until it goes away!"

"I want to see what it is. I don't want to always wonder about it."

Nova watched in disbelief. She knew well her friend's obsession with knowledge, particularly all things marine.

"No!"

But the bold swimmer carefully cracked the door. Immediately the shudders Nelda had just closed smashed open behind her and the tip of an enormous tentacle thrust in, snagged her and yanked her back through the window before Nova could even yell.

Hardly aware of what she was doing, Nova snatched up the speargun and rushed to the now open door.

Lightning timed just right to illuminate an immense monstrosity of mutated octopus with tentacles nearing one hundred and a single enormous eye that rolled her way. Nova fired point-blank into the horrid orb and the monster let out a sort of screech. It dropped her friend and, with a speed belying its size, tumbled back into the ocean and black of night.

Nelda climbed painfully to her feet and stared at Nova in amazement.



# CHAPTER FOUR

# A SUMMER

# OF TERROR

*Young hearts flock to the beach, eager to take one of many dips in the ocean this summer. How could one not want to soak in the water during a hot day in sunny California? Warm Rock is a resort that recently became popular with young people due to their travel packages, covering both food and lodging for a price many students can afford. With such alluring bait, naïve travelers from across the country arrive to spend their hard-earned holiday in the warm sand.*

*“Wait a minute, didn’t you say the name was Warm Rock?” If only everyone was as perceptive as you. The area is surrounded by a rock formation popular among both scientists and sunbathers, a testament to its old namesake. Warm Rock is a man-made beach created to support the increased tourism coming to the sunny state, though whispers among the staff at the resort suggest that the forced change is much more nefarious and has to do with something in the water.*

*When body parts start washing up at the beach, investigators show up and those working at the resort are told to keep quiet should they want to keep their jobs. What clues will they all discover; will this cheap summer holiday be more than what they bargained for?*

• • •

*A Summer of Terror tells the story of a summer resort in the sunny state of California. Warm Rock is a picturesque beach and a deceptively safe place filled with dark secrets lurking underneath the surface. The resort is an abandoned research base constructed to function as a lure to capture monsters of the sea. When no such abominations showed, scientists removed the staff there and hired “normal people” to see if that was the missing ingredient in creating a successful trap.*

*As the body parts of a civilian wash up on the beach, horror spreads among the visitors, but one figure — the owner of the resort — seems happy about the catastrophic development. Mr. Livingstone has the opposite reaction than any normal owner would have after a murder on their property and business. The protagonists are the only ones who are brave enough to discover the truth of Warm Rock’s origin and the monsters who have now been lured to the location.*

## PRODUCER’S NOTE

*A Summer of Terror* is written for starting groups and Directors, but it also functions as a scenario with an experienced group wanting to play a shorter game. It can last between up to 12 hours, depending on the number of players as well as how much they interact with the world and characters around them. The cerebral start of the story can help new players as solving a mystery draws on many real-life parallels one can focus on while getting comfortable with the aspect of roleplaying.

## SETTING THE TABLE

*A Summer of Terror* assumes all characters are kept relatively in the dark of its secrets, either completely oblivious to Warm Rock’s origins or know little. The man who owns the resort introduces himself as Mr. Livingstone and most people — visitors and employees alike — only see him once, if ever at all.

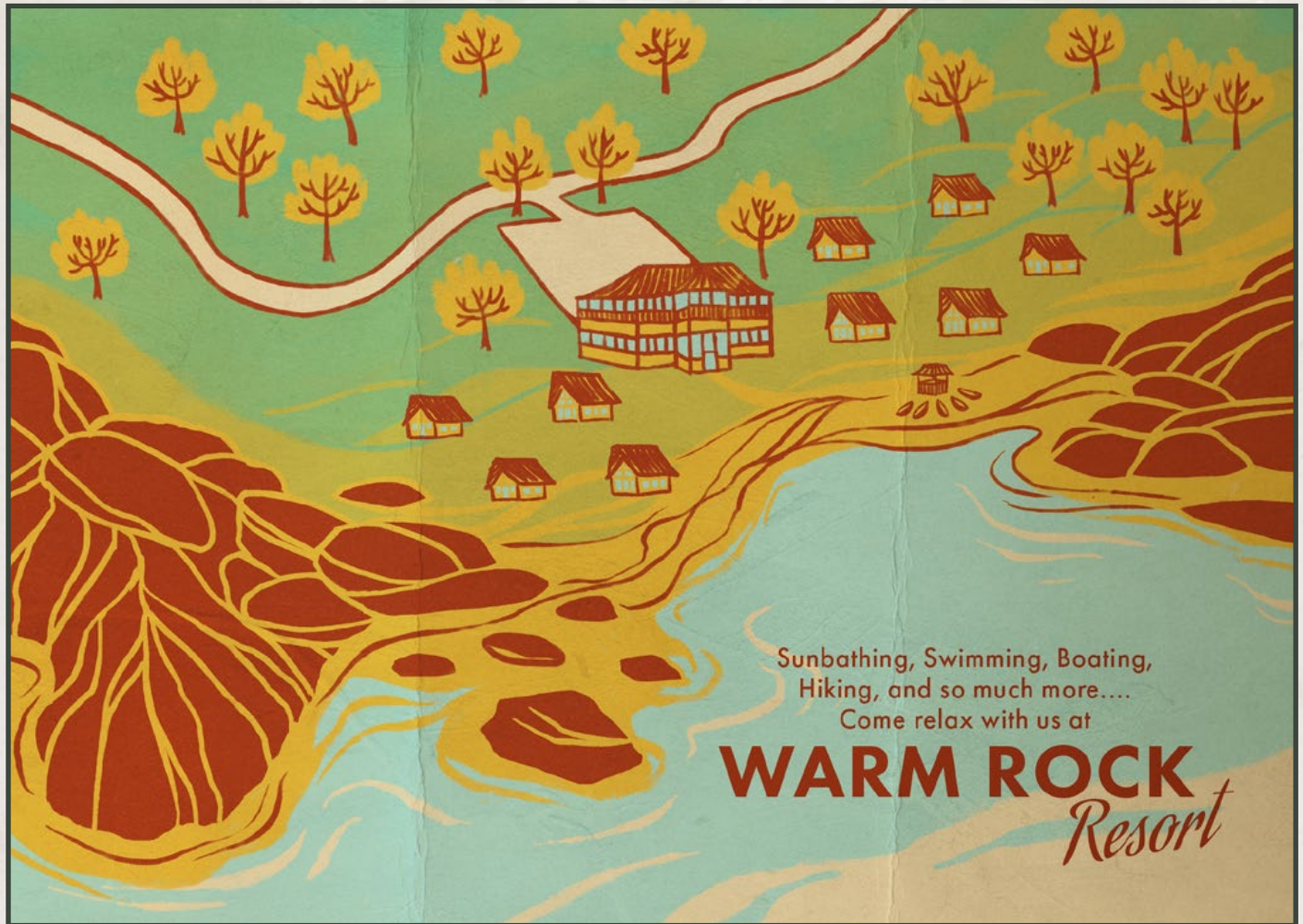
The pre-written protagonists (p. 64) are written in roles that involve them in the plot and to drive the story forward. They therefore also function as extras should the players decide to make their characters, which is an option this story supports.

The story falls into two thematic categories, and the focus on certain elements can be changed to suit the desired mood. While it’s possible to reduce the screen time for one of the villains to ensure a shorter campaign, cutting out one of the villains completely may also result in a shallower campaign.

Dashing Silver Screen Heroes — *A Summer of Terror* is played as a light-hearted and action-filled campaign. This works well for players who want to play a less serious scenario and blow up some monsters. Mr. Livingstone and the government scientists take a background role, and the sharks take center stage as the main villains for our heroes to defeat. The supporting characters cling onto the protagonists to save them.

Poor Unfortunate Souls — *A Summer of Terror* can also be played as a dark and serious drama about survival. The Director can play up the feeling of being trapped by strengthening the role and presence of the government goons. There are also enemies among the trapped, supporting characters are willing to throw one another and the protagonists under the bus to secure their survival.





## SANDY BEACHES AND BEAUTY EVERYWHERE

Warm Rock Resort is famous for its sandy beaches and the possibility to rent a small cottage by the sea. In the middle of the cabins, you find the main villa, where one checks in and to purchase anything one might want during a sunny day. There are also a few rooms in the villa available for rent and used by the staff in case of emergencies. The villa has two public entrances, the main one is facing the water, while the back entrance is facing the parking lot. There's also a discreet backdoor to the kitchen used by employees only.

The rentable cottages come in two different sizes. The standard, which features one bedroom with four bunk beds, a small kitchen, and a private bathroom; The premium, which has two bedrooms with bunk beds, one small bedroom with a queen-sized bed, a larger kitchen, and two bathrooms. Rubber boats are available for either purchase or hourly rental.

Walk from the resort area, and you'll find the first dark rocks, perfectly smooth and warmed up by the sun. On hot days, the rocks can get too warm, so the staff of the resort often recommend that you bring a towel.

Farther away, the landscape becomes rockier and untamed. Though officially not part of the resort many adventurous visitors go to explore the jagged cliffs and caves. Numerous accidents have happened there over the years, so the staff at Warm Rock recom-

mend not to go there without taking safety precautions. None of the staff venture out there, at least in an official capacity.

## VISITORS TO THE RESORT

- **Kimberly Jackson** (Force 2, Finesse 2, Resilience 3) is a tourist and friend of the deceased. She's a bubbly person, but quick to defer to the opinion of strong-willed people, as she abhors conflict. Kimberly's people-pleasing attitude results in her getting into situations she doesn't want to be in, often having to keep secrets she never wanted to keep. Though Kimberly may not be the Hollywood beauty that her best friend Alice is (one of the pre-written protagonists, p. 64), her optimism draws people in and she's deemed more approachable than the diva. Many find her straight brown hair and overall looks to be the typical girl next door.
- **Stan Bear** (Force 3, Finesse 2, Resilience 2) is the best friend of the deceased. He doesn't know the girls in his group well, as he and Brent met at the University in Washington. Clashes with Brent's girlfriend often, as he's more laid-back and doesn't care what others think — a dirty hippie, Alice calls him. He was last seen with the deceased the night prior to the body discovery. Stan is a Washington native who to outsiders gives the impression that he invited himself to the trip as he doesn't seem to interact well with the young

women in his travel-company. His wealthy father paid for his university tuition, but Stan has no ambition to spend his time studying law to then work at his father's firm. At least not before he gets to live a little and experience the free love moment that's taken off in California.

- **Jacke Thompson** (Force 2, Finesse 2, Resilience 1) is an older man traveling together with his wife of over 50 years. They came to Warm Rock in hopes to celebrate their anniversary while also helping Karen deal with her arthritis. He's finally become the man he always wanted to be, finally let go of all the anger that would boil over, ruining his relationship with family and friends. His wife says he's the sweetest man alive.
- **Karen Thompson** (Force 2, Finesse 2, Resilience 1) is the wife of Jacke Thompson. Though young at heart, her age has led to Karen suffering from many maladies typical to elderly people, such as arthritis and poor hearing. Her new signs of dementia also appear to worry both her and Jacke. She often seems confused and wanders off on her own, forgetting where she was headed.
- **Kip** (Force 2, Finesse 2, Resilience 2) is the older couple's Old English Sheepdog who's running around freely as "their bones are too weary to deal with this puppy's energy." It was Karen's daughter who got the couple the puppy, to encourage her mother to take walks to help her with her aching joints. The young puppy seems enamored with the investigation team, perhaps because they are the newest arrivals at the resort.

## WARM ROCK EMPLOYEES

- **Ross Salvato** (Force 5, Finesse 1, Resilience 3) is the feisty man in charge of the restaurant and shop. Ross thinks he's made for the chef role, as he has an impeccable sense of smell and his voice carries through even the loudest of diners. He's thankful for his niece helping out during the high season and hopes that she'll start opening up more after working with people. Since he's managing the shop and restaurant, he barely has any time to leave the building.
- **Beatrice Salvato** (Force 1, Finesse 2, Resilience 3) is Ross' niece who's working at Warm Rock as a waitress. She's the complete opposite of Ross, small and meek, so most have to squint to see the family resemblance. Beatrice was the first to see the washed-up body parts out of the people in the restaurant area. Like many other youths around her age, she feels uncertain about her future and her place in the world.
- **Sofia Salvato** (Force 2, Finesse 3, Resilience 3) is not a woman to be outdone by her husband in fieriness. True to the Italian stereotype, Sofia is considered "the madame" of Warm Rock, despite not having a manager title and doesn't hide the fact that she wants to work as the head receptionist. Sofia has now begun to work with customer service in addition to her cleaning job.
- **Mr. Livingstone** (Force 5, Finesse 2, Resilience 6) is a man of mystery and the owner of Warm Rock resort. He spends most of his time away from the resort, so not many have seen

the man even among the staff. Supposedly only the most senior staff knows his full name and some rumors say that Livingstone isn't his real name. Furthermore, it's said that he has a private villa somewhere nearby where he stays during his rare visits.

## INVESTIGATION TEAM

- **Michael Price** (Force 4, Finesse 3, Resilience 2) is the junior detective accompanying Gregor Durakov (one of the pre-written characters, p. 65) to investigate the crime scene at Warm Rock. He's the middle child of seven in a family that has served in the police force for generations. Michael feels like he has a lot to prove, and therefore works hard to leave no stone unturned. His diligence is bound to land him in trouble with the bad guys one day or another.
- **William Price** (Force 4, Finesse 2, Resilience 3) is Michael Price's older brother, the pride of his family and a staunch nationalist. He believes that Gregor is secretly a communist and Soviet spy who's responsible for the death of Greg's previous partner, Thomas Gray. Though he despises Greg, he wouldn't do anything to sabotage the investigation. He's more likely to step in from the shadows to aid the protagonists using his dashing looks. He was near the resort when he overheard that Greg was assigned to a case at Warm Rock and decided to head there to keep an eye on him. Being the popular detective in the vice department, he drives one of the fancier cars available at the police's disposal.

## PROLOGUE: THE PERFECT CRIME

Murder or unfortunate accident? That is the question on everyone's mind at Warm Rock. The sheer violence inflicted on the poor victim also begs the question of what kind of monster would do such horrible mutilation to a person's body. The most suspicious perpetrator, in this case, is not human, but a clan of sharks arrived at the resort after losing their direction in a storm. Though the most suspicious threat may not always be the true culprit. In this case, it's another threat framing the shark clan.

The true culprit is also who the personnel behind the construction of Warm Rock wanted to capture for a long time — the Glowing People. Knowing that they target humans close to the water, they tried to lure them out by constructing an artificial beach resort, but the monsters never left the water. They struck farther away, only taking a few who fell into the water by accident — the sad fate of the recently deceased Brent Harper and his friend Stan Bear. They headed to the rocky cove area at night, intoxicated, and both slipped on the rocks. Brent fell into the water and was subsequently picked up by the Glowing People.

The sudden arrival of sharks provoked the Glowing People to try and pin the abduction and murder of Brent on the half-sharks, while they figure out their next course of action. Thinking that if the humans are distracted, the Glowing People can finally pack up

and demolish the homes they built farther away. They have studied the humans at the resort for a long time and stolen various items from them over the years. The anti-shark harpoons and nets have proven to be effective weapons made by men against sharks, so humans should be able to fight against the clan.

They tore off his limbs to emulate the brutishness of the shark and left them to wash up on the beach. When the blood wasn't enough to lure the half-sharks, they decided to release the rest of Brent's body to wash up on the beach.

Among the innocent-looking people at Warm Rock is an undercover agent, keeping a look-out for any signs of monsters coming from beneath the sea. Once the signal is given, the fake resort is closed off from the rest of the world and turned into an observational experiment in how people may react to alien invasions. Their findings help shape how the government makes simulations and plans against larger invasions.

## TONIGHT, ON MURDER MYSTERIES!

The unfortunate people at Warm Rock are caught between a war of monsters from beneath the waves. *A Summer of Terror* is a story of both normal and extraordinary people fighting for survival against the invading Glowing People seeking to enslave humanity. In the other corner, we have a shark clan who, after a vicious storm, lost their course and ended up in the region. The waters surrounding the resort are shielded with a net, advertised to protect the visitors, but used to trap and track lifeforms in the area. Two of their clans folk are trapped in the net, one of the trapped being the leader of the group. Not wanting to leave their leader and other severely injured members behind, the mutated sharks linger near the tear in the net.

Upon seeing the Glowing People, the fiery sharks' vision went red, and murder became the only thing on their mind. The Glowing People released some of their burly human slaves to fend off the half-sharks, which in turn made the shark clans believe that any human is a danger to them and an ally to their nemesis.

## ACT ONE: WHO IS THE KILLER?

It's another beautiful day in California, the morning sun has already warmed up the beach at Warm Rock. The staff woke up early to clean the main villa and make breakfast. Sofia started her morning routine at 5 a.m. by walking along the beach to clean up any seaweed or other materials unappealing to the visitors. At this point, there are no body parts on the beach. The Glowing People know that more people wake in a few hours, so they bide their time.

The body parts of Brent Harper washed up at the sandy beaches of Warm Rock while the Thompsons were enjoying their breakfast. Mr. Thompson saw something odd on the beach from the window seat of the main villa's restaurant area. As he rose from his chair, the server let out a glass-shattering shriek as the old couple's sheepdog brought its owners a severed arm. The workers scramble in a panic and call the police. The severed

arm brought in by the dog, and the two other severed limbs on the beach, are all moved to the staff room in the villa.

The scenario starts with the characters being rounded up to hear about the tragedy on the beach. This is a good time for the Director to give a little one-on-one time with each of the protagonists to establish their reasons for being here and what contacts they have. You could also have them start in smaller groups so they get to explore their relationships with one another. They should all gather in one location, either the main villa's reception area or somewhere else decided upon by the group.

Just like in any murder mystery, most characters hold secrets that help unlock the truth of the story. It's the Director's job to piece-feed the protagonists these clues, even if all the characters have relationships with the extras in the story. There always exist some secrets between friends, family, and lovers.

By the time the investigation team arrives at the scene, most visitors are sitting anxiously in the waiting area in the villa. Only the staff and elderly couple have witnessed the body parts. To keep calm, they told the other visitors that there's been an accident and that the police will let everyone know what's happened once they arrive.

It's at this point that the player characters start to interact with one another and try to enact their secret agendas and goals.

### CORE CLUES

- Everyone at Warm Rock (besides Kip, the dog) recognizes Brent and Stan by looking at their faces.
- Brent was most likely killed by something in the water. Having a medical expert examine the body unlocks this clue, alternatively stealing the coroner's report after it's written up. His lungs were filled with water, indicating that the cause of death was drowning.
- The rest of Brent's body washes up on the beach during the first act. The Director decides when this happens, and this can serve as a tool to drive the story forward should it come to a halt or derail. His right leg has the same telling bruises as the other limbs, suggesting that a rope or tentacle was tied tightly around and pulled. It's the only limb that's still attached to his body. If the deceased at this point has not yet been identified, a search of the body reveals a wallet containing his ID.
- Since both Brent and Stan went missing, the GM can plant the seed that perhaps it was a conflict between the two rather than foul play by sea creatures.  
*Examining Brent's limbs (Medicine + Intellect) may reveal additional clues, one clue per success:*
  - Brent's limbs were torn off, rather than sawn or cut. The Director can describe how frayed the exposed muscle fibers on the limbs are, and how the bones aren't broken. A shark bite would produce a cleaner wound, and broken-off shark teeth are commonly found lodged in the wounds of shark victims.
  - The limbs all have bruising and swelling along the ankles and wrists, indicating tight restraints and pulling. All the scratches and cuts are signs of struggle.

- His detached right arm has a distinct, amateurish tattoo that Kimberly, Alice, and Stan recognize immediately. The initials of his girlfriend are inscribed.

## ALTERNATIVE CLUES

*Pressing characters can yield more information about the night before (Persuasion + Intellect or Empathy + Cunning to uncover one clue per success):*

- Pressuring Kimberly to give more information on the night of his disappearance reveals that the lovers had a spat about Brent's unfaithfulness. The whole trip was an attempt to win Alice back, but she learned that Brent yet had another lover he kept secret. When he stormed out of the cabin, he called for Stan to join him and "cancel the boat ride."
- Brent claimed that he paid Henry to borrow his boat for an evening. Henry says he never agreed to it, but the deceased did approach him about it. The reason for denying the youngsters is that it would land him into a lot of problems since the boat is Mr. Livingstone's property and Henry's only allowed to use it for work.
- Brent's second lover was Kimberly, who also happens to be his ex. Only Kimberly and Stan know this. While Kimberly doesn't want to hurt her friend by exposing this secret, Stan feels as if the two decided to cheat behind someone's back, then they should be ready for the eventual consequence of people finding out.
- Stan is still at the cove, passed out. At the Director's discretion, they can choose Stan's fate depending on the time taken for them to discover him and on whether he gets any medical attention (Medicine + Intellect). When, and if, Stan recovers consciousness, he'll give his rescuers and the investigation all the secret knowledge which Kimberly holds.
- Since Brent tried to obtain a boat for a romantic date, Henry has an idea of where the two young men might've gone. Mary and the other Warm Rock employees were also asked about a boat rental.
- There's an eerie glow coming from the cove that gets more visible as the sun goes down. Other visitors comment on this odd phenomenon as evening approaches. If anyone goes swimming, they might notice oil-slicks or glowing areas in the water.

## DIRECTOR'S NOTES

- The pace for this act is slow to build suspense over the murder. The antagonistic feelings toward the secret perpetrators need time so that there's a pay-off in the end.
- There might be more deaths in later acts, so feel free to have the supporting characters interact with the protagonists. This gives the players a connection, and then an incentive to care about the unfortunate people at Warm Rock. The risk of death means little if no one cares about the lives at stake.
- Karen plays a larger role in the next act as her true identity as an undercover agent for the government is exposed. Her learning of possible alien activity is what starts the next act.

- Kip is carrying a recording device underneath his jacket and fur. He's been trained to growl at anyone other than Karen fiddling with its accessory. Kip's introduction to the players needs Karen nearby, so she can tell the protagonists that Kip is harmless, other than when someone touches his beloved jacket. If a character persists despite the growling, Kip lunges at the person before trying to run back to Karen.

# ACT TWO: SKELETONS IN THE CLOSET

The second act starts when Karen makes the call to her agency. With one phone call, cars immediately block all highways and deny passage to anyone traveling from any direction of the road. A loud megaphone is heard in the distance, announcing that everyone at Warm Rock are now participants of a military experiment that ends when the threat of the monsters from the sea has been neutralized. More shocking is the message that follows: "This is a government-mandated research facility now observing civilian behavior while under invasion. You will not receive any help from the outside and you are not allowed to opt out of this experiment." Only a desperate fool would attempt to make it past these government workers armed and accompanied by vicious dogs. They refuse to answer any questions and shout for anyone to turn back for "their own safety."

Warm Rock is now in lockdown. No one comes in, nor out, besides government officials and right now they have no desire to interfere with the experiment. Karen reported back to her bosses that something of interest has occurred at the site, and she continues to inform them throughout the experiment. The order is to observe the alien interaction with civilians to learn more of their behavior, and so that proper procedures and contingency plans are written to serve the public later should a large-scale invasion ever occur.

Asking the employees of the resort about Warm Rock's past makes them visibly uncomfortable. It's up to the player whether their characters decide to cooperate with the rest of the people at Warm Rock. Those who wish to crack the reluctant ones can roll for Persuasion + Manipulation or Intellect. If it's a protagonist that's being grilled, they roll Integrity + Resolve to withstand the pressure.

The shark clan can now make their appropriate entry in this story (see **They Came from Beneath the Sea!** p. 167). Characters walking on the beach may see these hideous creatures stick their heads up from the water. They also circle around and if people show any signs of violence, the sharks try to capsize the boat.

Henry's boat contains bags full of equipment useful to a marine biologist, but also a regular civilian fighting off a sea monster, such as harpoons and knives. Should his boat capsize, the Director can have the tool bags wash up later on the beach.

## CORE CLUES

- Chatting with either Maty or Henry reveals that they recognize the voice through the megaphone announcing that the visitors are effectively trapped until this experiment has concluded is recognized as the elusive Mr. Livingstone by Mary and Henry.

- Karen used to work as an administrator at Warm Rock before “retiring.” Her illnesses are all a facade to lure people into a false sense of safety, making it easier to get close to targets while appearing completely harmless. If the protagonists are suspicious of Karen, two successes from an Empathy + Cunning roll earns them a vague clue. This is a woman who’s perfected her deception for decades.
- The people of Warm Rock can find listening devices around the resort inside hidden compartments, behind bookcases, underneath floorboards, and in other locations. Some of the paranoid characters who also have negative interactions with Mr. Livingstone suspects that it’s him listening in.
- Those who have suspicions toward Mr. Livingstone believe that there might be a secret weapon cache somewhere on the resort. Though they may remain convinced throughout the entire campaign, there are no signs of Livingstone’s rumored private villa on the resort, though the staff is adamant that Mr. Livingstone does not sleep in the rooms in the main villa, nor in one of the rentable cottages.
- There is a secret laboratory in the main villa that Henry, Mary, and Karen know about. If they are player characters, it’s up to them if they wish to divulge the location of this secret room. If they are supporting characters, the player characters must be on their good side to learn of this information. The laboratory contains a myriad of dynamite sticks enough to blow up the entire beach.
- There’s a computer in the laboratory where characters can search through the digital files of the news-clippings scattered around the resort. Characters require to beat a Difficulty 2 (Larceny or Science + Intellect). There’s also a map of the resort that shows a mysterious net — or barrier — in the water, which has a small opening in it, marked in red.
- Multiple news-clippings around the resort tell of the incident that started the research facility at Warm Rock. Two families vanished while hiking in the area, and people might recognize the face of a young Karen in the faded pictures accompanying the article. It states that a temporary rescue site is set to rescue the missing people and that the public are advised to stay away from the hiking trail. Nobody was found, and so the missing people were all presumed dead. Karen was the sole survivor of the incident and essentially grew up with the senior staff of the experiment, following up on the strange clues left behind of alien abduction. If the character who sees the news clippings doesn’t explicitly have a past that ties them to Warm Rock before it became a resort have to best a (Enigmas + Cunning) to recognize the location of the pictures.
- In a secret compartment in a drawer exists personal notes written by an unknown scientist expressing their frustration over the lack of success in “Project GLOW.” The scientists are being funded by the government, but they’re reducing the funding as no “targets” have been met — No Glowing People have been captured for study. The notes reveal that in an effort to both keep the experiment going and to get actual civilians to observe, the lead scientist suggests running Warm Rock like an actual beach resort. The notes mention “ML” as the scientist being promoted to lead scientist in their stead.

- **Alternative Scene:** A character spots Karen speaking in an uncharacteristic hushed tone over the phone. She’s speaking of the odd events at Warm Rock, but to whom? If pressed for an answer, Karen tells her interrogator that she was speaking to her daughter. Picking up a phone after her reveals a dead tone — this applies to all phones at the resort.
- **Alternative Scene:** If Mary Frost isn’t a player character, she has a breakdown when the gravity of the situation sets in. She’ll start crying about how she knew there was something suspicious about Warm Rock and tries to search for listening devices around the resort, asking for Mr. Livingstone to let them out. Henry and Beatrice can also fill this role.
- **Alternative Scene:** If a supporting character knows about the laboratory, but doesn’t tell the players, they might witness that person access the hidden room in the villa. Behind the reception desk exists a cellar door covered by a thick mat. A padlock is blocking people from entering, but rolling Larceny + Dexterity with at least one success unlocks it.

## DIRECTOR’S NOTES

- This act should leave a sense of deep unease. Armed soldiers now surround Warm Rock and they refuse to help the civilians under attack by monsters from the sea. A sinking feeling settles in the characters’ stomachs before they all unite to survive the invasion.
- If there the protagonists have established positive relationships with some characters, it might be better to retain that bond than to create too much tension. Those characters may, in turn, try to turn the characters against any people they dislike.
- To turn the characters against the supporting cast, the Director can have them acting overly suspicious — defensive body language, not holding eye-contact, and sneaking around. If their doubt against the supporting characters is starting to become detrimental, you can have them help rescue the protagonists to restore some trust.

# ACT THREE: LET’S BLOW THIS SHARK-SICLE STAND!

Dangerous half-sharks are lurking underneath the surface, and there’s a strong sense of being watched at all times — if not by the sharks, then by the Glowing People, and then by the government agents stationed around Warm Rock. They’re keeping their distance, so far only warning the people that they are in this experiment until the threat is either neutralized or when none of the people are left alive.

The tensions building up from the previous act reached a crescendo with the horrors of the sea fully revealing themselves to our protagonists.

Luckily for the protagonists in this story, all of the Warm Rock employees can perform basic first-aid should anyone suffer from a non-lethal shark bite.

- **Core Scene:** The Glowing People send three grunts to the beach to retrieve the evidence of their existence. They try to retrieve Brent's and Stan's bodies (dead or alive) along with capturing anyone who may have witnessed these garish creatures of the sea. It's up to the protagonists to save those who are targeted before the glowing gremlins can drag them beneath the surface!

As either a human or a Glowing Person approaches the water, a large creature breaches the surface with a gaping mouth. Razor-sharp teeth across multiple rows, it's an awful sight to behold. Anyone seeing this sight can feel their survival instincts kicking in, telling them to get as far away as possible from this streamlined apex predator of the sea. The shrieks of any human bystander cut through the night. "Shark!"

Its mouth turns to a toothy grave as its jaw snaps shut.

A message follows the loud static, "Marine alien life-form sighted! Eliminate the Glowing People and you'll be released from Warm Rock. This observational operation lasts until either all civilians are neutralized, or the Glowing People are eliminated or held captive."

The people trapped at the resort now know the face of the horrors they must defeat. But how are they going to best these aquatic terrors?

- **Alternative Scene:** If any player characters leave the group, they should roll a Survival + Cunning to notice that they're being followed. If they fail, searing pain shoots through every nerve of their body as a Glowing Person casts a stun net over them (see **They Came from Beneath the Sea!**, p. 174). If necessary, PCs can roll to avoid the net, perhaps avoiding the attack fully or getting stung by it but not captured. Should they fail, the last thing the character remembers is a pair of large eyes and an eerie glow surrounding them before everything turns dark. They then regain consciousness on the beach, water gently lapping onto their sides and friends bashing something colorful in the distance.
- **Alternative Scene:** With the area around Warm Rock being searched on land, one group decides to trawl a searchnet through the water. Something goes bump in the night, and the boat starts rocking. Before anyone can finish saying, "what was that?", the vessel capsizes and the unfortunate people in the water come face-to-face with the monstrous shark clan. If the people in the boat aren't important to the story, the attacking shark may take a test bite out of them. Alternatively, it chews at the boat.
- If the net in the water around the resort has not yet been mentioned, one of the supporting characters who's worked at Warm Rock for an extended time can mention the net as a possible weapon against the sharks, or that it might also be a way for them to get into the resort.
- The characters with government connections might be able to convince someone from the outside, or the guards themselves, to give them weapons or other resources. The Direc-

tor decides the difficulty of the roll (Persuasion + Presence) based on what's being requested to smuggle into the resort.

- **Core Scene:** After the initial shock, the survivors gather in the villa to discuss how to deal with the two threats now revealing themselves. If the scientist notes haven't been discovered at this point, one of the supporting characters suggests giving the resort another comb-through for more information.

Now is the time for our heroes to figure out how to deal with the marine horrors. They may decide to attack the Glowing People first (in that case, skip ahead to Act Four on p. 62) or tackle the sharks.

The players themselves should preferably come up with their own plan, but below you can find some examples on what they might do or what you can suggest:

- There's already been too much bloodshed at Warm Rock, so surely there has to be a way to neutralize the threat in a non-lethal way. Navigating to the area marked on the computer where a hole exists in the net, they can see two sharks trapped in the broken barrier surrounding the beach. To reach the trapped sharks one would have to dive in to cut them loose. Diving in with the sharks is a difficult roll requiring 3 successes (Survival or Athletics + Stamina) to reflect on the stress of the task to cut the net while apex predators are around. Another person may create a distraction to attract the attention of the free sharks, therefore lowering the difficulty of cutting the other sharks free to 2.

With the two sharks freed, their leader calls for all clan members to regroup and leave Warm Rock.

- The secret laboratory has enough dynamite to blow up all the buildings on Warm Rock, so why not toss them into their mouths as shark food? Or perhaps some dynamite fishing using the deceased people as bait is in order, hoping there's enough blood to attract the sharks. The harpoons and even the shark net in the water can also be used as weapons against the marine predator.

## DIRECTOR'S NOTES

- The shark clans detest the Glowing People and may crash the scene if their arch-nemesis is located close to the water. This shark clan acts typical to Great Whites, meaning that they'll often strike once and wait for their prey to weaken before finishing them off (it is this behavior that allows for shark bite victims to get away). This can be useful if the protagonists are in dire danger and the Director doesn't want to kill off the heroes.
- All the sharks in this clan have shark heads, with rows of serrated teeth that easily cut through meat and bones. If a shark clans folk manage to chomp down on an unfortunate victim, they violently shake their head to saw limbs and chunks of flesh. The Director gets to decide whether or not the sharks have mutations that allow them to climb out of the water.
- Everyone deals with loss differently; some lose themselves to anger while others drown in grief. Among the supporting characters at Warm Rock, those who have strong ties to

someone — for example, Jacke and Karen — are more likely to lose themselves to anger should their loved ones die. They'll be more gung-ho and aggressive toward the aquatic threats, hacking up corpses long after most people would've stopped.

## ACT FOUR: THE FINAL GLOW-DOWN

With the shark threat neutralized, it's time for our heroes to deal with the real villain in this scenario. If the last act is set at night, you can build up the scene by saying that there's a green glow in the sea reminiscent of aurora borealis. If it's now morning, the usual sunrise is plagued by an eerie green glow.

At this point, the Glowing People are desperate to get away, but they know that the people at Warm Rock know too much about their existence. What exactly do they know, however? That's something they'll only learn by taking the protagonists to the deepest depths of the sea.

The Glowing People wait until the next nightfall for their attack, so players have the opportunity to prepare and tie up any loose ends. This might be their last night alive, so give the protagonists a chance to deliver a heroic speech or a silver screen moment before the fight. Their first response is that they'll send the grunts in small groups of two or three to scout the area. Then they'll bring out the big guns, their fancy Elders that are capable of telepathic attacks.

Just like with the sharks, our protagonist crafts their own plan to deal with these glowing beings, but below you can find some examples on what they might do or what you can suggest:

- One of the original reasons why Warm Rock exists was to capture and study the Glowing People. Surely capturing one or more would earn the favor of the government. Maybe some of those guarding the resort decide to skimp on the rules if promised that they'll fulfill Project GLOW or mention 'ML,' the lead scientist. The Director can have these soldiers join as supporting cast if there aren't that many survivors left. They are more likely to stay out of the action, instead giving weapons or advice the protagonists can use to trap the Glowing People.
- If the dynamite hasn't been used up yet, it's an available but unstable weapon. With their mind-control and stun guns, one way to take them down is to set up an ambush using a small group as bait.
- Hiding isn't heroic, but this is not to say that concealment isn't a viable option depending on what's happening in the scene. If the protagonists attempt to use meta-knowledge that the Glowing People are fleeing and their characters are trying to survive the scenario by acting passive, remind them the Glowing People aren't leaving until they've either captured or killed everyone at Warm Rock.

The Director should never disclose that the Glowing People are fleeing from Warm Rock. So as far as everyone at the resort knows — government employees included — the Glowing People appearing at the beach are the only ones in this location.



### DIRECTOR'S NOTES

- The Glowing People (**They Came from Beneath the Sea!** p. 174) come in two sizes. Make sure you use the right one for the appropriate situation. Grunts are weaker and disposable, while an Elder never goes to shore alone. The Elders



are the ones that use their mind control abilities against the survivors at Warm Rock, and they prefer to have their grunts to the job of stunning or bashing humans.

The Elder may send some grunts ahead to lure one person away and then appear around the corner to dazzle the heroes with their gaudy outfits before trying to lock eyes with

them. If the protagonists decide to stick together and aren't taking the bait to separate, the Grunts try to use that to their advantage by trapping the heroes in a net, perhaps thrown from above if possible.

- Alice Moore, and any other characters with repressed memories of the Glowing People due to trauma, may recover



their memories at the Director's discretion. This works as an alternative to learn more about these foes, as her foggy memories remind her of looking into the Glowing People's eyes and hearing a voice speak in her mind. It was cut-off as her father embraced her from behind and covered his daughter's eyes. Alice now knows that they can control humans by locking eyes.

If Alice has died at this point, or if she's not in use in your campaign, Beatrice can act as a substitute. Karen has more extensive knowledge but needs coercion to open up about her past (Persuasion + Manipulation) with a difficulty of 3. The difficulty is lowered to 2 if her husband Jacke is within earshot.

- The Glowing People try to mind control the people at Warm Rock to fight against one another by stunning and then locking eyes with their victim. Since they're sent to buy the rest of their colony time to flee, there's no point in them trying to capture our heroes to use as slaves. To sneak up from behind, one rolls for Larceny or Athletics + Cunning.
- An alternative bait would be to have something incredibly garish that the Glowing People would proudly call "high fashion." A character can figure the Glowing People's weakness for colorful things by observing them and rolling Culture + Intelligence.

## EPILOGUE

The surviving characters are now unsung heroes of humanity. Their actions help in the plan to defend against alien invasions. As our protagonists finally leave this experimental prison, the government offers them an opportunity to join in the efforts to protect other civilians. If they refuse, there are some vague threats about them having to swear secrecy or facing the consequences.

- There are still some mysteries left unsolved. Though his voice was heard several times, the owner of the resort is nowhere to be found once the visitors are finally released. Who is Mr. Livingstone? What happened to those who were kidnapped by the Glowing People? Most of the pre-written characters have a past tying them to either Warm Rock or the threats they faced during this ordeal.
- One way to continue with another adventure featuring the cast in this scenario is that some of those who survived Warm Rock accepted the job offer from the government and are now traveling to assigned missions. They may run into other characters who turned down the same job offer, or perhaps their assignment is to coerce the nay-sayers or take them out as they know too much.

## DIRECTOR'S NOTES

- Allow your players a moment to celebrate their success (or tragic failures) and to have the classic movie-moment where the protagonists get to chew the bad guys out without any consequences.

# CAST AND CREW

This section contains four pre-made characters for *A Summer of Terror*. The characters have starting stats, no experience points, and follow the character creation rules in Chapter Three of **They Came from Beneath the Sea!**. They come with Quips already noted, though players can draw their own. Players can use the characters as-is for a one-shot game or create their own. Short-Term Aspirations are likely to arise at least once every act, while Long-Term Aspirations take longer (perhaps three acts or more) to complete.

## ALICE MOORE, VACATIONING MODEL

Alice Moore is a student visiting Warm Rock together with her long-distance boyfriend and a shared friend. The previous night, she fought with Brent before he stormed out and disappeared. The subject of the fight, Brent's unfaithfulness, only makes her more suspicious as people then believe her motive was jealousy.

Because of her appearance, many underestimate her independent knowledge and skills. Being the eldest out of four daughters, her father raised her as the son he never had. While she looks like she grew up attending beauty pageants as a child, she shot squirrels in the backyard. She can hold her own in combat, as long as she has a gun.

Alice is the adoptive child of the star police commissioner, Don "Donny" Moore. While he's proud to show off his daughter during press conferences and social gatherings, Don discourages Alice to go to any police stations. He fears that some of the unsavory figures will use her as leverage against him.

## SECRET KNOWLEDGE

People have always disappeared out of Alice's life. No friends are forever, grandparents die of old age, and some just walk out. The memory of her parents walking out is blurry, and is a cold case known by many officers who like mysteries. Alice remembers it being a drawn-out process of them picking up her sisters one by one. Poor Alice was left alone, her parents told her that they were setting up their new home. However, witnesses in the neighborhood are adamant that the family left together on a holiday and only Alice returned to the house. It wasn't until the third day alone where Alice broke down in school thinking that her parents had abandoned her. She stayed with her grandparents while the police searched for her family.

Though she pretends to be unaffected by those events, Alice fears that the people she cares the most about will leave her because they don't care about her anymore. Her image is her main tool for retaining people around her. Anything or anyone, that risks tarnishing her reputation is dealt with, one way or the other.

**Long-Term Player Aspiration:** Prove her innocence beyond any doubt as her reputation hangs in balance

**Short-Term Player Aspiration:** Learn what happened to Brent; Show off her athleticism and marksmanship

**Paths:** Archetype: Survivor; Origin: Touched by an Alien; Ambition: Best Friends

**Skills:** Aim 4, Athletics 2, Close Combat 1, Enigmas 1, Empathy 1, Integrity 2, Technology 1



## SECRET KNOWLEDGE

Just like every person both alive and dead, all of the pre-written characters have secrets which they may or may not wish to share with others. When meeting someone new, one rarely opens up about the lies they've kept for years. Both agendas and secrets are tools for players and the Director to create tension and memorable moments.

While it may be impossible to prevent players from reading the secrets of the pre-written characters, it's important to distinguish meta-knowledge from what the character you're playing. So, you may know that your friend Stella plays a character with a similar past to the pre-written Mary Frost, but your character may not know about it based on their background.

The secrets may not touch on the story directly but can serve as a point of conflict between supporting characters and player characters. As an example, Sofia wants Mary's job, so she might undermine Mary and make other characters doubt her honesty by revealing how she's been in trouble for spreading false gossip.

**Attributes:** Intellect 3, Cunning 4, Resolve 3; Might 2, Dexterity 4, Stamina 2; Presence 2, Manipulation 2, Composure 3

**Trademarks:** Ballistics Expert (Aim), Cultured Warrior (Athletics), Diamond-hard Emotions (Composure)

**Relationships:** Gregor Durakov (rude cop investigating Brent's death 1), Kimberly Jackson (best friend 3), Stan Bear (Brent's loser friend from uni 1), Henry Middleton (possible sucker 1)

**Connections:** Kimberly Jackson (loyal friend), Contact in the local news (informant)

**Tropes:** Last Man Standing, Keep Your Hands Off Me, Seen Too Much

### QUIPS:

*Nobody expects it's the pretty girl, but here we are...*

*Mister, that won't buy you a half stick of gum at the nickel store...*

*Sorry to throw a hairnet on your evil plans...*

## GREGOR "GREG DURAIN" DURAKOV, SHARP DETECTIVE

Gregor Durakov is a homicide detective in California who's struggling with being relegated to doing desk jobs for the foreseeable future. A stickler for rules, Greg is trying to teach his junior partner about solving crimes by following the guidelines. He's under a lot of pressure to do well on this assignment and hopes he can regain some of the lost trust of his colleagues after a string of dramatic homicide cases. A workaholic through and through, it is his first time at any kind of beach resort.

He knows that his birth country has had a long and on-going dispute with his parental home, the Soviet Union. He therefore

uses the name Greg Durain to avoid a raised eyebrow from civilians and suspects alike.

Greg is still mourning the loss of his previous partner, Thomas Gray, who passed after taking a bullet meant for Greg. Thomas was well-liked in the force and thus many blame Greg for this loss of life.

## SECRET KNOWLEDGE

He knows why he's informally demoted to pushing papers. It's because of the outcome of last case he worked. It was typical that his assignment involved some shady business with commies as if they expected that Greg would know these criminals. He didn't even flinch when he was assigned to infiltrate. It all seemed to be an easy job on the surface.

Greg is certain that it was sabotage, as an unexplainable bullet fired and caused mayhem. He slipped on the wet floor while trying to get away from the firefight. Despite being injured, Thomas tried to help Greg to get up, but got shot as they shuffled away. His testimony was thrown out after people deemed his story of giant sharks climbing out of the tanks as a result of brain damage.

He took on the Warm Rock case as a means to escape the routine, but to also confront his new fear of dark waters and sharks. There are also some repressed feelings that he's trying to run from, which keeps resurfacing whenever he allows himself a moment to mourn the loss of his partner.

**Long-Term Player Aspiration:** Find out who the killer is and the method used

**Short-Term Player Aspiration:** Solve things by being by-the-book; Always be the one who figures out a mystery first

**Paths:** Archetype: G-Man; Origin: Military Brat; Ambition: Lone Wolf

**Skills:** Aim 2, Enigmas 3, Humanities 5, Integrity 3, Survival 1, Technology 1

**Attributes:** Intellect 2, Cunning 3, Resolve 3; Might 2, Dexterity 3, Stamina 2; Presence 2, Manipulation 2, Composure 5

**Trademarks:** Badge and Gun (Integrity), Please Step Away From the Alien (Composure), We Have Ways of Making You Talk (Cunning)

**Relationships:** Emma Young (who are you? 1), Michael Price (friendly 1)

**Connections:** Michael Price (junior detective and colleague 2), William Price (disgruntled detective 1)

**Tropes:** I've Got a File on That, Shadow Conspiracy, The Missing Clue

### QUIPS:

*Without an answer... we'll only have a lot of questions...*

*Don't make me open a container of fisticuffs on your posterior...*

*Wave when you get to the explosion...*

## MARY FROST, CLAMPED DOWN RECEPTIONIST

Mary Frost has not worked at Warm Rock for long, yet she has already seen too much. She's known as the biggest rumormonger on this side of California. Her nosiness often lands her in trouble, but it's not until her first run-in with Mr. Livingstone where

she realizes that her life may be in danger. Knowing what's at risk if she spreads the info she has on Warm Rock, Mary refuses to talk about the rumors surrounding the resort. Even so, it's obvious to the other staff that a part of why she remains at the resort is because the mystery surrounding Mr. Livingstone is like the forbidden fruit — too juicy to ignore.

Mary sees the arriving police as an opportunity to receive protection from Mr. Livingstone, though because of his supposed influence over the government, she has to ensure that the detectives are trustworthy before spilling the beans.

Time has been cruel to Mary. She used to be Mrs. Johnson but Mr. Johnson ran off with a woman half her age. She knows not where he went, so she hasn't been able to send him the divorce files. Even if she hasn't formally divorced her husband, she calls herself by her maiden name. She openly shares her struggle with anyone who listens over drinks. Mary has insecurities about being less of a woman now that she's becoming older and is no longer of childbearing age. She greatly misses the days of being a suburban mom, gossiping together with the other women in the neighborhood and looking after her children. Her husband's affair forced her to move away from the place she considered home, which made resentment fester within her. Mary abhors those who are unfaithful in relationships, though her untreated trauma has led to her hate to also include promiscuous youth.

## SECRET KNOWLEDGE

Mary's greatest fear, but also her only source of excitement is the mystery surrounding Mr. Livingstone. Her first reprimand from Mr. Livingstone was after discovering a prototype of a listening device inside a book in one of the villas rented by a politician. Curious as always, she gasped as she saw the recording device inside a hollowed-out book.

Since the incident, the tension between Sofia and Mary increased tenfold. Mr. Livingstone phoned Sofia and told her that should Mary act nose-y again, then Sofia receives a promotion and gets the head receptionist job.

Those who are fired by Mr. Livingstone are said to disappear off the face of the Earth, and though Mary's curious of what happens to those people, she doesn't want to experience it.

**Long-Term Player Aspiration:** Ensure that Mr. Livingstone cannot pursue her for leaking knowledge about Warm Rock.

**Short-Term Player Aspiration:** Learn more about Mr. Livingstone; Spread gossip that doesn't involve her

**Paths:** Archetype: Everyman; Origin: Suburbia; Ambition: Out for Revenge

**Skills:** Athletics 1, Empathy 4, Humanities 1, Integrity 3, Larceny 2, Persuasion 4

**Attributes:** Intellect 2, Cunning 2, Resolve 2; Might 3, Dexterity 3, Stamina 2; Presence 5, Manipulation 4, Composure 2

**Trademarks:** I Forgot My Pen (Persuasion), I am the Manager! (Presence), You're Hearing It Here First (Integrity)

**Relationships:** Sofia Salvato (wary -1), Beatrice Salvato (nice young girl 2), Ross Salvato (friendly colleague 2), Henry (look how handsome he became since he went out with my daughter! 2)

**Connections:** Beatrice Salvato (work favors)

**Tropes:** Elbow Grease, Picket Line, Tools of the Trade

## QUIPS:

*These eyes wouldn't lie to you...*

*I'll make my final move if it's the last thing I do...*

*Don't look now, but we've got dinner guests!*

## HENRY MIDDLETON, MARINE BIOLOGIST

Henry Middleton visits Warm Rock to collect samples and write up reports of the marine life in the region at the behest of Mr. Livingstone. Though meek and wary of people in positions of authority, Henry likes to be the center of attention and therefore tries to get along with everyone he meets. When someone clearly dislikes him, he becomes greatly saddened by the fact to the point where he actively avoids that person as he cannot stand disappointment.

He loves his job as he's an adrenaline junkie and jumps at any opportunity where he gets to observe sharks. After being reprimanded by Mr. Livingstone for not carrying out his orders to a tee, Henry's retreated into his shell and he often seems lost in thought.

It's no secret that Henry loves the academic lifestyle, both the cerebral challenges of learning new things but also the social aspect of it. He's known at the university where he works and studied at that he still hasn't left the student lifestyle, going to social gatherings and trying to get the approval by students and peers alike.

## SECRET KNOWLEDGE

Henry first got into trouble with Mr. Livingstone when he invited a visitor at the resort to ride in his boat while collecting water samples as an intern. He went farther away from the net than what was allowed and collected some of the glowing water samples. Henry thought that the glow might be bioluminescent phytoplankton, and as a memento, he gifted his boat-riding companion one of the sample-collecting bottles. As the night turned to early morning, the glow from the bottle disappeared, but he urged his passenger to keep the memento regardless.

While Mr. Livingstone was positively glowing just as much as the phytoplankton, his mood quickly turned when he counted the samples and discovered that one was missing. Henry lied, and said that he accidentally dropped it in the water while attempting to get a sample where the water was glowing. Ever since that incident, Henry has suspected that there's something strange in the water that Mr. Livingstone doesn't want the public to know about.

**Long-Term Player Aspiration:** Learn why Mr. Livingstone is ordering frequent tests of the water and why he harshly reprimanded him when one sample went "missing."

**Short-Term Player Aspiration:** Make friends and have fun; See some cool predators in the water

**Paths:** Archetype: Mouth; Origin: Outdoors Enthusiast; Ambition: Community Leader

**Skills:** Aim 1, Athletics 1, Integrity 2, Pilot 1, Science 4, Survival 2, Technology 3

**Attributes:** Intellect 4, Cunning 2, Resolve 3; Might 2, Dexterity 3, Stamina 1; Presence 2, Manipulation 3, Composure 3

**Trademarks:** I Ain't Afraid of No Fish (Resolve), Sly wink to the camera (Presence), Xenobiologist (Intellect)

**Relationships:** Alice Moore (she seems nice 1), Beatrice Salvato (what a sweet girl! 2), Mary Frost (my on-and-off girlfriend's mom 2)

**Connections:** Stan Bear (owes me money for beer)

**Tropes:** Spotlight, The Missing Clue, Special Cache

**QUIPS:**

That's not the biology I had in mind...

These things really put the "F" in fish, don't they?

Sometimes we learn the hard way, especially after we've already touched something gross...



# VOYAGE OF THE SALLOW

Aprcell Gonnofy awoke in her cabin, excited at the day's prospects. Of course, she was excited at every day's prospects. Nothing wrong with that when one's been handed their dream job: cruise director aboard the SS Sallow Seas.

It suited her personality to a T. Even as a little girl, Aprcell thrived on telling friends what to do to have fun. When they didn't comply, she employed budding passive-aggressive behavior. Of course, she'd never do that now. That she was aware of.

Cruises were darned fun, and anyone who didn't see that didn't deserve to be on a cruise. And Aprcell knew all the best fun things and activities and snacks, so why not share that gift with those less fortunate.

As she stepped out on deck and soaked in that glorious day, Aprcell ran over the day's checklist, particularly excited about the rousing games of whiffle-brush and deck-ball plus a screening of a zesty Chelly Noobers musical comedy, all planned for her "unsuspecting victims" as she jokingly called them, but not really.

As she was an early riser, it was no surprise few were yet on deck. Dick Bladdenbird was, of course, dedicated jogger that he was.

Aprcell approached him with a chipper hello, guaranteed to wake the most introverted, or at least shake them up (no shells to crawl in here, people). He did not respond, and she realized he was not jogging by but rather walking slowly. In fact, the man looked a bit glassy around the eyes and his slight smile gave him the look of someone who'd been drugged.

"Dick? Dick, are you alright?"

Dick did not answer but continued to walk the deck as one in a trance, if a slightly happy one.

Aprcell frowned a bit then chased it away. It was her official duty to not let any introverted passengers undercut her perky cheer. She had to be strong. After all, she had enough chipper for all of them.

Next, she came to elderly Mrs. Minnercoat snuggled in a deckchair with a book. Aprcell greeted her like a long-lost mining engineer, but the lady didn't seem to hear. Then the

relentlessly happy cruise director noticed that Mrs. Minnercoat's eyes were not on the book, but were staring just above it, out to sea with a hint of a smile. Her eyes were glazed too. Was this Glazed Eye Day?

Now, even the Queen of Upbeat was mildly concerned. She decided to pay a quick visit to the ship's doctor, Dr. Rorbet Clame, whom she affectionately called "Doc," a shortening of "doctor" she'd devised a while back. Perhaps a creeping bliss malady was affecting the passengers.

She found Doc in the main dining room, his untouched breakfast before him. His blank staring eyes told the disturbing tale. She spoke to him, repeatedly, but even the use of her special nickname failed to get his attention. Finally, the man just pushed his chair back, rose and walked away, like a man in a pleasant dream.

Aprrell was officially alarmed in her official capacity. This called for a higher power. She headed for the bridge.

She rounded a bulkhead and froze. Just ahead of her she had glimpsed a small figure disappearing around a corner. It was so quick there was no time for a clear look.

But it was glowing.

Glowing passengers were not on her roster, in fact she had never once as cruise director directed the activities of a glowing person.

A peek in a window confirmed the worst. The entire bridge crew, including Captain Ovalton, was standing in a trance-like state.

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Aprrell appreciated the safety blanket of her cabin as she tried to suss this out. No game of babbleball was going to cure this ailment. Something had happened to these people, and maybe a small glowing person had done it.

The knock on the door almost made her jump out a porthole she couldn't fit through. Cautiously she pressed an ear against it and asked, "Who is it?"

"Aprrell? It's me, Howder Undermiller. Can I speak with you?"

She was relieved. Not only did the voice sound normal and un-trance-like, it was Howder, probably the cheeriest and heartiest of her passengers. It had been a pleasure to find activities for one so appreciative of good clean fun. Aprrell opened the door and let him in.

When the handsome robust vacationing frame salesman entered, he shut the door quickly behind him. Instantly, Aprrell knew he knew. But what they knew, who knew?

"You've seen them? The crew? The passengers? What's going on?"

"I know," she replied. "It's like they couldn't be boisterous now if they wanted to." Aprrell cringed to hear herself. She sounded like she was putting her job ahead of their wellbeing.

"We've got to see if there are any others left," whispered Howder hoarsely. Then he seemed to consider before asking the next thing. "Have you seen any... glowing things?"

"Yes!" squeaked Aprrell, delighted she wasn't crazy. "They might be behind all this."

The two listened a moment before venturing into the corridor, then carefully made their way up to the deck. They decided when they ran into glazed-eyed people that it would be prudent to feign similar glazed-eyeness.

Now the promenade deck was thick with slowly wandering people in apparent states of bliss. Selfishly, Aprrell thought how useless she had become. The last thing these strangely contented passengers needed now was a professional cheerer-upper.

They rounded a corner and Howder paused. "Hey, there's Jinny Stuben. She teaches kids about cereal or something. Say, she looks like she's normal. See how confused she is?"

It was true. Jinny was trying to speak to blissful trance people to no avail.

"Come on, let's talk to her," said Howder, but Aprrell grabbed his arm.

A small figure had stepped out from an open doorway and stared up at the young teacher. It was glowing. They could see now that it was strangely and garishly garbed and appeared to have a diamond-shaped plate of some sort on its forehead, just above large hypnotic green eyes. Eyes that Jinny now seemed lost in.

Jinny walked blissfully away. When the small glowing being started to turn in their direction Aprrell and Howder ducked around a corner.

"Listen, we've got to split up," spat Aprrell, now having fully doffed her cruise director role for something more commanding. "We'll make contact with any survivors and lead them to the lifeboat deck. Meet you there in one hour."

Impressed by her sudden take-charge attitude, Howder nodded and headed off.

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Aprrell stood by the lifeboat as the hour came to an end, her fake smile now second nature. She had not found a single soul free of that terrible control.

Suddenly, Howder was beside her, and she breathed relief. She asked if he'd had any luck finding unpossessed people, but his only answer was a blissful vacant smile as the short glowing figure stepped out from behind him.

# TALES OF AQUATIC TERROR!

*Terence and Judith hadn't been away from shore longer than three days, but already the luxury cruise was alleviating their accumulated stresses. No working grind for a month, the kids safely ensconced in the best boarding school money could afford, and none of the neighbor's irritatingly mundane tales of clogged garbage disposals and weeds in need of pulling. This was the life.*

*As the couple reclined on their deck chairs, the sun beating down on their toasting skin, Judith reached her right hand over to where she suspected Terence's left should be. She wanted to give it a squeeze to say "Thank goodness we made this decision." But instead of his hand, her fingers found something else to squeeze: slimy, long, and writhing.*

*Judith leapt from her lounger with a shriek, sunglasses falling from her face. The horrible sight that was her husband revealed himself before her! Something had replaced him, but not only him! Before her very eyes, the crew changed into cephalopods on legs!*

*Judith screamed for a long, long time, but nobody heard her cries, or those of the other passengers on the Swan. The liner drifted for another month before it was discovered, and by that time, not a living soul remained...*

**Tales of Aquatic Terror!** is a book of playable stories for **They Came from Beneath the Sea!**, containing four adventures of varying length and complexity ready for play straight from the pages.

As with the stories in **They Came from Beneath the Sea!**, these tales of terror can be played in the mode of farce, horror, or anything in between. This book contains options for terror far at sea, frights at the beach, and deep conspiracies in 1950s American society, which isn't as pure as it would have us believe. Each of these stories is fit to be played as one-shots or as parts of longer stories!

**They Came from Beneath the Sea!** uses the Storypath System.

## TALES OF AQUATIC TERROR! INCLUDES:

- A story of frightening disappearances in the coastal resort of Warm Rock, California! Only the protagonists can solve the mystery and stop people from vanishing.
- A tale of horror at sea as a pleasure yacht finds itself caught between iguanoids, a U-Boat, and the US Navy, with the yacht's passengers forced to take action to survive their vacation!
- A mystery in Portland, Maine, where the Prefecture of the Pod engineer a conspiracy to take control of an important government official, and only the player characters can stop them!
- A journey of aquatic menace as the passengers of the Rose Marie luxury cruise liner encounter a plethora of threats on what is supposed to be the transatlantic journey of a lifetime!
- Playable characters provided throughout the book, immediately available to use or adapt for your stories.

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