



# Buccaneers & Boker

Volume One Issue Two  
February 2004



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## Captain's Log

We're coming into port a bit late this time, mostly due to circumstances beyond our control...hopefully the plague of delays that struck *Skull & Bones* hasn't been visited upon our little publication as well.

Now that we're here, though, we're proud to present another issue of goodies for your *Skull & Bones* campaigns (or any other piratically-themed game, for that matter). This issue features an adventure, more legendary islands, more NPCs, an expansion of the Afflictions rules, and Encounter Tables for both sea and port encounters. This issue's cover is a classic as well: a painting by Howard Pyle, which was used for his *Book of Pirates* back in 1905. Pyle is responsible for many of the most famous pirate paintings, and we'll be using more of his work in future issues.

We hope to see you again for Issue 3, which will be available in April.

Gareth-Michael Skarka  
Adamant Entertainment



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If you are interested in submitting material for a future issue of *Buccaneers & Bokor*, please contact the Editor-in-Chief via email at [gms@adamantentertainment.com](mailto:gms@adamantentertainment.com)

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# For Love of Rum

an adventure by T.S. Luikart

**I**n the north of Barbadoes lies the first, and likely the oldest, rum distillery on Earth: a 280-acre plantation named Mount Gilboa. The finest rum in the Caribbean has been produced there since 1663. Many of the shops in Bridgetown carry bottles of Gilboan rum and all of the taverns serve it. It is drunk in every port of the Spanish Main and regularly shipped throughout Europe. Barrels of it regularly make their way to Newfoundland and Nova Scotia where they are traded for dried codfish, then set-aside for an additional five years of aging to produce the powerfully hearty rum known as "Screech" – probably because that's the only thing most men can do for several minutes after drinking it.

In short, Gilboan rum is damn good stuff.

Which makes it a near tragedy from any true drinker's point of view that the Gilboan distiller's master brewer has been pressed into service with a teetotaling wacko and his crew of painfully sober scalawags.

**For Love of Rum** is an adventure for a pirate crew, with their own vessel. Characters should be at least 4th level, and Gamemasters can increase the challenge ratings of encounters to make allowances for more powerful PCs.

## *Ere's Mud in yer Eye*

Historically (and mechanically from a PC officer's point of view) having a "well-lubricated" pirate crew is much to be desired and rum is the drink of choice in the Caribbean. Rum is traditionally made from molasses, which is the sticky sweet residue that remains once sugar cane juice has been boiled down and any crystallized sugar has been extracted. The various islands of the Spanish Main are, in the Golden Era of Piracy, the world's primary producers of sugar cane. Originally, molasses was viewed as a waste product resulting from sugar production, but once some enterprising lads realized you could ferment it, rumbullion was soon invented. It was sailors, honest and otherwise, that shortened the name to "rum" and helped make it popular worldwide.

Molasses is mostly sugar, but there are other minerals in most batches that influence the final flavor, not to mention which yeasts get chosen for the fermentation. If you have the proper materials, it's easy to make rum, but it's always an art to make good rum. The skill of brewing rum is so new that there isn't enough knowledge about it yet to really teach anyone to be a master brewer. Masters of the sugar cane distillery are very rare, but such a master is Clinch Stayner, an Englishman with rum in his blood, or so rumors claim. Clinch

came to Barbadoes in 1695 and managed to parley his youthful experiences at wineries into a job at the Mount Gilboa distillery. His ready manner and ideas for brewing soon brought him to the attention of Master William Sandiford who made him a foreman and eventually, appointed him Master Brewer. Several months ago, Stayner was on a brief trip to Antigua when his ship was taken by one Captain Ashton, a humorless, devout, and sober pirate captain. Ashton needed a cooper and pressed Clinch into the job.

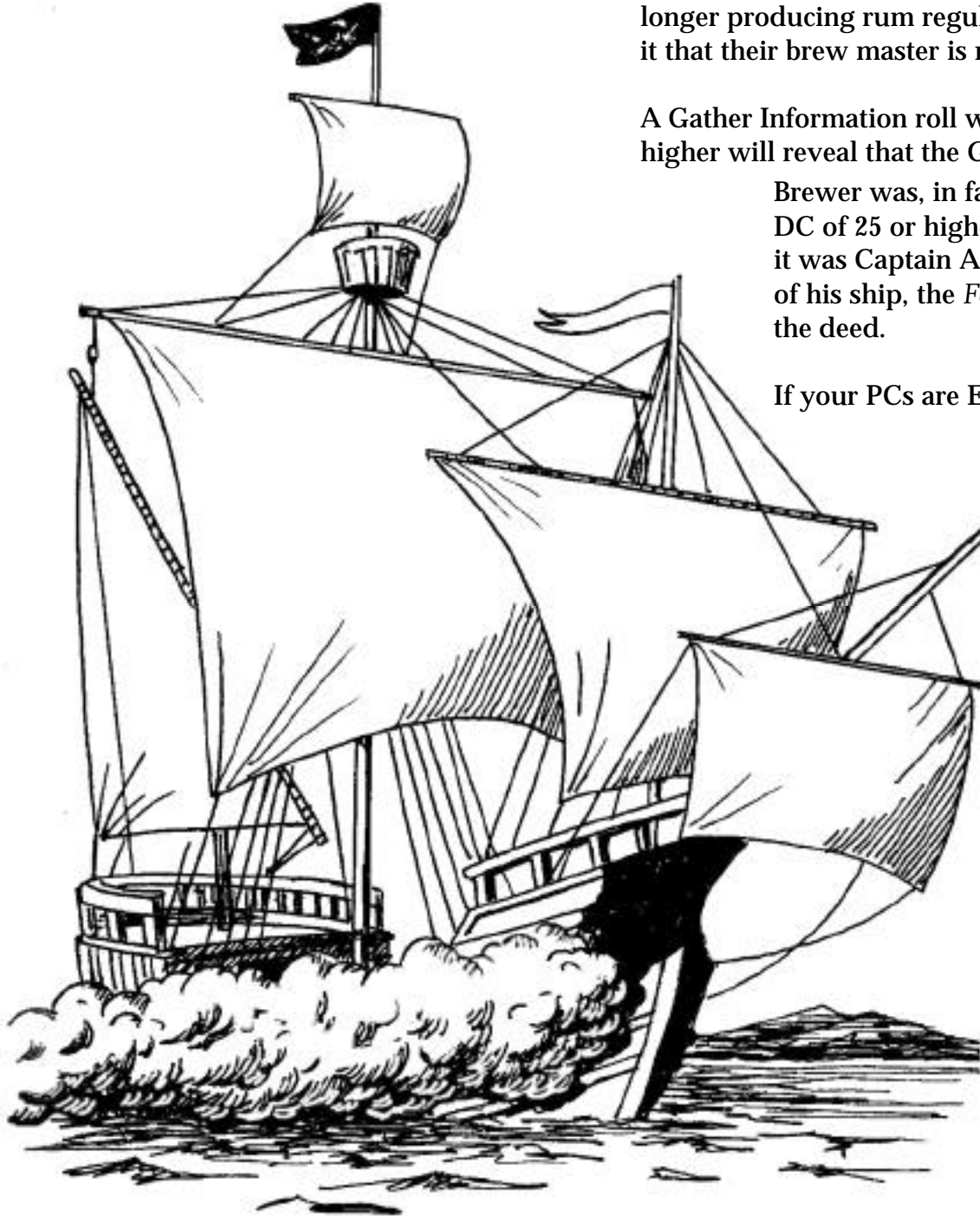
### **What do you mean, "There's NO RUM"?**

This adventure works best when you've managed to set it up over several sessions. At first, slightly jack up the price of rum at the PCs favored ports of call. Over time, increase the price significantly, despite the fact that a sinister drop in taste soon accompanies the raise in price. Sympathetic bar-keeps will shake their heads and declare, "Aye, with the Gilboan running out, there's naught but shite to be had, lads." Apparently, the Gilboan distillery is no longer producing rum regularly and rumor has it that their brew master is missing.

A Gather Information roll with a DC of 15 or higher will reveal that the Gilboan Master

Brewer was, in fact, press ganged. A DC of 25 or higher will hear tell that it was Captain Ashton and the crew of his ship, the *Forthright*, what did the deed.

If your PCs are English, or at least capable of docking in Barbadoes, they may have met Stayner in the past or even be friends of his. Stayner is a jolly sort and was prone to roaming the taverns of Bridgetown, sometimes buying rounds for a whole bar so he could happily watch others imbibe his labors. Stayner isn't a particularly big man, though he does possess a roaring laugh that can shake a tavern floor. Anyone that knew him would be swift to say that,



before all else, Clinch is a shrewd fellow. His various successes in life were no accident, but the results of careful planning and a keen mind. Unfortunately, Stayner's skill at the cooper's trade is also well known and the taking of the ship that he was aboard was not a coincidence...

**Master Brewer Clinch Stayner (NPC):** Expert 13th; Medium-sized; 74 hp; Init +0; Spd 30 ft; AC 12 (Buff Coat); Atk +9/+4 melee (1d6/x2 Belaying Pin); AL NG; SV Fort +8, Ref +4, Will +8; Str 11, Dex 10, Con 14, Int 16, Wis 10, Cha 13; Skills and Feats: Appraise +19, Bluff +15, Craft (Brewing) +22, Diplomacy +17, Gather Information +17, Knowledge (Nature) +17, Profession (Cooper) +19, Sense Motive +16, Spot +14, Swim +14. Endurance, Great Fortitude, Negotiator, Quick Draw, Skill Focus (Brewing), Skill Focus (Cooper).

At this point, serious drinkers (and let's face it, most sailors and the majority of pirates are serious drinkers) will be thinking "rescue time" as will anybody that is a friend of Stayner's.

However, more material types will probably be thinking "bet the Gilboan brewery will pay well for this one's recovery"--and they would be correct.

William Sandiford has put up a reward of 1500 Pounds for Stayner's safe return with no questions asked. Only members of the pirate community know Stayner's fate generally, as some of the crew of the *Forthright* were shooting their mouths off on one of their rare visits to Phillipsburg on St. Martin. If your players failed to hear the rumors of what became of Stayner, they should turn to their contacts for assistance. This could take as little or as much time as you want. Feel free to throw in some red herrings or a whole other adventure while you're at it.

Remember that there's more than a few in the Caribbean that will happily lie through their teeth if there's a bit o' silver in it for them. Eventually, your PCs should discover that the last time Stayner was seen alive, he was working as ship's cooper on the *Forthright*.



## ***Forthright and Painfully Dry***

People go to sea for a myriad of reasons, but Captain Ashton's story is fairly unique. As a boy, Ashton was used as a scapegoat by his family and regularly punished for crimes he didn't commit. After many years of abuse, he finally decided that if he was going to be punished, he might as well do the crime.

For many years, his was a life of debauchery and violent excess until one night, after some less than savory associates stabbed him, he managed to stumble his way into a church. A Puritan pastor looked after him and hid the wounded man when the authorities came looking for him.



Somewhere along the way, Ashton saw the light, well, some form of light at least. He committed himself to many aspects of the Puritan faith, but seeing as the only thing he knew how to do well was steal, he was fairly certain he'd never truly make the best Puritan while he stayed in the Colonies. He decided to take his "ministry" to the Caribbean, where it could do the most "good."

Now, many years down the line, Ashton is a rarity – a devout, sober, pirate captain, who frequently contributes large amounts of gold and silver to Puritan churches. His ship is crewed by faithful sea dogs and converts he's made along the way. In point of fact, the crew of the *Forthright* addresses him as "Minister," not

"Captain." Those who've been with him long enough to drop formalities call him Ash. Not one soul in all the Caribbean knows that his first name is actually Graeme.

Ashton heavily disapproves of rum, calling it the "devil's tonic" and he isn't very fond of Catholics, either. Correspondingly, he preys near exclusively on English and Spanish ships. He's long since made "arrangements" with the various Dutch governors and the *Forthright* generally berths at either Phillipsburg on St. Martin or Amsterdam on Curacao.

The *Forthright* is a standard schooner but unlike the majority of pirate vessels, she's exceedingly well painted and maintained. Her crew of sea dogs are almost entirely enlightened instead of the more typical superstitious.

Captain/Minister Ashton only suffers a -1 Sway penalty for a sober crew as opposed to the standard -4 penalty.

**Minister Graeme Ashton (NPC):** Rog4/SoF6th; CR 10; Medium; 49 hp; Init +1; Spd 30 ft; AC 15 (Breastplate + Dex); Atk +7/+2 melee (1d6/18-20/x2 cutlass), +9/+4 ranged (2d4/x3 pistol) +2d6 Sneak Attack; AL LN; SV Fort +3, Ref +7, Will +11; Str 10, Dex 12, Con 10, Int 14, Wis 17, Cha 15; Skills and Feats: Appraise +10, Bluff +8, Climb +6, Diplomacy +17, Escape Artist +7, Gather Information +9, Intimidation +13, Knowledge (Navigation) +8, Knowledge (Religion) +8, Knowledge (Sea Lore) +8, Move Silently +5, Profession (Sailor) +11, Search +8, Sense Motive +17, Spot +7, Swim +4. Crack Shot, False Attack, Iron Will, Negotiator, Weapon Focus (Pistol); Fortune: Enlightened; Fame: 13

Ashton is a skilled negotiator and very persuasive. He is also near impossible to lie to, which makes chicanery difficult. His acquiring of Stayner was no accident. Ashton needed a cooper and he found out that Stayner was going to be aboard a certain vessel. Thus, Ashton killed two birds with one stone: he now has a cooper and the sinful production of rum has been stymied.

### **The Forthright – Schooner**

*Medium-size Merchantman*

**Draft:** 1.5 fathoms

**Structure Points:** 18

**Hardness:** 5

**Maneuverability:** -2 (-2 Merchantman)

**Speed:** 120 ft./12 knots

**Turn Rate:** 4

**AC:** 8 (-2 Merchantman)

**Weapons Fore:** Demi-culverin x2

**Weapons Aft:** Demi-culverin x2

**Weapons Broadside:** Culverin x10

**Damage:** Demi-culverin 1d4, Culverin 2d4

**Special Qualities:** (none)

**Crew:** 50

**Passengers:** none (capacity for 20)

**Cargo:** 100 tons

### **The Crew of the Forthright**

**Class:** Sea Dog

**Level:** 4th

**Crew Size:** 60

**Crew Wounds:** 68

**Attacks:** Cutlass +4, Pistol +4

**Damage:** Cutlass 1d6, Pistol 2d4

**AC:** 10 (unarmored)

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

**Seamanship:** +7

**Feats:** Dodge, Mobility

**Crew Quality:** Average



### **Grabbing Clinch**

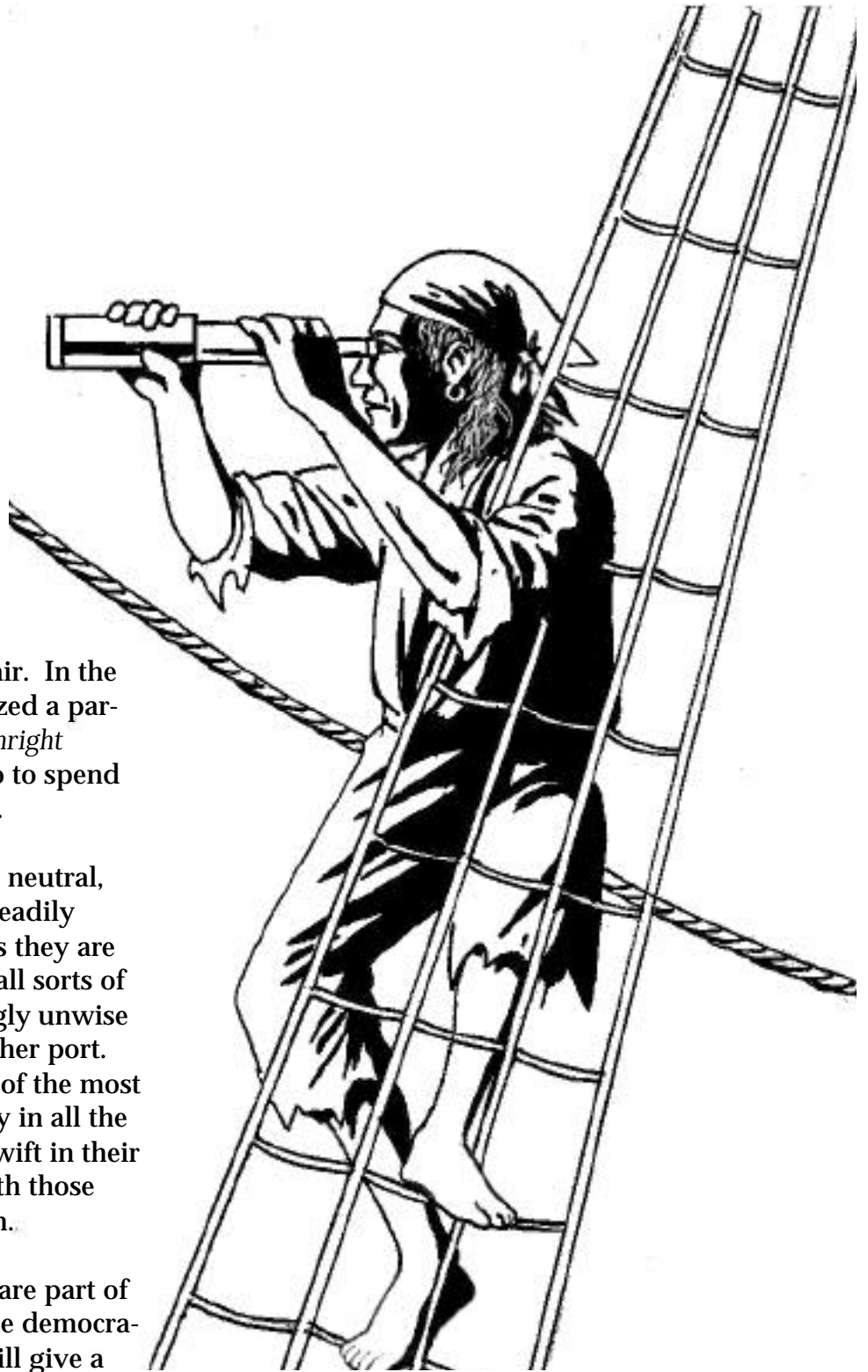
This could go down any number of ways, depending on your group and the "style" of confrontation they choose to employ. The first problem is, of course, actually locating the *Forthright*. Not easily done, as pirates seldom wish to be found and are often at pains to make certain that

they won't be. In this, however, Captain Ashton's ways have done him a disservice. There are plenty of sullen pirates who are none-to-fond of the self-righteous Ashton and correspondingly, there are many who will be quick to honestly tell all they know about his doings, which is not normally the case among those on the account.

The *Forthright* generally preys amidst the Leeward and Virgin Islands during the spring, summer and early fall, occasionally berthing at Phillipsburg on St. Martin when in need of supplies or repair. In the late fall, or when Ashton has seized a particularly valuable prize, the *Forthright* heads to Amsterdam on Curacao to spend the winter, or lay low for awhile.

If your PCs are on good, or even neutral, terms with the Dutch, they can readily approach either of these ports, as they are both centers of employment for all sorts of crews... However, it is exceedingly unwise to start any serious trouble in either port. Amsterdam, for example, is one of the most dangerous harbors for the unruly in all the Caribbean--they are extremely swift in their justice, and the jails are filled with those who have not learned that lesson.

Remember also that if your PCs are part of a pirate vessel, there will be some democracy involved and not everyone will give a damn about rescuing some brew master. Thus, depending on the season, your PCs are probably best advised to take a prize or two and wait for the *Forthright* to appear. Once they've located the *Forthright*, they have several paths available to them.



Your group may decide to negotiate for Stayner's return. While they may not realize this at first, negotiation with Ashton is doomed to a resounding failure and what's worse, will alert him that the PCs are interested in acquiring Stayner. If your PCs have done their legwork, though, they should already be aware of the fact that the "Minister" is known to be set in his ways and unlikely to deal fairly with them.



If your PCs have some stealthy types among them, they may wish to sneak aboard the *Forthright* and spring Stayner. This isn't a bad idea at all, but it'll be tricky. The normal prevalence to drinking and poor watches is not to be found on the *Forthright*. If an alarm is raised, they're likely to have a fierce fight on their hands, but remember that if the *Forthright* is in port, two-thirds of her crew will be in town, though Ashton himself seldom leaves the ship.

Your PCs may wish to wait till the *Forthright* leaves port, follow her and attack her in darkness. This isn't as easy as it may sound, as Ashton, like the majority of pirate captains, is wary of pirate hunters. Still, your PCs may love

a good nautical scrap. They'll certainly get one and little else. If Ashton has just come from a port, he won't have any prizes aboard, merely stores. In such a case, boarding, seizing Stayner and fleeing at all possible speed is probably the best course to take.

Clinch, for his part, is overjoyed at any rescue and the second he realizes that a boarding party means to take him away from his present post, he'll do his best to assist them. Obviously, he'll readily leap to their aid if old friends come calling. Stayner is chained in the hold if the *Forthright* is in port, as Minister Ashton is aware that Clinch hasn't "seen the light" yet. The chains are thick and will require more than a

pistol shot to remove. An Open Lock skill check with a DC 20 will get them off, as will the key, which happens to be hanging about Ashton's neck.

### ***The Aftermath***

Depending on where the PCs pull off Stayner's rescue, there may well be other repercussions. If they start a big fight in Amsterdam and fail to slip away very quickly, they will eventually be brought to heel by a number of Dutch warships and a whole lot of fort cannons. The good news here is that Governor Karl Van Randwijk is a decent sort, and more importantly, loves Gilboan rum. After hearing why the PCs are trying to steal Ashton's cooper (and they'll come off way better if they're friends of Stayner's and not just in it for the money) he'll let them go with Stayner, but he'll expect a favor in return. In fact, the Governor of



Curacao is frequently looking for a shipload of likely lads to help him out with various...eh, let's go with "activities" – all of which require a crew with flexible morals. If a fight went down at Phillipsburg, nobody is likely to stop them, but the Dutch will eventually get around to black-listing the PCs' ship.

Minister Ashton is not a forgiving soul and if he isn't dead by the end of the adventure, he will neither forgive nor forget the PCs. If they never actually encountered him, don't worry about it. The word will eventually get around the Caribbean of the saucy lads who spirited Stayner right out from under Ashton's nose and he'll know who to come calling on when the opportunity is right. Even if Ashton is dead, his loyal crew has a number of members just this side of fanatical and his death will be viewed as a martyrdom of sorts, which could also lead to a fair bit of trouble.

Stayner will be thrilled and greatly relieved by his rescue. Characters that weren't friends with

Stayner to begin with may well become so on the trip back to Barbadoes. If, for some reason, the PCs aren't normally welcome at the port, Stayner's vouching for them will let them dock for a brief time, at least. Master Sandiford pays the 1500 Pounds with a sea chest filled with crowns and shillings. Stayner asks the PCs to remain in port for a few days as he has a surprise for them. During that time, he'll create a set of twelve specially engraved barrels. Clinch will bring the rum-filled barrels to the docks and declare that, until such time as he ceases to be the Master Brewer of the Gilboan brewery, once a year in the spring, all of the barrels he made for the PCs will be filled to the brim with his very best brew...for free.

Clinch talks to a lot of people on a regular basis and makes an excellent Contact who is well on the way, if he isn't already, to being an Ally. The PCs will often to be able to find him at either Bridgetown or up at the distillery from then on, as he makes a point of never leaving Barbadoes again!



# Uncharted Shores

By T.S. Luikart

**W**elcome to the second column of Uncharted Shores: an ongoing collection of islands that never were, but might have been. Some of these islands existed in the world you know, but were twisted by legend or cartographical error. Others are merely figments of the minds of sailors, fodder for wishful thinking or terrible ghost stories.

The entries, roughly, follow this format:

- The Island or Place name and/or titles
- A Brief Description
- History
- Options
- Hooks
- Real world history, e.g. where the idea came from

In the case of our first isle, it isn't the island that should concern you - it's the inhabitants...



# *Alashur*

Alashur, an idyllic tropical paradise where parrots dwell and turtles flourish. Alashur, who boasts no treasure, nor offers any prize to a weary traveler save peace. Alashur, an isle that Caribs and Arawaks who've been wronged still seek in hopes of meeting the last remnants of an ancient people, the Makutsol – the Justice Bringers, the Bloody Avengers, the Shark People.

To understand what the legend of Alashur means, one has to understand the history of the Caribbean's natives over the last few centuries. The coming of the Europeans was as a plague to the natives of the Caribbean, though they were, in the main, greeted in peace when they first came to the "West Indies."

The largest distinct group of Caribbean natives, the Tainos, were discovered by Columbus on the island of Hispaniola, though he later found that they had contacts with tribes on Cuba and Porto Rico. The Tainos were a relatively advanced culture who relied on a mixture of agriculture, hunting and fishing to meet their needs. The Tainos dwelled in large villages headed by a local chief, who could be either a man or woman.

Chiefs handled a variety of functions, both religious and political. Each chief, in turn, reported to a sort of "district" chief who would be the head of both a larger village and the senior of the chiefs of multiple small villages.

The Tainos' way of life was fairly democratic and broken into two basic classes, nobles and commoners, as they had no slaves. The Tainos carved spiritual figures, called zumis, into their furniture, their homes and tattooed them on their bodies. The zumis represented their sacred spirits, gods and fortunes. The Tainos wore very little clothing, though they frequently painted themselves bright colors, favoring red. The Tainos would fight with their neighbors when

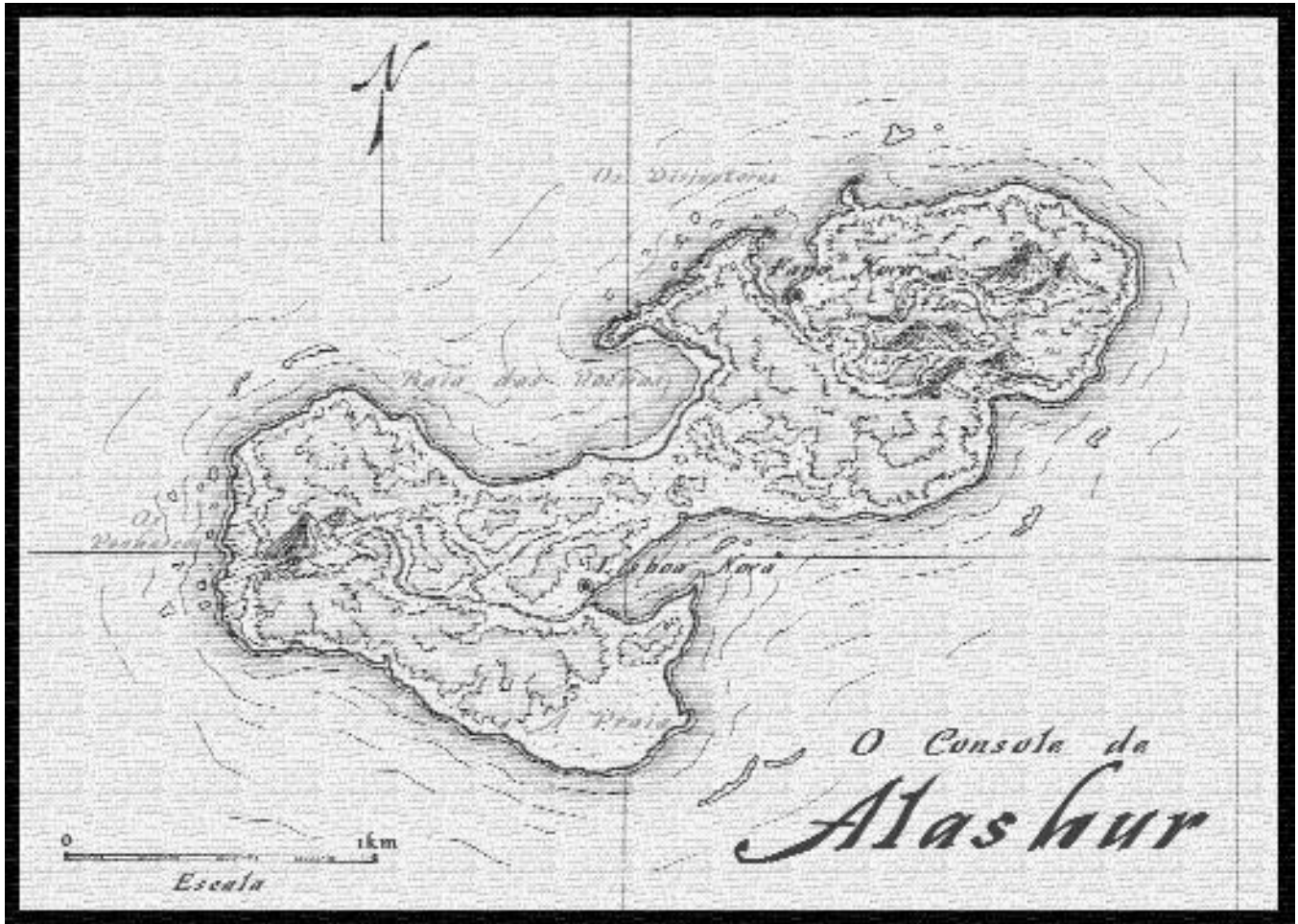
they had disputes, but one of the high points of honor in the Taino culture was taking the weapons and equipment of one's enemies while sparing their lives. Thus, even on the few occasions that the beat European aggressors, they often allowed them to live, a favor the Europeans never bothered to return.

The Tainos had several distinct groups among them with differing practices, but on the whole, they were very similar in outlook. The Island-Caribs, on the other hand, were known to be exceedingly aggressive and warlike. The Island-Caribs would regularly elect a chief for only one battle and, on the whole, were a far more disorganized people than the Tainos. They regularly raided Taino villages that were near their islands, to steal food, wives and legend has it, food. Their cannibalism, in the main, was ritualistic. They would, for example, cut off the limb of a powerful warrior and eat it after a mystic ceremony that would help the warriors' strength pass on to the imbiber. This was thought to honor the spirit of the dead.

The final group was a small tribe known as the Guanahatabey who lived on the far western end of Cuba. They dwelled in small roving bands, often sleeping out in the open or staying in caves. Their language was distinctly different from the rest of the Caribbean peoples and, since they were a rare and peaceful people, they were mostly left alone by the other tribes.

The natives of the Caribbean, even the most warlike, were not prepared for the advanced tactics and firepower that the Spaniards and later, other European powers, rained down on them. There were an estimated 8 million native Tainos living on Hispaniola when Columbus arrived in 1492. The Spaniard's systematic brutality and practice of killing thirteen or more individuals whenever any form of rebellion occurred, whether the condemned were involved or not, led to widespread decimation of the native population. By 1508, there were less than a hundred thousand natives left.

By 1535, there were none.



The greater bulk of the "natives" left on Hispaniola in the Golden Era of Piracy are, in fact, transplanted Arawak slaves from other islands, not Tainos.

In the *Skull & Bones* core book, we refer to both Arawaks and Caribs. The more violent Caribs that still exist in the Golden Era of Piracy are generally descendants of the Island-Caribs, though some tribes were originally Tainos who realized they had to become far more aggressive, or they were going to be slaughtered.

The language of many of the island tribes is, in fact, called Arawakan and it originally came from Trinidad. The natives of Trinidad were greatly influenced by South American tribes, so their tongue sounds distinctly similar to some of the languages that one might hear on the Spanish Main. Thus, "Arawaks" are generally Tainos that tried to remain peaceful or co-exist with the Europeans and still managed to survive.

So what does all this have to do with Alashur? What indeed...



There is a truly primeval legend amidst the Caribs, supposedly passed down from the ancient Siboney, which touches upon the Guanahatabey and their peaceful ways.

It seems that long, long ago, the Guanahatabey weren't so peaceful. In fact, they were some of the most dangerous of all the Caribbean tribes. They journeyed in long sleek vessels, cruising amidst the islands and slaughtering where and when they willed.

Eventually, a group of holy men and women from various tribes gathered together to see what could be done about them. They called upon the Taino zumi known as Yúcahu, the Lord of the Sea, to help them punish the

Guanahatabey's fearsome ancestors. Yúcahu demanded that a portion of the fiercest and most skilled warriors from each tribe be given unto him in sacrifice. The tribes of the Caribbean, believing that they had no choice, mournfully complied with the zumi's request.

For a few seasons, the Guanahatabey's ways continued, but slowly, their raids lessened. A Taino holy man named Lakassa claimed to have met his son, one of the men who'd been given over to Yúcahu, but said that he had been changed. His son told him that the Lord of the Sea had conjoined his soul with a shark's and charged him with hunting down those who indiscriminately slaughtered others. "You will be the justice of the depths," Yúcahu had whispered, "You will be the vengeance of the sea."

Other tales soon joined Lakassa's. Those who met members of the fierce new tribe, the Makutsol, said they stated that their home was called Alashur and that only those who truly deserved vengeance could find it. Whatever the cause, the Guanahatabey were decimated and swiftly gave up their warlike ways, becoming the peaceful tribe that still exists in the Golden Era of Piracy.

As to the Shark People of Alashur, they remain a grim legend. The Tainos were so decimated by the coming of the Europeans and the injustices wrought upon them so many, that no people, no matter how mystically powerful, could ever reap enough vengeance. Still, even in the midst of oppression, there are some atrocities that are so great that they stand out, some acts of cruelty that can be attributed to either a single or small group of individuals – and in the dark hours, such tyrants should look for the coming of the Makutsol and be wary, for the tales say that they can smell fear...

## **Makutsol**

*Medium Outsider (Djab)*

**Hit Dice:** 9d8+27 (68 hp)

**Initiative:** +7

**Speed:** 50 ft.

**Armor Class:** 20 (+7 Dex, +3 Natural), touch 17

**Base Attack/Grapple:** +9/+13

**Attack:** Masterwork bone knife +14 melee (1d6+5 / 19-20) or masterwork composite longbow +17 ranged (1d10+6 /x3)

**Full Attack:** Masterwork bone knife +14/+9 melee (1d6+5 / 19-20) or masterwork composite longbow +17/+12 ranged (1d10+6 /x3) or Rapid Shot +15/+15/+10 ranged (1d10+6 /x3)

**Space/Reach:** 5 ft /5 ft

**Special Attacks:** Frightful Presence

**Special Qualities:** Adroit, blindsight 60 ft, damage reduction 10/magic, scent

**Saves:** Fort +9, Ref +13, Will +10

**Abilities:** Str 18, Dex 24, Con 16, Int 12, Wis 18, Cha 10

**Skills:** Climb +10, Concentration +9, Escape Artist +13, Gather Information +12, Hide +15, Intimidate +8, Jump +12, Move Silently +17, Search +13, Sense Motive +10, Spot +14, Survival +16, Swim +14

**Feats:** Far Shot, Many Shot, Point Blank Shot, Rapid Shot, Track

**Environment:** The Caribbean

**Organization:** Solitary

**Challenge Rating:** 10

**Treasure:** None

**Alignment:** Neutral

**Advancement:** By character class

**Typical Sacrifice:** A quest to Alashur and a true story of great woe

These warriors typically appear as Caribbean tribesmen, covered in war paint. Their eyes, though, are the predatory doll's eyes of a shark and they move with inhuman grace and speed.

The Makutsol always travel alone, each one a fierce warrior capable of decimating a band of lesser warriors single handedly. They've been

too touched by the other world to rightly be considered human anymore. When they accept a mission of vengeance, they seem to have an unnatural ability to track down the correct target. They typically have gruff, straightforward personalities (when they deign to speak at all).

### Combat

The Makutsol have no problem stabbing their targets to death in a dark room if that is the most expedient way to be done with them. Every Makutsol warrior is unique. For example, the Makutsol above is a master archer and uses special shafts with shark teeth heads that are near unbreakable (1d10 +2). A different Makutsol may be a master of the long spear and would have a different set of Feats to reflect that. The Makutsol are chilling foes and they cut down their enemies with deadly grace.

**Adroit (Ex):** All of the Makutsol's movements in combat are near blindingly fast to humans. Makutsol never suffer attacks of opportunity and they cannot be caught flat-footed.

Alashur, like so many islands of legend, is not easily found. Varying tales place it somewhere in the Bahamas, the Virgin Islands or somewhere off the Yucatan peninsula.

The myths state that any being who has truly been wronged that sets out for Alashur will eventually find it, though in at least one of the tales, a hunter sought it for three years before finding it.

The Makutsol presumably live in a village not dissimilar to the villages of the Tainos, though no tale of their personal life, if they have such a thing, exists.



### Hooks

- A Hougan is asked by the Loa Agwé to search out the people of his "brother" Yúcahu and help them against a terrible darkness.
- Colonial magistrates ask the PCs to investigate a murder – an officer that was literally nailed to a high bulkhead by a series of arrows. Investigation reveals that the force of the arrows' impact hurled the man many yards and stuck him in the seemingly "impossible" position his body was found in. Further investigation into the murder's motive, however, reveals that he was involved in a great deal of nasty business...



The descriptions of the Caribbean tribes are all fairly accurate. Several tribes of Caribs exist to this day on the isle of Dominica and foreign visitors seem to feel compelled to frequently comment on how gentle they are. There are many Caribbean legends that blend men with beasts physically, spiritually or mentally.

# Frisland

Frisland-- a land acknowledged on every European map for over a century. Frisland--a small realm placed between Iceland and Scotland. Frisland--originally claimed for England by the legendary King Arthur himself. Frisland--a shattered, ice-locked wasteland that supposedly holds the great relic known as the Heart of Ice.

Frisland makes its first appearance in European circles in the tales of a 14th century Venetian nobleman named Nicolò Zeno.

In 1380, Zeno set out from the Straights of Gibraltar with the intent of exploring the western ocean. After 20 or more days sailing, a great tempest met up with his ship and drove it far off course. The gale was so bad that Zeno lost the ability to discern sea from sky and, at the last, his ship grounded on a strange island.

While Zeno and his men managed to save their ship and goods, it didn't help them when a ferocious group of islanders happened upon them. They were attacked and soon bound, their somewhat primitive attackers made them fearful of being eaten.

Just when Zeno's company was prepared to give themselves up for lost, to their great wonder, a host of knights came riding down upon their captors, scattering the savages before them. The leader of the knights named himself as Zichmni, the Duke of Sorani, and he was delighted to find that Zeno and his men could speak Latin.

Zichmni told the company that they'd landed upon the isle of Frisland, which had recently been wrested away from the King of Norway. Zichmni soon put Zeno, who was an able and skilled seaman, in charge of his navy and they set about conquering various islands throughout the region.

Zichmni's staging port on Frisland was named as Ocibar, a small, fortified town on the southern shore of the island. Zeno's descriptions suggest that the Duke of Sorani may have had mystic forces working for him, for his luck in battle was uncanny, his realm wide, and his sailors preternaturally skilled. Zeno's successes in battle soon caused Zichmni to knight him.

Eventually, Zeno sent for his brother, Antonio, to join him on the island. The brothers dwelled together for many years, till a plague brought on by the extreme colds of the north finally killed Nicolò. Antonio succeeded him in both title and skill. For another ten years, Antonio served Zichmni in his wars and trading, till eventually, he went back to Italy leaving Frisland behind.

With Antonio's departure, Frisland passes out of all forms of contact with the rest of Europe, though England laid claim to it. In 1578, Queen Elizabeth's famous court magus, Dr. John Dee, declared that King Arthur and King Maty had both conquered Frisland (or Gelinda) at one time or another, sighting as evidence, among other proofs, the "Kyng's Library" that existed amidst the monks of Andefore, a monastery to the North of Frisland that Zeno had spoken of.

In this, Dr. Dee was being somewhat canny, as his interest in Frisland was more than academic. Dee had come into possession of old records indicating that the King of Norway had kept a most valuable artifact on Frisland – the Heart of Ice. Since Dr. Dee was actively involved in the search for the Northwest Passage *{see next entry}* his interest in the artifact would've been keen, to say the least.

Whatever Dr. Dee's intentions were, they went up at the century's turn for, in 1600, witnesses throughout Scotland and the northern islands reported seeing a massive fireball plummet towards the ocean. A resounding explosion that nearly deafened fishermen hundreds of miles away echoed across the sea and then a harsh silence.





# FRISLAND

ANDIFORE

OCIBAR

*e spanglia*

*golfo Zorda*

*e s'altica Zorda*

*e c'itosa*

No mariner reported Frisland after that, though some spoke of a series of broken island peaks and by 1660 or so, Frisland passed entirely into legend.

The shattered isle of Frisland still exists amidst the vast expanse of the northern Atlantic sea, though it is greatly changed and near unrecognizable from the land it once was. A meteorite struck the western portion of the island in 1600, causing a series of shockwaves that awakened several dormant volcanoes and briefly buried the whole under water with a massive wave.

These assorted calamities were more than enough to topple what little civilization Frisland had, even if they weren't compounded with the breaking of the Old Norse shrine that held the Heart of Ice. The resulting leak of the Heart's powers caused waves of intense cold to wash over the island and slowly, what remained of the original Frisland drifted northward.

There is a small community of human fisher folk that have since come to live in the remains of the port of Ocibar. Most of them are either of Icelandic stock or expatriates seeking to escape the troubles of Europe. Their life is a simple one, mostly subsistence, though they occasionally trade woven items for pearls from the People of the Sea, which they then swap for trade goods from rare passing ships. They ask few questions of visitors, though anyone that stays for any length of time is expected to help out the community. There are certainly worse places to lay low.

The people of the Duke of Sorani survived, after a fashion, due to the power of their lord, Zichmni, by going under the waves. They now call themselves the People of the Sea and the grandson of Zichmni rules over their small, undersea, kingdom. Use the stats of the Onijegi from pg. 146 of the *Skull & Bones* rulebook. The People of the Sea have thicker skin than the Onijegi and those of the royal line have the ability to assume the shape of seals, making them one of the sources, at least, for the British Isles

legends of selkies.

The People of the Sea regularly deal with sharks and the occasionally rogue whale, but their greatest troubles stem from the shards of the meteorite that destroyed Frisland, which are scattered through the remains of the western portion of the isle. Odd mutations and horrible abominations have resulted from creatures that have been exposed to the meteorite's inner core for too long. GMs should feel free to unleash any manner of odd beastie in the waters surrounding Frisland.

Conversely, metal ore from the meteorite's outer shell has a number of useful properties (treat as adamant) and some chunks have unusual properties, e.g. they act like *ioun stones*. Most useful knowledge about the meteorite's aftereffects is held by an order of Sea Monks called the Brethren of the Icy Waves who now dwell in the submerged remnants of the monastery at Andefore. The Sea Monks actively trade with the People of the Sea and are friendly with visitors who manage to locate them. They have a number of rooms where humans can safely travel and all that could be salvaged of the "Kyng's Library" of Andefore has been moved to a vast undersea but air filled grotto {air filled so the books don't disintegrate}.

What, exactly, is the Heart of Ice? The few fortune hunters that have heard of it declare that it is a diamond the size of a man's fist, which burns with a cold light. The old tales, though, and those with a more mystical bent to their wisdom argue that the Heart of Ice is literally that, a fleshy organ that generates and controls the forces of winter: the still beating heart of the long dead Frost Giant Lord, Thrym. One saga relates that when the bulk of the King of Norway's men were forced to pull back from Frisland, they left a handful of fanatical volunteers to guard a single shrine...

If the Heart of Ice truly exists, whatever it is, it would still dwell in its cracked reliquary on one of the lower peaks of Frisland. Some particularly fearsome undead barbarians with either the Greater Zombi or Wraith template would likely guard the shrine. The Heart's powers, whatever the Heart actually is, are as follows:

At will – *Chill Metal*; 3x a day – *Sleet Storm*, *Control Weather* – but limited to either invoking or control winter related phenomena; 1x a day *Ice Storm*; 1x a week *Otiluke's Freezing Sphere*

Cold and frost seem to "listen" to the bearer of the Heart of Ice. Ice floes break up before them if they wish it, icebergs will move away from their ship's path if they so will. The bearer of the Heart of Ice is completely immune to cold. However, a bearer also slowly loses the ability to feel all emotion save bitterness. After a week's worth of proximity to the Heart, a bearer requires a DC 20 Will Save to motivate himself to do anything for another.

## Hooks

° The characters are introduced to a pearl the size of a man's fist and told that it came from the waters surrounding "Frisland"(wherever the Hell that is). A number of highborn ladies and queens will pay top doubloon for such...

° A terrible sea monster has been ravaging the sea-lanes of the Atlantic. While pirates may not care too much about it at first, the beast's predations are slowing merchant voyages and causing them to {gasp!} hire escorts. The Loa say that the beast came from Frisland, and that the People of the Sea who dwell there will be able to give advice on how to deal with the beast.

° An agent connected with a country to which the characters are allied approaches them with maps of Frisland and a tale of what the Northwest Passage will do for their country. All they have to do is get their hands on a certain artifact called "The Heart of Ice."



The widely reported tales of Nicolò Zeno are still argued about in academic circles to this day. One camp says that he made it all up – the other that they are equal parts truth and fabrication. Either way, Frisland did indeed exist on maps for close to two centuries before being discredited in the late 1660s. Dr. John Dee's claims, right down to the fact that Arthur took it first, are true. Well, at any rate, true as in, he did actually make them. He also tried to convince Queen Elizabeth to send an expedition to Frisland, but she wanted no part of it. Dee's interest in Frisland may very well have had to do with the search for the Northwest Passage...

# The Northwest Passage

Fortune beyond the dreams of avarice. Glory unending for the mariner who dares and finds the way, for there must be a way. The renowned Northwest Passage – the birth of dozens of voyages and the death of hundreds of men.

The "Northwest Passage" is the term used to refer to a near-legendary supposed sea route from the Atlantic directly to the Pacific north of the Americas. Ever since the Europeans first discovered Asia, explorers have sought a western way to the Orient for the lucrative trade that the Far East represented.

Five years after Columbus reported his discovery of the "West Indies" back to Spain, Henry VII of England sent explorer John Cabot (whose birth name was Giovanni Caboto, by the by) on the western quest for spices. At the time, the Portuguese already had the eastern sea routes around Africa locked up, and with Columbus' discovery, Spain was under the impression that they now had a lock on a sea route to the east as well. Cabot reckoned that if he sailed north and west, nearer the pole, that he would reach Asia quicker than by following Columbus' more southerly route.

Cabot's voyages did produce a small fortune in cod and lumber, but ultimately, all he found was Newfoundland. His wake was followed by a variety of explorers including Jacques Cartier and Gaspar Corte-Real who explored parts of what is now called Canada in search of a way.

Europe was soon forced to recognize that there was, in fact, a whole new continent on the far side of the Atlantic, not Asia. In 1519, Ferdinand Magellan set out on his long voyage into legend and by sheer determination managed to round Cape Horn and pass through the Straights that now bear his name.

Knowledge that the world was, indeed, a sphere, was slowly accepted in Europe and the knowledge that it was so once again fueled the search for the Northwest Passage.

Dr John Dee was active in the search, advising such men as John Davis and great English navigator Sir Martin Frobisher, who set out on multiple expeditions for it in 1576, 1577 and 1578. The prevailing belief of the day was that if one could break through the ice of the Arctic Circle, one would find warm weather and seas free of ice near the North Pole.

Henry Hudson eventually tried to sail directly to Cathay over the North Pole in 1607. He failed in his original quest, though he managed to explore a great deal of Canada, finding the vast bay that still bears his name. One of the last serious attempts to find the Passage was made by William Baffin in 1616, with Baffin's failure the quest was dropped, but not forgotten.

In the Golden Era of Piracy, explorers still seek the Northwest Passage for many reasons. Some wish to avoid the dangers of Caribbean and Atlantic piracy, while others may well wish to readily engage in piracy in different oceans.

In **Skull & Bones**, the belief that there is a Northwest Passage, however difficult it may be to find, may just make it so. Such a voyage would be dangerous in the extreme, for who knows what beasts may roam over the ice floes of the Far North? Only the most skilled and daring crew could accomplish navigating such a route. Many pirate crews would doubtless decide there would be no profit in such a venture. However, there are still a lot of campaign usable ideas inherit in the very possibility that there may be a way through the Northwest to the Pacific. Expeditions set out every so often and who knows what they may turn up?

Then again, if a crew had a way to ease their passage, say with either a very high level Mystic Navigator or a legendary relic such as the Heart of Ice, think of the advantage that it would give them on the high seas...





The descriptions of the search for the Northwest Passage are pretty much the straight truth. The quest continued for many centuries. After the end of the Napoleonic Wars in 1815, England spent decades trying to find a way. In 1845, Sir John Franklin set out on a fatal expedition that took the lives of 129 men. In 1854, Sir Robert McClure, who led one of forty search parties who sought news of Franklin's expedition, found the Northwest Passage. McClure's expedition was ice bound for nearly two years until finally rescued by Captain Henry Kellet's ship; unfortunately, Kellet's ship was then ice locked for another year. They finally returned home to England and justifiable fame in 1859.

It wasn't until 1906 that the Norwegian explorer, Roald Amundsen managed to sail a single ship safely through the Passage.

The Passage runs through the Arctic, 500 miles north of the circle, a mere 1,200 miles from the North Pole. The Northwest Passage is 900 miles from east to west, running from Baffin Island to the Beaufort Sea through a shifting mass of thousands of icebergs and then onto the Pacific past the Bering Strait.

A final, grim note – there are a number of prominent scientists that believe the Northwest Passage will open due to the ongoing melting of the polar ice packs within 10 years (by 2013). Even the most conservative estimates state that it will be open by 2080.



# Buried Treasure

An Inspirography for

## SKULL & BONES

by  
Gareth-Michael Skarka

**W**hen the folks at Adamant Entertainment set out to design *Skull & Bones*, each of us brought a long-standing love of the genre to the mix, and along with that came a list of inspirations: Books (fiction and non-fiction), films, comics and games. Collectively, these materials formed the “Inspirography” of the game--a combination bibliography, filmography and comicography--that we’d now like to take this opportunity to share with you.



Items marked with the Captain’s Skull are especially recommended as must-have source material for any *Skull & Bones* campaign.

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#### Films:



Let's get the big one out of the way first. Whereas we'd love to say that Disney's blockbuster **Pirates of the Caribbean: The Curse of the Black Pearl (2003)** was an inspiration for **Skull & Bones**, we'd be lying.

Despite the fact that it is arguably the perfect **Skull & Bones** film, the truth of the matter is that the design work on the game was begun before we'd heard that the movie was in production, and was completed long before its release. Of course, we're going to list it here anyway, because it's just too damned perfect.

That said, here is a list of the films that inspired us during the design phase:

**Against All Flags (1952):** Maureen O'Hara and Errol Flynn swashing buckles on the African coast.

**The Black Swan (1942):** Tyrone Power, Maureen O'Hara (noticing a trend here?) in a film based



on a Raphael Sabatini novel of the same name.

**The Buccaneer (1958):** Yul Brynner portrays Jean Lafitte at the Battle of New Orleans. A remake of a 1938 film.



**Captain Blood (1935):** Perhaps the best pirate film ever made--Errol Flynn (in his first swashbuckler) plays the title role in a film based on Sabatini's novel.

**The Crimson Pirate (1952):** Burt Lancaster in a spoof of 30s-40s pirate movies. Goofy but fun.



**Cutthroat Island (1995):** Geena Davis stars in an unfairly-maligned pirate epic. As you watch it, realize that it is an homage to the over-the-top swashbucklers of the 30s-40s. It plays a lot better that way.

**Frenchman's Creek (1944):** Joan Fontaine and Basil Rathbone in a film based on a Daphne du Maurier novel about a French pirate taking shelter in a cove on an English woman's property.



**Morgan the Pirate (1961):** The pirate equivalent of a Spaghetti Western, this Italian cheese-fest features muscleman Steve Reeves and is way cooler than it deserves to be.

**Muppet Treasure Island (1996):** Yes, Muppets. Pretty damned funny, though...and well worth it for the opening song, and Tim Curry as Long John.

**Nate & Hayes (1983):** Set outside of the Golden Age, this Tommy Lee Jones movie tells the story of South Pacific pirate Bully Hayes.

**Pirates (1986):** Walter Matthau stars in this Roman Polanski bomb, which features amazing costumes, sets and background. Too bad about the plot.

**Pirates of the Seven Seas (1965):** Another "spaghetti swashbuckler" with Steve Reeves, this time against asian pirates.



**The Princess Bride (1987):** Yeah, OK, it's not really about pirates, but it features "the Dread Pirate Roberts", some of the best fencing ever captured on film, and is a gamer favorite. Like we weren't going to list it?

**The Sea Hawk (1940):** Errol Flynn again, fighting the Spanish on behalf of Queen Elizabeth.

**Swashbuckler (1976):** Robert Shaw and James Earl Jones in a forgotten movie with some great swordfighting scenes.

**Treasure Island (1934):** The black-and-white version of Stevenson's tale, with Jackie Cooper as Jim.



**Treasure Island (1950):** The full-color Disney version which is viewed as the standard. Robert Newton plays Long John Silver and single-handedly creates the archetype.



**Treasure Island (1990):** A very young Christian Bale plays Jim, and Charlton Heston does a surprisingly good job as Long John in this tv-movie version made for TNT. Phenominal. Realistic sets, ships and costumes, great story, and music by the Chieftains.

**Yellowbeard (1983):** If you've ever wanted to see a Monty Python pirate movie, this is it, in all but name. "Stagger, stagger, crawl, crawl, roll..."

### Comics:

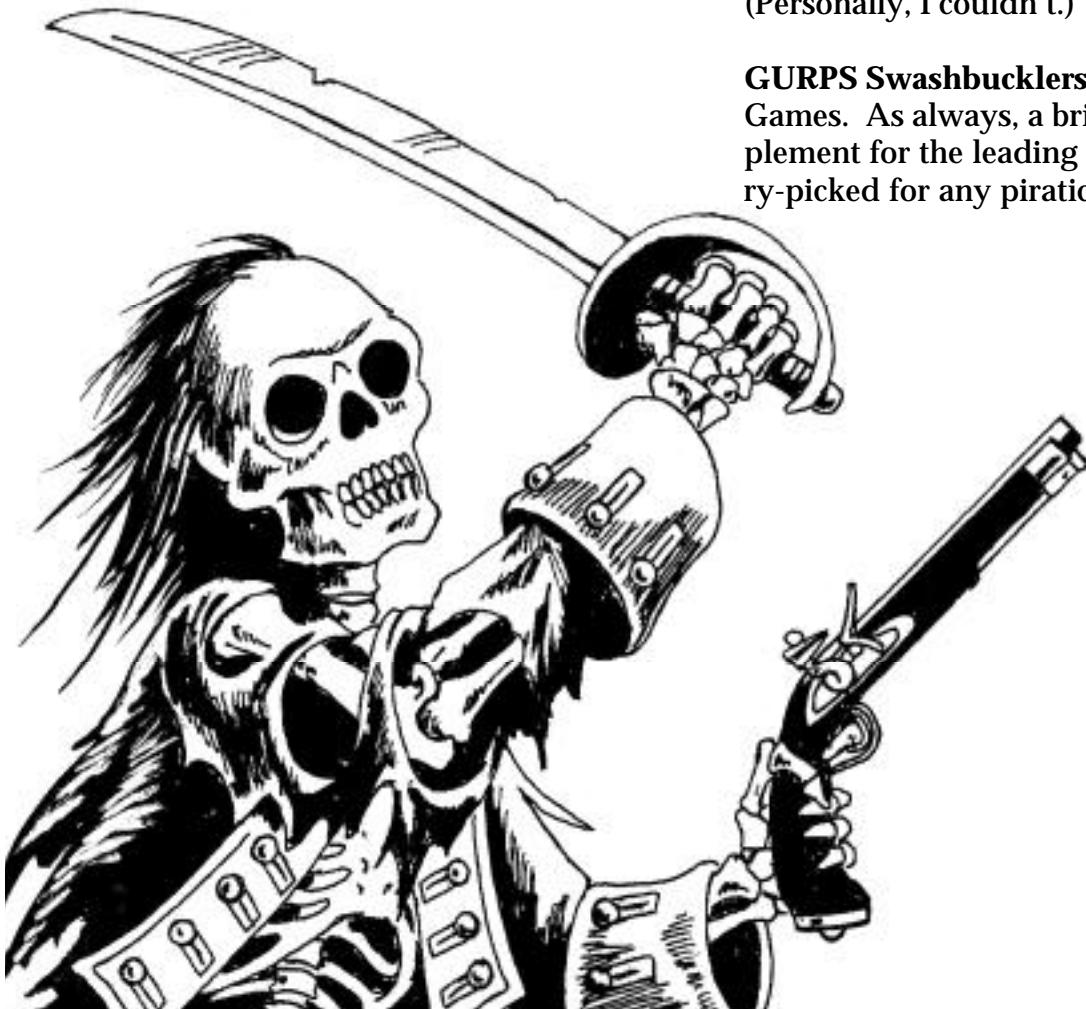
The heyday of pirate comics was in the 1950s, but, unfortunately, the overwhelming majority of these have never been re-printed, and original copies are rare, even for collectors who frequent comic conventions.

The most famous of these comics was **Piracy**, published by EC Comics. In the late 1980s, a hardcover volume collecting all of the issues of this brilliant series was released, and can still be found on Ebay and on the dusty back shelves of some Comic-book stores. More recently, trade

paperbacks have also been released, collecting 2-3 issues at a time (again, check eBay).

One of the *Skull & Bones* artists, Rich Becker (the man responsible for the “Legends of Piracy” sidebars, among many other great pieces in the main rulebook) published a pirate comic in the 1990s-2000s, called *Bloodthirsty Pirate Tales*, released under the Black Swan Comics label. It only lasted 8 issues, but is well worth tracking down if you can.

The pirate genre made it’s grand return to comics in the Summer of 2003, however, with the publication of CrossGen Comics’ *El Cazador*, which shattered first-issue sales records upon release. This is a straightforward piratical tale, with no fantasy elements, and given CrossGen’s policy of regularly collecting their titles into trade paperback versions, should be very easy for *Skull & Bones* fans to track down and pick up.



## Games:

Obviously, we’re partial to sticking with *Skull & Bones* for our piratical game needs, but even we find ourselves using other people’s products for ideas and source material for play. Here are some of the better sources for the picking:

**Run Out The Guns**, by Iron Crown Enterprises. A big boxed set, with some good information. Especially useful are the fold-out large maps of the Caribbean, and the “player-sized” unlabeled maps which make great props.

**7th Sea**, by Alderac Entertainment Group. More focused on land-based swashbucklery than piracy, and set in a fantasy amalgam of historical Europe which bugs some folks, but possessed of a wealth of source material, any of which can easily be scavenged for adventure ideas.

**Furry Pirates**, by Atlas Games. Contains some very detailed information about ships and sailing, if you can get past the whole “furry” thing. (Personally, I couldn’t.)

**GURPS Swashbucklers**, by Steve Jackson Games. As always, a brilliantly researched supplement for the leading generic RPG, easily cherry-picked for any piratical RPG campaign.

# All Hands...

NPCs for piratical campaigns

by T.S. Luikart

## The Brass Monkey

Medium Sized Human

**8th Level Monk / 4th Level Sea Dog**  
(12th level NPC)

**Hit Dice:** 8d8 + 4d10 + 12 (79 hp)

**Initiative:** +7

**Speed:** 50 ft

**Armor Class:** 16 (+3 Dex, +3 Monk Bonus), touch 16, flat-footed 13

**Base Attack/Grapple:** +10 / +12

**Attack:** Unarmed Strike +13 melee (1d10+2) or thrown dirk +13 ranged (1d4+2/19-20)

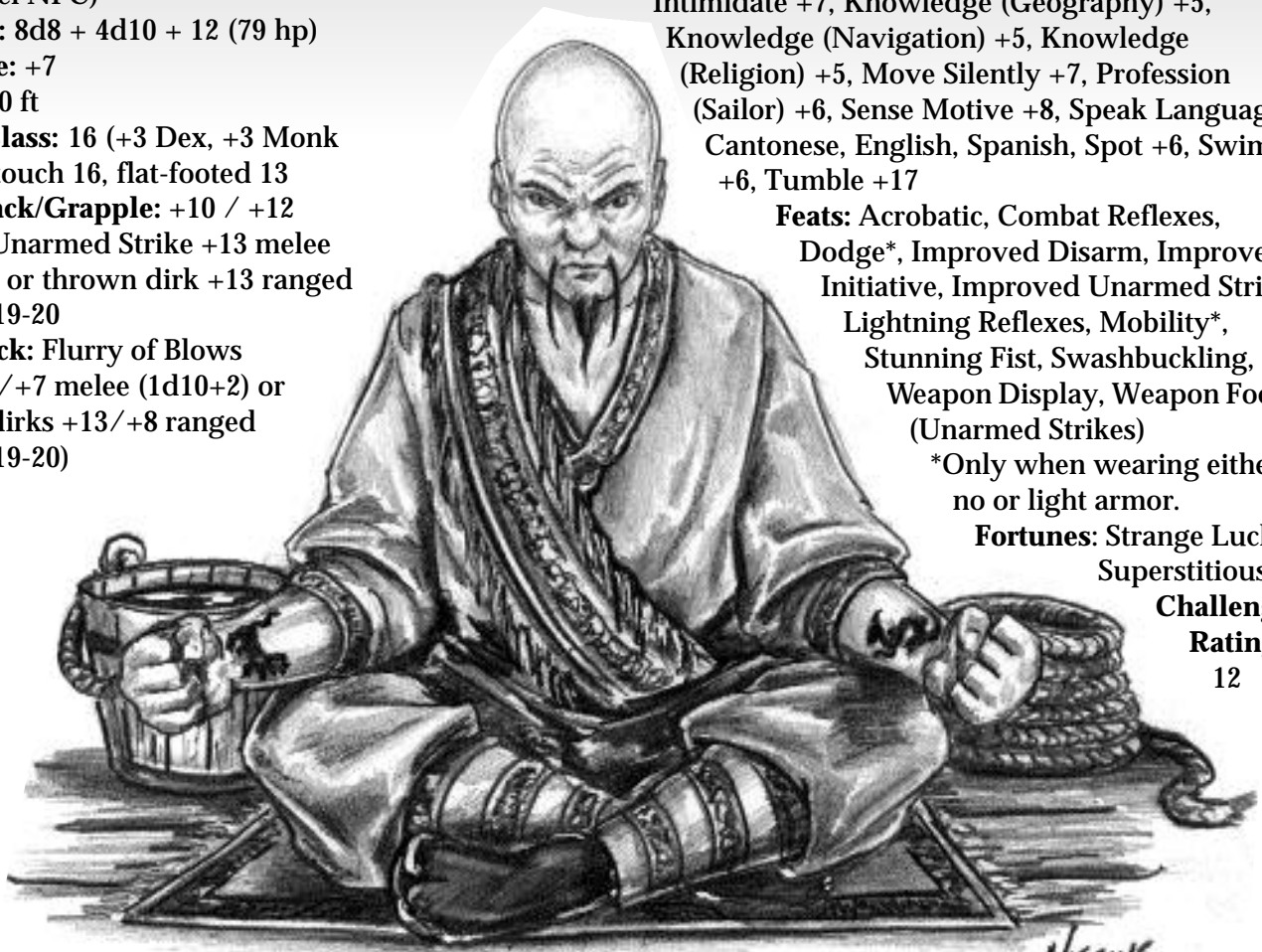
**Full Attack:** Flurry of Blows +12/+12/+7 melee (1d10+2) or thrown dirks +13/+8 ranged (1d4+2/19-20)

**Skills:** Balance +13, Climb +8, Concentration +5, Diplomacy +5, Escape Artist +7, Jump +12, Intimidate +7, Knowledge (Geography) +5, Knowledge (Navigation) +5, Knowledge (Religion) +5, Move Silently +7, Profession (Sailor) +6, Sense Motive +8, Speak Language: Cantonese, English, Spanish, Spot +6, Swim +6, Tumble +17

**Feats:** Acrobatic, Combat Reflexes, Dodge\*, Improved Disarm, Improved Initiative, Improved Unarmed Strike, Lightning Reflexes, Mobility\*, Stunning Fist, Swashbuckling, Weapon Display, Weapon Focus (Unarmed Strikes)

\*Only when wearing either no or light armor.

**Fortunes:** Strange Luck, Superstitious  
**Challenge Rating:**  
12



**Space /Reach:** 5 ft / 5 ft

**Special Attacks:** Flurry of Blows, Ki Strike (magic), Stunning Fist

**Special Qualities:** Close Quarters +1, Evasion, Fast Movement +20 ft, Favored Ship: English Ships, Purity of Body, Slow Fall 40 ft., Still Mind, Wholeness of Body (16 hp)

**Saves:** Fort +11, Ref +15, Will +9

**Abilities:** Str 14, Dex 17, Con 13, Int 12, Wis 14, Cha 13

**Treasure:** A bare fistful of silver

**Alignment:** Neutral

**Advancement:** By character class

Chung Huan (Loyal Badger) was abandoned as a baby on the steps of a Shaolin temple in the midst of a massive thunderstorm. The monks found only his swaddling clothes, though, as he was adopted by one of the last of the kuma, a kind of Chinese bear, and taken to a nearby mountain cave.

HIGGINS  
03

A wandering poet later caught the precocious toddler rummaging through his goods and promptly delivered him back to the temple. The varied oddities of his life haven't really stopped to this day.

Chung Huan became a monk, though he was never devout, and only vaguely suited to a life of contemplation. Fortune intervened when an ancient artifact known as the Jade Turtle was stolen by some daring thieves and supposedly passed its way into the hands of pirates.

Chung Huan swore to retrieve and return the Jade Turtle or die trying. His quest has led him across the globe, through improbable adventures and impossible escapes. He has made friends and enemies, loved and lost, fought and drank. Oh yes, he has drunk quite a bit, in fact. The one-time monk has found he has a taste for rum.

He knows he will never be a monk again – but his word was not given lightly and the quest continues. Now, Chung Huan roams the Caribbean, briefly hiring on with different crews as he searches for the lost relic. His price is always the same, shelter, food and the Jade Turtle when it is found – he asks for no other share. He will not join those with a villainous reputation and crews with a taste for blood will swiftly find that he is a dangerous enemy.

The first time a denizen of the Caribbean sees Chung Huan fight, he or she will, inevitably, be astounded. His fighting style is nothing short of spectacular. Chung Huan charges from high crow's nests, using ropes and sails to slow his fall as he hurtles towards the deck. He leaps and twirls over his foes, knocking men unconscious with grace and flawless skill.

It was the pirate captain, Morgan Red-Beard, who, upon watching Chung Huan fight his way through a mass of sailors, declared he was "bold as brass and quick as a monkey".

Fortunately for those who must face him, the Brass Monkey is a merciful fighter and would sooner knock a man unconscious than kill him. However, anybody that has ever heard of him

has doubtless heard the tale of how he ripped out Black Calhoun's heart with his bare hand. Chung Huan is a wiry Asian man, far smaller than stories make him out to be. His inner forearms are branded with a tiger and a dragon. He always has a big smile, even in the midst of a fight; after all, his life has been too strange and wonderful not to laugh at.

The Brass Monkey has a Fame Rating of 8.

### **Adventure Hooks:**

° Chung Huan approaches the player-characters while they are in port, and asks to hire on to their crew. As described, he will only ask for board, and the Jade Turtle if it is found. (The Gamemaster will have to decide who has the Jade Turtle, and what powers the artifact possesses, if any.)

° The PCs have come into possession of the Jade Turtle, and now have to contend with becoming the very object of the Brass Monkey's search. (The mixture can be sweetened by adding a third party who is looking for the artifact as well...perhaps a wealthy plantation owner who originally paid for the thieves to steal it from China in the first place....)



# Afflictions Revisited

A Rules Expansion by T.S. Luikart



The original Afflictions chart was quite a bit more long-winded than that which eventually appeared in the final cut of *Skull & Bones* and I always figured on going back to explain a few of the results in more depth. My original plan was altered, though, when I started thinking about the fact that not all pirates necessarily have "scars" you can see. The following gives players and GMs a bit more room to determine what, exactly, befalls a scurvy dog that had to look Ghede in the eye.

Choose either the Physical or Mental Afflictions chart – then roll a d20. Some GMs may wish to allow their players to roll and then choose which chart they take an Affliction from, e.g. a player rolls a 7, acquiring either a Hideous Scar or a Mild Phobia.

## Physical Afflictions

**3 or less) Impressive Scars** – Reminiscent of a dueling scar. +1 Charisma

**4-6) Battle Scars** – Neither particularly rakish, nor particularly ugly, this network of scars gives the {probably correct} impression that you've been in a lot of fights. +1 Fame

**7-8) Hideous Scar** – Nasty and memorable. Powder burns, deep wide cuts, and flayed skin all qualify. Diplomacy -2, Intimidate +2

**9) Disfiguring Scars** – Worse than merely hideous, this would be along the lines of a vital

piece of missing countenance, such as a nose, ear, lip or a large enough piece of face that some teeth become permanently visible. -2 Charisma

**10) Throat Wound** - Your voice is forever altered, though not in a pleasant way. +2 Circumstance bonus to any Skill check where having a disturbing voice could be useful, e.g. Intimidate, Bluff, Diplomacy with Other World entities, etc.

However, you can no longer shout -- maximum distance you can be heard is reduced to half of the normal. Captains with this affliction tend to hire a good loud Bosun, as quickly as possible.

**11-13) One Eyed** - You traded depth perception for an eye-patch. Be wary of attacks from your blind side. -2 to initiative checks, Dex-based skill checks, and Reflex Saves

**14-16) Lose a Hand** - Hopefully, you have since learned to parry better. -2 circumstance bonus to attacks with two-handed weapons and skill checks for Climb, Craft, Disable Device, Escape

Artist, Forgery, Open Lock, Sleight of Hand, and Use Rope checks. Two-Weapon Fighting will work with, say, a hook (treat as a Dagger).

**17-19) Lose a Leg** - Get ready for nicknames like "Stumpy". -10 ft. to movement. -2 on Climb, Swim, Jump, Ride, Tumble, Balance, and Move Silently checks. -2 to Reflex Saves.

**20) Lose an Arm** - Amputated at the shoulder, you can't even get a hook fitted to this stump. -4 circumstance bonus to attacks with two-handed weapons and skill checks for Climb, Craft, Disable Device, Escape Artist, Forgery, Open Lock, Sleight of Hand, and Use Rope checks.

**21-23) Weathered** - Your countenance has become a testament to your harsh life at sea and the battles you've barely survived. You lose a point of Dexterity, a point of Strength and two points of Constitution. Any further rolls of Weathered give you another -1 Dex, -1 Str and -2 Con. If your Constitution is permanently reduced to 2 or below by results of Weathered, you always count as Staggered for the rest of your life and it's probably time to retire.

**24+) Worn** - The years of battle, disease, bad food, and general abuse have taken their toll on you. You lose two points of Dexterity, two points of Strength and four points of



Constitution. If you are still alive, know that you have the strength for one last adventure, before you must retire.

## **Mental Afflictions**

**3 or less) *Strange Quirk*** – You develop an odd trait, such as a peculiar jig to your walk or an unusual way of speaking, like ending every sentence with a whistle. +1 Fame

**4-6) *Compulsive Disorder*** – You acquire a mannerism that you continually repeat whenever you're not doing something else, and sometimes even when you are, such as persistently sharpening your cutlass or regularly shouting out "I am not a dog!" Intimidate +2, Hide and Move Silently -2

**7-8) *Mild Phobia*** – You develop a slight irrational fear of either an object or a particular situation. You are totally aware that your fear is unusual and maybe even ridiculous, but that doesn't make it any less powerful. When confronted by the thing or condition that you fear in a dramatic situation, make a Will Save against a DC 10. Success means you get a +1 Circumstance Bonus to all attack rolls, while failure means you become shaken until you leave the presence of whatever is causing your fear. See Phobia List for examples.

**9) *Depression*** – Your experiences have left you world weary and somewhat bereft of hope. You tend to see the gloomy side of every situation and aren't particularly fun to be around. -2 Charisma

**10) *Kleptomania*** – A mania is a condition in which one is inordinately fond of an object or situation, in this particular case, the taking of small objects that have no particular value or use to you. To people of the era, this is regarded merely as petty opportunistic theft that should be accordingly punished. Amidst pirates, however, this is a very dangerous, potentially lethal, condition to have. Whenever you can steal a

small object, without being noticed, make a Will Save against a DC 15. Failure means you attempt to pocket the item. On the upside, Sleight of Hand becomes a class skill for you. On the downside, you must do your best to keep the condition a secret from every one around you and if you are ever caught, you'll deny it till your dying breath (which may come shortly if you're found with plunder that wasn't part of your share of a haul, eh?)

**11-13) *Mild Delusions*** – You believe things that simply aren't true or perceive things that aren't there. Whenever you enter a dramatic situation, make a Will Save against a DC 10 or your delusions start kicking in. Examples: Quixotism – You believe that you're a heroic, knightly individual and that your actions advance the romantic ideals of love and honor, e.g. you're robbing people so you can restore your lady to her unlawfully lost high station. Illusions – Everywhere you look, every long thin object appears to be a poisonous snake and you will react accordingly, e.g. ropes, poles, belying pins, etc.

**14-16) *Phobia*** – You develop a strong irrational fear of either an object or a particular situation. You are totally aware that not everyone shares your fear, but that doesn't make them right. When confronted by the thing or condition that you fear in a dramatic situation, make a Will Save against a DC 15. Success means that you are merely shaken, while failure means that you are frightened until you leave the presence of whatever is causing your fear. See Phobia List for examples.

**17-19) *Paranoia*** – They're out to get you, you're sure of it. You aren't quite certain who they are, so you're watching always to catch them at it. You trust no one. Some would argue that a bit of "healthy paranoia" is reasonable for those engaged in acts of piracy, but with this affliction you may even suspect that your ship may be listening in on your conversations with hostile intent... Whenever any stimulus occurs that could set off your paranoia, make a Will Save against a DC 15. Success means that you can act

normally, but you have to do your best to "keep an eye" on whatever it was that set you off. Failure means that you are shaken and you loudly, publicly accuse your "enemies" of their "deceptions."

**20) Megalomania** – The time has at last come for you to embrace your great destiny. The weak-willed fools that once held you back must either be killed or showed to a place at your feet where they can be your lackeys. Only you have the foresight and the will to govern the Caribbean {or wherever} all others are merely pawns, tools or obstacles, to be used and discarded at your whims. You get a +2 bonus to Will Saves and a +2 bonus to Intelligence. You automatically fail at all Sway checks. In other words, you can no longer tolerate orders of any kind, from anybody. You will immediately challenge others to a duel if they dispute you in any meaningful way. You must make a DC 20 Will Save when-



ever anyone or anything defeats you. Success means you become obsessed, to the exclusion of all else, until you succeed in destroying or subverting whatever you lost to. Failure means you are fatigued for 1 week for each point you missed your Will Save by.

**21-23) Major Phobia** – You develop a completely rational fear of some horrible object or situation. Anyone that doesn't share your fear is, potentially, a lunatic or inhumanly brave. You actively go out of your way to avoid any situation that you reasonable suspect may expose you to the source of your phobia. Whenever confronted by the thing or condition that you fear, make a Will Save against a DC 15. Success means that you are only frightened, while failure means that you are panicked until you leave the presence of whatever is causing your fear. See Phobia List for examples.

**24+) Powerful Delusions** – You believe things that are blatantly untrue and perceive many things that aren't there. Your delusions are eternally present, in one form or another. You have to make a Will Save with a DC 25 to even catch a glimpse of the "real" world or remain lucid for a brief time. Failure means you're lost in your delusions and unreachable outside of their context for a few hours. Examples: You're an ancient dragon and you cannot understand why your "fiery breath" wasn't more effective in stopping those horde robbers. You're King Arthur and everyone around you is either a Knight of Camelot or a member of your court.

**Modifiers:**

Each life previously lost: +2

The Devil's Own Luck Fortune: -2

Strange Luck Fortune: The rolled result may be adjusted by one slot up or down at PC's discretion



## Typical Phobias in Skull & Bones

Gamemasters should usually pick their PC's phobias. The ones with asterisks are particularly nasty and should probably be reserved for Major Phobias, which are likely to lead to a character's retirement:

*Astraphobia*: Fear of Lightning – You don't like storms at all.

*Astrophobia*: Fear of Stars – You stay below decks a lot.

\**Ballistophobia*: Fear of Bullets – No pistols for you. Hell-- active avoidance of combat for you.

*Botanophobia*: Fear of Plants – You have nightmares about jungles.

*Blennophobia*: Fear of Slime – Such as what may be found in the bilge.

*Claustrophobia*: Fear of Tight Spaces – You stay above decks a lot.

*Demonophobia*: Fear of Djab – About as rational as a phobia gets in **Skull & Bones**.

*Entomophobia*: Fear of Insects – Avoid swamps.

\**Hematophobia*: Fear of Blood – Ah-heh. You're boned.

*Icthyophobia*: Fear of Fish – You may be one of the pirate community's first vegetarians.

*Necrophobia*: Fear of Corpses – You actively avoid bokor.

\**Nyctophobia*: Fear of Darkness – Invest in a whole bunch of torches.

*Ophidiophobia*: Fear of Snakes – Hope you never see an anaconda.



*Pyrophobia*: Fear of Fire – You keep a water bucket handy. Just in case.

*Spectrophobia*: Fear of Ghosts – Voodoo is not a good religion for you.

\**Thalassophobia*: Fear of the Sea – So much for life On the Account.

Note: Roy Scheider's character in *Jaws* had Mild *Thalassophobia*, yet he still managed to take on a Dire Shark, so there may be some hope for you...

*Tomophobia*: Fear of Surgery – In this era, this one is almost rational, too.

*Zoophobia*: Fear of Animals – You avoid the ship's mascot like it had pox.

# Ahoy!

## Encounter Tables for **SKULL & BONES**

by Gareth-Michael Skarka

**W**hat follows are the various tables used to determine encounters in *Skull & Bones*, from sea to ports.

These tables are just examples--the Game Master should modify them to suit the needs of an individual campaign, or feel free to develop original tables of their own, or to substitute encounter tables from the *PH* or other products.

### Sea Encounters

Each day that the Player Characters (PCs) are at sea, three encounter checks should be made. These checks represent the Forenoon Watch (dawn until midday), the Afternoon Watch (mid-day until nightfall), and the Night Watch (night-fall until dawn).

An encounter check is a D20 roll, modified by circumstances as shown on the table at right (Apply a single modifier from each section of the table, as applicable--the results are not cumulative, unless otherwise noted). A result of 20 or higher indicates that an encounter occurs. If an encounter is indicated, roll on the Sea Encounter

table. Descriptions and definitions of the entries on the Sea Encounter table follow the tables themselves.

### SEA ENCOUNTER CHECK MODIFIERS

<u>Circumstance</u>	<u>Modifier</u>
<b>Location</b>	
On Shipping Lane	+1
Off Shipping Lane	-2
Within 20 miles of landfall	+2
Within 20 miles of a port	+3
<b>Circumstance (can be cumulative)</b>	
Each previous encounter that day	-2
Bad Weather	-2
Spring or Winter	+2
Summer or Fall (storm season)	-1
Characters actively searching	+2
<b>Characters' Party Level</b>	
1-5	+0
6-10	+1
11-15	+2
16+	+3

### SEA ENCOUNTER TABLE

<u>D20</u>	<u>Encounter</u>	<u>D20</u>	<u>Encounter</u>
1	One Tiny or Small Vessel	11	Two Pirates or Privateers
2	One Medium Merchantman	12	Three Pirates or Privateers
3	One Large Merchantman	13	One Medium Warship
4	One Huge Merchantman	14	One Warship, Large or Huge
5	Two Merchantmen	15	One Gargantuan Warship
6	Two Merchantmen with One Escort	16	One Colossal Warship
7	Three Merchantmen	17	Two Warships
8	Three Merchantmen with One Escort	18	Squadron of Warships
9	Three Merchantmen with Two Escorts	19	Flotilla of Warships
10	One Pirate or Privateer	20	Special Event (roll on Special Event Table)

## SPECIAL EVENT TABLE

### D10

### Encounter

1	Land Ho! (Uncharted Island)
2	Sea Creature
3	Shipwreck
4	Ghost Ship
5	Lost!
6	Enemy
7	Castaway
8	Legend of Piracy
9	Djab/Loa
10	Spanish Treasure Fleet

### Encounter Descriptions:

**One Tiny or Small Vessel:** A single rowboat, ship's boat, fishing boat or barge. Roll a D8 for nationality: 1-2 Dutch, 3-4 Spanish, 5-6 English, 7-8 French.

**One Medium Merchantman:** A single merchant vessel (50/50 chance of Sloop or Schooner). Roll a D8 for nationality: 1-2 Dutch, 3-4 Spanish, 5-6 English, 7-8 French. There is a 40% chance of a full cargo hold--otherwise roll D% to determine how much of the hold is full. Use Chapter XII: Plunder, to determine contents.

**One Large Merchantman:** A single merchant vessel (60/40 chance of Brigantine or Pinnace). Roll a D8 for nationality: 1-2 Dutch, 3-4 Spanish, 5-6 English, 7-8 French. There is a 40% chance of a full cargo hold--otherwise roll D% to determine how much of the hold is full. Use

Remember that in the case of all encounters at sea, the rules for sighting, found on page 113 of the *Skull & Bones* rulebook should be used, to determine how much time the PCs have to react to the coming encounter (or whether the subject of the encounter spots them first, and reacts accordingly).



Chapter XII: Plunder, to determine contents.

**One Huge Merchantman:** A single West Indiaman merchant vessel. Roll a D8 for nationality: 1-2 Dutch, 3-4 Spanish, 5-6 English, 7-8 French. There is a 40% chance of a full cargo hold--otherwise roll D% to determine how much of the hold is full. Use Chapter XII: Plunder, to determine contents.

**Two Merchantmen:** A pair of unescorted merchant vessels. Roll a D6: 1- Two medium ships, 2- Two large ships, 3- One large and one medium, 4- One medium and one huge, 5- One large and one huge, 6-Two huge ships. Roll a D8 for nationality (not separately): 1-2 Dutch, 3-4 Spanish, 5-6 English, 7-8 French. There is a 40% chance of a full cargo hold--otherwise roll D% to determine how much of the hold is full. Use Chapter XII: Plunder, to determine contents.

**Two Merchantmen with One Escort:** As above, except with the addition of a single escort vessel of the same nationality (50/50 chance of Corvette or Frigate).

**Three Merchantmen:** Three unescorted merchant vessels. Roll D6 for each ship's size: 1-3 Medium, 4-5 Large, 6 Huge. Roll a D8 for nationality (not separately): 1-2 Dutch, 3-4 Spanish, 5-6 English, 7-8 French. There is a 40% chance of a full cargo hold--otherwise roll D% to determine how much of the hold is full. Use Chapter XII: Plunder, to determine contents.

**Three Merchantmen with One Escort:** As above, except with the addition of a single escort vessel of the same nationality (40% Corvette, 40% Frigate, 20% Fourth Rate).

**Three Merchantmen with Two Escorts:** As above, except with an additional escort vessel (Only one Fourth Rate is possible in any escort pair, however).

**One Pirate or Privateer:** A single vessel, either pirate, or operating under a Letter of Marque (Roll a D8 for nationality of the letter: 1-2 Dutch, 3-4 Spanish, 5-6 English, 7-8 French). Roll D6 for the ship's size: 1-3 Medium, 4-5 Large, 6 Huge.

There is a 10% chance that the vessel will be encountered in the act of attacking another vessel (roll on the Encounter Table separately to determine the specifics).

**Two Pirates or Privateers:** Two vessels, as above. There is a 10% chance that the vessel will be encountered in the act of attacking another vessel (roll on the Encounter Table separately to determine the specifics). There is an additional 10% chance that the two vessels will be engaged in combat with each other, rather than allied.

**Three Pirates or Privateers:** As above, with the addition of a third vessel (who, in the case of combat among the pirates, is allied with one of the other ships).

**One Medium Warship:** A single warship (50/50 chance of Corvette or Frigate). Roll a D8 for nationality: 1-2 Dutch, 3-4 Spanish, 5-6 English, 7-8 French. There is a 40% chance of a full cargo hold--otherwise roll D% to determine how much of the hold is full. Use Chapter XII: Plunder, to determine contents, remembering, however, that military vessels usually carry supplies, not treasure.

**One Warship, Large or Huge:** A single warship (50/50 chance of Fourth Rate or Third Rate). Roll a D8 for nationality: 1-2 Dutch, 3-4 Spanish, 5-6 English, 7-8 French. There is a 40% chance of a full cargo hold--otherwise roll D% to determine how much of the hold is full. Use Chapter XII: Plunder, to determine contents, remembering, however, that military vessels usually carry supplies, not treasure.

**One Gargantuan Warship:** A single Second Rate warship. Roll a D8 for nationality: 1-2 Dutch, 3-4 Spanish, 5-6 English, 7-8 French. There is a 40% chance of a full cargo hold--otherwise roll D% to determine how much of the hold is full. Use Chapter XII: Plunder, to determine contents, remembering, however, that military vessels usually carry supplies, not treasure.

**One Colossal Warship:** A single First Rate warship. Roll a D8 for nationality: 1-2 Dutch, 3-4 Spanish, 5-6 English, 7-8 French. There is a 40% chance of a full cargo hold--otherwise roll D% to

determine how much of the hold is full. Use Chapter XII: Plunder, to determine contents, remembering, however, that military vessels usually carry supplies, not treasure.

**Two Warships:** A pair of naval vessels--roll d6 for each ship type (1-3 Medium, 4 -Large, 5 - Huge, 6 - Gargantuan (First Rate ships are not found in these groups)).Roll a D8 for nationality (not seperately): 1-2 Dutch, 3-4 Spanish, 5-6

English, 7-8 French. There is a 40% chance of a full cargo hold--otherwise roll D% to determine how much of the hold is full. Use Chapter XII: Plunder, to determine contents, remembering, however, that military vessels usually carry supplies, not treasure.

**Squadron of Warships:** Three Corvettes, with a 50% of being in the company of a commanding Frigate. Roll a D8 for nationality (not seperately):



1-2 Dutch, 3-4 Spanish, 5-6 English, 7-8 French. There is a 40% chance of a full cargo hold--otherwise roll D% to determine how much of the hold is full. Use Chapter XII: Plunder, to determine contents, remembering, however, that military vessels usually carry supplies, not treasure.

**Flotilla of Warships:** A small fleet of 1d4+2 naval vessel. Roll randomly for vessel sizes: (1d6) 1-2 Medium, 3 - Large, 4- Huge, 5- Gargantuan, 6- Colossal. (No more than 1 First- or Second-rate is encountered in Flotilla, re-roll duplicate results) Roll a D8 for nationality (not separately): 1-2 Dutch, 3-4 Spanish, 5-6 English, 7-8 French. There is a 40% chance of a full cargo hold--otherwise roll D% to determine how much of the hold is full. Use Chapter XII: Plunder, to determine contents, remembering, however, that military vessels usually carry supplies, not treasure.

**Land Ho! (Uncharted Island):** Pretty much exactly what it says--the ship happens across a small island that is not on any charts. Whether this island is inhabited or contains any adventure hooks is up to the GM.

**Sea Creature:** The ship encounters a sea creature (Jenny Hannivers, Onijegi, Sea Monks, or Siren from the *Skull & Bones* rulebook, or any aquatic creature from the *MM* or other publications). The GM is encouraged to create their own "creature encounter table", tailored to their campaign.

**Shipwreck:** The ship encounters the sinking remains of another vessel. There is a 30% of survivors in the water (5d10-5 individuals), and approximately 20% of the cargo is salvageable. The Gamemaster should determine the identity of the ship, it's type, it's cargo, and what destroyed it.

**Ghost Ship:** The ship encounters a vessel using the "Ghost" template (see the rules for adding templates to vessels, in issue 1 of *Buccaneers & Bokor*). Roll randomly for vessel size: (1d6) 1-2 Medium, 3 - Large, 4- Huge, 5- Gargantuan, 6- Colossal.

**Lost!** The ship becomes lost. The Gamemaster should place the true position of the ship secretly (with a supernatural reason, like the Bermuda Triangle, it could even be possible to be thousands of miles away). Determining the ship's true location requires a DC 30 *Knowledge (Navigation)* check.

**Enemy:** One of the player-characters enemies has located the ship. Results will vary, depending on the enemy in question.

**Castaway:** The ship encounters a single castaway, either floating on a piece of flotsam, or marooned on a sandbar. The identity of this individual, and the reasons for their condition, are up to the GM, but will almost certainly serve as an adventure hook.

**Legend of Piracy:** The ship encounters one of the Legends of Piracy, as described in the boxed texts in the *Skull & Bones* rulebook. The GM should make sure to pick an individual who is operating at the time of the campaign...although, encountering someone out of their usual time can be a great adventure hook in and of itself!

**Djab:** The ship is paid a visit by one of the Djab (usually an Ailusairad or Badessy the Wind, but any of the Djab could conceivably make an appearance). There is a 25% chance, however, that the ship is instead visited by one of the Loa (again, it could be any, but Agwe, Damballah, and Simbi are not out of the question, due to their connection with the sea). What the Djab or Loa want with the ship is to be decided.

**Spanish Treasure Fleet:** The dream of every pirate: the Spanish treasure fleet, carrying gold and silver from the jungles of South America, back to Spain. To take a vessel of the Treasure Fleet is enough for every man aboard to retire wealthy...but taking a vessel is no easy task. See the description of the Spanish Treasure Fleets on page 137-138 of *Skull & Bones*.



## Port Encounters

Each day that the Player Characters (PCs) are in port, a single encounter check should be made. An encounter check is a D20 roll, modified by circumstances as shown on the table below (Apply a single modifier from each section of the table, as applicable--the results are not cumulative, unless otherwise noted). A result of 20 or higher indicates that an encounter occurs. If an encounter is indicated, roll on the Port Encounter table. Descriptions and definitions of the entries on the Port Encounter table follow the tables themselves.

### PORT ENCOUNTER CHECK MODIFIERS

<u>Circumstance</u>	<u>Modifier</u>
<b>Location</b>	
Small port (pop.- 1000)	+1
Medium port (pop -20K)	+2
Major port (pop 20K+)	+3
<b>Character's Status (cumulative)</b>	
Characters are laying low	-2
Characters are looking for action	+2
Characters average Fame 1-5	-2
Characters average Fame: 6-10	0
Characters average Fame: 11-15	+2
Characters average Fame: 16-20	+3
Characters average Fame: 21+	+4
<b>Characters' Party Level</b>	
1-5	+0
6-10	+1
11-15	+2
16+	+3

### PORT ENCOUNTER TABLE

<u>D20</u>	<u>Encounter</u>
1	Muggers
2	Pickpockets
3	Harrassment
4	Spectacle
5	Found item
6	Hiring
7	Port-specific encounter (see below)
8	Brawl
9	Prominent personage
10	Port-specific encounter (see below)
11	Enemy
12	Corpse
13	Duel
14	Mistaken identity
15	Monster
16	Fire (building, ship, etc.)
17	Port-specific encounter (see below)
18	Escaped prisoner
19	Contact
20	Ally

### PORT-SPECIFIC ENCOUNTERS

Roll below for encounters specific to the type of port the PCs are in: Pirate, Neutral or Hostile.

A **Pirate Port** is one which welcomes pirates or is otherwise lawless.

A **Neutral Port** is one in which the PC does not hold a Letter or Marque and where the PC has not attacked vessels from the nation controlling the port.

A **Hostile Port** is one where the PC has attacked vessels from the nation controlling the port.

### PORT -SPECIFIC ENCOUNTERS

<u>D6</u>	<u>Pirate</u>	<u>Neutral</u>	<u>Hostile</u>
1	Murder	Press Gang	Recognized
2	Hijack	Marque Offer	Arrest!
3	Seller's Market	Buyer's Market	Execution
4	Buyer's Market	Seller's Market	Secret Meeting
5	Parley	Recognized	Navy
6	Adventure Hook	Adventure Hook	Adventure Hook

**Muggers:** Random thugs try to rob the PCs. There's roughly one mugger for every PC, and each has a CR of 4 less than the party level.

**Pickpockets:** One or more rogues try to steal from the PCs. A pickpocket has rogue levels equal to 2 less than the party level, and a Sleight of Hand modifier equal to 4 more than the party level.

**Harrassment:** The PCs encounter a group in authority (guards if Neutral or Hostile, "Citizen's Watch" if Pirate), who wish to throw their weight around. The opponents outnumber the PCs 2-to-1, and have CRs of 1-3.

**Spectacle:** The characters witness an unusual form of entertainment: a shantyman, a puppet show, a carnival, or even a hanging.

**Found Item:** The characters find an item of some value: treasure, weapon, maps, etc. They can make use of it, or try to find the item's rightful owner (suuuuurrrre they will...).

**Hiring:** Depending upon the character's situation, this is either a ship which is looking to hire on new crew members, or new crew members looking to hire on to the PCs ship.

**Brawl:** The characters become involved in a fight (usually at a tavern or inn--liquor is almost always involved). There are 1d4 opponents for every PC, each with a CR of 1d6-1 less than the party level (minimum CR of 1).

**Prominent Personage:** The characters meet an important political, religious, mercantile, or military NPC, along with the NPC's retinue or guards.

**Enemy:** The characters encounter one of the PC's enemies. If none of the PCs has an enemy, then this result indicates that one of the characters makes a new Enemy.

**Corpse:** The characters find a dead body. The corpse could be the victim of a crime, mishap or strange occurrence.







**Duel:** One of the characters is challenged to a duel. The opponent has a CR of 1d4 less than the character being challenged. The duel will follow the Code Duello (found on page 74 of *Skull & Bones*).

**Mistaken Identity:** One or more of the PCs are mistaken for someone else--perhaps someone infamous.

**Monster:** The characters encounter a monster while in the port (any of the creatures from the *Skull & Bones* rulebook could work, or any other monster that the Gamemaster deems appropriate). Note that this entry could also be used for an encounter with a supernatural event, or a run-in with a Bokor, etc.

**Fire (building, ship, etc.):** The characters encounter a fire--either one of the port's buildings, or a ship in the harbor (perhaps even the PC's). (Use the rules for forest fires on pp. 87-88

of the *DMG* for rules that may help with PCs trying to put out a building fire, and the rules for fires aboard ships on page 119 of *Skull & Bones* for help with gamemastering a fire on a harbored vessel).

**Escaped Prisoner:** The characters encounter someone who has broken free from the authorities of the port. They can help apprehend the prisoner, or help the prisoner escape. The prisoner will have a CR roughly 1d6-1 lower than the party level (minimum CR of 1).

**Contact:** The characters encounter one of the PC's contacts. If none of the PCs has an available contact, then this result indicates that one of the characters makes a new contact.

**Ally:** The characters encounter one of the PC's allies. If none of the PCs has an available ally, then this result indicates that one of the characters makes a new ally.

## PORT-SPECIFIC ENCOUNTERS:

**Murder:** The characters are witness to a murder. They may attempt to stop it, to apprehend the murderer afterward, or to do nothing.

**Press Gang:** The characters are accosted by sailors and/or royal marines, who are intent upon forcing the PCs into the service of the crown, most often through violence and abduction. There are 2 gang members for every PC, and their CR is 1d6-1 lower than the party level (minimum CR of 1).

**Recognized!:** An NPC in the port recognizes the characters. What they do depends upon the Gamemaster--perhaps they may want revenge for a relative killed in an attack the PCs made on a merchant ship, or perhaps they may wish to hire the PCs to undertake a job, or perhaps they may go to the authorities with their information.

**Hijack:** A group of Buccaneers attempts to take the PC's ship while it is at anchor. There are 2 CR 1 Buccaneers for each PC, led by 1d4 experienced Buccaneers (CR 1d4-1 less than the party level). For example, a party of 6 PCs at level 5 will be facing 12 1st level Buccaneers and 1-4 others from 3rd through 5th level.

**Marque Offer:** The characters are approached by representatives of the island's governor, and brought to a meeting where they are offered a Letter of Marque from that nation, giving them legal authority to attack vessels of that nation's enemies.

**Arrest!:** The authorities of the port have recognized the characters as vile infamous pirates, and are determined to arrest, convict, and execute them. There are 2 CR 1 soldiers (sailors or fighters) for each PC, led by 1d4 experienced officers (CR 1d4-1 less than the party level, with levels of Sea Officer or perhaps even one of the



fencing Prestige classes). For example, a party of 6 PCs at level 5 will be facing 12 CR 1 soldiers (usually 1st level fighters or sea dogs) and 1-4 officers from 3rd through 5th level.

**Seller's Market:** The economy of the island is favorable to those selling goods (whether it's the characters trying to sell booty, or the shop keepers on the island, selling to the characters). All sales prices are 20% higher than normal

**Buyer's Market:** The economy of the island is favorable to those purchasing goods (whether it's the merchants buying the character's booty, or the characters themselves buying from shop keepers). All sales prices are 20% lower than normal.



**Execution:** There is a scheduled execution of interest to the characters--the condemned is (at the Gamemaster's discretion) an Ally, a Contact, or an Enemy...or perhaps one of the PCs themselves.

**Secret Meeting:** The authorities of a Hostile Port (perhaps the constable, or the commander of military forces, or even the Governor himself) summons the characters to a secret meeting, to unofficially engage the PCs in a job.

**Parley:** The characters are summoned for a face-to-face meeting with the Captain and officers of another pirate vessel. The purpose of the meeting is up to the Gamemaster, and can include offers of partnership, discussion of disputes, etc.

**Navy:** While the characters are in a Hostile port,

naval vessels of that power arrive. Roll on the Sea Encounter table, ignoring any non-warship results. The characters will have to get out of the port without arousing suspicion and bringing down the wrath of the crown.

**Adventure Hook:** The characters are presented with a lead-in to an adventure. The Gamemaster can use this to introduce any published or pre-prepared adventure, or may use the random adventure generation tables from Issue One of *Buccaneers & Bokor*.





# Next Issue:



**"The Terror of Bushiribana"**--A full-length adventure.



**A Golden Age Timeline**--An expanded timeline of the Golden Age of Piracy, from 1664-1730



**Port Royal**--A guide to the city, from its early days as a Spanish colony, through its heyday as a pirate stronghold, to its destruction by earthquake in 1692.



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