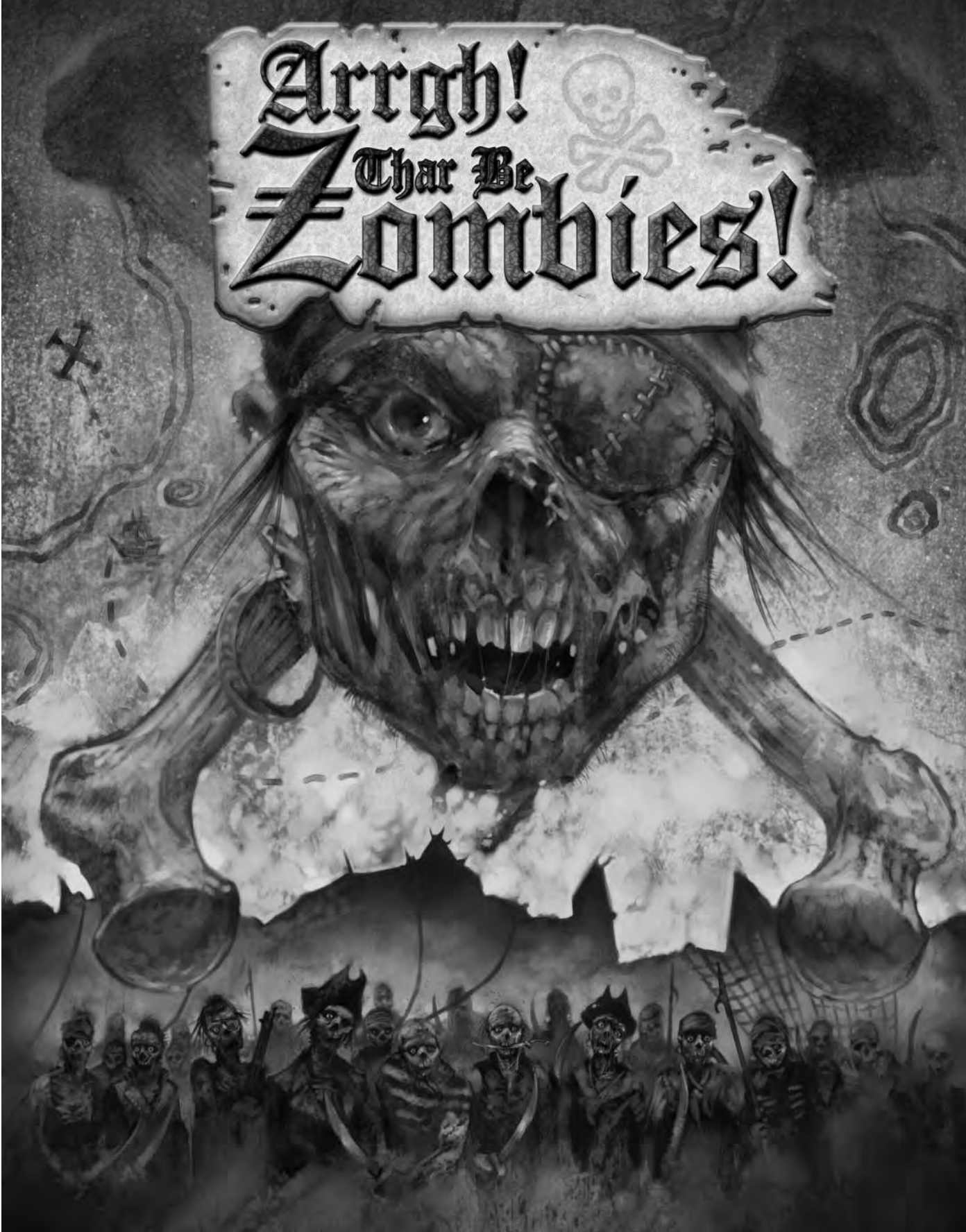


Arrgh!
That Be
Zombies!



A Pirate Sourcebook
All Flesh Must Be Eaten

Arrgh!
That Be
Zombies!



E D E N S T U D I O S P R E S E N T S A S H Y / V A S I L A K O S P R O D U C T I O N

Arrgh! Thar Be Zombies!™

Produced by E D E N S T U D I O S Directed by G E O R G E V A S I L A K O S

Written by D A N I E L R . D A V I S

Additional Development A N D R E W F E R G U S O N

Edited by T H O M A S M A R R I O N

Proofing and Indexing by J A N I C E M . S E L L E R S

Director of Photography G E O R G E V A S I L A K O S

Visual Effects by J O E L B I S K E T R A V I S I N G R A M

B R A D L E Y K . M C D E V I T T

M A T T M O R R O W C A R Y P O L K A V I T Z

Cover Art by J O N H O D G S O N

Playtested by

Special thanks to Francis Hogan for the Arrgh! Thar Be Zombies! Logo, Marla Terrible, Andrew "Fergzilla" Ferguson, Bill Synnott, Jayne Synnott, Evin Ager, Derek A. Stoelting, Eden Studios, Brian Heiberger, Wickie M. Legg, Danny K. Davis

Based on the Original Concept by

C H R I S T O P H E R S H Y a n d G E O R G E V A S I L A K O S

W W W . A L L F L E S H . C O M

Eden Studios

6 Dogwood Lane, Loudonville, NY 12211

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Reader discretion is advised.

Comments and questions can be directed via the Internet at www.allflesh.com, via e-mail at edenprod@aol.com or via letter with a self-addressed stamped envelope.

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Z O M B I E S

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CHAPTER ONE

Woolly Pete stood with one foot propped on the gunwale, his muscled arms folded across his barrel of a chest, and waited. The wind picked up, tussling Pete's brown and curly hair and beard that gave him his nickname. His brown eyes, at once penetrating and commanding, scanned the horizon while the crew of the *Gale Cutter* readied the ship for departure from London's port.

When one looked at Pete, one got the impression of a dormant volcano that could blow at any moment: calm, but dangerous. His saber hung at his right hip for a left-handed draw and three pistols were clipped to a belt that rode diagonally across his chest. Around his neck was a leather cord, from which hung a charm given to him by a houngan after Pete had taken a slave ship as a prize and had given the man his freedom. Pete was told that as long as he wore it, the sea would always be his friend.

“Cap'n, the ship is ready to depart whene'er you are,” the Quartermaster called from behind him.

Pete turned and looked at his quartermaster, a balding man. Jack McReady had been with Pete since the beginning. He'd signed on ten years ago at this very port and was quickly made quartermaster by the crew. He had an open personality and treated everyone with respect and fairness.

The *Gale Cutter* was a privateer vessel given to Pete by the Sovereignty of England. It was a fine naval sloop and had survived many a scrape. Pete hoped she had one more good fight left in her. The letter he'd received from the King's courier was troubling. The letter stated that it was imperative that the *Gale Cutter* make its way toward the Caribbean isles, taking the same route that another ship, *Winslow's Pride*, had taken. It had never returned from its voyage and the Sovereignty wanted to know where it had gone.

Winslow's Pride was captained by a man named Edward Linworth. He was a greedy and lecherous man and had a cruel streak a mile wide. He claimed that a shaman taught him to summon the Vodou gods and he had killed the practitioner for refusing to teach him more of the craft. He was quite proud of that fact. A nobleman, he was recently turned

AHOY MATEY!

down for a place in the royal family. He had been a suitor for one of the high nobility. However, he was snubbed once his personality came to the surface. Small wonder, Pete thought. Pete had always found him a pompous dandy of a man and wondered why the Sovereignty put up with him.

Woolly Pete was beginning to get that feeling, almost an itch that he got whenever he was about to run into trouble. It was a feeling he'd learned long ago not to ignore, which had gotten him out of many a scrape and earned him the reputation of having the Devil's own luck. Whatever happened, the crew of the *Gale Cutter* was in for some rough times. He turned back to the horizon and rested his hand on his saber hilt.

"Raise anchor, McReady. Ahead full. Let's get this journey done," he said in his deep bellowing voice.

"Right! Raise anchor! Hoist sail! Let's off, men! Smartly now, heave to!" McReady began barking orders as he moved back toward the rear of the ship. The crew began to move quickly and efficiently along the deck and the rigging, and the ship slid through the water toward destiny.

The chart took them past the Caribbean isles, so Pete had decided to stop at Port Royal to ask around and resupply. No one had seen the *Winslow's Pride*, but many spoke of a mysterious fog that some had seen not far from the *Pride's* charted course. They claimed that no ship that entered the fog ever returned and that it could move of its own accord and swallow up ships that strayed too close. Pete marked the map and decided to investigate the tales. If the *Pride* had sailed into that fog, then it was his duty to determine if the tale was true and report it to the Sovereignty of England. Now the *Gale Cutter* slid across the sea once more, headed for the fog that seemed to spell certain doom for ships.

They sailed into the night, waiting for any sign of the creeping fog. McReady had just called the midnight hour when a shout from the crow's nest brought all eyes to starboard. Out in the night, a white fog could be seen coalescing quickly out of the darkness as it moved with unnatural speed toward the *Gale Cutter*.



Introduction

Arrgh! Avast ye landlubbers! Pull up a seat 'ere while I tell ye of times agone.

Oh, the Age of Sail! It was a time for men and women of action, a time for pirates who took what they wanted when they wanted and privateers who did the same in the name of a king or country. It was a time for derring-do and swashbuckling chivalry on the high seas. At least, that's what the movies and fiction have told us.

The Age of Sail, an era that spanned some 300 years and began in earnest around the 16th century, was not as glamorous and full of high adventure as the stories would have us believe. This was a dangerous time, full of war, death, and underhanded dealings, which were felt on a daily basis by those

who sailed the seas. However, a game based on this time would not be nearly as enjoyable without all the swashbuckling high adventure made famous by such great screen actors as Errol Flynn, Rudolph Valentino, Douglas Fairbanks Sr. and Jr., and Basil Rathbone. So this book compromises by adding the historical flavor of the genre and all the swashbuckling action that your heart can take. Then, just when you thought we couldn't cram any more into it, the zombies arrive. Black fleets, ghost ships, skeletal corsairs, and the undead denizens of Davey Jones' locker have clawed their way up from the depths to take their place beside the swashbuckling greats of the day.

So hoist anchor, raise the sails, and head out on a quest for high adventure. Just beware the shout from the crow's nest: "ARRGH! THAR BE ZOMBIES!"

Chapter Summary

Chapter One: “Ahoy Matey!” Includes these introductory remarks as well as a pirate and seafarer's lexicon, inspirational materials, timeline, and bibliography.

Chapter Two: “Ye Pirates and Privateers” This chapter deals with the whys and wherefores of piracy as well as character creation, Qualities and Drawbacks, sword dueling techniques, new zombie Aspects, and more!

Chapter Three: “Th’ Tools o’ the Trade” A vast array of weaponry, gear, and sailing ships along with three currency types and their exchange rates. The chapter also discusses life at sea, ship combat, and rules for the creation of a ship's crew.

Chapter Four: “Vodou” A comprehensive section on Vodou Miracles, Loa, Rituals, and much more, which can be used by Inspired characters in any Unisystem game.

Chapter Five: “Voodoo Queen of the Shrouded Isles” On a small island in the Caribbean, shrouded by mist, an old woman plots to avenge the death of her sons at the hands of white men in ships who sank their vessel and labeled them pirates. She has called upon the Loa for vengeance and they have answered. When the living dead are on land and sea no place is safe!

Chapter Six: “The Black Fleet” Someone is hitting the shipping lanes of every nation. They strike without warning and leave no one alive. Each nation believes the others responsible for the attacks and is gearing up for war. Some nobles are paying ridiculous amounts of money to any privateers who can help protect their shipments. And now there is a tale being whispered in dark corners of the taverns and alehouses of the world: a dark tale of a horror that was supposed to have disappeared a hundred years ago. The Black Fleet has returned!

Chapter Seven: “Islands in a Dark Sea” The mysterious force known as Essence powers sailing ships and carries them into that great dark sea above the clouds. Unfortunately, what the pioneers find up there is a deadly corsair force that wishes to control

the islands in the Dark Sea. This is a swashbuckling setting that takes the cast straight up into the vast reaches of space and pits them against an undead race bent on ruling all the islands in the Dark Sea.

Chapter Eight: “Pieces of Eight” Two Deadworlds in brief that feature Asian swashbuckling and Aztec zombie curses.

How to Use

Arrgh! Thar Be Zombies!

Chapter One, the first part of Chapter Two, Chapter Three, and Chapter Four are safe for player plunderin'. Even if the player reads the second half of Chapter Two, it should not detract from the enjoyment of the game. The second half of Chapter Two and all remaining chapters are the domain of the ZM. Chapters Five through Eight are Swashbuckler settings and should be left to the ZM. Each setting includes two ready-to-run Cast Members that may be used to begin play immediately, modified to suit each player, or used as guidelines for players to create their own cast members. They may also be “Supporting Cast” that the ZM can use whenever an NPC is needed.

This book can be used as a stand-alone genre setting or incorporated into other Unisystem settings for even more options for mayhem.

Conventions

As with every *All Flesh Must Be Eaten* sourcebook, *Arrgh! Thar Be Zombies!* uses the following conventions.

Text Conventions

This book uses different graphic features to identify the type of information presented. This text is “standard text,” and it is used for general explanations.

Certain text is set off from the standard text in this manner. This is sidebar text and it contains additional but tangential information, or supplemental charts and tables.

Other text is set apart in this way. It details Supporting Cast or Adversaries that may be used in Stories at the Zombie Master's discretion.

Dice Notations

This book uses several different dice notations. D10, D8, D6, and D4 mean a ten-sided die, an eight-sided die, a six-sided die, and a four-sided die, respectively. A number in parentheses after or in the middle of the notation is the average roll. This number is provided for those who want to avoid dice rolling and just use the result. So the notation D6 x 4(12) means that players who want to skip rolling just use the value 12. Some notations cannot provide a set number because their result depends on a variable factor. For example, D8(4) x Strength is used because the Strength value to be plugged into this notation varies depending on who is acting.

Gender

Every roleplaying game struggles with the decision about third person pronouns and possessives. While the male reference (he, him, his) is customarily used for both male and female, there is no question that it is not entirely inclusive. On the other hand, the "he or she" structure is clumsy and unattractive. In an effort to "split the difference," this book uses male designations for even chapters and female designations for odd chapters.

Measurements

This book primarily uses U.S. measurements (feet, yards, miles, pounds, etc.). Metric system equivalents appear in parentheses. In the interest of ease of use, the conversions are rounded relatively arbitrarily. For example, miles are multiplied by 1.5 to get kilometers (instead of 1.609), meters are equal to yards (instead of 1.094 yards), pounds are halved to get kilograms (instead of multiplied by 0.4536), and so on. If a Zombie Master feels more precision is necessary, she should take the U.S. measurements provided and apply more exact formulas.

Inspirational Material

A comprehensive list of fantasy literature, films, and television would take up an entire library. Jet down to a video or bookstore in your area and check out the "Pirate, Fantasy, and Horror" section to see for yourself. Listed below are just a few books, films, and TV shows that you might enjoy.

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Ars Magica. Atlas Games. 1996.

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7th Sea. Alderac Entertainment Group. 2000.

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Vodoun Culture

(<http://www.geocities.com/Athens/Delphi/5319/ayibobo.htm>)

The Vodou Page

(<http://members.aol.com/racine125/index1.html>)

Life on a Galleon

(<http://www.nhm.org/education/cahistory/galleon/>)

Glossary of Nautical Terms, circa 1814

(<http://www.psych.usyd.edu.au/vbb/woronora/maritime/Glossary.html>)

Pirates of the Spanish Main

(<http://www.sonic.net/~press/index.html>)

Pirates of the Caribbean

(<http://hegewisch.net/blindkat/pirates/pirates.html>)

Pyrates Providence

(<http://www.inkyfingers.com/pyrates/>)

British Coins before the Florin

(<http://www.friesian.com/coins.htm>)

Coins of the UK

(<http://www.tclayton.demon.co.uk/coins.html#size>)

Money Museum

(<http://secure1.moneymuseum.com/frontend/mon-eymuseum/en/SiteMap/view>)

17th Century Prices and Wages

(<http://www.portsdown.demon.co.uk/mark.htm>)

At Home on the French Frontier 1700-1800: Clues to the Past – Marie Baron's Estate Inventory

(<http://www.museum.state.il.us/exhibits/athome/1700/clues/mcb-inv.htm>)

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Treasure Island. Robert Louis Stevenson. 1882.

On Stranger Tides. Tim Powers. 1987.

Tripoint. CJ Cherryh. 1995.

Corsair. Chris Bunch. 2001.

The Princess Bride. William Goldman. 1973.



Movies

There are far more pirate movies than have been listed here. However, some may be difficult to find, as the writer has found reference to pirate movies as far back as 1908.

The Bounty (1984)
The Black Swan (1942)
The Black Pirate (1926)
Blackbeard the Pirate (1952)
Blackbeard's Ghost (1968)
Breed of the Sea (1926)
The Buccaneer (1958)
Captain Blood (1935)
Captain Horatio Hornblower (1951)
Captain Kidd (1945)
The Crimson Pirate (1952)
Cutthroat Island (1995)
The Devil-Ship Pirates (1964)
Fortunes of Captain Blood (1950)
The Golden Hawk (1952)
The Great Adventures of Captain Kidd (1953)
The Ice Pirates (1984)
The Island (1980)
Jason and the Argonauts (1963)
The King's Pirate (1967)
Long John Silver (1954)
The Master of Ballantrae (1984)
Morgan the Pirate (1961)
Old Ironsides (1926)
Pirates (1986)
Pirates of the Caribbean: The Curse of the Black Pearl (2003)
The Pirates of Penzance (1983)
The Princess Bride (1987)
Pirates of Tortuga (1961)
Queen of the Pirates (1960)

Raiders of the Seven Seas (1953)
Return to Treasure Island (1954)
The Sea Hawk (1940)
The Seventh Voyage of Sinbad (1958)
The Golden Voyage of Sinbad (1974)
The Spanish Main (1945)
Swashbuckler (1976)
Treasure Island (1934, 1950, 1972)
Yankee Buccaneer (1952)
Yellowbeard (1983)

Nautical Terms

About ship: The order to prepare for tacking.

Abreast: When two ships are exactly side by side.

Adrift: When a ship has broken from her moorings and is driving about without control.

Aft: Behind or near the stern of the ship.

Aground: When a ship's bottom, or any part of it, rests on the ground.

At Anchor: A ship that has her anchor down.

Ballast: Pigs of iron, stones, or gravel used to bring the ship down to her bearings in the water, which her provisions and stores will not do.

Batten Down the Hatches: To nail battens upon the tarpaulins over the hatches, so that they may not be washed off in a storm.

Bearing: The situation of one object or place from another, with regard to the points of the compass.

To Belay: To fasten a rope by winding it several times backwards and forwards on a cleat or pin.

Bilge: The area at the very bottom of a ship where the ballast is placed.

Bilge Water: Water that lies at the bottom of a ship in the bilge.

Broadside: To fire all of the guns on one side of a ship, both above and below.

Bulwark: The sides of a ship above the decks.

Buoy: A floating cask, moored upon shoals, to show where danger is. Used on anchors to show where they lie.

To Careen: To incline a ship on one side so low down, by the application of a strong purchase to her masts, that her bottom on the other side may be scraped and examined.

Coming To: Bringing a ship's head toward the direction of the wind.

Crow's Nest: Small partially enclosed platform near the top of a mast where a lookout stands or kneels and watches the horizon.

Dead Lights: A kind of window-shutter for the windows in the stern of a ship, used in very bad weather.

Fathom: A measure of six feet.

Fore: That part of a ship's frame and machinery that lies near the stem.

Forecastle: The upper deck in the fore part of the ship.

To Founder: To sink at sea by filling with water.

To Furl: To wrap, or roll, a sail close up to the yard or stay, and winding a gasket round it to keep it fast.

Gangway: The entering place into a ship.

Grounding: Laying a ship ashore in order to repair her. It is also applied to running aground accidentally.

To Hail: To salute or speak to a ship at a distance.

To Heave to: To stop the vessel from going forward.

Helm: The instrument by which the ship is steered. Includes both the wheel and the tiller as one general term.

To Hoist: To draw up something by the assistance of one or more tackles. Example, "Hoist the sails!"

To Hull a Ship: To fire cannon balls into her hull.

Hulk: A ship without masts or rigging.

Keel: The principal piece of timber on which the vessel is built.

To Labor: To roll or pitch heavily in a turbulent sea.

To Loose: To unfurl or cast loose any sail.

Magazine: A place where gunpowder is kept.

Mooring: Securing a ship in a particular station by chains or cables, which are either fastened to an adjacent shore or to anchors at the bottom.

Pierced: A term for gun-ports.

Port: The left side of a ship when looking forward; also a harbor or haven.

Ready About!: A command of the boatswain to the crew. Implies that all the hands are to be attentive and at their stations for tacking.

Rigging: The various ropes attached to the sails and masts.

Rudder: The mechanism by which the ship is steered.

Scudd: To go right before the wind. Going in this direction without any sail set is called spooning.

To Set Sail: To unfurl and expand the sails to the wind, in order to give motion to the ship.

To Ship: To fix something in its proper place, as to SHIP THE OARS, to fix them in their rowlocks.

Sound: To check the depth of water.

Starboard: The right-hand side of the ship, when looking forward.

Steady: The order to the helmsman to keep the ship in the direction she is going at that instant.

To Stem the Tide: When a ship is sailing against the tide at such a rate that it enables her to overcome its power.

Stem: The fore-part of the vessel.

Stern: The after-part of a vessel.

To Stow: To arrange and dispose a ship's cargo.

Stranded: When a vessel has gone aground on some rocks and filled with water.

To Strike: To lower or let down something. Used to denote the lowering of colors in token of surrender.

Swab: A kind of large mop, made of junk, to clean a ship's deck with.

To Tack: To turn a ship about from one tack to another, by bringing her head to the wind.

To Veer: To change a ship's course from one tack to another, by turning her stern to windward.

UnderSail: When a ship is loosened from moorings, and is under the government of her sails and rudder.

Waterlogged: When a ship becomes heavy and inactive on the sea, from the great quantity of water leaked into her.

Weather-Beaten: Shattered by a storm.

To Weigh Anchor: To heave up an anchor from the bottom.

To Windward: Toward that part of the horizon from which the wind blows.

Weigh: To haul up; as weigh the anchor.

Yards/Yardarm: The timbers upon which the sails are spread.

Pirate Terms

Arrgh: A general exclamation used by pirates.

Ahoy!: A greeting much like hello. Used when calling to another vessel.

Avast!: Generally means “hey!” or a call for instant attention.

Aye: Yes.

Belay: To stop or to hold or secure.

Bilge Rat: A disrespectful term, called so because of the men who manned the bilge pumps. Usually manning the bilge was a task given to the most junior members or given as punishment.

Black Spot: Typically a way pirates used to make a threat to another pirate. A black spot was marked on a paper with the threat itself written on the other side. Pirates might give this to their captain as a threat to depose them if they were really bad captains.

Blimey: An exclamation of surprise.

Brethren of the Coast: During 1640 to 1680 pirates of the Caribbean called themselves Brethren of the Coast. They had certain codes that they lived

by and most didn't steal from one another, almost as though they had formed a type of fraternity.

Buccaneer: A term for pirates taken from the term boucaniers, who were French hunters who lived for long periods in northwest Haiti.

Bucko: Generally meant “friend” or an “acquaintance” and could be used derisively as well.

Chase: Pirates typically called the ship they were after the “chase.”

Corsair: A more romantic way of saying pirate, much like calling a thief a rogue. The Muslim pirates of the Barbary States were called corsairs.

Davey Jones' Locker: The bottom of the sea.

Dead Lights: Another word for eyes. Also, see the description of Dead Lights in the Nautical Terms.

Gangway!: “Get out of the way” or “make way.”

Grog: Rum mixed with water to kill the bad taste of the water and any bacteria. Made the water go farther on a voyage.

Handsomely: “Gradually” or “slowly.”

Jack Ketch: What some pirates called the hangman.

Jerked into the Devil's Arms: Being hung.

Jolly Boat: A small craft or rowboat.

Jolly Roger: The black flag with the skull and crossbones. Used to strike fear into the hearts of those who saw it flying.

Lad, Lass: A way to address a young man or woman.

Landlubber: A person who was not a sailor. Used derisively to insult another pirate sometimes.

Letter of Marque: Papers given to pirates from a government that allowed them to legally detain, attack, and plunder ships of the government's enemies.

Me: Pirates used this instead of “my”, yet they also used it for “me.” Example: “Bring me an ale me hearty!”

Me Hearty: Generally the same as Bucko. A captain might use this term for his crewmen. Not typically used derisively.

Matey: Used to address someone in a cheerful manner.

Going on the Account: To become a pirate.

Quarter/Good Quarter: To show mercy to the enemy.

Red Flag: A flag that was raised to tell the enemy that no quarter would be given.

At Rope's End: Another term for flogging.

Sail Ho!: A call to let the crew know that a ship has been spotted on the horizon, since the sail is usually the first thing seen.

Scuppers: Openings in the upper deck that allow water to drain off the deck back into the sea.

Scurvy Dog: A derogatory term for a bad or no good pirate.

Shanty: Name for a tune sung by pirates. "Yo-Ho-Ho and a Bottle o' Rum" is one, as is the "Drunken Sailor" song.

Shiver Me Timbers!: An expression of shock, surprise, or strong emotion.

Sink Me!: Another expression of surprise.

Smartly: Quickly.

Snap Arms: To fire an unloaded flintlock so as to create a spark with the flint.

Swab: A disrespectful term for a pirate, called so because those with the task of swabbing or scrubbing the deck were usually put there as punishment.

Yellow Flag: Flown as a warning to tell others that there was sickness or plague aboard a ship.

Historical Timeline

Herein is a short timeline noting some important historical dates. These are by far not the only events that happened during these times, just some possibly useful events that ZMs can use for informational purposes. ZMs are encouraged to use any other historical information they wish.

1492 --- Columbus discovers the Americas.

1495-1500 --- In 1495, the Privateering regulations are created, making piracy illegal except during times of war. First recorded outbreak of syphilis infects the army of Charles VIII. By 1500, over 35,000 books and some ten million copies have been printed.

1501-1505 --- 1501, Vasco da Gama is sent out with 20 ships to close the Red Sea and cut off the trade route through Egypt to Alexandria. In 1504, Queen Isabella of Spain dies after succumbing to illness. In 1505, Vasily III becomes Tsar of Russia.

1507-1509 --- Henry VIII becomes King of England in 1507. In 1509, the first shipload of African slaves arrives in Haiti.

1512-1515 --- 1512, Ponce de Leon discovers Florida. In 1515, Francois I is crowned King of France.

1518-1522 --- In 1518, Magellan begins his journey to find the Spice Islands. In 1521, Spanish conquistadors storm the Aztec capital of Tenochtitlan, plunder its valuables, and claim the lands. French corsairs attack the treasure ships bound for Spain and take two of them, beginning an age of piracy and privateering. Magellan dies in the Philippines during a native war and his remaining crew continues on to the Spice Islands. 1522, *The Victoria*, Magellan's final ship, arrives in Spain with 18 crewmen and is the first vessel to circumnavigate the world.

1536-1543 --- In 1536, Henry VIII dissolves 376 monasteries and nunneries after proclaiming himself the head of the church in England. In 1538, Pope Paul III excommunicates Henry VIII, and in

1541, Henry VIII proclaims himself King of Ireland. In 1543, Henry VIII and Charles V (Holy Roman Emperor) make an alliance against Scotland and France.

1547-1553 --- Henry VIII dies and is succeeded by Edward VI in 1547. In 1553, Edward VI of England dies and Mary I takes the throne. One year later, Catholicism is restored in England, Elizabeth I is imprisoned, and Mary marries Philip II of Spain.

1555-1570 --- In 1555, tobacco is brought to Spain from the Americas. In 1558, Elizabeth I becomes Queen of England after the death of Mary I. In 1570, the potato is introduced to Europe from South America. Francis Drake makes two highly profitable trips to the West Indies.

1572-1581 --- Carrier pigeons are first used in the Dutch War of Independence. In 1577, England and the Netherlands form an alliance. Francis Drake leaves from England to sail around the world and returns successfully one year later. In 1581, Drake is knighted and made mayor of Plymouth.

1584-1598 --- In 1584, Feodor I becomes Tsar of Russia. In 1588, Drake defeats the Spanish Armada off Plymouth with the help of the weather. In 1589, Drake is sent to attack Spanish settlements in the West Indies. He dies of dysentery on the return journey after failing to capture Panama City. In 1598, Feodor I dies and Boris Godunov becomes Tsar of Russia.

1603-1608 --- James I is proclaimed King of England, Scotland, France, and Ireland after the death of Elizabeth I in 1603. In 1605, the Gunpowder Plot is uncovered in England. Guy Fawkes and other Roman Catholic conspirators fail in their attempt to blow up Parliament. In 1607, the colony of Virginia is founded at Jamestown in America. In 1608, Hans Lipperhey requests a patent on a spyglass.

1613-1620 --- Mikhail Romanov is named Tsar of Russia. In 1617, Louis XIII is crowned King of France at the age of 17. In 1618, three comets appear; the third is very bright. The Thirty Years

War begins between the Protestant Bohemians and their Catholic rulers. In 1619, the first African slaves are brought to Jamestown. In 1620, the *Mayflower* sails from England to New England with 102 dissenters to set up the first permanent colony to be made by families.

1625-1630 --- The end of the Bohemian period of the Thirty Years War comes in 1625. Ferdinand II of the Holy Roman Empire is victorious over the Bohemian Protestants. In 1630, an outbreak of plague in Italy disrupts commerce and travel between cities.

1636-1643 --- Ferdinand II dies and Ferdinand III becomes the new Holy Roman Emperor. In 1642, the English Civil War begins. Galileo dies in Arcetri. In 1643, Louis XIV is named King of France.

1645-1653 --- Aleskey I succeeds his father Mikhail I as Tsar of Russia. Oliver Cromwell reorganizes Parliament's armies and captures Charles I. In 1648, the Scots invade England and are defeated by Cromwell at the battle of Preston Pride's Purge. In 1649, Charles I is executed and England is proclaimed a republic. Then Cromwell lands in Ireland and tries to force the Irish off English lands. In 1653, Cromwell dissolves Parliament and proclaims himself Lord Protector to rule as a dictator.

1658-1670 --- Oliver Cromwell dies and in 1660 the monarchy is restored. Charles II agrees to respect the Magna Carta and Petition of Rights. The Great Plague hits London in 1665 and in 1666 is the Great Fire of London. In 1670, Secret Treaty of Dover made between Charles II and Louis XIV of France to restore Catholicism to England.

1675-1685 --- In 1675 King Philip's War begins. In 1682 Ivan V and Peter become co-rulers of Russia with their sister Sophia as Regent. In 1685 James II inherits the throne and passes laws that grant rights to Catholics. He also dissolves many anti-Irish laws. In 1687 James issues a Declaration of Liberty of Conscience, which extends tolerance of all religions.

1688-1690 --- In 1688 William and Mary become joint rulers of England and James II flees England's

Glorious Revolution to Ireland. In 1689 James II leads a failed rebellion in Ireland. King William's War between the French and British begins in North America. In 1690 William defeats James II and James flees for France.

1692-1700 --- In 1692 Port Royal is destroyed by an earthquake. Salem Witch Trials begin. In 1694 Mary II dies in England. Ivan and Peter become the real rulers of Russia after the death of their mother. In 1696 Ivan dies, leaving his brother Peter the Tsar of Russia. In 1697, King William's War ends. In 1700 the burial cross of King Arthur vanishes from history.

1702-1715 --- In 1702 Queen Anne ascends the throne of England. The War of Spanish Succession begins as England declares war on France to stop the union of France and Spain. In 1707 The Act of Union is created that joins England, Scotland, and Wales to create the United Kingdom of Great Britain. In 1711 British forces attack Quebec, with help from the American colonies, but are stopped when a storm in the St. Lawrence sinks nine ships. In 1713 the War of Spanish Succession ends with the Treaty of Utrecht. In 1714, tea is first introduced to the American colonies. In 1715, Louis XV succeeds his great grandfather as ruler of France. However, he is only five years old and the Duke of Orleans is named as his regent.

1716-1722 --- In 1716 the first group of African slaves are brought to the Louisiana Territory. In 1718 Blackbeard the pirate dies in a great fight where he takes over thirty wounds before succumbing. New Orleans is founded by the French. 1721, The Expanded Piracy Act was made, making trade with pirates illegal and punishable by death. In 1722, the pirate trials of Cape Coast Castle condemned 54 men to hang for piracy, closing the book on the Golden Age of Piracy.

About the Author

Daniel Davis was born in Tacoma, Washington. At a very young age he moved to Columbus, Ohio and has been skulking about around the coves and taverns there ever since. Roleplaying games caught his attention in 1980 and never let go, sparking his imagination in ways that nothing else had, and causing him to realize that his dream was to become a writer.

Deciding to take the advice of some of his English teachers he has become an aspiring writer with hopes of making it a career and following in the footsteps of such greats as Terry Pratchett, Piers Anthony and JRR Tolkien, and gaming greats such as CJ Carella, Steve Jackson, and R. Talstorian. He has done a couple projects for Eden Studios, including the OGC *AFMBE* conversion, *Odyssey Prime* Unisystem Conversion, and the character statistical write-ups in the back of the *Matchsticks* comics.

Always one to ignore the warnings of friends and family, Dan hopes that this supplement will be the first in a long line of game products and novels that will allow him to finally do what he enjoys doing most, writing for fun and profit.

CHAPTER TWO

“Hard t' port!” McReady shouted. The ship lurched and turned as hard as it could in the calm.

“All hands prepare cannon!” Pete shouted. “McReady, pass out the weapons! Step lively now! I don't want whatever's in that fog t' catch us unawares.” Pete moved to the stern of the *Gale Cutter* and stared out at the advancing wall of almost luminescent white.

The decks were a flurry with activity as men moved quickly about their tasks. Pete continued to gaze into the fog, as though he could penetrate it by sheer force of will. He absent-mindedly rubbed the charm around his neck with his thumb and tried to ignore the constant nagging itch he felt that told him there was danger afoot. There was no way they were going to outrun it without a strong wind in their sails. He began to imagine all sorts of dangers within that glowing blanket and pushed his musings aside.

The crew could feel the fog as it slid around them, as though icy tendrils had shot from its mass to touch them and chill them to their marrow. Through the gloom, Pete thought he saw the edge of what looked to be a sail, but he couldn't be sure. His mind had played tricks on him once already.

“Keep alert, lads,” Pete growled.

The fog was as thick as yesterday's porridge. The crew of the *Gale Cutter* strained their eyes for any sign of another ship or any hazards that could tear the bottom from their boat and send them down to visit Davey Jones. The only sounds that drifted to them were the occasional creaks of their own rigging.

Woolly Pete spat on the deck and adjusted his saber. This fog was the Devil's work, the way it came out of nowhere like that. Woolly Pete couldn't help but feel a sense of foreboding as he listened for any sign of another ship. He heard it even before the lookout called from the crow's nest. Another creaking noise answered their own from farther off into the fog.

“Ship ahoy!”

As the ship drew closer in from the fog Pete suddenly felt a chill run through him like death had come a-calling. He drew his saber just as the lookout called again.

“Arrgh! Thar Be Zombies!”

“Bring 'er around! All guns fire!” Pete held his blade at the ready and drew a pistol from his belt. He'd heard tales of ghost ships and the undead crews that sailed them. He'd even met a bokor with an undead servant once. However, nothing could have begun to describe what he witnessed as a

YE PIRATES AND PRIVATEERS

tattered sail slid quickly from the fog and a ship moved into view only yards away from their ship. As the cannons of the *Gale Cutter* echoed in the fog, Pete could see shot ripping through the broken and rotten hull of the ghost ship. Though many a shot connected, the ship still held strong and mooring lines began thumping onto the deck of the *Gale Cutter*.

“Cut those lines, boys!” Pete heard McReady call. “We’ll not have ‘em boardin’ us that easily!”

A shot rang out and one of Pete’s deck hands fell. Pete could see forms moving on the deck of the ghost ship. He grabbed a brand from one of the runners and took aim with a swivel gun. The deck sweeper belched smoke and fire and rained its shot across the deck of the ghost ship. Deck hands joined in with the rest of the swivel guns to keep the boarders at bay while others cut the mooring lines with sabers and boarding axes.

It was then that Pete saw the clawed and skeletal hand come up over the gunwale.

Several of the ghost ship’s crew had made it across and were now on deck. As the ghastly face of the undead crewman came up over the gunwale next to Pete, he placed his pistol in its face and fired, spraying the contents of the zombie’s fetid head into the sea. It fell from view and Pete spun around to scan the deck, drawing another pistol. The pirate fired as another zombie came toward him brandishing a badly rusted cutlass. The shot entered the dead man’s chest but failed to stop it. Pete rushed to close the gap as it staggered back and steel clashed upon steel. Pete easily parried a slice to his middle, sliding his blade up and around to redirect the cutlass onto the deck where he stepped on it, breaking it. The pirate then reversed his stroke, cleanly taking the head from the zombie and sending it over the side. The body fell and Pete turned to survey his crew. There were at least ten of the creatures on board. Three of his own men were lying on the deck in their own blood and several more were facing off against the zombies, while others continued to cut mooring lines and send more shot across the deck of the ghost ship.

Then a crack of thunder sounded over the explosions of swivel-gun fire and lightning lit up the fog. The wind began to whip about and Pete could hear the sails creaking and straining. As the last of the lines were cut the *Gale Cutter* lurched, pulling away from the ghost ship. As his ship began to speed away in the increasing gale, Pete caught sight of the name on the side of the ghostly hulk: *Winslow’s Pride*.

They limped into Port Royal with torn sails and fouled rigging. The ship had been tossed about like a rag doll all night in the storm, but still managed to keep her heading. The men claimed it was just one more miracle due to their blessed captain. They had seen plenty of times where they had made it out of what seemed impossible odds, ever since joining up with Woolly Pete. Pete himself had begun to wonder if he truly had been blessed the day he saved that old hound. Last night had been no exception.

Pete ordered the men to stay on board and make repairs while he and McReady went ashore to resupply. Pete knew he had the information he needed to bring back to the Sovereignty, but he wasn’t sure if they would believe that the *Pride* had been taken over by some ghastly crew. Besides, the ghostly *Winslow’s Pride* had stung him and he wasn’t about to let that go. While McReady went off to replace what they had lost in the storm, Pete trekked out to the edge of town to a ramshackle hut.



Piracy and the Age of Sail

Those who do not know history are doomed to repeat it. At least, that's what our history teachers tell us. Of course, in a roleplaying game, repeating history isn't necessarily a bad thing and it is always good to know a little something of the history of the era in which you are playing. So it seems that those roleplayers who know history will still repeat it, but we won't tell the history professors if you don't.

Below is a very general and brief overview of the Age of Sail and the history of piracy. It is not a full treatment, which would take volumes, but a quick romp down history lane that should give the gist of what was going on at the time. The appendix on page 13 also has a timeline, which may assist those who want a bit more historical information in their game. Anyone desiring more information than exists

in this book can look online or even at their local library for more historical references.

The Long & Short Of It

As long as there have been ships on the water there have been those who would use those ships to raid other ships and coastlines alike. Whether you call them freebooters or corsairs or raiders they all have one thing in common, using ships to plunder and pillage. Even as far back as 700 BC, piracy had been reported in one form or another and continues even today.

In the early days, pirate raids rarely took place on the ocean, as most mercantile shipping still moved over land. However, this did not stop raiders such as the Vikings of the 8th century from sailing their ships into the ports of coastal towns and pillaging them of whatever they wanted or needed. Combat

on the water during this time was mostly for the sake of combat rather than any spoils aboard. Occasional raids still took place even after the decline of the Viking campaigns, but were nowhere near as severe.

Piracy saw an upsurge in the 13th century when Europe established trading ports for the purpose of moving goods by ship along the coast. It was more lucrative than trying to eke out a living from fishing or farming. When fishing was poor or foul weather killed crops the community either starved or found another method. That method was oftentimes piracy, especially for those communities that had access to ships. During this time, various governments attempted to stamp out piracy. The pirates' knowledge of the coasts, coves, winds, and currents that they sailed every day made them a difficult problem to solve.

Then in 1495 Henry VII, after signing an agreement with France, created a set of regulations that governed the activities of pirates and corsairs. The regulations stated that piracy could only be engaged in during times of war and only against enemy ships and their allies. Similar regulations had already been in place in other areas of Europe and they became the accepted method for dealing with piracy in the European world.

Still, piracy continued in spite of legalities. Pirates and other freebooters simply used the "fog of war" to hide their pilfering and underhanded dealings from the authorities by pretending to be working for "King and Country" if they were ever caught. Meanwhile, privateers, people specifically sanctioned by a government to detain, raid, and/or destroy enemy vessels, sacked ships in the name of whatever country they were working for at the time and were usually paid a percentage of the haul. These privateers were used in times of war as naval reinforcements and were either private ship owners (legally or illegally), merchants turned privateer, or loyal subjects who were given the command of a vessel for the sole purpose of privateering. Many pirates such as Captain Henry Morgan, Piet Heyn, and Woodes Rogers became national heroes as privateers working for their governments. However,

once treaties were signed and wars ceased for a short time, privateers had nothing to look forward to but their old lives farming, fishing, working for some merchant for not much pay, or officially joining the military for even less pay. It is no wonder that many of these people turned to piracy for their bread and butter, as it had been far more lucrative than what they had left behind.

Though piracy continued off and on during this time, it was never as prevalent as in the time period from 1521 to 1750. The lure of Spanish gold, taken from the Aztecs, was one of the driving forces behind the sudden rise of piracy in 1521. This coupled with the open hostilities and out-and-out wars between France and Spain brought piracy and privateering to new heights. England supported Spain until 1550, when the allure of the New World goods and resources became too much even for them.

Spain's control of the New World bred resentment in other countries. First the French, then England, then finally the Dutch went to war over the right to trade with and settle in the New World. French vessels began visiting the Americas in growing numbers, causing Spain to begin detaining any vessels going to or coming from the New World. Any products from the New World that were found on board those vessels would be considered contraband and resistance to such searches punishable by death. This did not stop privateers, freebooters, and pirates who were willing to risk it by trying. By 1535 the constant hostilities between France and Spain had brought Spain's oceangoing mercantile traffic virtually to a standstill. In response, Spain's leaders instituted a convoy system for their cargoes, the Spanish treasure fleets. Though the wellarmed convoys afforded better security, they also inflated the cost of Spanish merchandise in the marketplace. This arrangement also starved the Spanish colonies of European goods, as Spain began to neglect its colonies due to a lack of available ships to send. This arrangement, of course, was perfect for pirates and freebooters who would simply sell plundered European goods to the colonies of the Americas who would pay well for them. Pirates could also raid any ships

coming from the Americas, do “legitimate” trade with the Americas, and sell those goods in Europe for exorbitant prices.

By the 1550s, tired of waiting for Spain to open the Americas to its allies, England had joined in the fray. In 1558, these hostilities led to open conflict between the two countries. England's choice to go to war with Spain was also in part due to differences in religious belief. England supported the Reformation and splitting off of the Protestants from the Catholic Church, while Spain was a strong supporter of the Catholic faith and the Counter-Reformation actions. This Counter-Reformation, aside from attempting to restructure and solidify the Catholic Church, gave religious zealots such as Ignatius of Loyola the authority to go to war with not only the Protestants, but also any other “heretic” or non-Christian. Many battles were fought and much blood was spilled over this difference in religious belief. The hostilities finally came to a close at the end of the Thirty Years War, which lasted from 1618 to 1648.

The 1550s also saw a rise in silver production in the Spanish-controlled Americas, due to a new method of extracting quality silver from medium grade ore and two major ore strikes in Mexico. This did much to bolster the wealth of the Spanish-American colonies and make them rich targets for many pirates of the day, as well as for legitimate foreign traders.

While wars raged privateers and pirates flourished. Privateers such as John Hawkins, Francis Drake, and Thomas Cavendish, three of England's most notorious privateers, harried shipments from the Americas time and time again. It was Drake's spectacular voyage in 1577 that truly elevated piracy to another plane as he not only circumnavigated the world but also took a wealthy Peruvian galleon and touched upon many new and exotic locales. His epic cruise fueled the lust for adventure, wealth, and power of many pirates and freebooters, and even more rovers took to the sea in hopes of succeeding as well as Drake had. However, most of these pirates would never be famous and few left their mark in history.

By 1604, Spain had signed treaties with France and England, which allowed for trade in any Spanish-controlled region except the Americas. This quelled much of the trouble between these nations until the 1650s, when France and England allied to assail Spain once more over the Americas. However, Spain had another more immediate threat.

The Dutch, who had once had good relations with Spain, drifted apart from Spain over questions of religious faith and liberty. The Dutch Republic, lead by Holland, wanted independence both as its own government and as Protestants. While the wars between the two nations raged, Dutch privateers such as Pieter Schouten, Boudewijn Hendricksz, and Pieter Pieterszoon Heyn - the last being the most famous Dutch Privateer also known as Piet Heyn - sacked Spanish ships for gold, silver, and many other trade goods from the Americas. The Dutch also created trading posts in the Americas against the wishes of Spain and began clandestine trading practices with the colonies, as well as protection of the colonies when Spain began its depopulation push in places such as Hispaniola. By 1629, the Spanish Empire was at its lowest power base. The treasure fleets no longer sailed and Spain spent much of its time and resources warring with the Dutch and defending its settlements in the Americas from interlopers and the increased pirate and privateer population.

Spain was not able to patrol everywhere in the Americas and as a result, many foreign settlements often went unnoticed for long periods of time. These colonies were perfect places for pirates and privateers to hide out and trade their plunder in and quite a few of these colonies actually welcomed them. Some even became popular pirate hangouts. Places such as Tortuga and Port Royal were notorious for their pirate populace.

The wars went on for some time with occasional changes in allegiance until the Treaty of Utrecht was signed in 1713, which brought an end to the War of Spanish Succession and brought about a quarter century of peace. With major hostilities out of the way, European countries turned toward stopping piracy and rebuilding their own power bases.

The Golden Age of Piracy

What is considered the Golden Age of Piracy began in the late 1680s and lasted for thirty years or so. Pirates in record numbers plied the seas in search of plunder during this time, striking out from the relative safety of places such as Port Royal, Hispaniola, New Providence, and other nooks and crannies in the Caribbean isles and the Americas. This was the time of such notable and notorious pirates as Blackbeard, Bartholomew Roberts, John "Calico Jack" Rackham, and Anne Bonny. Many films and novels depict this time in history. There were still some hostilities between nations and piracy and privateering were at an all-time high.

Though the Treaty of Utrecht put an end to hostilities between nations, it left a lot of privateers in the lurch. Privateers were given a choice to join the military or go back to their old lives as shop owners, farmers, or merchant pilots. For many, privateering was a far more lucrative business than anything they had done before and they were not willing to give that up. As a result, some of these privateers turned to piracy and smuggling as a way of keeping their wealth flowing.

With the power base of the nations so low, it became difficult to deal with the pirate menace while trying to rebuild. As a result, some of the privateers of the day were once again hired for a new task, tracking down pirates and bringing them in for trial. Many pirates saw these people as turncoats and betrayers of the pirate's code and would attack them on sight. Some nations even went so far as to offer pirates amnesty for past crimes if they would put down their sabers and take up farming. Though some pirates did indeed take this offer, others pretended to take the offer to have their records stricken and then headed out to continue their piratical ways with a clean slate.

By 1718 many countries were making a concerted attempt to stamp out piracy. The Expanded Piracy Act of 1721 made it difficult for all who would trade, barter, or exchange with pirates, making them equally guilty of piracy if they were caught. Those pirates who once enjoyed sanctuary

and safe harbor in their own countries were now being prosecuted to the fullest extent of the law. Then in 1722, the pirate trials at Cape Coast Castle condemned 54 men to hang for piracy and another 17 to prison in London (thirteen died before reaching England). These mass hangings brought down the curtain on the Golden Age of Piracy, showing that piracy as a practice would no longer be tolerated by any country.

Even after this last act, sporadic episodes of piracy still flared up from time to time and piracy as a practice has never really died out completely. The American Revolution and the War of Independence brought a return to privateering as the American colonies did not have a large naval presence and were forced to resort to using privateers out of necessity. Even today, there are those who raid shipping lanes and private craft in remote areas of the world who fall under the maritime description of piracy, but no pirate since the Age of Sail has ever captivated the minds or hearts of young and old alike.

Going On the Account

Alrighty, ye scallywag! Now that the borin' history stuff an' all that rot is outta the way, let's get to the heart o' the matter! And it starts with one important question, why piracy? Well, the first thing to look at is the causes of piracy. Why go *on the account* in the first place? The reasons are many and in this section we're gonna review 'em.

The Geo-Politicky Stuff

So before we give you the reasons why you'd want to become a pirate, let's touch briefly on where piracy took place and why.

Piracy tends to flourish wherever trade routes funnel through narrow straits or between groups of islands. Ships are much more difficult to track down in the open sea, so pirates used their chosen terrain to their advantage. Poorly guarded shipping lanes and trade routes were prime targets for piracy, as was any lane that passed by a secluded river or inlet. Even today, those labeled as pirates strike out from the poorly patrolled areas of the world, attacking swiftly and taking whatever they can.



The Americas and the Caribbean isles were prime places for pirate strikes, as were areas around the African and Asian coasts. Modern pirates still strike out against shipping vessels and private yachts in the poorly protected waters around the Caribbean isles, Africa, and Asia. These areas were difficult to patrol in any great number and so were poorly defended. There were also many nooks and crannies for pirates to hide in, allowing them to make quick strikes and retreat back to the relative safety of a cove or waterway. Occasionally, small pirate communities would spring up in these out-of-the way areas, creating a sort of communal hideout where pirates and freebooters followed their own set of laws and regulations.

Shipments of gold or silver were prime targets by pirates of the day, but these were by far not the only things targeted. Anything was fair game to pirates including food or spice shipments, alcohol, textiles, and even slaves. In fact, most prizes generally consisted of goods that had to be sold before the pirates got their shares, including the merchant's vessel itself. Occasionally this vessel would be handed over to the first mate to captain, but oftentimes would be sold and the booty split among the pirates.

Once the pirates had the goods, they always just sell them anywhere. These were usually wanted men and going into a city such as London to hawk their ill-gotten gains could have resulted in a stretched neck courtesy of the local hangman. Sometimes, pirates had to sell their goods at less than market value just to clear them from their hold. This meant that they could not always be too picky where they sold them. Out-of-the way places in the Americas and the Caribbean isles where goods were sometimes scarce were prime areas to sell to, especially once Spain's goods became too expensive for these areas to afford. Any area where governments were lax, or that simply turned a blind eye to piracy, was a locale that pirates could sell to. The lucky pirate could also occasionally find a corrupt official, noble, or even legitimate mer-

chant to sell their wares through, but this was a dangerous affair. An official could easily sell his supplier out if he was caught, to keep himself from swinging at the end of a rope.

What's My Motivation?

So why become a pirate in the first place? Why go through all the hardships of finding a place to plunder and a place to sell that plunder? Well, the reasons are many and here we touch upon the most common.

Robbing ships and far-off locales just to survive has always been a motivating factor in piracy. For many fishermen and seamen of the day, all they had was their ability to pilot a boat and pull in fish. When the fishing was poor and not enough to support the family, or the seamen could not find work on a merchant ship or employment in the navy, piracy or smuggling provided another means of income.

The alternating pattern of war and peace during the Age of Sail tended to breed piracy as well. Many people joined the navies of the world in hopes of a better life and income, or were conscripted by press gangs. Many who joined the navy found the life to be generally worse than the one they had left and they either struck out on their own, taking over the ship, or went back to their old lives. Whole generations of men left their shops, farms, and businesses to join the navy and during times of peace these men had to once again find peaceful employment or starve. Some managed to do so, but most ended up going *on the account*, as they couldn't find employment anywhere else.

The privateering laws set down in 1495 were another problem that invariably caused piracy. Privateering provided reinforcements to navies in times of war, but in times of peace, those private ships were manned with crews who found plundering merchant vessels a far more lucrative career than becoming merchants themselves or returning to whatever life they had left behind. Letters of marque gave privateers the right to plunder an enemy's vessels during wartime; unfortunately, many times these letters were not taken back later and some

were even still honored in times of peace, which invariably led to resentment from the countries on the receiving end and more wars.

Politics has always been a driving force in piracy. Ships sanctioned by the government to detain and plunder an enemy's vessels were a major part of wartime policy. Even during times of peace, ships would detain other vessels in order to search for "contraband." This oftentimes degenerated into nothing more than theft or payoffs.

For many would-be freebooters, piracy offered a sort of freedom and a life of liberty and democracy. Many seamen on merchant vessels and navy ships suffered horrible cruelties at the hands of their captains, and their wages and food rations were poor at best. Many of these seamen not only saw piracy as an escape to what they saw as a better life, but also as a rebellion against authority. Pirates had their own codes of honor that they lived by and these codes were very democratic. All pirates had a "say" on a pirate vessel, which was usually much more than they would get on a naval vessel or merchant ship.

For young men, piracy offered adventure, danger, wine, women, and a chance to see the world. It also offered a means of escape from the monotony of everyday life on land. Most pirates in the Age of Sail were between the ages of 17 to 35. Very few crews had men in their 40s or 50s, as the constant life at sea was very rough on the body. In fact, very few pirates engaged in piracy for more than ten years, and the careers of the more notable pirates were not much more than four or five years.

Amazingly, religion has always been a motivation for piracy. Throughout the early part of the Age of Sail, the Muslims and Christians were ever at each other's throats and would occasionally plunder other vessels that happened to get in the middle of their war. However, the enemy crew themselves were the most common plunder, which could be used as slave labor or ransomed back to their respective countries. Some of today's piracy is also done under the guise of religion and the crew is either slain or ransomed, just as it was back in the Age of Sail.

Lastly, the most important cause of piracy is one of the Seven Deadly Sins. Greed has played an important role in piracy from the beginning. The lure of wealth is a strong motivating force and many a pirate has gone on the account simply for the possibility of becoming rich and living the good life. In truth, many pirates died long before they got a chance to enjoy the fruits of their labor. Many more spent any money they received from a haul as soon as they arrived in port on food, women, strong drink, and any other entertainment or vice they could find. However, this didn't stop the pirates of the age from plying the seven seas for plunder and adventure and shouldn't stop your pirate cast member from amassing a fortune and living like a king in Patagonia, if he so chooses.

Those wishing to use Asian piracy in their games should look at the *Enter the Zombie* supplement for great martial arts rules, which can easily be used with the rules in this supplement for Hong Kong martial arts swashbuckling adventure. Yo-ho-ho and a bottle o' sake!

Asian Piracy

While the Western world went about its business warring amongst themselves, the Asian regions of the world had their own piratical problems to worry about. The pirates of Asia started out as nothing more than fishermen from the maritime regions of the southeast coast. Many found themselves supplementing their income with small-scale trade. The livelihood of these fishermen was so bad that for most of them, piracy was their only hope for a better life.

In the early days, piracy typically spanned the summer months when fishing was poor and dangerous. Pirates would sail north and raid along the coasts until fall, when they would return south and resume fishing. The leader of a pirate gang would usually be the one who had the vessel available, but would not be much different from the rest of the fishermen. At their maximum strength, these early

pirate gangs consisted of not much more than ten to thirty men armed with knives, bamboo pikes, utility blades and a couple *junks*. Occasionally, the leader would possess a sword.

These enterprises tended to be brief. Their tactics typically consisted of swift strikes and then retreating before any resistance could be raised. They only remained at sea for a few days before returning to divide the booty, which was typically split as single shares for the crew and a double share for the leader and boat provider.

Later, around the 1550s, economic piracy arose when interdicted trade between China and Japan gave rise to a covert exchange of hostilities. Smuggling and piracy flourished during this time as market demands were met through the maritime trade. As a result, new patterns of exchange and finance methods emerged to displace the tribute trade. Pirates during this time became known as *wo-k'ou*.

During much of the 17th century, many of the pirate gangs solidified into a naval fleet under the guidance of Cheng Chih-lung during the first half of the century and then his son, Cheng Ch'eng-kung, during the second half. This pirate navy was not defeated until 1683.

Though China provided little encouragement to piracy, the same could not be said of Vietnam. In the 18th century, Vietnam was in the middle of a great rebellion. The Tay Son rebellion, not much more than a large number of unified petty pirate gangs, was formed in 1773 and the group took the capitol of Qui Nhon. The former emperor of Qui Nhon requested the aid of China, and in 1788 three Chinese armies took to the field to retake Vietnam and restore the throne. In response, the Tay Son declared their best leader emperor and proceeded to route the Chinese army. After this display of force, the Chinese emperor declared the Tay Son leader the new emperor of Vietnam.

The Tay-son began recruiting in 1792, when the emperor's hold on the throne began to weaken. This was a great opportunity for the petty pirates of China. However, in 1802, the forces of the former

emperor swept down upon the forces of the Tay Son, and in a number of decisive battles finally retook the capitol and executed the leaders of the Tay Son.

Though the Tay Son was crushed, this did not stop the petty pirates of China. They returned home and formed a confederation, which allowed them to survive. In 1805, another member of the Cheng family took control of the pirates. He and his wife unified the gangs into a solid and formidable pirate army and introduced the concepts of hierarchy and inter-gang affiliation to the pirate gangs.

The confederation was initially composed of seven fleets, which later became six. The largest fleet consisted of over 300 junks and near 40,000 pirates. Each fleet was composed of a number of squadrons, which had between ten and forty ships each. Each squadron was under the command of several skippers, or *lao-pan*. Each *lao-pan* was responsible for several ships in the squadron. Each ship also had a headman, who was responsible for the individual ship. They took command of the ships during combat. Helmsmen were in charge of the sails and the steering of the junk. There were typically two helmsmen per ship. Under the helmsmen were several people who were charged with deck duties, and another three in charge of cannons, anchors and burning of incense. Lastly, the pursers kept track of the booty, which was placed in a common fund for redistribution later.

The typical weaponry on these junks, besides cannons, were *gingalls*, which resembled the swivel gun. The pirates also possessed the occasional matchlock, flintlock, or fowling piece. However, many of these were of poor quality, due to a lack of knowledge of the proper care and use of such weapons. Other weapons included long bamboo pikes with a sharp, saber-like blade on one end. There were also a number of shorter pikes with slightly curved blades, knives of all



sorts, and a huge arsenal of bows and arrows. Many of these vessels also carried many shields, for use against enemy arrows.

By 1809, the confederation was a powerful force, making attacks on both land and sea. China called upon England to assist in the destruction of the confederation. However, even the British fleets found the confederation a difficult nut to crack. In the end, the confederation was brought down by itself as discord between the two largest fleets resulted in a major schism and a return to the old ways. The current leader, the wife of Cheng I, named Cheng I Sao, entered into negotiations with the Chinese government so that the remaining pirates could join the military, where some of them would be given official rank. Instead of attempting to turn them back into farmers, like what was attempted in the West, the government employed them to patrol nearby shores.

This put an end to the petty pirate fleets of Asia until the 1830s, when the opium trade brought about a new era of smuggling.

Life in the Age of Sail

Life in the Age of Sail was not as great as the romanticized versions depicted in novels and movies. For most of the populace it was a difficult life, which was one of the many reasons that people went on the account. The caste system kept the poor downtrodden and the rich on high and rarely did anyone from the “dregs of society” rise above his station. Below is some general information about life during this time, which can be used to add a bit of realism to your campaign.

Living Conditions

Life in the Age of Sail was harsh and difficult for all but the most rich, and even then, disease could strike at any time. Large cities were rife with filth and disease due to poor or no waste disposal methods. In many cities, refuse was piled somewhere nearby or thrown into large pits and made a horri-

ble stink as it rotted, which could be smelled upon the wind long before a person reached the city itself. At night, those who did not want to make the trip to the cesspit would empty wash water and chamber pots directly out the window. If passersby were not careful, this waste would hit them as they walked by. The wealthier districts were marginally better, but for the most part, cities were not nice places to stay in for long. By comparison, villages were much cleaner, but medical attention and modern medicine was much harder to come by. People in villages relied more on home remedies, holistic medicine, or the not always reliable tonics and remedies supplied by traveling mountebanks. Personal hygiene was not a high priority in most places as well, which meant that fleas and lice were commonplace on the populace.

Disease and Medicine

Illness and wounds were very difficult to successfully treat during the Age of Sail. Sometimes the treatment was just as bad or unsanitary as the illness itself. Many people simply shut themselves in to avoid the spread of the illness to other people and relied on home remedies or, if they could afford it, a doctor's advice. Many deaths resulted from undiagnosed or untreated illnesses or wounds.

Large wounds were difficult to treat and usually resulted in amputated limbs. Infection and gangrene could set in, resulting in further complications in the wound. Damage to internal organs could be a death sentence during this age. Appendicitis or gallstones could be deadly, even if a doctor was able to diagnose it correctly. Though new strides in learning about human anatomy were being taken all the time and journals were being published, the information was not very widespread and the symptoms associated with bad or damaged organs were still virtually unknown. Add to that the fact that surgeons still knew little to nothing about germs and bacteria and it spelled disaster for anyone undergoing a surgical procedure. Surgeons had no idea at the time that germs and bacteria from their unsterilized instruments, let alone their unwashed hands, could kill just as easily as a pistol shot or sword wound.

There were many diseases in the Age of Sail that were simply lived with or treated with holistic medicine. Below are a few of the diseases of the day along with their descriptions and game mechanics. We would hope that it would not have to be mentioned, but we will anyway. Do not try any of the remedies that may be added below. Though they are taken from folklore, they should not be used. See your doctor if you think you have any of these illnesses...or a shrink if you are merely a hypochondriac.

Attribute Loss

Many of the wasting diseases below cause Attribute loss. Once the disease is cured, lost Attributes will return at 1 point per week with proper exercise and diet. Some ZMs may actually ask their players to roleplay the return to health over these weeks (i.e., "Captain Maiser is spending this time doing his morning jog back and forth across the ship to help regain his lost Con.").

'Tis true that there's a bit more information in the followin' section than shown in th' main book. That's 'cause most landlubbers nowadays know th' gen'ral symptoms o' th' common cold an' th' flu. A bit more info has been added here for those who don't know jus' what happens t' a man when 'e gets in a foul humor with th' rot or the white plague.

Dysentery

Dysentery was a fairly common affliction due to the lack of hygiene, poor drinking water, tainted food, and coming in contact with feces. The bacteria are taken through the mouth. At its worst, dysentery can kill.

Vector: Waste; Contagion Strength: 4; Severity: Serious

Effects: Symptoms occur within 6 hours and include abdominal pain, diarrhea, fever, loss of appetite, sleeplessness, great thirst, and a pale and emaciated look. -2 to all actions with an additional -1 per additional day with the illness if left untreated. Also, the sufferer loses 1 point of Strength per two

days with the illness, due to malnutrition. Once Strength reaches 0 the character begins losing Constitution points at the same rate. When Constitution reaches 0 the character must make a Survival Test with a minus equal to the current minuses that have been accrued. Failure results in death due to starvation and dehydration.

Cures: The best cure is simple bed rest and a steady supply of clean water and mild, soft foods. The character should stay in bed for two weeks.

Possible Herbal Remedy: A tea made from black pepper, coriander, and powdered sweet flag root.

Malaria

Malaria is caused by the bite of certain mosquitoes. At its worst, malaria can cause coma and death.

Vector: Vermin; Contagion Strength: 3; Severity: Serious

Effects: Symptoms occur within 10 days after infection and include fever, shaking chills, headache, muscle aches, tiredness, nausea, vomiting, and diarrhea. -2 to all actions due to the symptoms. Endurance Points drop by 10 for each week the virus is left untreated. Once Endurance reaches zero or below, the character must make a daily Survival roll to avoid falling unconscious. The character also begins losing 1 point of Constitution per week until it reaches zero. Once it reaches zero, the character must make a Survival roll to avoid going into a coma. Once in a coma, the character begins losing LPs at 10 per day. Another Survival roll is made with the same modifiers as with making a Survival roll to keep from dying (see *AFMBE* p.112) when LPs drop to 0 or below. Failure results in death.

Cures: Cinchona bark tea (from which quinine is derived much later) was used as a cure for malaria by doctors of the day, from the mid 1600s to the mid 1800s.

Possible Herbal Remedy: A tea made from black walnut leaves that have been harvested before the nuts form.

Scurvy (also called The Rot)

Scurvy is caused by a lack of vitamin C in the diet. Death can occur if scurvy is left untreated, due to wounds that refuse to heal that become infected. Many vessels began carrying foods rich in vitamin C. This gave rise to the British nickname Limey, as they began carrying an adequate supply of limes to eat on their voyages.

Vector: Poor Diet; Contagion Strength: 6; Severity: Serious

Effect: After about 3 months on a diet devoid of vitamin C, the character begins showing the symptoms of lethargy, weakness, and joint pain. Raised red spots appear on the legs, buttocks, arms, and back. Internal hemorrhages cause bruises on the skin. The gums bleed and the teeth loosen. The skin becomes flecked with small lesions, and wounds heal at only one half the rate they normally would, including with a doctor's care. This can lead to complications due to infection of the wounds. Any rolls to avoid infection while a character has scurvy are done at -2. If the illness is untreated after 8 months or more, the victim must start making Survival rolls each week. Failure results in a loss of one Constitution point. When the character's Constitution drops to zero, he must continue making weekly rolls. Failure at this point results in death.

Cures: Resuming a steady diet of vitamin C will clear the problem up within a week.

Smallpox

These raised welts start in the mouth and spread to the face, forearms, trunk, and legs. The rash turns to pus-filled lesions that become crusty and eventually dry up after about one month, leaving scars. The victim also suffers from delirium, vomiting, and diarrhea. Other complications, which usually lead to death, includes severe bleeding and brain inflammation. Even if the victim survives the virus, he will usually be left with horrible pockmark scars on his body.

Vector: Airborne; Contagion Strength: 4; Severity: Serious

Effect: Ten days after the initial infection, the victim suffers from high fever, fatigue, severe headache, backache, and malaise. The victim also begins getting a rash on the skin. -3 to all Tasks or Tests during this period. He must make a Simple Constitution Test each day (remember the -3 to Tasks & Tests) against the Contagion Strength of the illness or lose D10(5) LPs. This must be done until the disease runs its course, about forty days after infection. If the victim ever drops below 0 LPs he must make a Survival roll as normal with an additional -3 due to the disease. Failure results in death.

Cures: There is no real cure, even today, but the symptoms can be treated with modern medicine, making survivability a much greater chance. In a modern setting a successful Intelligence + Medicine Task roll will give a +1 bonus for each Success level gained for any Constitution rolls to fight off the illness. During the Age of Sail, it was possible for a doctor to hit upon something that could help the victim fight off the illness. A successful Intelligence + Medicine Task roll will give a +1 bonus for every two Success levels gained for any Constitution rolls to fight off the illness. The only other options are magic or just waiting it out. Those who survive a bout with smallpox pick up the Appearance Drawback at -2.

Syphilis

This disease ran rampant through Europe due to prostitution and other promiscuous sexual practices. It was especially prevalent in prisons.

Vector: Bodily Fluids; Contagion Strength: 4; Severity: Serious

Effect: At the onset, a chancre sore appears on the body, usually on the genitals but sometimes in other places, which lasts for a month before healing. After 6 weeks, the victim is at -2 to all actions, due to rash, joint pains, fever, and constant headaches. This problem goes on for 6 more weeks, after which the victim can make another Simple Constitution Test against the Simple Contagion Strength of the illness. Success means that the illness goes into

latency or remission for a time. The victim rolls D10 x 3(15) to determine how long in years that the disease is in remission. During this time, he is still a carrier and can infect others. After the time is up, the character must make daily Tests against the virus. Failure means that the disease returns for the final stage. Tumorous lesions grow on the soft tissues of the body, including the mouth, nose, and genitals and on other parts of the body. Mercury treatments can help drive the disease back into remission. The doctor administering the mercury must make a Medicine + Intelligence Task roll. If successful, the sufferer can make another Simple Constitution Test to drive the illness back into remission. Each Success level in the roll determines how many years the illness goes into remission. Failure indicates the mercury treatment failed and must be administered again after one week. Failure in the doctor's roll results in possible mercury poisoning, which has its own set of side effects. In the final stage, the victim is at -2 to all rolls, due to pain and fatigue, and -1 to Dexterity, Intelligence, and Willpower per month, due to neurological and nervous system damage. Also, LPs and EPs drop by one third, due to physical damage. The LPs, EPs, and -2 to all rolls will revert to normal if the disease is successfully treated. However, the neurological and nervous system damage is permanent.

Cures: The disease was treated with mercury, by mouth and by applying it in ointments to rashes, scabs, and lesions. It was also injected into the nose and genitals. However, mercury is highly toxic and was generally regulated by its lesser side effects, which included nausea, diarrhea, and salivation. It also had other long-term effects, but one hoped the sufferer didn't need the treatment for quite that long. Now, there are far better treatments for this disease.

Typhoid

This disease is caused by bacteria found in the intestinal tract and is contracted from a symptomatic carrier or from food or water contaminated by the bacteria. This is what they mean when they say, "Don't drink the water." Without treatment, the victim may continue to grow weaker, with

severe dehydration, an enlarged abdomen, and a rapid pulse. About 10% of untreated sufferers die from this illness.

Vector: Waste; Contagion Strength: 4; Severity: Serious

Effect: -2 to all rolls and Endurance drops by one-third at the onset of symptoms, which include fever, fatigue, loss of appetite, chills, headache, muscle and stomach pain, diarrhea, and red spots on the skin around the chest and abdomen. This penalty increases to -3 after three weeks with another one third drop in Endurance. After 5 weeks the penalty becomes -2, but there is no more Endurance drop. After 6 weeks it drops off completely and the Endurance may return normally. Without any kind of attempt at keeping hydrated or properly nourished with clean water and food while the disease runs its course, the victim must make weekly Simple Constitution Tests or lose D10(5) LPs, which will not return until the victim gets better nourishment and plenty of clean water. If the LPs drop below 0 a standard Survival Roll is made. Failure results in death from severe dehydration, starvation, and intestinal perforation.

Cures: Plenty of clean water and orange juice, along with bed rest and lowering the body temperature with cool water. A vegetable broth made from several vegetables, such as carrot, celery, onion, spinach, etc., is also nourishing; strain it and give as a broth. In modern times, a visit to the doctor for antibiotics usually does the trick.

Possible Herbal Remedy: Injections of witch hazel tea will help. Also, a tea made from golden seal and wild alum may be useful to relieve and heal ulceration in the stomach.

Tuberculosis (Consumption, White Plague)

Illness usually manifests in those with a weakened immune system. The victim may have a weakened immune system for any reason, from injury or malnutrition to a sedentary lifestyle or even a lifestyle filled with too many vices (Doc

Infection and Gangrene

Infection and gangrene were major issues during the Age of Sail, as not much was known about germs and wound treatment. In fact, real strides in wound treatment were not made until around the early 1800s, when scientists such as Louis Pasteur made many breakthroughs in microbiology and began to realize that cleanliness played a big part in keeping away infection.

ZM's wishing to add the element of infection and gangrene into his games should have the player roll a Simple Constitution Test against a Simple Contagion Strength Test of 3, for each day a wound goes untreated (i.e., no First Aid or Medicine skill performed upon it). Even a successful Unconventional Medicine Task roll will negate the need for this Test, as even holistic medicine saw some success in treating wounds during the Age of Sail. Keep in mind that this is for large wounds and really shouldn't be used whenever a Cast Member gets a paper cut.

If this roll is failed, the wound will stop healing and the Cast Member will no longer be able to Test for healing per day (see AFMBE p. 113 Medical Healing for information on healing without medical aid). What's more, the wound is now infected and the Cast Member will lose 1 LP per day and experience fever and chills and a -1 penalty on most physical tasks due to increased pain in the region of the wound. The infection can be treated by a successful First Aid, Medicine, or Unconventional Medicine Task roll, with a minus equal to the number of days the infection has been allowed to fester.

If no treatment is done to stop the spread of infection, the Cast Member must begin making Difficult Constitution Tests. Failure indicates the infection has progressed to gangrene.

As the skin begins to die in the area it turns dark purple, dusky, or black and shrivels. Foul-smelling reddish-gray pus runs from the wound and the victim suffers D6(3) LPs of damage per day. The victim is essentially bed-ridden and all physical actions are performed at -2. The victim suffers high fevers, chills, and nausea as the infection slowly spreads into the rest of the body. If the gangrene is in an extremity, the extremity can be amputated, which will remove the gangrenous tissue and stop the spread, but the new wound will still have to be treated medically or it could become infected again.

Any Medicine or Unconventional Medicine Task rolls (First Aid will not work here) to treat Gangrene are done at -3, due to the difficulty of stopping gangrene once it is allowed to take hold. Certain Unconventional Medicines of the day, such as maggots, for instance, saw use in people with infection and necrotized skin tissue. Even if successful, severe damage has been done to the body and as a result, the victim loses one point in a physical attribute (ZM's discretion depending upon where the wound was located) and gains one level of the Attractiveness Drawback, due to ugly scarring.

If the victim ever drops to -10 LPs or less he must make a Survival Test (AFMBE p.112, Survival and Consciousness Tests) or die from the infection that has ravaged his body.

Note: The Touch of Healing Miracle can eradicate infection for 2 Essence points and stop gangrene for 5, or 15 for a progressed gangrenous state.

Holliday, anyone?). The disease here is the “classic” form, which attacks the lungs and creates small lesions of dead gray tissue in the lungs, but there are other forms that attack other portions of the body. If left unchecked, the illness can kill. In fact, tuberculosis had a high mortality rate in the Age of Sail because no one really knew what it was or how to treat it. Now, with a quick diagnosis, tuberculosis can be treated.

Vector: Airborne; Contagion Strength: 3; Severity: Serious

Effect: Without a severe change in lifestyle and living conditions, tuberculosis invariably kills within 10 years in the Age of Sail. Tuberculosis begins with -2 to all rolls due to constant fever, sweating, fatigue, and breathing difficulties and chest pain due to lung damage. The victim may also lose weight and suffer from night sweats. After 6 months, a Simple Constitution Test is made against a Simple Contagion Strength Test. Failure indicates a drop in both Strength and Constitution of 1 point each. All Secondary Attributes should be recalculated to account for the lower scores. Every 6 months another Simple Constitution Test is made until the character drops to 0 in both scores. Once this happens, the victim must make a Difficult Willpower Test. Failure indicates that the victim simply lets go and dies.

Cures: There really was no simple, reliable cure for tuberculosis in the Age of Sail. The best that could be hoped for was a longer life by eating right, taking herbal tonics, and dropping all vices such as alcohol and tobacco. With proper diagnosis in modern times, tuberculosis can be successfully treated.

Possible Herbal Remedy: A tea made from slippery elm will strengthen, heal, and nourish. Also, a tea made from powdered bugleweed and cayenne may be useful to check bleeding from the lungs. To relieve congestion and inflammation, brew knotgrass, shave grass, hemp nettle, and primrose flower.

Death

Though the world was beginning to make great strides in anatomy through the study of the body, death was still somewhat of a mystery. For some deaths the cause was quite plain. A sword wound through the guts was pretty self-explanatory; however, an aneurysm that resulted in death would more than likely be dubbed death by headache. A case of appendicitis might be death by stomachache and fevers. In many instances, these would be passed off as a terrible imbalance in the humours of the victim and treated in the usual manner.

When death did occur, it was treated with a certain amount of respect and superstition. It was required that the corpse lie in state at home for three to four days. While embalming techniques were beginning to improve during this time, many could not afford it and as swift an interment as possible was preferable. Many homes had a “showing room” set up for family viewing, which was normally a room in the cellar or the coolest and driest room available. This was not only done so that families would have a chance to show their respects for the deceased and to allow time for funeral arrangements, but also for more supernatural reasons. Most believed that three to four days was adequate time to give the deceased to rise, in case his soul had not quite left his body yet. Amazingly, this superstition was not as far-fetched as it seems. Certain illnesses, poisons, and comas could make a victim seem dead to anyone but the most skilled in medicine. These “deceased” would sometimes revive before being placed in the ground, along with some who revived after they were interred.

Suicide was seen as instigated by the Devil, and the church retained the right to refuse a Christian burial to anyone who was believed to have committed suicide. If bail was denied, an old pagan approach was used instead. The body was buried with no clothes at a crossroads. A stake would be driven through the corpse to prevent the malevolent spirit within from haunting the living and rising from its grave on the Day of Judgment.

Bodies of the executed were also believed to contain mystical properties. Women would hold their children up to the gallows so that the hands of the swinging, executed criminals could touch them. This was seen as a general guarantee of good health. Also, the “death sweat” of executed criminals was believed to be a cure for scrofula.

Though these are only a few examples of superstitious belief in the face of death, it shows the level of superstitious and supernatural belief that was still present in the world during the Age of Sail. It would not be until later that science and religion would quell belief in the supernatural.

Slavery

One of the many dark sides to the time period was its massive slavery trade. Many nationalities were subjected to slavery, but none more so than the inhabitants of Africa. Though Eden Studios does not condone slavery or wish to focus on it in this book, it requires a mention. The most important reason is that many of these slaves became inhabitants of some of the Caribbean isles and brought rise to the practice of Vodoun, or Voodoo as non-practitioners sometimes call it, in Jamaica and the Caribbean. Another reason is that some of these slaves were allowed to join many pirate crews, and any nationality from Africans to Indians from the New World could be found on a pirate ship. Though this book does not focus on the slave trade, it was such a large part of the time that it is mentioned here.

Those wishing to use the slave trade in their games may do so. However, this book focuses more on the romanticized aspects of the genre; thus, there is no further information on the subject in this book other than a general price scale in Chapter 3 and occasional mentions in the historical texts.

The Pirate's Life fer Me

So ye want t'be a swashbucklin' pirate, do ye? Well, there be a few things ye need t'know first, like our rules an' regulations. That thing we like t'call the Pirate's Code. But first, ye need t'know just what it is t'be a pirate. Read on, me hearty!

Pirates.

Brethren of the Coast.

Buccaneers.

Corsairs.

These are just a few names used to describe those who sailed the seas looking for plunder. They were a colorful and boisterous lot, held together by a common desire for adventure and profit. They were fearless, inventive, and sometimes larger than life. It's no wonder they are depicted as swashbuckling, loudmouthed, swaggering swordsmen in books and movies. These men and women had a style all their own that truly differentiated them from the rest of society.

Though they seemed a rag-tag lot, pirates had a social structure that bordered on true democracy. The crew elected the captain and he only served as long as the crew thought he was doing the job well. He could be deposed for cruelty, cowardice, refusal to attack a potential prize, or any other issue the rest of the pirates could think of. There were pirate captains, however, who kept their position simply because they were too frightening to depose. The captain had few special privileges. He received the same rations as everyone else and had to share his cabin with anyone who walked in.

The crew would also elect a quartermaster, who was to be the representative of the crew. The quartermaster's duties, among other things, were the distribution of food, drink, and money. He also acted as the adjudicator in disputes between crewmen. Often, it was the quartermaster who became captain of a vessel that was taken as a prize by the pirate crew and the crew would split to maintain both vessels until more crew could be hired or taken.

Between voyages, a pirate crew would get together for a pirate council, in which the goals of the voyage would be discussed. Every pirate on the ship attended and all got a vote on where to go, what to do, and how to deal with problems, should any arise. Like many other things in pirate society, this flew directly in the face of rules and regulations on military vessels, where only the highest-ranking officers had any say in what went on.

When vessels were taken as prizes, the remaining crew on the prize would be consulted about their captain and officers. If the captain and officers were good and treated the crew well, they were generally allowed to live. However, this usually entailed being marooned on an island, cast adrift in a boat, or even ransomed. If they treated the crew badly, they were treated much worse. Typically, those who treated their crew poorly were tortured mercilessly before being executed. Pirates took a dim view of the mistreatment of crew. Any remaining crew was usually given the opportunity to join the pirate crew and most did so willingly. Depending upon the cargo, any slaves found on board would be set free and allowed to join the pirates, or taken as part of the booty. This also sometimes depended upon the pirates in question. Not all pirates condoned slavery and there were a few pirate crews that were comprised mostly of freed slaves.

Women and Piracy

Lest ye be thinkin' that there weren't no women pirates an' that women on board a ship was bad luck, we're gonna tell ye that there were indeed women pirates. All that blusterin' about "women couldn't be pirates" was a lie.

Women did indeed become pirates, though not as frequently as men. The tale of women being bad luck on a ship was an old superstition and partially spread by those captains who did not want the distraction of a woman on board their ships. If a woman was aboard the ship, especially a woman a crewman was amorously attached to, it could cause problems, including fights over her, and a crewman who may not do as he's told in a pinch. This was the same reason why many pirates had no families. Families were also forbidden from coming along on a voyage, as it was more likely that the family would get in the way, or the crewman would not perform at his peak if they were aboard.

However, there were women in pirate crews, though not many. There were even two famous pirate women, Anne Bonny and Mary Read. They both sailed with the pirate John "Calico Jack" Rackham, and were just as mean and tough as the male pirates they sailed with. The stories state that once when Mary Read mortally wounded a man, she pulled open her shirt, showing the poor dying man that he'd been defeated by a woman,



not a man. Both women were sentenced to the gallows along with Rackham. When they were caught the commander of the boarding vessel claimed that “those two fought like wild animals, while the other pirates gave in.” Mary Read died of fever in prison and Anne Bonny never went to the gallows, disappearing one day. No one knows if she escaped or was paroled by her father, but she made her feelings clear with her last words to Rackham. “Had you fought like a man, you need not have been hanged like a dog.”

So before you exclude your female counterpart from the fun, remember that there were some pretty rough women pirates in the day that were just as cutthroat and ruthless as the male pirates. And if you still exclude them from the fun, don't send us your medical bills; we warned you.

The Pirate Articles

Also called the Pirate's Code, the pirate articles would be set up at the beginning of a maiden voyage or at the nomination of a new captain. They were designed to allow for a modicum of order and control to be maintained upon a vessel and all crewmen generally had a say in what went into them. These articles were derived from the privateering articles and each of the crew swore to them over a bible or a boarding axe and signed them. Those who did not agree with them or swear by them would not join the voyage. These rules were to be followed by the crew and governed daily life aboard the vessel.

Though the articles of Piracy differed from ship to ship, these were some of the more common rules. These are taken from the Articles of Captain George Lowther, a pirate who took between fifteen and twenty ships during his career:

Article 1

The captain is to have two full shares; the master is to have one share and one-half; the doctor, mate, gunner and boatswain, one share and one-quarter. All others receive one share. (ZM Note: If there was a musician on board, he would usually get a larger share than the rest of the crew as well, which would usually be around one and one-quarter.)

Article 2

He that shall be found guilty of taking up any unlawful weapon aboard the Privateer, or any prize, by us taken, so as to strike or abuse one another, in any regard, shall suffer what punishment the captain and majority of the company shall think fit.

Article 3

He that shall be found guilty of cowardice, in the time of engagement, shall suffer what punishment the captain and majority shall think fit.

Article 4

If any gold, jewels, silver, etc, be found on board any prize to the value of a piece of eight; and the finder does not deliver it to the quartermaster in the space of 24 hours, he shall suffer what punishment the captain and majority shall think fit.

Article 5

He that is found guilty of gaming or defrauding another to the value of a shilling shall suffer what punishment the captain and majority shall think fit.

Article 6

He that shall have the misfortune to lose a limb, in time of engagement, shall have the sum of 150 pounds sterling (approximately 38 Doubloons or 608 pieces of eight), and remain with the company as long as he shall think fit.

Article 7

Good quarter shall be given when called for.

Article 8

He that sees a sail first shall have the best pistol or small arm on board her.

Other rules were popular in many articles. The ones below are pretty self-explanatory. Many pirates were rogues, but they abhorred the mistreatment of women. Women often received protection and better treatment when taken from a prize vessel. However, sometimes the cost meant accepting the advances of a pirate. Still, there were many recorded events of atrocities against women on pirate vessels.

Due to the ever-present danger of fires on board a ship, rules were often added to the articles dealing with open flame in the hold of the ship. One spark in the wrong place could have devastating results.

Other Possible Articles:

The captain shall have full command during the time of engagement, and shall have authority at all other times to conduct the ship accordingly. He who disobeys him shall be punished unless the majority votes against the punishment.

If at any time you meet with a prudent woman, that man who offers to meddle with her without her consent shall suffer death.

That man who shall snap his arms or smoke his tobacco in the hold without cap to his pipe, or carry a candle lighted without a lanthorn, shall suffer Moses' Law (39 stripes on a man's bare back with a lash).

That man who shall not keep his arms clean, fit for an engagement, or neglect his business, shall be cut off from his share, and suffer such other punishment as the Captain and Company shall think fit.

Punishments

Those who did not abide by the rules of the Articles of Piracy or those unlucky souls who were not too kind to their crew had a number of punishments to look forward to. The most common are detailed below.

Walkin' the Plank

It is believed that forcing someone to "walk the plank" was a myth perpetuated by the Hollywood movie scene. But it's a good myth, so we are going to include it anyway.

The victim was tied by his hands and blindfolded and then forced out at sword point onto a narrow plank usually used for disembarking from the ship. This method of punishment was usually used as a method of gathering information, more than it was a punishment. There are only a couple documented cases where a victim was forced to walk the plank.

Moses' Law

The victim is tied to a cannon or other structure and given no more than 39 stripes across the bare back with a lash. Moses' Law was usually given out for those most serious infractions that did not require a death sentence.

Keel Haulin'

Though this was not usually a punishment pirates used, it was quite an effective threat for those who were subjected to it or witnessed it in the Royal Navy. The victim was stripped of clothing and a rope was passed under the ship from port to starboard. The man's hands would then be tied by one end of the rope. His legs would also be bound to prevent him from swimming. Then he was tossed overboard and a group of men would attempt to pull the victim out of the water by pulling him under the boat with the rope and out the other side.

If the men pulled slowly the victim would most likely drown. If he was pulled quickly, he would hit the bottom of the ship, which was often covered with razor sharp barnacles. Many of the victims of this form of torture bled to death from the injuries incurred or suffered a slow painful death from infection. If by some miracle the man did actually survive, the Captain could accuse the crew of doing the punishment incorrectly and order it done again! This was just one of the many atrocities visited upon crewmen in the military.

For game purposes, Keel Hauling does D8(4) x 3 damage per Turn as the body is raked across the bottom of the ship. Normal drowning rules apply (*AFMBE* p. 108), but a Difficult Constitution Test must be made each Turn, due to the pain from the wounds and salt water. Failure indicates that the victim gasps out his breath and begins to drown. The captain and crew determine how long the victim is left in the water and it could be a few Turns before he is brought back up. Swimming would be nigh impossible in this instance, but for those who want to try anyway, impose a -8 penalty on the roll.

Maroonin'

This punishment was typically reserved for murderers, rapists, thieves, and cruel captains. The victim was given the clothes on his back, a bottle of water or rum, a pistol, a bottle of powder, and a handful of shot. Then he was left behind on not much more than a small, barren island with no hope of food or shelter or rescue. The pistol was so that the pirate could take his own life; nobody believed that there was a chance

of actually finding food. However, the movies and novels show pirates marooning victims on jungle covered islands so there's no reason why your pirates shouldn't do so as well.

Cat o' Nine Tails

The cat o' nine tails was a nasty whip composed of nine knotted lines of cow or horse leather attached to a leather handle. Sometimes, steel balls or wire barbs would be added to the ends of the lines. After a flogging with the cat o' nine tails, the typical practice was to pour salt water from the sea into the wounds, causing more pain.

Hangin'

Many pirates found themselves swinging from the gallows during the Age of Sail. The result was usually a slow, painful death which often took several minutes. There were generally two methods for hanging. The first was to put a rope around the victim's neck and then pull him off the ground. The second was to pull something out from under the victim, letting him drop a distance and swing freely. Both methods rarely led to a broken neck and the victim suffered horribly as he slowly choked to death and suffered many indignities while doing so, like losing control of his bodily functions.

In game terms, the victim must succeed in a Survival Test with a -1 penalty. The Zombie Master may impose a -3 penalty for very long drops. A successful roll results in the victim not suffering from a broken neck, which means it is time for the choking and indignities to begin. At this point, the victim takes D4(2) LPs of damage per Turn until dead...or rescued by his comrades.

Swashbucklers

The dictionary describes a swashbuckler as “a swaggering or daring soldier or adventurer”, while other places speculate that the term comes from a nickname given to men who would purposefully rattle or bang their swords against their opponents' bucklers in combat. Either way, the term has come to mean those men and women of action and daring who plied the seven seas in search of adventure and

fortune; those of bravery who lived and died by the sword and followed their own moral code. Pirates, buccaneers, and freebooters if they did it with class and a suave style, they were swashbucklers.

The following rules will allow players to create their own men and women of derring-do. There are also new Qualities, Drawbacks, Skills, and rules for swordsmanship and duels that will help give that swashbuckling feel to the setting.

Playin' It Straight

The *All Flesh Must Be Eaten* Core Book has the Norm, Survivor, and Inspired character types (*AFMBE* p. 28), which are fine for use in this supplement. In fact, those of the rank and file in everyday society would more than likely be Norms, while the pirates and privateers on the oceans would be Survivors. Inspired characters could be used, depending upon ZM approval, or whether the ZM wants to incorporate Vodou in his game (see Chapter 4 for more information on Vodou). It is highly possible to have a religious cast member with divine powers in a group of rapsallions. It all depends upon what you want for the feel of the setting.

Swashbucklin' Derring-do!

Those who want a little of the ol' over-the-top swashbuckling action, need look no further than any Cinematic Unisystem product for a little thing Eden Studios likes to call Drama Points. They are easily dropped into any Unisystem game and can make for a funnigh of high-flyin', death-defyin' swashbucklin' action. If this is your cup o' grog, you can start characters off with 4 Drama Points for Survivors and Inspired, and 8 Drama Points for Norms and Silver Screen Swashbucklers.

Just make sure the villains equally up to the challenge!

A word of caution: Adding Drama Points to your Classic Unisystem game can create some astoundingly high roll results as well as abysmally low roll results. Make sure you are fully prepared for these possible eventualities before adding Drama Points to your game.

Larger Than Life

Although some may wish to play it straight for a more realistic feel, there are those who want to play those larger than life swashbucklers in the movies. For that, we have the Silver Screen Swashbuckler! The Silver Screen Swashbuckler can easily swing from one ship to another from the mainmast, fight many men at once, climb sheer rock faces, and generally win the day with a twinkle in his eye and a gleam on his tooth.

The Silver Screen Swashbuckler starts with 25 points for Attributes, 20 points for Qualities (and up to 10 points in Drawbacks), and 35 points for Skills.

The Notorious Pirate

Commodore Norrington: *"You are without doubt the worst pirate I've ever heard of."*

Jack Sparrow: *<beat> "But you have heard of me."*

-Pirates of the Caribbean

Though many pirate careers fell into obscurity, the great pirates of the day had a certain notoriety about them. Pirates such as Blackbeard, Anne Bonny, "Calico Jack" Rackham, Francis Drake, and others made a name for themselves in the history books, becoming some of the most notorious pirates of the day through success, bravado, and sheer determination. The Cast Members in any game setting should have a chance to become just as notorious as those in the history books. For that reason, a bit on status and notoriety has been added here.

The Status Quality (*AFMBE* p. 46) plays an important role in determining how notorious a Cast Member has become. In terms of notoriety, Status is viewed in different ways, depending upon the circumstances. A pirate seaman may view a piratical Cast Member with awe while a naval captain may view him as a criminal and a villain.

Each level of Status grants a +1 bonus to Intelligence Tests for anyone attempting to recognize the Cast Member by name or appearance. It also determines how good a starting crew or ship the Captain can possess. A Cast Member's Status can get them a better deal with merchants, or get him

tossed out of port towns, depending upon whom he's dealing with. A pirate well known for raiding French vessels might get better treatment from an English Captain if he was captured than he would by a French one. In this regard, the Status Quality can be a double-edged sword and gives a +1 or -1 for each level of the Quality to any reaction rolls or skill rolls when dealing with anyone who knows the Cast Member.

Lastly, ZMs can hand out more Status to a Cast Member in game for daring deeds that are witnessed by others. These awarded Status increases are free and do not need to be purchased with XPs.

Ye Old Qualities & Drawbacks

A couple of the old Qualities and Drawbacks are a little different in the Age of Sail. If you are using the historical Age of Sail as your setting, keep in mind that the Minority Drawback is worth 2 to 3 points, depending upon the nationality chosen. During the Age of Sail, those whom we consider Minorities now would've been considered either savages abroad or slave labor and typically not trusted in everyday society. However, this was not always the case aboard pirate vessels, which is why there were quite a few Minority pirates and even a few women who were pirates.

Resources

Variable Social Quality or Drawback
2 points/level, positive or negative

Destitute (-5): 2 Real worth of stuff, and possibly a wooden bowl or cup. Lucky to beg one Real a month on the streets.

Miserable (-4): 3 Pieces of Eight (P) miscellaneous gear & 3P assorted currency.

Poor (-3): 15P gear/property & 15P life savings.

Hurting (-2): 30P gear/property & 30P life savings.

Down on Yer Luck (-1): 150P gear/property & 45P life savings.

Lower Class (0): 450P gear/property & 75P life savings & 3P/month

Middle Class (+1): 1,500P gear/property & 150P life savings & 15P/month

Well To Do (+2): 9,000P gear/property & 300P life savings & 30P/month

Wealthy (+3): 21,000P gear/property & 1,200P life savings & 50P/month

Rich (+4): 60,000P gear/property & 1,500P life savings & 65P/month

Lordly (+5): 150,000P gear/property & 6,000P life savings & 90P/month

Addiction

LSD, heroin, refined cocaine, and many other barbiturates were not created until much later. However, there were plenty of other drugs to become addicted to in the Age of Sail. Tobacco and alcohol use was very popular during this time and even coffee and tea were considered mild drugs, due to their uplifting effects from caffeine.

Opium and Laudanum use: 4 points

Heavy use of Opium or Laudanum: 5 points

Cannabis (marijuana): Treat exactly as on p. 36 of the *AFMBE* Core Book.

Coca Leaves (Cocaine): Treat exactly as on p. 36 of the *AFMBE* Core Book.

New Qualities

Berserker

4- or 6-Point Supernatural Quality

Some people have a burning rage within them that is only barely kept in check. This beast surfaces during times of stress or combat, turning the sufferer of this affliction into an uncontrollable killing machine. Some rare few people have learned to control the rage, only letting it out when they need it.

The Red Rage, as it is sometimes called, allows the berserker to tap into a primal, almost animalis-

tic, strength to do amazing things. Unfortunately for most, they also tend to ignore the punishment that they are taking in combat until it is too late. Also, even their friends are at great risk when they are on the same battlefield. It's best to just stay away from a frothing berserker until he comes down off his rage.

When the Red Rage takes him, a berserker temporarily gains the following:

+2 to Strength, +2 to Constitution (this does not add LPs but adds to damage, Resistance, Consciousness, and Survival Rolls). He also gain Natural Toughness and Nerves of Steel (note: those who already possess Nerves of Steel cannot be shaken by anything when the Red Rage is in effect, no matter how indescribably horrific). His Life Points are doubled for the duration. However, once the berserker comes down from the rage he may actually die from the grievous wounds he has suffered. All the damage done in the combat comes off of the berserker's true LPs first and any points after that are treated as negative LPs once the Rage leaves him. The berserker gains the Reckless Drawback and a -2 reaction from anyone who learns that he is a berserker. Also, the berserker is far less concerned with defense and does not have the mental state to think of aiming. As a result, he suffers a -1 to all defense rolls and cannot aim for weak spots or unarmored limbs. Lastly, the rage is uncontrolled and can happen whenever the berserker is in combat or very confrontational circumstances. He cannot actively try to come down off of his rage and could possibly hurt friends or acquaintances even after a battle is over. The ZM can decide when the rage comes on or when it has passed. Keep in mind that the character shouldn't go berserk at the drop of a hat. Finding a weevil in his sea biscuit is not going to send him over the edge...unless they has a horrible phobia of weevils.

Some berserkers have learned to control the Red Rage and can make a Difficult Willpower roll to either work himself into a rage (no penalty) or calm himself down (-2 penalty). This version costs more.

Once a berserker comes down from the Red Rage he is weak and tired from extreme overexertion. Until he rests for at least 4 hours he suffers -2 on all physical actions, is down by half on his Endurance Points, and moves at half speed. These penalties are cumulative with any previous instances of becoming berserk without the proper rest. Once the negative modifier is equal to his Willpower or more on physical actions due to these cumulative minuses he collapses from overexertion and is unable to do anything until he gets at least eight hours of uninterrupted rest.

Born for the Sea

1-Point Mental Quality

The Cast Member seems born to be a seaman. Perhaps he was born under some sailor's star, or during a typhoon. Whatever the reason, all aspects of sea life just seem to come naturally to him. It takes the Cast Member half as long to learn a sea faring skill from an instructor (see *AFMBE* p. 56, Instruction Skill) and he has a +1 bonus in any sea-faring skill he possesses.

Sleep Interruption and Deprivation

Interrupted sleep and sleep deprivation were both very real problems on board vessels. If an all hands call went out while you were asleep and you had to remain vigilant the rest of the night, you didn't just get to go back to sleep and pick up your sleep shift where you left off. Also, some cruel captains sometimes used sleep deprivation as a punishment, forcing a crewman to stay on extended watch and taste the lash if he was caught sleeping on duty.

Just as sleep deprivation plays a role in everyday lives and on board ships, so too is it a problem in survival horror. When running in fear from the walking dead or some horror from beyond Cast Members don't always have enough time or even desire to close their eyes for eight hours lest they become dinner for the stalking horror lurking outside. However, eventually the hapless Cast Member will drop from sheer exhaustion and then...

The body needs around eight hours or more of sleep to function at peak performance, though most humans can function just fine with only six or seven. AFMBE p. 114 has information for Endurance loss from not getting enough sleep, but there are other side effects to not sleeping and being awakened suddenly.

A Cast Member who stays awake for more than 20 hours begins to feel the effects of it, beginning with a feeling of grogginess and heavy limbs. He also begins to experience a -1 penalty to all Perception based rolls. After 24 hours, the Cast Member gains an additional -1 to Perception based rolls and a -1 to all Tasks or Tests requiring hand-eye coordination (e.g. driving, shooting, etc.). At this point, the eyes begin to play tricks on the mind, making the Cast Member see things just at the edge of vision that aren't really there. These can really set the nerves of a lookout on edge. After 28 hours, these tricks turn into full-blown illusions, making it difficult to discern whether that shadow over there is a shadow or a flesh-devouring zombie. The Cast Member may make a Difficult Intelligence Test to tell if what he is seeing is illusion or the real thing. At this point, the Cast Member must begin making Difficult Constitution Tests every two hours to keep from simply falling over from sheer exhaustion, no matter how many Endurance points he still has left in his pool.

These penalties remain until the Cast Member gets a full 8 hours of rest.

A Cast Member who is suddenly awakened while asleep must make a Difficult Constitution Test immediately upon waking or be at -1 to all mental and physical Tasks or Tests for 7 Turns minus the Cast Member's Constitution Attribute. The Light Sleeper Quality negates this effect.

Disconcerting Countenance

1-Point Social Quality

Whether it's the cold, calculating stare of a killer or the stance of the dusty hero as he looks at someone from under his hat, this character seems to inspire fear with just his very countenance. Sometimes this countenance can rattle opponents, causing them to miss at crucial moments or even run away from the character. The character makes a Difficult Willpower Test and checks the chart on *AFMBE* p. 95 to determine the success levels of the roll. Each Success Level is a -1 to an immediate Fear Test that the object of this character's ire must make. Failure means the target reacts in whatever way the Fear chart or the ZM feels appropriate. Those with Nerves of Steel are not affected by this Quality.

Double-Jointed

2-Point Physical Quality

This does not mean that the character has more than the usual number of joints, but that he can actually rotate or pop joints out of place. This ability can assist the character in wriggling free of bonds or other restraints. The character has a +3 bonus to any attempt to get loose from restraints or to squeeze through narrow areas.

Increased Life Points

1-Point per Level Supernatural Quality

Some pirates seem imbued with some supernatural fortitude that allows them to shrug off many wounds and still keep going. In fact, sometimes it's hard to tell if these sea dogs are even human at all. Perhaps they made some dark pact in the middle of the night or they possess some ancient item that gives 'em the power to withstand even the touch of cold steel in their guts. Blackbeard would be one who had levels of this Quality. Whatever the reason, this Quality grants the character +10 LPs per level purchased. However, unlike Hard to Kill, this Quality has no benefit other than the ability to take more damage than most. ZMs are encouraged to keep a tight rein on the amount of levels allowed,

unless you are intentionally running a higher-powered campaign.

Internal Compass

1-Point Mental Quality

The character always knows which way is north. Even while underground or in some massive complex the character can make a Simple Intelligence Test to determine which way is north, south, east, or west.

Light Sleeper

2-Point Physical Quality

The type of person who sleeps "with one eye open", this character can be awake at the slightest hint of trouble. He is instantly alert, able to perform actions as soon as he bolts upright. Light Sleeper negates any penalty for interrupted sleep. The Light Sleeper rolls Perception + Notice to recognize trouble in his surroundings. This roll is contested if the danger is stealthy or quiet.

Natural Toughness

2-Point Physical Quality

Some buccaneers are so weather-beaten, scarred and generally stubborn that they have gained a hide of tough, leathery skin and have a high tolerance for pain. These swashbucklers have an Armor Value of 4 against blunt attacks. This includes fists, feet, cudgels and belaying pins, chairs, and other not so sharp items. Their natural armor will also defend against cannon shot, which isn't much protection against a weapon that's built to blow through wood and stone.

Resistance

1-Point per Level Physical Quality

Alcohol: Great for drinking games. A pirate who is resistant to alcohol gains a bonus to resist the effects of over consumption of liquor. Each point in the Quality grants a +1 bonus to resisting the effects of alcohol, including penalties to actions and Willpower Tests to stay conscious.

Alcohol Effects

Alcohol affects everyone differently according to personality and cultural background (for some it's an euphoric, for others it's a depressant). The character suffers a -1 penalty to all actions (including Willpower Tests) for every two doses taken up to four, and for every dose after the fourth. Alcohol tends to increase the effects of many Mental Drawbacks. Therefore, increase any Mental Drawbacks the Cast Member has by 1 while drunk. The Cast Member may also gain the Clown, Emotional Problems (Depression), or Reckless Drawback at the ZM's option while in a drunken state. ZMs should also keep in mind that alcohol reduces inhibitions and any temporary Drawback given to the Cast Member should reflect the given situation. It is not always easy to determine just how alcohol will affect a given person and could affect him completely differently with each given situation.

Overdose: If the character takes more "doses" than double his Constitution, he must make a Difficult Willpower Test to stay conscious (failure results in unconsciousness for $D4(2) \times 2$ hours). If he succeeds, he may continue drinking, but every new dose requires a new Test. If he fails the second or any further Willpower Tests, he must make a Simple Constitution Test with a -1 for each additional drink over the character's Constitution score doubled, against a Simple Strength Test of the alcohol. Failure indicates he suffers alcohol poisoning. Some poison Strengths for various alcohol proofs are below:

- Under 10 Proof (most beers):** Strength 1
- 20 Proof (some European beers):** Strength 2
- 40/80 Proof:** Strength 3
- 101 Proof:** Strength 4
- 151 Proof:** Strength 5
- 190 Proof (pure grain alcohol, Everclear, etc.):** Strength 6



Alcohol Poisoning: Alcohol is a nerve poison (see *AFMBE* pp. 106-107 for Poison types) and affects the central nervous system, specifically consciousness, respiration, and heart rate. If a character suffers alcohol poisoning he may vomit (a natural defense mechanism as the brain tries to expel the toxins in the stomach), pass out, or pass out and vomit (a dangerous combo). The character's breathing will be shallow and he will be very difficult to awaken.

If the character has alcohol poisoning he immediately falls into an unconscious state close to a mild coma. The Success levels in the contested Simple Constitution vs. Simple Strength Tests are compared and the character's Constitution is dropped by 1 per point of Success the poison achieved over the Simple Constitution Test. If the character's Constitution drops to 0 or below he must immediately make a Survival Test using Willpower and the current Constitution (if the number is a negative it goes against the roll). Failure indicates that the character slips into a coma and will die in 5 minutes per Willpower point he possesses unless immediate medical attention is given. If the character succeeds in the Survival Test he stays in a mild coma until the poison runs its course through his system. He may make Consciousness Tests after D4 x 3 hours and for each hour after that until awake and will regain lost Constitution at 1 point per day of rest. For the first day he will still be groggy and still suffer any minuses to action penalties gained from the original binge. He may also gain an Intolerance to the specific type of alcohol that poisoned him, requiring a Simple Constitution Test from then on just to drink the stuff without vomiting.

Resistance

1-Point per Level Physical Quality

Cast Iron Gullet: Growing up on the ocean and eating the rations on board ships has given this swabby the ability to stomach food that would make a zombie retch. The character can eat all but the most decayed food and can drink tainted water. He can actually stomach those old bug-encrusted biscuits in the back of the hold and come back for seconds. Watching this person eat is hardly ever a

treat, as he doesn't always care what it is he's eating. The character has a bonus to Constitution Tests for eating unpalatable or tainted food equal to the Resistance level.

Sea Legs

2-Point Physical Quality

The character is most at home on a ship on a rolling sea. He ignores all but the most extreme minuses to Dexterity from adverse conditions while on a ship. Even at the sea's worst, he still only takes half the minus that most sea dogs would. Cast Members with Sea Legs cannot take the Motion Sickness Drawback.

Uncanny Balance

2-Point Physical Quality

This character has a very good center of balance, allowing him to balance well on precarious surfaces. The Quality grants a +2 bonus to all rolls where balance might come into play, including tightrope walking and sliding along a ledge.

New Drawbacks

Landlubber

2-Point Drawback

The butt of jokes on an ocean voyage, the landlubber has a hard time coping with life at sea. He just does not have the knack of moving around on a rolling deck and is at a -2 to all dexterity-based actions for the first two days of a voyage. He also has a -1 susceptibility to seasickness during this time. After two days the seasickness passes, but the character is still at a -1 to all dexterity-based actions for another day. After 3 days, the minuses pass. After the character has stayed on land for more than 12 hours, the process starts again.

Obligation (Type)

Variable Social Drawback

Some rights are accompanied by duties. An Obligation must be followed to various degrees, and

grants a number of points depending on the strictness of its dictates. Minimal Obligations, where the character is expected to obey the basic precepts of an organization or creed and not to betray its members, or the normal obligations to friends and family, are worth no points.

In terms of the Age of Sail, this could be an obligation to “King and Country”, to follow the Articles of Piracy, to follow a Letter of Marque, etc; and could vary in severity depending upon who the Cast Member is obliged to. Skip the apathetic pirate Captain may not be as adamant at enforcing an obligation as Blackbeard would.

Important: The character is expected to routinely risk himself for the cause, and go above and beyond the normal call of duty. An Important Obligation is worth 1 point.

Major: The character is expected to put the welfare of the group or cause above his own. He is always on call and does not have time to pursue such activities as a normal job, or much of a personal life. The penalties for disobedience or selfishness are severe and may include death. This is worth 2 points.

Total: The character is expected to die for the group or cause, if need be. Missions are generally extremely hazardous, and the character is constantly in danger of imprisonment, torture or execution. This is worth 3 points.

Physical Disability: One Eye 2-Point Drawback

For this person an eye patch isn't just a fashion statement. A character with only one eye has -2 to melee combat-related Tasks and Skills requiring hand-to-eye coordination and all Perception Tests involving peripheral vision and depth perception. During ranged combat, the penalty is increased to -3.

Vulnerability 1-Point per Level Physical Drawback

Vulnerability is the opposite of the Resistance Quality. A character can be vulnerable to anything listed in the Resistance Quality, giving him a minus

Peg-Legs & Hooks

Aarrgh, me matey! So ye say ye want yer pirate t' have a hook fer a hand an' a peg-leg. Well, look no further than yer AFMBE core book p. 45 fer th' Physical Disability Drawback. Simply take Missing Hand and Missing Leg and buy it as though ye had a prosthetic replacin' it, which drops the point value an' the penalties.

against it instead of a bonus. Note: Both Alcohol and Cast Iron Gullet can be taken as Vulnerabilities as well. Cast Iron Gullet in this case should be renamed to Weak Stomach.

Motion Sickness: This landlubber is vulnerable to seasickness and has a minus to resist becoming sick on sea voyages. Whenever the sea becomes even a little choppy, the character must make a Simple Constitution Test with a minus equal to the level of this Drawback. Failure indicates that the character is feeding the fish over the side of the boat.

New Skills

Craft (Cartography)

This is the skill of creating an accurate map of an area. In the Age of Sail, a reliable map was worth quite a sum of money. Each Success Level gained in creating a map of an area grants a +1 bonus to any Navigation rolls made with the map. A failed roll indicates a map that is inaccurate. For every two points the roll is failed by, the map imposes -1 to any Navigation rolls when using the map.

Guns (Type)

The Guns skill is still used to fire cannons and flintlocks. Guns (Handgun) is used for the flintlock pistol and Guns (Rifle) is used for the flintlock musket, while Guns (Shotgun) is used for the blunderbuss. Firing a cannon (as well as other heavy artillery) uses Guns (Gunnery) + Perception, instead of Dexterity.

Survival and Foraging

“Teach a man to fish and he eats for a lifetime”...or at least, as long as he can catch the fish. The same goes for all types of foraging. When a Cast Member needs to find food in the wild he can make a Survival + Perception Task roll to try to forage. The type of terrain dictates what types of food could be found there. See *AFMBE* p. 60 for the Survival skill for penalties on using the skill in the wrong type of terrain.

Each Success level in the Task roll will allow the forager to find approximately 1 pound of edible food in the form of berries, nuts, and plants. A person can eat satisfactorily on 2 pounds per day and poorly on 1 pound. If the Cast Member takes the time to set crude traps he can find double that amount. If more than one person helps in the search, but only one person has the proper Survival skill, that person rolls and adds a +1 per additional person in the search to the roll. If more than one person foraging has the skill, they all roll and simply add success levels together. Each time a Cast Member rolls to forage it takes one hour.

Other factors may make it more difficult to successfully forage for food, including the time of year, weather conditions, or area. The ZM should use the table on *AFMBE* p. 94 to determine what the difficulty should be for these conditions. Some examples are below:

Late Fall/Early Winter: Difficult (-1 to -2)

Late Winter/Early Spring: Very Difficult (-3)

Vast Desert: Very Difficult (-4)

Icy Tundra: Very Difficult (-5)

Drought: Very Difficult (-3)

Foraging at sea is done much the same way, except fishing gear or harpoons are needed to forage, or some way of harvesting seaweed. When fishing, the forager rolls a Survival + Perception Task roll to choose a likely spot to fish in. During modern times, fishing sonar could be used, which would add a +1 to +4 bonuses to the Survival roll, depending upon the quality of the sonar used. The Cast Member catches 1 pound of fish per Success level. Using a fishing net quadruples this amount. If multiple people are fishing, the bonuses are as above. However, using a net will only double this amount.

Hand Weapon (Type)

Useful for animal handlers, swashbucklers, and S&M fetishists, Hand Weapon (Whip) allows the Cast Member to make use of a whip to great effect in combat. For those unlucky sea dogs who needed to replace their missing hand with a hook, fork, or other odd utensil, Hand Weapon (Hook) allows the Cast Member to make use of his artificial replacement as a weapon in combat.

Navigation

A good navigator was highly prized by seafarers, as they could get the ship safely from one place to another without getting completely lost. Many maps of the known world were notoriously inaccurate and it took a good navigator to plot a course that would land a ship in the proper locale. This skill covers knowledge of map reading and plotting, course calculating and the like. It is common among scouts,

Navigation Addendum

The ZM should give bonuses or minuses to the Navigation roll depending upon anything from weather factors or bad or nonexistent navigational equipment to an unreliable or nonexistent map. Failure indicates that the ship is off course by 10 miles per 2 points the roll was failed by.

pilots, artillery officers, and communications and sensor operators. Use Navigation and Intelligence to plot and calculate a course or flight plan, and Navigation and Perception to examine someone else's course or coordinates for mistakes.

Seamanship

This is the knowledge and practical application of not only making a vessel go, but also discerning your tack from your scud and knowing what to do if a fire breaks out aboard a vessel. Anything needed to keep a ship moving, including trimming, raising and lowering sails, manning the tiller, putting out fires, manning the bilge and other tasks, is covered with this skill. The Skill uses Dexterity + Seamanship for the most part, but could use any other Attribute at the ZM's option, depending upon what the roll is for. Seamanship skill checks are used in a multitude of ways later in this book and are detailed there. The Quality of the crew on board a ship modifies the Seamanship roll. More on Ship's Crew can be found in Chapter 3 (p. 70).

Survival

Cast Members may take Survival (Sea) for knowledge of how to survive on the sea. This grants knowledge of various signs that warn of shoals, storms, and other dangers at sea. The skill allows the Cast Member a roll to determine if a sea plant is edible or not. It also allows for foraging rolls to determine whether fish can be caught in a location.

"Florentine" Fighting Style (Special)

The art of fighting with two weapons was developed into a complex fighting style in Florence, Italy. This was far more than just picking up two weapons and swinging them around and its original incarnation was the



sword and dagger, or dirk, pairing. Eventually, this was expanded to encompass any two-weapon pairing. With this skill a character can fight with a weapon in each hand. This does not mean that the character is ambidextrous, as he still has a dominant hand, only that the character has trained in the use of a specific two-weapon pairing in combat situations.

This is a Special Skill, which costs 2 points per level at character creation (see *AFMBE* p. 119 for raising or purchasing a Special Skill after character creation). Each Pairing must be chosen as a separate skill. Some more common ones include Sword/Dagger, Sword/Sword, and Sword/Cape.

A character who has trained in a two-weapon pairing has learned to use both weapons in sync to great effect. When used in combat, the Cast Member uses the Florentine Fighting Style skill for combat rolls even if he has another Hand Weapon skill that would normally be used for the weapon in question. For example: A Cast Member who has Florentine Fighting Style (Sword/Dagger) also takes levels in Hand Weapon (Sword). While using the Sword/Dagger pairing he uses the Florentine Fighting Style skill level. Later, after losing his dagger over the side of a cliff, he must rely only on his sword and may use his Hand Weapon (Sword) skill instead. If his Florentine skill is higher, or he has no other skill, he may still default to using the Florentine skill.

Florentine Style and Ambidexterity

If the character has Ambidexterity from the *Dungeons & Zombies Supplement for AFMBE*, he has an easier time of learning Florentine Fighting Style. He purchases Florentine Style as though it were a normal Skill and not a Special Skill. He also has slightly better combat abilities than those who only have one or the other. In this case, the character's first combat action is done with a +1 bonus! The second action has no bonus or minus, while the third action has only a -1 to the roll. All other actions beyond this progress as normal beginning at -2 for the fourth action.

The Florentine Fighting Style skill grants an additional attack, parry, or feint (one free attack/defense action) per Turn with the off-hand weapon at no penalty. Each action after that still suffers the cumulative -2 penalty. Therefore, the character gets the normal one attack and one defense Task each Turn at no penalty, plus one additional attack or defense Task at no penalty for the off-hand weapon. Damage on a successful attack roll depends upon which weapon was used in that attack. Thus, a character who has Florentine Fighting Style (Sword/Axe) who uses his axe to attack in his second attack action would use the damage for the axe and not his sword.

Dueling Swords

Inigo: *"You are using Bonetti's defense against me, eh?"*

Wesley: *"I thought it fitting considering the rocky terrain."*

Inigo: *"Naturally you must expect me to attack with Capoferro."*

Wesley: *"Naturally, but I find that Thibault cancels out Capoferro, don't you?"*

Inigo: *"Unless the enemy has studied his Agrippa." <super cool flip that has nothing to do with the Agrippa style> "...which I have."*

-The Princess Bride

The word "duel" comes from the Latin word "duello", made up of "bellum" (conflict) and "duo" (two). A true duelist was defined as one who fights in single combat. The duel was an important part of the Age of Sail and even more so in the swashbuckler genre. Any affront, whether real or imagined, was usually resolved with the sword. In fact, at some time during the Age of Sail, duels were specifically outlawed, due to the death toll. However, this did not necessarily stop dueling, just as antipiracy laws did not necessarily stop piracy.

In a more formal duel, one man would generally "call out" the other, either by words or by the throwing of the glove. If the challenge was accepted, the

Fencing and Hollywood

Duels rarely ranged all over the place. In fact, many were public affairs and were performed on a stage in the town square. They adhered to a strict set of rules about backing away and moving. The duel that ranges all over looks impressive, but was actually a product of Hollywood. Fencers would have to be terribly strong and powerful, not to mention agile, for that kind of constant activity and sword swinging. But we all know the setting would not be nearly as fun without the “over-the-top” action of the Hollywood duel, so make with the acrobatic displays all you want!

terms of the duel would then be discussed. If one of those involved in a challenge did not know how to use a sword, that person could choose someone to duel for him. Many nobles chose others to duel for them, unless they were confident in their abilities to win the duel. Sometimes, a refusal to duel was seen as an act of cowardice or admission of guilt or fault. However, there were times when a refused duel actually worked against the reputation of the challenger.

Sudden skirmishes, such as those on pirate ships and in narrow alleyways, could not be settled in an orderly manner as it was with the formal duel. These were usually quick and bloody affairs that almost always left one side dead or dying.

Learning the Art

Learning the art of swordsmanship and becoming a master took years of study under a sword master. Masters of the craft such as Agrippa, Thibault, Capoferro, and Bonetti wrote treatises on the subject, some of which are still followed today. In 1540, Henry the VIII granted license to certain “masters of the noble science of defense” and simultaneously outlawed independent teachers. Anyone who was not chosen as a member of this institution was forbidden to teach the art of fencing. Those who were members were made to swear not to teach the craft to murderers, thieves, or other undesirables. Of course, it was not always easy to discern who was of the right caliber to teach the

craft to. Nine masters and 11 provosts were registered as legal teachers of the craft. They created four ranks: Scholar, Free Scholar, Provost, and Master, with advancement through the ranks based on success in prizefights. This law did not dissuade some private masters from teaching fencing, but it did make their activities illegal.

The Terms of the Field

The rules for sword duels differ slightly from the regular combat rules, but not so much as to completely change combat. In fact, it still works much like the normal rules, but with a number of maneuvers added for extra flair, which can be used by any swordsman.

Sword duels are usually composed of a combination of offensives, defensives, and ripostes, along with some fancy footwork and chandelier swinging in the swashbuckler genre. As it is difficult to create a comprehensive system for all the nuances of fencing, a more simplified system is used here with some modifiers for special maneuvers.

Riposte: The most basic maneuver in swordplay, the riposte is done after a successful parry and allows an immediate return strike against the attacker. The riposte takes an action to accomplish, but interrupts the actions of the attacker. Whether the riposte hits or misses, the action reverts back to the attacker.

Pommeling: This maneuver can be used after a successful parry. The swordsman steps forward suddenly and delivers a blow on the head or upper body of his opponent with the pommel or basket guard of his sword. This maneuver is done at the usual minuses against the head or neck (*AFMBE* p. 104), or no penalty on a general strike to the upper body (chest, shoulder, bicep, etc), and does $D4(2) \times (\text{Strength}+1)$ in bash damage. This can be used as a non-lethal “knock out” attack to do Endurance Point damage only, which quadruples the damage on a shot to the head, but is all Endurance damage.

Shasso (Boar's Thrust): Done after a successful parry. The defender makes a Dexterity + Dodge Task to avoid the attacker's blow. If successful, the

defender drops beneath the attacker's strike by bending deep on the leading knee and dropping to the ground supported on the free hand. Then the defender quickly thrusts upward with his own sword into the stomach or sternum of the attacker. The damage is as the weapon, but the bonus to strike is at a +2.

Incocciatura/Corps a Corps: Essentially a grapple with swords, a fencer uses this move to keep an opponent in close by locking blades. The attacker slides his blade around and steps in to bring his cross-guard in to entwine with the opponent's cross-guard or sword blade. A successful grapple roll must be made using a Dexterity + Hand Weapon (Sword) Task roll against the opponent's Dexterity + Hand Weapon (Sword) or Dodge Task roll. If successful, the attacker can make another attack without incurring a multiple action penalty that does not involve his locked weapon (i.e., head, knee, fist, dagger, etc). What's more, the action has a +1 bonus to the attack. Afterward, the opponent must make a Contested Simple Strength Test to break the Corps a Corps.

Manchette: This maneuver is a dangerous one as it could put the attacker at a disadvantage. The attacker slides into the guard of the defender and delivers an upward slash into the sword arm of his opponent in an attempt to cripple it. The blow strikes the upper forearm joint, possibly severing the tendons there. The attack is at -4 to attempt, but if the damage to the arm

is equal to Total LPs/3 then the arm is crippled. However, if the attack misses, the defender is at +2 on the riposte attack, due to the fact that the attacker has stepped into his guard.

Balestrata: This is not much more than a plain old ordinary trip maneuver, but it's enough to put someone at a distinct disadvantage when he is on the ground. The attacker must succeed with a Dexterity + Brawling Task roll. If the roll is successful, he has managed to step in and hook the leg of his opponent, pushing him backward and to the ground. The opponent may attempt to keep his feet under him with a Difficult Dexterity Test (or Acrobatics + Dexterity) with a minus equal to the number of Successes gained in the attack maneuver. However, even if successful, the opponent is still at -2 to any actions performed that Turn due to being off balance. If the defender falls, he is at -4 on all actions while on the ground until he spends an action getting back up. ZM Option: The ZM could impose a -1 penalty to the attacker's roll for each level of Strength the defender has over the attacker's Strength to simulate an "out-muscling" of the maneuver. Or a +1 bonus for each level of Strength the attacker has over the defender.

Feint: This maneuver is most useful for those swordsmen who are trained in the use of two weapons. The attacker uses his weapon in a manner which causes the opponent to think the blow is com-



ing from another direction and reacts to that maneuver. Then, the attacker reverses the stroke to attack from a different direction. The Feint uses an Intelligence + Hand Weapon Task roll against the opponent's Perception + Hand Weapon Task roll. If the feint is successful, the next attack the attacker makes receives a bonus equal to the number of Successes gained in the feint. If not, the opponent caught on to the ruse and reacts accordingly.

Shiver Me Timbers!

“They groan'd, they stirr'd, they all uprose, Nor spake, nor moved their eyes;

It had been strange, even in a dream, To have seen those dead men rise.

The helmsman steer'd, the ship moved on, yet never a breeze up-blew;

The mariners all 'gan work the ropes, where they were wont to do.

They raised their limbs like lifeless tools--We were a ghastly crew.”

-Samuel Taylor Coleridge: *The Rime of the Ancient Mariner*

Zombie Swashbucklers

So it's a dead man ye say ye want t'be playin', ay? Well, we be thinkin' we can accommodate yer request, me bucko! One thing ye need t'keep in mind. Death is a harsh Mistress an' she don't take too kindly t'havin' one o' 'er own runnin' 'round less'n she says it's a'right. An' most folks don't take too well t'seein' some denizen o' Davey Jones' Locker up'n walkin' like 'e was alive! With that in mind, it's time t'listen to th' guy with the not-so-colorful way o' speakin', 'cause 'es gonna tell ya how t'be an undead terror o' the seven seas!

For those with the *Enter the Zombie* Supplement for *All Flesh Must Be Eaten*, the rules for zombie character creation are virtually the same. For those who don't have it...go get it!

Just kidding, folks. Here's the long and short of it:

Start with the Basic Zombie Template. Add the Long-Term Memory and Problem Solving Aspects (see *AFMBE* p. 156) to the zombie, which boosts its Power level and makes a much more playable zombie. Then spend 10 points on Attributes, using the normal spending patterns from *AFMBE* p. 30. Each point spent on Attributes raises the Power level by one. Keep in mind here that human maximums do not apply to zombies. Next step is to calculate the Speed and Essence points as normal (you didn't think we were going to make you keep that speed of 2, did ya?). Dead Points are calculated the same as LPs, unless another Aspect besides Weak Spot: All is chosen.

At this point, subtract the Power level from 90. The difference is the number of character points remaining that can be spent on Qualities, Skills, Metaphysics, Miracles, or more cool Aspects. The zombie may also have up to 10 points of Drawbacks, just like any other character. A couple of things should be noted. First, without the Language Aspect you cannot speak. Oh, sure you could pick up Sign Language or something, but sometimes it's good to be able to actually speak to someone. Also, any Qualities or Drawbacks that affect Endurance can be taken, but no points are gained or lost from them. Aspects not already set-

Basic Zombie

Strength 2	Constitution 2
Dexterity 1	Intelligence -2
Perception 1	Willpower 2
Dead Points 26	Speed 2
Endurance Points n/a	Essence Pool 6
Skills: Brawling 2	
Attack: Bite D4 x 2(4) slashing	
Weak Spot: All	
Getting Around: Slow and Steady	
Strength: Dead Joe Average	
Senses: Like the Dead	
Sustenance: Daily, All Flesh Must Be Eaten	
Intelligence: Dumb As Dead Wood	
Spreading the Love: Only the Dead	
Power: 5	

tled by the Basic Zombie template can be purchased. This means that generally, only Special Features and Intelligence Aspects may be chosen. Also, if the player does not want to be an eating machine or spread its taint, Aspects from the Sustenance or Spreading the Love section can be chosen as well, some of which may grant more points. There are also some Special Feature Aspects further on in this chapter that can raise Attributes.

Zombies normally do not heal, but Cast Member zombies may heal by consuming flesh. For each allotment of sustenance consumed above the required amount to avoid starvation (see *AFMBE* p. 154), the zombie regains a number of DPs equal to the Power of its Sustenance Aspect. This does mean, however, that zombies with the Daily and All Flesh Must Be Eaten Aspects do not regain DPs from feasting. For them, it's best to invest in some levels of Regeneration.

Zombies earn experience points and advance just like all other characters. Aspects may be bought at double their normal cost and a good rationale should be thought up for this sudden radical change in the zombie's physiology.

Aspects

Billy Bones

Power +15

These zombies are only about half the men they once were. No flesh remains on these clacking skeletons to hamper their movement. They don't need to eat, and even if they did, where would it go? These zombies have only their will (or the will of some zombie lord) driving their bones onward, but the will can be a powerful thing. They are also faster than most run o' the mill zombies, as they don't have all that hanging flesh to worry about. A Billy Bones uses its Willpower, or the Willpower of the controlling entity, zombie lord, whatever, instead of its Strength when dealing damage or lifting things, while the overall DPs of the creature are still calculated in the usual manner. Add 1 to the basic Dexterity of the zombie and +5 to the Speed. A Billy Bones is harder to hit with piercing weapons, there

being so little to target, and -2 is applied to attack rolls (except attacks to the head) when using piercing weapons against it.

Displacement

Power +4

Looking at this zombie is something akin to looking at an object lying at the bottom of a clear pond. It's never in the place it looks like it is. The zombie has the uncanny ability to refract light to make its location seem to be where it's not. Anyone attempting to attack the zombie does so at -4 at a distance and at -2 in hand-to-hand range.

Fog Power

**+10/+1 per
50- yd radius**

This ability is an advanced version of that found in the *Atlas of the Walking Dead* (p. 101). Some zombies or even ghostly vessels are able to blanket an entire town, port, or island in a porridge-thick fog that obscures all but the keenest of vision. The power begins at a 500-yd (meters) radius and is an additional +1 Power for each additional 50 yds (meters) beyond this. The fog spreads out at 10 yds (meters) per second and drops almost all visibility to zero. Those attempting to sight a target within this fog do so at -6 beyond a range of 10 yds (meters). Some Ghost Ships have this ability, creating a massive and unnatural blanket of fog to quite suddenly appear out of nowhere to envelop their quarry. Those on the Ghost Ship have no minuses to vision and can still see through the fog as though the objects they were looking at were shadows or mist-like forms. The fog travels with the ship, with the vessel at its center.

From The Ashes (Power: Variable)

Sometimes zombies just don't know when to stay dead, even when they're incinerated. A zombie with this Aspect can literally be reborn in a spectacular, or even creepy, display on the night following its destruction, or on a particular night, depending upon the Power level of the Aspect. The zombie rises from where it died, either by a bolt of lightning from the sky, in a bright flash of fire or just by reconstituting itself from the leftover bits.

All Flesh Must Be Eaten™

From the Ashes Table

- +2 The zombie only returns on a certain night (Samhain, Christmas, next St. Swithin's Day, etc.)
- +5 The zombie returns every month at a particular phase of the moon
- +8 The zombie returns on a certain day of the week
- +10 The zombie returns nightly

Ghostly Form

Power: +10

Thar be nothin' worse than a zombie on a pirate ship...unless it be a zombie on a pirate ship that can walk through your best sword swing to get at you. With this power the zombie can temporarily turn himself insubstantial. The power is very useful for evading those pesky weapons that want to chop you into fish bait. Ghostly Form takes one Turn to activate and costs the zombie one Essence point per Turn to maintain. However, while insubstantial, the zombie cannot be affected by any physical attacks and can walk or glide through solid substances. Metaphysics, Miracles and magical or blessed items can still affect the zombie in its insubstantial form.

Glamour

Power +2/+5

Some zombies look quite human, that is until you bring them into the light. For whatever reason, these zombies have some glamour placed upon them to make them look human until something happens to reveal them. They could've been cursed by some ancient treasure, disguised by a powerful zombie lord, or any other cause. The circumstance is completely up to the ZM (or the player and ZM if it's taken by a Cast Member) and can include anything from daylight to being under the light of the moon to being near a holy symbol. Whatever the circumstance, the zombie looks completely human in all respects until the circumstance is met. Then, his true form emerges immediately, which could be a real shocker to anyone believing him to be a living breathing mortal being. At the higher Power level, the zombie can actually control the Glamour, only revealing its true form when it wants to inspire terror in its victim. The zombie will be revealed for what it is, however, once it actually grabs its victim.

Graft

Power +5/+10

Flesh, it's not just for eating anymore. With this Aspect the zombie can take pieces of flesh or bone from its victim and literally graft it onto itself, allowing it to heal wounds using the grafted piece. Lost limbs can be replaced, gaping wounds can be closed, and spilled guts can be sealed back inside where they belong. Of course, this does look strange; something akin to a patchwork zombie, but it is effective. It does take time to graft, however. A zombie graft takes about 30 seconds to complete for each half-pound (8 ounces) of flesh and each half-pound can regenerate 10 DPs of damage. Lost limbs take longer to attach, 5 minutes, and heal the zombie of all the damage it took to remove or destroy the limb (see *AFMBE* p. 147). At the higher level, the zombie can actually graft multiple limbs onto its body, giving it more combat actions per Turn. Each pair of arms grafted onto the zombie gives it one more attack action at no penalty. No more than 6 arms total (including the ones it already had) can be on a zombie. ZMs may even allow the zombie the ability to graft its torso onto an animal's body (like a centaur) at their discretion. Grafting additional limbs takes the same amount of time as replacing a limb.

Natural Armor

see Below

Some zombies have hide that is just a bit tougher than most others do. Natural armor is for those creatures that have hardened exoskeletons or chitinous shells or are in some way hardened to damage. Below is the Power level of the Aspect and the Armor Value of each. There is also a description, which can be used as a guide to determine what type of hide the creature may have.



Power	AV	Description
1	D4-1(1)	
2	D6+1(4)	Leathery
3	D8+8(12)	Leathery Plates or Folds (Iron Shirt Body from <i>ETZ</i>)
4	D8x2+8(16)	Thick Scales/Skin Like Iron
6	D8x3+10(22)	Flexible Chitin
8	D8x3+14(26)	Solid Chitin
10	D10x3+15(30)	Unknown Substance

Special Attribute Feature: Increased Attribute (Type) Power +2 per Level

Some zombies are a cut above the rest, whether it's a ballet dancer's dexterity or the strength of a body building champion or even the superior intellect of a mad scientist. For each level of this Aspect, the chosen Attribute is increased by 1 point. This Aspect must be purchased in addition to an Aspect that sets the Ability. For example, a zombie with Increased Strength would have to have one of the base Strength Aspects before purchasing Increased Attribute. Speed is calculated as for a living being when this Aspect is taken for Getting Around, instead of using the speed provided in the base Aspect. ZM Note: May not be suitable for PC zombie Cast Members, as there may be a potential for min-maxing.

Constitution Aspects

Some zombies are just a bit more hard and fit than your average corpse, even after taking a short dirt nap. Others become pale comparisons of their former selves. Whether the zombification process turned the creature into a walking dynamo or a putrefied fall-apart pus factory, constitution plays a role in its unlife. Zombies with Weak Spot (None) gain an additional 10 DPs per Constitution level over 2 for purposes of destroying them with mass damage (see *AFMBE* p. 147, Other Damage).

In this section, choose the best Aspect that fits your zombie. Then the other Constitution-related Aspects can be chosen to further augment/hamper the creature's unlife.

Desiccated

Power: -1

The zombie has not taken too well to dying and being put into the ground. It has wasted away and become a mere shadow of its former glory. The body is no longer built for stress and tends to fall apart rather easily. Constitution 1. Minus 5 DPs if a weak spot other than All is chosen.

Fresh One

Power: 0

These flesh feasters have still got a little of the old piss and vinegar in their bodies. The rigors of dying have not done much to hamper the overall health of these zombies. They're still juicy and have that satisfying meaty smack to them when struck. Constitution 2.

Hardy Specimen

Power: +5

Maybe it's the zombie chow (TM), but something has brought these creepies back with a rock-hard physique and a resistance to pain to rival that of body-piercing fanatics. These zombies ignore all pain, even if they have senses that allow them to feel pain. Constitution 4. Add 5 DPs to the total DPs if a weak spot other than All is chosen.

Tough as Nails

Power: +10

These powerhouses of the zombie world are prime specimens off the slab. They don't go down easily and can take quite a pounding. They don't feel pain and they don't tenderize easily. Constitution 7. Add 10 DPs to the total DPs if a weak spot other than All is chosen.

Willpower Aspects

It's a zombie eat human world out there and to succeed a zombie must have the drive, the will to go on in the face of adversity. Some zombies are nothing more than creatures driven by hunger to shamble from place to place, while others have a will to survive and to shake off the mind-controlling efforts of those pesky Zombie Lords.

In this section, choose a level of willpower that best suits your new creation. Once that is accomplished, scream "It's alive!" and continue on to the rest of the zombie creation Aspects in the *AFMBE* book.

Mindless Pawn

Power: -2

These zombies unlive to serve. They barely have a will to speak of and would probably do something rash if they were alive. They are most likely found in the thrall of zombie lords and other would-be necromancers. Willpower 1

The Every-Zombie

Power: 0

These creatures have about as much will to succeed as the average Joe on the street. Although they will happily chase down a hapless victim they may not have the angst and gumption to climb through that barbed wire fence or over those precariously stacked barrels. If it's too much work it's probably not worth it. Willpower 2

Resilient

Power: +5

The zombie could be a shrewd businessman or someone who could take the stresses of staying in the wilds with little more than a pocketknife and a compass if it were alive. Now, it's merely an unstoppable force of will. These creatures can shrug off all but the most persistent zombie lords and stop at nothing to get at their prey. Willpower 4

Will of Iron

Power: +8

These zombies can endure the harshest conditions and are hardly ever bothered by the feeble minds of zombie lords. In fact, if these creatures were intelligent they could be the masters of their domain, bending others to their will. Willpower 7

CHAPTER THREE

Daybreak found the *Gale Cutter* thoroughly drenched and halfway back to Port Royal. The ship had been tossed about like a rag doll in the storm, but still managed to keep her heading. The men claimed it was just one more miracle due to their blessed captain. They had seen plenty of times where they had made it out of what seemed impossible odds, ever since joining up with Woolly Pete. Pete himself had begun to wonder if he truly had been blessed the day he saved that old hound. Last night had been no exception. Last night he had been almost certain that they would end up like the *Winslow's Pride* and other ships at the hands of the ghost ship. However, the storm had pulled them out of the jaws of Hell and into salvation. He knew that one day he would have to find a way to give thanks to whatever Loa had watched over them.

They limped into Port Royal with torn sails and fouled rigging. Pete ordered the men to stay on board and make repairs, lest they go off telling stories of last night's encounters, while he and McReady went ashore to resupply. Pete knew he had the information he needed to bring back to the Sovereignty, but he wasn't about to run with his tail between his legs like some mangy cur. Besides, he had absolutely no idea if they would even believe that the *Pride* had been taken over by some ghastly crew. The ghostly *Winslow's Pride* had stung him and he wasn't about to let that go. He would find out what had caused the *Pride* to become a ghostly hazard and stop it, if it was the last thing he did. While McReady went off to replace what they had lost in the storm, Pete trekked out to the edge of town to a ramshackle hut.

In the doorway of the hut were hung bones and other strange things. A bottle of what was most likely rum sat on the stoop alongside a cigar. A figure

THE TOOLS OF THE
THE TRADE

came around the corner of the hut as Pete walked closer and stood in front of him. The man, as far as Pete could tell it was a man, wore a sack over his head, sewn shut at the neck. Holes had been cut for his eyes but nothing else. His coat was sewn up and the buttons taken off. All of his pockets had been torn out and his feet were bare. The last time Pete had been here he had been told that this was a zombie.

“I’m here t’ see your master,” Pete spoke. He wasn’t sure if it could understand, but it turned and walked into the hut. Pete waited and shortly a thin black man came out of the hut followed by the zombie.

“What do you want, white man?” the bokor spoke. There was danger in his eyes as he looked at Pete.

“I am sorry to disturb you, sir,” Pete started. “I met you many years ago when I was a lad. You told me then that if I ever needed the help of The Baron to seek you out.”

The bokor narrowed his eyes and looked at Pete more closely. “Ah yes. I remembah you. You look much different, oldah. Any wisah, I wondah?” His gaze fell to the charm around Pete’s neck. “And you have the blessing of Agwe. Someone must’ve really liked you.”

“I saved one of your holy men from a slave vessel once several years ago.” Pete could see the man relax a little. “I guess he was grateful.”

“I guess he was.” the bokor replied. “So, what can I and The Baron do for you, white man?”

“I ran afoul of a ghost ship last night. I want to know how to stop it.”

“Hm, I can ask The Baron to see if he was asked to make a...ghost ship.” The bokor smirked at the use of the words. “But you must first give a gift to the Baron Samedi. Come, white man. The Baron loves good rum.”

He picked up the bottle and pulled the cork with his teeth. He spit the cork away and drank deeply of the dark liquor, then handed the bottle to Pete. Pete took a long pull on the bottle, letting the strong drink course down his throat. He had to admit it was good stuff.

“The Baron, ’e get only da best.” The bokor began to chant in his language, calling out to speak with his Patron, the Baron Samedi. The wind picked up slightly, cooling Pete’s sweat-covered brow. As he listened to the wind blow-

ing by, he suddenly realized that the bokor had stopped chanting. Pete turned his head back to look at the bokor and saw a change had come over the man. The bokor was grinning wildly and his eyes were wide. In one hand he held the bottle of rum and in the other was now a lit cigar. He inhaled deeply and laughed, a deep and boisterous sound.

“What is it you need of Baron Samedi, favored of Agwe?” he said in a deep, amused voice.

Pete had never seen this before, but he had heard that the Loa could possess other people and speak through them. It seemed that he was now speaking to The Baron himself. Though the bokor was a full head shorter than Pete was, he gave the air of someone much taller. Pete could sense that here was an imposing figure, one that could turn him upside-down if he wanted to and use his head as a deck swab. Pete decided it best to be very cautious around this man.

“Lord Baron,” he began, “I’ve come t’ ask you how I can defeat the ghost vessel I met last night.”

The Baron laughed again, long and loud. “Ah, what you faced was no ordinary...ghost ship.” Then his expression darkened considerably. “Nor did I allow it to be made.”

“Then, would it not be in both our interests to see that whoever did make it is stopped and punished?” Pete was on his guard. He had no idea what might offend this being, especially one so prone to extreme and sudden emotional changes.

The Baron’s eyes studied Pete, seeming to bore into his very soul. Then he replied, “Yes, favored of Agwe, yes it would. This, my mount, will return with you and help you. Now, let us drink and feast and find young and pretty women to behave naughtily with!” And with those words, a wink and a wide grin, he began marching back toward Port Royal. Pete followed him, hoping that this night would not find him face down in a gutter.



Introduction

Ahoy, matey! So, now that ye got yerself a swashbucklin' terror t' plunder the Seven Seas with, yer thinkin' it be a good idear t' 'ave a little protection 'n provender t' take along with ye. Well, ye come t' the right place! In this chapter ye'll find all th' tools o' the trade from provender t' sailin' ships t' keep yer swashbuckler ready fer anythin'! Not only that, ye'll find the currency o' the time an' even exchange rates so's ye know when some scallywag of a merchant be tryin' t' cheat ye.

Currency

There were so many different currencies in the 1700s that it would be a daunting task to place them all here with exchange rates. Therefore, only three of the most widely used currencies are detailed here, starting with the most famous, Spanish currency.

To keep things simple, those who want to worry about how much weight in coins they are carrying can look below in the descriptions of the coins. A “small” coin weighs one-quarter ounce, a “medium” coin weighs one-half ounce, and a “large” coin weighs one ounce. There are 16 ounces in one pound (1/2 kg).

Spanish Currency

34 Maravedi	=	1 Real
8 Real	=	1 Piece of Eight
2 Pieces of Eight	=	1 Escudo
8 Escudo	=	1 Doubloon

Maravedi: *Small* copper coin.

Reale: These *medium* silver coins were one of the lowest denominations. Eight of these made up one Piece of Eight.

Piece of Eight: This *large* coin was the standard “dollar” in Spain and is made of silver.

Escudo: Slightly larger silver denomination than the Piece of Eight.

Doubloon: *Large* gold coin of Spain worth 16 Pieces of Eight or 16 silver coins.

British Currency

4 Farthing	=	1 Penny
2 Half-Penny	=	1 Penny
2 Penny	=	1 Twopence
3 Penny	=	1 Threepence
4 Penny	=	1 Fourpence
6 Penny	=	1 Sixpence
12 Penny	=	1 Shilling
2 Shilling	=	1 Florin
2 Shilling 6 Penny	=	1 Half Crown
5 Shilling	=	1 Crown
10 Shilling 6 Penny	=	1 Half-Guinea
20 Shilling	=	1 Sovereign (Pound)
21 Shilling	=	1 Guinea
42 Shilling	=	2 Guinea
100 Shilling	=	5 Guinea

Farthing: The Farthing and Half-Farthing were the smallest copper denominations in Great Britain.

Half Penny: This coin was both a copper coin and a bronze coin, depending upon the year. This was a *medium* sized coin.

Penny & Pence: The copper Penny was the largest copper coin in Great Britain, but was not minted until 1797. It weighed a full ounce and was eventually made into a medium sized coin in the early 1800s. Before 1797 the Penny was a *small* silver coin. The Two, Three, Four and Six Pence were *small* silver denominations. The Fourpence was also called a Groat.

Shilling: The most widely used silver coin in Great Britain. It is a *medium* sized coin.

Florin: A silver Two-Shilling piece. The Florin is a little larger than the Shilling, but is still considered a *medium* sized coin here.

Half-Crown: *Medium* sized silver coin.

Crown: *Large* silver coin.

Half-Guinea: *Small* gold coin.

Sovereign (Pound): *Medium* sized gold coin worth a little less than a Guinea. A Half-Sovereign would be worth 10 Shillings and is a *small* gold coin.

Rate of Exchange

Spanish		British		French	1700s US
1 Maravedi	=	1 Farthing	=	6 Denier	1/2¢
4 Maravedi	=	1 Penny	=	2 Sol	2¢
8 Maravedi	=	1 Twopence	=	4 Sol	4¢
12 Maravedi	=	1 Threepence	=	6 Sol	6¢
16 Maravedi	=	1 Fourpence	=	8 Sol	8¢
24 Maravedi	=	1 Sixpence	=	10 Sol	12¢
2 Real	=	1 Shilling	=	24 Sol (1/5 Ecu)	24¢
4 Real	=	1/2 Crown	=	1/2 Ecu (3 Livre)	61¢
1 Piece of Eight	=	1 Crown	=	1 Ecu (6 Livre)	\$1.22
2 Escudo	=	1 Sovereign	=	1 Louis D'Or	\$4.87
1 Doubloon	=	4 Sovereign	=	4 Louis D'Or	\$14.61

ZM Note: For those of you who wish to bring the US currency into play, the fourth column shows the approximate value of the coins in 18th-century America.

Guineas: The one, two, and five Guinea Pieces were *small*, *medium*, and *large* gold coins, respectively.

French Currency

12 Denier	=	1 Sol (Sou or Douzain)
20 Sol (Sou)	=	1 Livre
6 Livre	=	1 Ecu
4 Ecu	=	1 Louis D'Or

Denier: *Small* copper coin.

Sol: Also called a Sou or Douzain. This is a *small* silver coin

Livre: This was the standard unit of measure for accounting purposes. No Livre piece was ever minted. However, the lower denominations of Ecu took care of that problem.

Ecu: The Fifth, Half, and 1 Ecu pieces were *small*, *medium*, and *large* silver coins, respectively. A Half Ecu was worth 3 Livres and a Fifth Ecu was worth a little over 1 Livre. See the Rate of Exchange table on page 58.

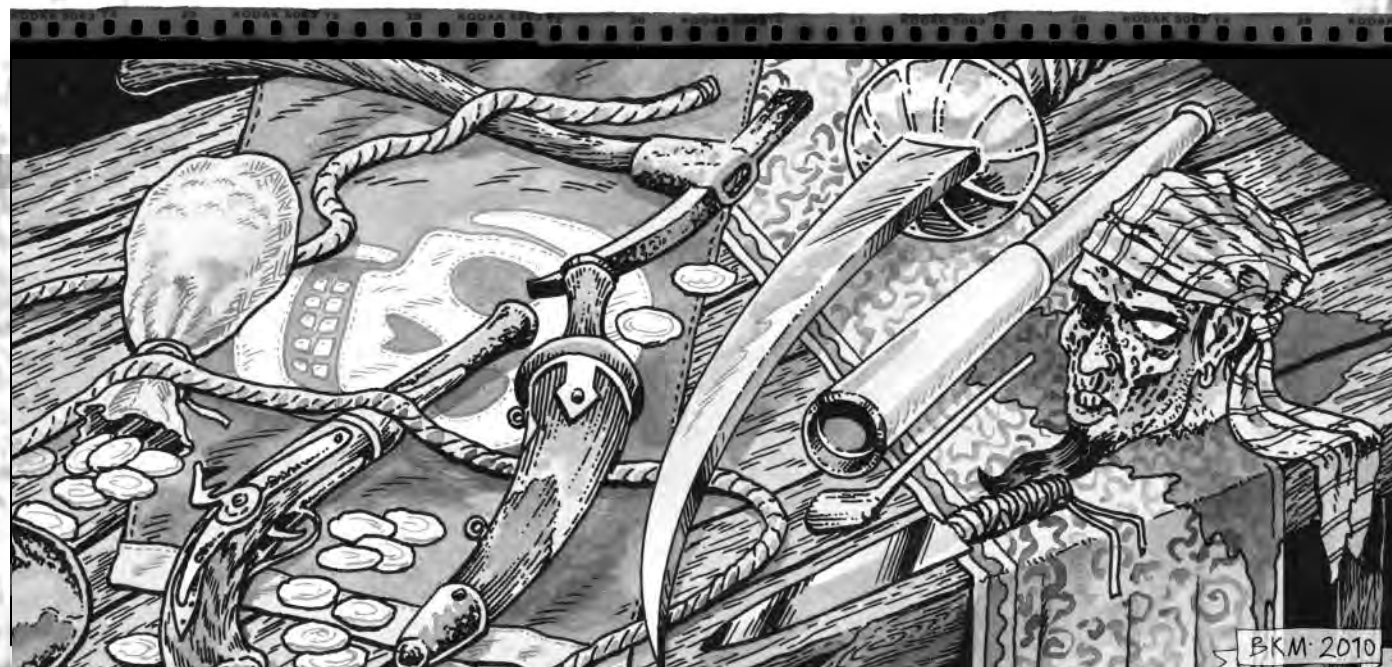
Louis D'Or: The Louis D'Or came in a Half and Whole denomination. These were *small* and *medium* gold coins, respectively.

Gear

Herein are the items and equipment of the time period. The costs are approximations based on various sources both historical and fictional and may not be wholly accurate. Prices tended to fluctuate in the world depending on the season, weather, taxes, and many other factors. The ZM should feel free to raise or lower the cost of an item if she feels it necessary. Prices may also be higher, depending on how shrewd a merchant wants to be (see the Hagglng skill (*AFMBE* p. 55)).

All the following gear and weaponry are priced in Spanish currency. See the Rate of Exchange table to determine the costs of items in other countries. Though there is a plethora of gear below, it is by no means an exhaustive list. The costs below should give a ZM a good basis for comparison when attempting to determine the cost of other items.

Where appropriate, an approximate cost in Pieces of Eight per ton is added in bold for ease of determining how much a cargo is worth or costs. For obvious reasons, certain items have not been converted to a cost per ton, as it was generally too expensive to haul an entire ton of it, let alone how much space it might take up in the hold. Imagine the cost involved in trying to transport a ton of cinnamon bark!



Monetary Abbreviations

m	=	Maravedi
r	=	Real
p	=	Piece of Eight
e	=	Escudo
d	=	Doubloon

Animals

Chicken	16m
Cow	20p
Ewe/Sheep	8p
Goat	4p
Horse	
Riding	80p
Draft	60p
Lamb	8p
Parrot	2p
Pig	3r

Clothing

Belt	4m
Boots	2p
Breeches	1p
Cape	1p
Cloak	2p
Doublet (close-fitting jacket)	2p
Drawers (undergarment)	6r
Gloves	1r
Gown	10p
Hat	6r
Hose/Stockings	2r
Jacket/waistcoat	2p
Pantaloon	1p
Robe	3p
Sash	1r
Shirt	1p
Shoes	2p
Tunic	6r
Vest	5r

Common Goods

Coal (per pound (1/2 kg))	2m 15p
Hemp Rope	12m/yd
Lamp Oil (per pint (1/2 liter))	20m (5r/gal)
Soap	8m

Ships Gear

Astrolabe	20p
Compass	20p
Map or Chart (fair)	2r
Powder Keg (100 lb (50 kg))	30p 600p
Spyglass	50p

Survival

Backpack	3p
Blanket	2p
Fish Hooks (12)	2r
Fishing Line (per yd)	4m
Fishing Net (per yd)	16m
Lantern	6r
Tent	2p
Wine/Waterskin (1 gallon (4 liters))	1p
Powder Flask, Oiled Leather (holds 1/2 lb powder)	3r
Powder Horn (holds 1 lb powder)	6r

Provender

Cheese (1 pound (1/2 kg))	8m 59p
Fish (per pound (1/2 kg))	
Fresh Water	8m 59p
Ocean	16m 118p
Smoked/Pickled	8m 59p
Lard (per pound (1/2 kg))	8m 59p
Molasses (per quart)	10m (1r 6m/gal)
Oats (1 pound (1/2 kg))	24m 177p

All Flesh Must Be Eaten™

Rations (1 person per day)

Fresh	12m
Preserved	16m
Rye (1 pound (1/2 kg))	20m 147p
Vinegar (1 gallon (4 liter))	24m 25p (appr. 275gal/appr. 1 ton)
Wheat (1 pound (1/2 kg))	20m 147p

Fruit (per pound (1/2 kg))

Apples	1m 7p
Apricots	2m 15p
Dates (dry)	12m 90p
Limes	16m 118p
Oranges	20m 147p
Pears	2m 15p
Plums	4m 30p

Vegetables (per pound (1/2 kg))

Beans	24m 177p
Carrots	2m 15p
Corn	2m 15p
Lentils	16m 118p
Onions	2m 15p
Potatoes	3m 22p

Spirits

A hogshead holds 63 gallons (238-l.), a barrel holds 31.5 gallons (119-l.), and a keg holds 10 gallons (38-l.). The barrel would cost half as much as a hogshead. A kilderkin is roughly 3 hogsheads. Liter equivalents are approximations.

Beer/Ale

Pint	4m
Keg	1p 1r
Hogshead	7p 4r

Brandy

Pint	12m
Keg	1p 4r
Hogshead	12p

Gin

Bottle (Quart)	4m
Keg	5r
Hogshead	3p 5r

Mead

Pint	6m
Keg	5r
Hogshead	5p

Rum

Bottle (quart)	15m
Keg	1p 4r
Hogshead	12p

Whiskey

Bottle (quart)	17m
Keg	2p
Hogshead	16p

Wine (average quality)

Glass	17m
Bottle	2r
Keg	4p
Hogshead	32p

Champagne

Glass 2r	Bottle 1p
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Spices

Cinnamon	Ounce	1p	Pound	1d
Ginger	Ounce	4r	Pound	8p
Mustard	Ounce	1m	Pound	16m
Nutmeg	Ounce	6r	Pound	12p
Pepper	Ounce	1p	Pound	1d
Salt (1 pound)		4m	30p	
Sugar (1 pound)		24m		

Uncommon Goods

Bullet Mold				2p
Coffee (1 pound)				3p
Opium	Ounce			1p
	Pound			4d
Tea (1 pound)				4p
Tobacco (1 pound)				2p
Leaf (per dram)				
	Silver	4r	Gold	2p

Slaves

Male, Healthy				1000p
Female, Healthy				500p
Child, Healthy				200p

Astrolabe: Used in determining latitude at sea by measuring the altitude of the sun or pole star. Other items were later developed to take the place of the astrolabe. These were the sextant, developed in 1730, and the octant, which was developed in 1731. However, these items would cost more than an astrolabe, as they used a combination of telescopes and mirrors to determine position.

Armor & The Age of Sail

Though the arrival of the firearm made armor much less useful, some still wore it in the hopes it would keep a fatal blow from actually killing them.

Below are some descriptions of the general usefulness of different armor types. There is also a new armor type detailed below, the breastplate.

Keep in mind the Swimming Skill (*AFMBE* p. 60) and the Drowning rule (*AFMBE* p. 108) when dealing with Cast Members falling into the sea while wearing armor. All other armor stats are in *AFMBE* p. 138.

Padded/Quilted Cloth Armor: Not amazingly useful on an ocean voyage as it tended to become waterlogged in storms or swells and could drown a man as easily as steel armor if he fell into the briny blue. Multiply the weight of the armor in pounds by 10 if it becomes waterlogged. *Period Cost* 4p

Leather Jacket: Though not much use against firearms, a leather jacket could possibly be the difference between a slit gizzard and a minor flesh wound in a knife fight. It was still light enough for a seaman to survive a dunkin' in the briny, but it would tend to get hot and smelly on an ocean voyage. *Period Cost* 4p

Leather Armor: Though durable in a sword duel, a full suit of leather armor could drag a sailor down into the depths of the sea rather easily due to its weight and drag on the sailor during swimming. *Period Cost* 6p

Chain Mail: A little more protection than a leather jacket, but still not much good against a good piece of fast-moving lead. Of course, if one were to fall into the sea he'd be visit'n Davey Jones' locker soon enough. *Period Cost* 10p

Plate and Mail: Not a good suit to be wearing to go swimmin' with Davey Jones. Still, it could turn a pistol shot, if one were lucky. *Period Cost* 30p

Plate Armor: Even worse armor to be wearing on a sea voyage than plate and mail, although it could occasionally stop a pistol shot. It was also expensive to purchase and manufacture. Many nations stopped producing fully functional plate armor by this point and began creating less functional but stylish parade armor, which was highly decorated with filigree and etching. *Period Cost* 40p

Breastplate: A decent piece of armor for the open sea, the straps of the steel breastplate could be cut quickly if one were to fall into the briny. It afforded decent protection to the torso, but none to other parts of the body. This was still occasionally used on the battlefield, not for its bullet stopping power, but for the times when melee combat was necessary.

Armor Value	EV	Cost	Avail
D6 x 2 + 2*	20/10#	7p	U

* Does not protect the wearer from any attacks except those to the torso.

Regardless of EV, this item is considered medium encumbrance.

Weapons of War

These are the weapons of the era along with descriptions and additional rules where necessary.

Belaying Pin: Usually a wooden pin around one inch in diameter and sixteen to twenty inches long, which is used to “belay” or hold a rigging rope in place by wrapping the rope around the pin. These pins could be removed from the pin rail of a ship and moved to different locations. Mutinous crewmen would sometimes use these as weapons as most times all other weapons were stowed away on voyages.

Boarding Axe: Somewhere between a wood axe and a battle axe, the boarding axe was around 2-ft. long with a 2-lb. steel or iron head. Used primarily for cutting mooring lines and fouled rigging, it could be used as an effective weapon in a pinch.

Melee Weapons

Weapon	Range	Damage	EV	Cost	Avail.
Bayonet	-	D4(2) x Strength**	1/1	2p	C
Bayonet (charge)	-	D6(3) x Strength+1**	1/1*	2p	C
Belaying Pin	-	D6(3) x (Strength -1)	1/1	-	C
Boarding Axe	-	D8(4) x Strength**&	2/1	3p	C
Cutlass	-	D8(4) x Strength+1**&	5/3	20p	C
Cat o' Nine Tails	-	D4(2) x Strength**	1/1	5r	C
Gully Knife	-	D4(2) x Strength**	1/1	4r	C
Hook/Fork	-	D4(2) x (Strength -1)**	1/1	3r	C
Lash/Whip	***	D4(2) x Strength**	2/1	1p	C
Main Gauche/Dagger	-	D4(2) x Strength**	1/1	2p	C
Rapier (edged)	-	D6(3) x Strength**&	2/1	30p	C
Rapier (point)	-	D8(4) x Strength**&	2/1	30p	C
Sabre	-	D8(4) x Strength**&	4/2	16p	C
Singlestick/Waster	-	D8(4) x Strength&	2/1	1r	C
Sword Cane	-	D6(3) x Strength**	2/1	10p	C

* Weight is added to the musket.

** Indicates a stabbing/slashing weapon. See *AFMBE* p. 105.

*** See description for more details.

& Weapon may be used two-handed, raising the character's effective Strength by 1 when calculating damage.

Some boarding axes even sported a spike on the opposite side of the axe head to assist in pulling a boat closer or to help with climbing.

Gully Knife: A gully knife is not much more than a large utility knife used on board ships for a multitude of uses including eating utensils and cutting ropes and sail cloth. It was typically made with a wooden handle, no hilt or cross-guard, and sharpened only on one side of the blade. Smaller versions of the gully knife had folding blades, much like modern pocketknives or lock-blades and would do damage as a Small Knife in *AFMBE* p. 132.

Hook/Fork: A device typically used in place of a severed hand. It can not only be used to stab opponents, but can be used to disarm an opponent on a successful parry when used in combat. Disarming an opponent is done with a Strength + Hand Weapon (Hook) Task roll against the opponent's Strength + Hand Weapon Task roll. The maneuver takes an action to do.

Main Gauche: The term main-gauche translates to “left hand” in French and was typically a long double-edged dagger with a cross-guard, which was used in the off-hand by some fencers to assist in parrying and getting in a quick thrust when the enemy's sword was occupied. In some, the cross-guard was designed to catch an opponent's blade so that the wielder could attempt to trap the enemy's blade while she goes in for the kill with her own sword. These are called sword catchers and require a contested Dexterity + Hand Weapon skill roll to catch the weapon. Once caught, a Contested Simple Strength Test is needed to keep a sword trapped or to disarm the opponent.

Singlestick/Waster: A singlestick, originally called a waster, was a round stick of ash which was about 34 inches long and thicker at one end than the other. It was used as a wooden sword in practice.

Sword Cane: A sword secreted into a cane or walking stick. The sword was used for attack, while the cane was kept in the other hand and helped with defense. During the Age of Sail, the sword cane was illegal in London and was considered an ungentlemanly weapon.

Whip/Lash/Cat o' Nine's: The whip and lash typically do the same damage, though the lash is a bit shorter than the bullwhip. Though the damage is not much, the pain is distracting and the victim automatically loses her next action due to the sudden shock of pain. She must also make a Simple Willpower Test minus half the strength of the attacker when struck or be paralyzed with pain for an entire turn. Whips can also be used to grab things. Targeting a small object is -4, and -6 if the item is fragile. Targeting a limb is done at a -2 and if successful, the limb is grappled. A Contested Simple Strength Test is used to determine who gets the upper hand. If the legs are targeted, the defender is at -4 on the Strength roll. If the defender succeeds, she may decide to break free or pull the attacker around instead. If failed, the defender gets pulled off her feet, or has her weapon yanked away or some other embarrassing fate. The cat o' nine tails cannot grapple but can be fitted with steel barbs, which makes the damage stabbing/slashing instead of bashing. A bullwhip has a range of around 5 yards, while a lash is around 2 yards. A cat o' nine tails is typically less than a yard long from end to end and so cannot be used as a ranged weapon.

Flintlocks

The flintlock pistol is a smoothbore .54 caliber weapon and the rifle or “musket” is a .69 caliber weapon. Many of them were tailor-made for those who carried them. Smoothbore weapons are highly inaccurate. In realistic games, they don't get a Point-Blank bonus to hit. They also have an inherent -3 to hit beyond point-blank range and their total Dexterity and Skill value cannot exceed 6, regardless of the character's actual Dexterity and Skill levels. For the most part, these firearms were a danger only at very close ranges or against large targets (such as a mass formation of soldiers). If the idea of having PCs who are armed with largely ineffective noisemakers isn't appealing, replace those penalties with a flat -2 to attack Tasks beyond point-blank range.

Halve the Armor Value of Ancient/Medieval Armor against musket damage. Modern Body

Flintlock Weapons Table

Weapon Type	Range	Damage	Cap.	EV	Cost	Aval
Blunderbuss	5/10/20/35/50	D8 x 6 (24)	1	6/3	18p	C
Flintlock Musket	10/20/30/50/100	D8 x 5 (20)	1	8/4	20p	C
Flintlock Pistol	5/10/20/30/50	D8 x 4 (16)	1	2/1	10p	C
Ammunition	Cost					
Lead Shot (per 12)	2r					

Armor, on the other hand, has its effective Armor Value increased by +10 or doubled (whichever is less) against the slow-moving projectiles.

Another major problem with flintlocks was that they would not fire if the powder in the priming pan became wet. This could become a major concern on rainy days or on rough seas. On rainy days or in situations where the weapon could have gotten wet, an unmodified roll of 1 or 2 on the attack roll, before the skill and attribute are added, results in the weapon failing to fire. The advent of a percussion cap in the 1800s reduced this problem drastically, as the spark was completely internal (see *Fistful of Zombies* p. 37 for more on percussion firearms).

Loading a flintlock was a lengthy procedure. First the hammer, nicknamed the doghead, would be pulled back until it clicked. At this position the weapon was half-cocked. A weapon in this position was in a “safety” position and the trigger could not be pulled. Loads would be prepared ahead of time, to speed up loading time, and wrapped in paper wadding. The wadding would be torn open and the powder poured down the barrel. Then the bullet and wadding would be rammed down the barrel with the ramrod. Once this was accomplished, a small amount of priming powder, which was a much finer powder with a bit more saltpeter than usual, would be added to the priming pan, to ensure that the touch-hole was full. Then the frizzen, which is where the hammer strikes the flint, would be clamped back over the priming pan. When the wielder was ready to fire, the hammer would be pulled back a second click, allowing the trigger to be pulled.

A flintlock pistol typically takes two Turns to prepare for firing and requires a Dexterity + Guns (Handgun) Task roll. Rolling two Success Levels or more reduces the time required to one Turn. If the Guns Task total is less than 9, the user misses a step and must begin again. Worse, on an unmodified roll of 1, the Cast Member does not realize that a step was missed and the player will have to roleplay this lack of knowledge when next the weapon is fired.

A flintlock musket takes five Turns to prepare for firing and requires a Dexterity + Guns (Rifle) Task roll. Each additional Success Level reduces the number of Turns needed to reload by one to a minimum of two Turns. If the Guns Task total is less than 9, the user misses a step in the loading process and the gun must be reloaded. Worse, on an unmodified roll of 1, the Cast Member does not realize that a step was missed and the player will have to roleplay this lack of knowledge when next the weapon is fired. Add an additional D4(2) Turns of work to account for cleaning up the previous mess when reloading.

Blunderbuss: Most blunderbusses were around 20 inches in length and many were flared at the end of the barrel. It was thought that this design would help the shot to spread more, but in truth, it did very little other than make the weapon look more impressive. They had a short stock at the rear that was used to help brace the weapon when it was fired. The shooter braced the weapon by holding the stock between her elbow and side, or holding it against her hip or a stationary object, due to its powerful recoil. The blunderbuss is much like a modern shot-

gun, gaining a +1 to the attack roll, due to the spread of pellets. However, much like buckshot, the damage does not double. This weapon was terrible on land as a military weapon, but saw plenty of use on board ships as a means of repelling boarders.

Loading the blunderbuss takes four Turns to prepare for firing and requires a Dexterity + Guns (Shotgun) Task roll. Each additional Success Level reduces the number of Turns needed to reload by one to a minimum of two Turns. If the Guns Task total is less than 9, the user misses a step in the loading process and the gun must be reloaded. Worse, on an unmodified roll of 1, the Cast Member does not realize that a step was missed and the player will have to roleplay this lack of knowledge when next the weapon is fired. Add an additional D4(2) Turns of work to account for cleaning up the previous mess.

Cannons and Shot

Cannons were used for a variety of purposes during combat. Not only were they used to destroy the enemy's crew, but also their masts, sails, rigging, and yes, even the ship itself. An 18-pound cannon was capable of penetrating nearly 2 feet 6 inches into oak at a range of 400 yd. and over 1 foot at 1000 yd. Even the largest ships were only made with 8 inches of hull thickness, which was impressive, but still not able to withstand the bigger guns for long.

Cannon Damage

Cannon rounds are extremely lethal against human beings; any damage to the torso is tripled, and the Armor Value of any body armor worn is halved. Hits against arms or legs that do more than minimum damage automatically rip the limb off the victim's body. However, the limb removal does not apply to grapeshot, canister shot, or sangrenel, though the armor halving still applies. There is a -6 penalty to firing at one specific human-sized target with cannon shot.

Against vehicles, cannonballs are somewhat less effective. Wooden ships take 1/5 damage from solid shell (ignore armor), which does not include ship's boats. Ship's boats take full damage from a direct hit. A broadside of 10 12-pounder cannons, for example, will inflict a maximum of 200 points of structural damage to a wooden ship after the damage is divided by 5 (D10 x 10 = 100 x 10 cannons = 1000/5 = 200 damage). On the other hand, as the cannonballs smash through the vessel, they make splinters fly out in a lethal shower of wooden shrapnel, inflicting D6 x 3(9) points of Slash/Stab damage to anybody within 2 yards of the impact. Sinking a wooden ship with cannon fire was possible, but it required a lot of hits.

Against metal vehicles, the slow-moving cannonballs are very ineffective. During the Civil War, the *Virginia/Merrimack*, one of the first armor-plated

Cannon and Shot Table

Weapon	Range	Damage	Cap.	EV	Cost	Aval
Cannon 4-pounder	20/100/200/400/600	D10 x 5 (25)	1	800/400	250p	U
Cannon 6-pounder	20/150/300/650/1000	D10 x 7 (35)	1	1500/750	500p	U
Cannon 12-pounder	30/400/800/1300/1800	D10 x 10 (50)	1	2000/1000	800p	U
Cannon 18-pounder	30/500/1000/2000/3000	D10 x 15 (75)	1	3000/1500	1000p	U
Cannon 24-pounder	50/600/1200/2000/3000	D10 x 20 (100)	1	4000/2000	1200p	U
Cannon 36-pounder	40/400/800/1400/2000	D10 x 25 (125)	1	6000/3000	1800p	U
Cannon 42-pounder	40/400/800/1400/2000	D10 x 30 (150)	1	8000/4000	2400p	U
Swivel Gun	10/30/60/100/150	D8 x 6 (24)	1	100/50	150p	U

ships, was able to withstand repeated bombardment with minimal damage. Thus, double the Armor Value of any metal armor plate against these attacks.

Swivel Gun: These miniature versions of cannons were mounted on the railing of a ship so that they could swivel around, allowing for easy reloading. Some of them could be taken down and moved to another location, allowing them to be loaded and kept on deck until needed. The guns were used primarily to repel boarders by firing grapeshot into groups of marauders and were not very effective beyond 100 yd./m. It may be possible for swivel guns to fire a 2 or 3-pound shot, about the size of a modern baseball. This would do D8 x 6(24) damage to only one target.

Ammunition	Cost
Cannon Shot (per 12)	
4 and 6-pound shot	2p*
12 and 18-pound shot	3p*
24 and 36-pound shot	5p*
42-pound shot	12p

* Other types of ammunition are available for the 4, 6, 12, 18, and 24-pound guns. These are bar shot, chain shot, bundle shot, grape or canister shot, and sangrenel, and are detailed below. The cost is the same for these munitions.

Bar Shot: Two cannon balls connected by a metal bar that was fired into sails or at the side of a ship. Their purpose was to make large gaping holes and destroy sails and rigging, which would ultimately slow a ship. Adds +1 to the attack roll against masts (also see Hit the Deck! p. 84 for minuses to Dodge rolls). -1 to the Toughness roll of a ship when targeting sails. Adds an additional x1 to the damage multiplier when targeting the hull.

Bundle Shot: Several short iron bars bundled together with a length of rope. The bundles were made to fit snugly down the bore of a cannon. When the cannon was fired, the rope would loosen and burn away, and the iron bars would spread apart.

Once these bars hit a deck they would begin ricocheting, wreaking havoc on the crew. They were also useful for damaging sails. Deducts -2 to the Toughness roll of a ship when targeting sails (also see Hit the Deck! p. 84 for minuses to Dodge rolls).

Chain Shot: These were two or three cannon balls attached together by a length of chain. They were loaded down the barrel one after the other. When fired they would fly through the air in an erratic fashion. When they hit they caused major damage to ship's hulls as well as destroying masts, sails, rigging and crew alike. It adds +1 to the attack roll against masts or -2 to the Toughness roll of a ship when targeting sails (also see Hit the Deck! p. 84 for minuses to Dodge rolls). Adds an additional x1 to the damage multiplier when targeting the hull.

Canister/Grape Shot: For canister shot a large cask or metal container would be filled with small iron balls or stone and fired from the cannon. These crude "mortar rounds" would explode on impact, releasing a hailstorm of shrapnel on a ship's deck. Grapeshot consisted of many small iron balls approximately one inch in diameter. This shot was packed down the barrels between two wooden discs. Grapeshot was very effective against enemy crews at close range and was often used to repel boarders. These types of shot are much more difficult to dodge, due to their scattering effect (see Hit the Deck! p. 84). The damage for the cannon type is rolled as normal, but the damage is only one-quarter the damage rolled (swivel guns still use their full damage). However, apply the damage to all targets who fail to Dodge or Hit the Deck within a 3-yd radius. Ranges of a cannon using this type of shot drop by half, unless it is a swivel gun.

Sangrenel: Probably the most deadly anti-personnel round of its time. It was really nothing more than a cloth bag of jagged scrap iron rammed down the barrel of the cannon. The bag disintegrated when the powder ignited and jagged iron flew in all directions. This tended to cause grievous wounds to enemy crews, resulting in amputations and death as the jagged metal was removed. This type of shot is much more difficult to dodge, due to its scattering effect (see Hit the Deck! p. 84). The damage for the

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Area of Effect

Explosive Type	Ground Zero	General Effect	Maximum Range
Powder Keg (100 lbs/50 kg)	1	2	3
Cannon	1	2	3

Explosive Damage

Explosive Type	Ground Zero	General Effect	Maximum Range
Powder Keg	D6 x 6(18)	D6 x 4(12)	D6 x 2(6)
Cannon	D8 x 10(40)	D8 x 8(32)	D8 x 4(16)

cannon type is rolled as normal, but the damage is only one-half the damage rolled. However, apply the damage to all targets who fail to Dodge or Hit the Deck within a 3-yd radius. Ranges of a cannon using this type of shot drop by half.

When a powder keg explodes it initially does concussion and shrapnel damage from the burning wood shards and metal bands around the barrel. Those caught in the blast zone will be on fire, taking D4(2) damage per Turn. Those at Ground Zero are engulfed in flame, taking D6(3) damage per Turn. Those diving for cover must make a Dexterity + Dodge (or Acrobatics) Task roll to try to make it out of the blast radius. The difference between the ranges is expressed as a minimum number of Success Levels. For instance, to go from one yard (Ground Zero) to two yards (General Effect), a character would need to get a minimum of 1 Success Level in her Dodge roll. To go from the General Effect range to the Maximum range would also take 1 Success Level. To go from Ground Zero to beyond Maximum Range would require 3 Success Levels.

If an entire powder room goes up, the damage listed in Ground Zero for one powder keg is multiplied by 10 and the ship is on fire, taking D6(3) fire damage per Turn. Few ships survived an explosion in the powder room.

When a cannon explodes it sends shards of superheated iron out in every direction, causing horrible wounds to anyone in the radius. When a cannon is hit by a cannonball, there is a chance that the cannon will explode if it was loaded. Roll a 1D10 to

determine if the cannon explodes. If the result is a 1, the cannon detonates and does the listed damage to the surrounding area. Otherwise, it does not explode but is still ruined. An exploding cannon during a combat will usually kill two crewmen if their Hitting the Deck roll is failed (see p. 84 for Hitting the Deck).

Ships of the High Seas

The AV and DC of the old seafaring vessels work under a slightly different principle than the rules in the *AFMBE* Core Book. The entire vessel is technically armored, due to the sheer thickness of the wood planks used for the sides. The planks were often made from oak or some other hardwood. However, the “armor” of the ship was just wood and did not always fare too well against large balls of iron flying at it at explosive speeds. There were also weaknesses in the hulls due to warped wood, worms, or occasionally rot.

Armor Value

Ship's Armor Values are determined by the hull's thickness (typically 4-8 inches of wood for most vessels). The formula is $12 + (\text{Thickness in inches} \times 2)$, yielding a range between 20 and 28. Heavy ships typically had 8 inches of hull thickness, while medium ships had 6 inches. Tiny and light ships had 4 inches of hull thickness, and boats had around 3 inches.

Damage Capacity

The formulas below are for calculating the DCs of wooden ships. Other vessels work under a slightly different method and will be added in future Unisystem supplements. Below are also the recommended maximums for cannons aboard ships of each size class. However, these are guidelines and ZMs may change these for any vessel they see fit, if research of the new vessel shows that more or heavier guns were aboard.

Boats: (less than 1 ton): $15 + 1$ per 200 lbs; 3-in. hull thickness; 1 swivel gun

Tiny Ships (under 10 tons): $50 + 10$ per ton (maximum 150); 4-in. hull thickness; 6 cannons max; 4-pounders

Light Ships (under 200 tons): $150 + 1$ per ton (maximum 350); 4-in. hull thickness; 14 cannons max; 18-pounders

Medium (under 300 tons): $350 + 1$ per 5 tons (maximum 410); 6-in. hull thickness; 20 cannons max; 24-pounders

Heavy Ships (over 300): $400 + 1$ per 10 tons; 8-in. hull thickness; 74 cannons max; 42-pounders

Cannon Locations

Typically, ships had the same number of cannons on both sides of the ship. If a ship was carrying 14 cannons, there would be 7 to a side. Also, weights were distributed evenly, lest the ship lean to one side slightly, making it harder to steer. If a ship carried four 24-pounders and ten 12-pounders for example, two 24-pounders and five 12-pounders would be on each side.

Most ships carried the same types of cannon for the most part so that there was no confusion in loading the cannons during a combat. However, this was not always true of pirates, who had to make due with whatever they could get. Most vessels tended to carry lighter cannons to keep their maneuverability, as heavy cannons would cause a ship to become weighed down and sluggish. For the most part, only the largest ships (Galleons and heavier) carried the really big 36- and 42-pounders.

Occasionally a ship would be armed with a fore cannon, called a bow chaser, or even an aft cannon, used for warning shots and attempts at slowing a craft by taking down a sail. The aft cannons were useful for shots on the run. These were usually smaller cannon, but there's nothing saying a ship could not have a heavy bow chaser, if the player wishes.

Each ship detailed later has a maximum cannon type that can be placed on board the ship as well as a maximum total. ZMs may allow their players to take heavier cannons than a ship will allow, but every cannon heavier than the maximum allowed type drops the available cargo space by one tenth and the top speed by 0.5, as the ship becomes heavier and more sluggish in the water. The same is true for the maximum amount of cannons allowed.

Cargo Capacity

Ships of the day were not “weighed” in the traditional sense. Most ships of the Age of Sail are rated by their “burthen”, which is the capacity of the ship and was calculated approximately by the length, width, and depth of the vessel. The formula for calculation of the burthen during that time was woefully inadequate and yielded a figure a lot less than a ship could actually carry. When a weight is given for a ship of this time it is most likely the burthen of the ship. To make matters more confusing, many vessels of the day were also rated at 1.5 crewmen per ton, meaning 2 tons were reserved for every 3 crewmen. Instead of dealing with all that math, the rules below will suffice.

A ship can carry up to 1/2 of its weight (burthen) without any ill effects to the ship. At 3/4 burthen any Seamanship rolls performed to pilot the craft are done at -1 due to the sluggishness of the vessel. At full burthen, rolls to maneuver the craft are done at -2 and the ship is “riding low” in the water. The amount of crew added should not affect this number at all unless the vessel is carrying more than the maximum number of crew allowed for the vessel. In this case, drop the maximum allowed burthen by 1/5 for every 25% more passengers brought aboard above the maximum crew allowed.

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The weight of the ships on pp. 73-76 should be considered their burthen, unless otherwise noted in the ship's description.

Toughness and Handling

Toughness is the ruggedness of a vessel and is generally much like a human being's Constitution. Handling is the measure of a vehicle's maneuverability and responsiveness. Handling is comparable to a human being's Dexterity. In maneuvering a vessel, use Handling or the pilot's Dexterity for Piloting rolls, whichever is less, for a ship can only respond so well, no matter how adept the captain and crew are at sailing her. However, Seamanship bonuses still apply to this roll. More on these vehicle attributes and others are in *AFMBE* p. 115.

Ship Speed

A ship's speed is represented in nautical miles or "knots", which is approximately 6076 feet per hour. However, assume that each knot of ship speed is one mile per hour for ease of calculation and simplicity. Ships are assumed to be able to go their maximum knots in a good wind; however, ZMs may impose any limits they wish due to adverse weather conditions, light wind, cross winds, etc.

Minimum Crew

Unless otherwise specified in the ships below, the minimum crew required to operate a vessel, albeit poorly, is 1/10 the total crew allowed. Thus, a Naval Snow could be piloted by a skeleton (pardon the pun) crew of 8 men but would not have enough men for every task, which would include cannons, fire brigade, etc, which could be a harrowing experience with an enemy vessel fast approaching.

An Experienced Vessel

During the Age of Sail, ships were often thought of as having personalities, which made them seem as though they were entities with a mind and nature all their own. They were often referred to in the female designation instead of simply saying "it." In that regard, a ship was just as much a part of the crew as anyone else. If a sailor treated his mistress a'right, she would return in kind.

Ships in *A!TBZ!* can be given Qualities and Drawbacks and even be awarded Experience Points of a sort. These Experience awards can go toward outfitting the ship with better crew and adding new Qualities to a ship and "repairing" Drawbacks.

A ship and crew start "green" unless the Captain of the vessel begins the game with Status. Each point of the Captain's Status Quality is one point that can be added to a ship and its crew at the start



of the game. This allows a Cast Member to begin play with a seasoned ship and crew. As noted in the Status Quality, high levels of Resources grant a bonus to the Captain's Status (*AFMBE* p. 46).

During play a ship and crew gain Experience just as the Cast Members do, though in smaller amounts. These points are used to purchase Qualities for the ship and crew, and to replace lost crew Qualities later, due to heavy loss of crew. They can also be used to buy off ship or crew Drawbacks that were added at the beginning of play or that came with a vessel that was picked up in game. A ship and crew gains 1/10 the XPs that its Captain does per session and should be recorded as a decimal score. Each whole point can be spent on the ship and/or crew to improve it and make it more "experienced." As some sessions may take place on land, a ship would not always receive XPs. Each Quality Point added to a ship adds 2,000 pieces of eight to the cost or value of a ship and each Drawback drops the cost or value by a like amount. Like Cast Members, ships can have up to 10 points of Drawbacks, but who wants a ship with horrible flaws?

In all instances, the ZM is the final arbiter on which Qualities and Drawbacks can be added to a ship or crew. Many that are not normally considered Supernatural would be when added to a ship. The player and ZM should get together to decide how a Quality or Drawback fits on a vessel or crew. Some possibilities are listed below.

Fast Reaction Time – The ship itself could be a very stealthy and nimble ship, granting it this Quality.

Hard to Kill – The ship is harder to damage or destroy.

Increased Life Points – Adds more DC to the ship.

Recurring Nightmares – Something about the ship seems to give the crew the same nightmare over and over.

Resistance (Type) – Rot, damage, fire, and other factors can all be types of Resistance for a ship.

Accursed – The ship itself could have some dread curse attached to it.

Good/Bad Luck – The ship could be lucky or it could be the opposite.

Bag of Tricks (One of the Living) – Anything useful could be lying around the hold.

Hallucinations (One of the Living) – The crew see things that are not there.

Threat Detection (One of the Living) – All aboard the vessel just seem to know when there's danger afoot.

Life Point Adders

When adding a Quality onto a vessel that adds Life Points, the LP increase would be multiplied by 5. These are added to the DC of the ship. The bonus to Survival rolls from Hard to Kill is added to the Toughness of a vessel and is not multiplied.

"Cursed" Ships

A ship considered to be cursed or blessed in some fashion can increase the notoriety of those aboard her. If a ship has some well know special Drawback, Quality or Aspect, add 1 to the Status of the Captain and all who crew her.

Ghost Ships

Just as a normal ship can possess Qualities and Drawbacks, a Ghost Ship could have Qualities, Drawbacks, or even...shudder...Aspects. The possibilities are endless and can make for an interesting encounter. What if the zombie pirate ship had Weak Spot: None? You could take care of the crew, but the ship would still be around! And what if it was the cause of the curse turning all who step onto its deck into zombies? What if anyone on board the vessel for more than a day began to have horrible Recurring Nightmares? Below are a number of Aspects that could be appropriate, but ZMs can add any Aspects to a ghost ship as they wish and there are even examples of these types of ship in later chapters.

Aspect	Effect
Constitution Aspects	Raises the Toughness of a vessel
Damage Resistant	Half damage from all attacks except fire/chemicals
Displacement	Makes the ship harder to hit
Flame Resistant	Half or no damage from fire attacks
From the Ashes	Allows the vessel to return after it is destroyed
Ghostly Form	Allows the vessel to become insubstantial
Nest	Some ships had rats and other critters aboard which could become undead too
Only the Dead	Anyone who dies aboard the Ghost Ship rises as a zombie
Regeneration	Allows the ship to regenerate; can be bought in levels
Soul Sucker	Drains Essence from living beings who step on board
Spew Flame	Uses the Toughness (Constitution) of a ship x 20 to calculate the range, damage is x10, can come from cannons or something else aboard the ship
Spitter	Uses the Toughness (Constitution) of a ship x 20 to calculate the range, damage is x10, can come from cannons or something else aboard the ship
The Quick Dead	Adds 3 knots to the Speed of the ship
Weak Spot (Fire)	Ship takes double damage from fire attacks
Weak Spot (None)	Can only be destroyed by special circumstances (burning, exploding, etc.)
Willpower Aspects	Gives the Ghost Ship Willpower to allow it to use the Soul Sucker Aspect

Other Aspects from other *AFMBE* supplements can be added as well and a couple have made their way into Ghost Ships in later chapters. Below are a couple more ship specific Aspects that can be added to ghostly vessels.

Eldritch Cannons

POWER +8

Some ghost ships possess equally ghostly cannons that fire not cannon shot, but some form of eldritch or ectoplasmic shot. These cannons require an expenditure of Essence, either from the ship or from human “batteries” to function. Each shot drains a number of Essence from whatever powers the cannon, be it the ship’s Vital Essence, a living slave, or the zombie crew, dependent upon the size of the cannon. The table below determines the Essence expenditure for each size of cannon:

Swivel Gun	1 Essence Point
Cannon 4-12 pounder	1 Essence Point
Cannon 18-24 pounder	2 Essence Points
Cannon 36-42 pounder	3 Essence Points

Ghostly Agility Power +4 per Level

Be it the superb crew that died upon its decks or some other supernatural force driving it, some ghostly vessels have an uncanny ability to do the impossible in regards to maneuvering. This Aspect increases the Handling of a ghost ship by 1 point per each level taken. ZMs allowing players to take this for a Quality on a ship may wish to limit the number of levels purchased.

Ghost Ships and Essence

Much like ghosts in *CJ Carella's WitchCraft*, Ghost ships have a Vital Essence score instead of a DC. This score is the same as the DC of the type of ship the Ghost Ship once was. Thus, a Ghost Ship Sloop has a Vital Essence score of 400. This not only represents its "DC", but also its available Essence to fuel any Aspects, Qualities, or abilities that require an Essence expenditure.

Some Ghost Ships absorb Essence from those on its decks, which fuels the Vital Essence of the ship and allows it to "regenerate" in a fashion as it drains the wills of any living souls on board. A vessel could also have the Regeneration Aspect, allowing it to actually heal itself. Regeneration can be added to the Ghost Ship multiple times; thus a ship that has two levels of Regeneration for 10 Power would regenerate 2 Vital Essence per Turn.

When a Ghost Ship is depleted of all its Vital Essence it is effectively destroyed, banished, or otherwise unraveled, unless it has an Aspect preventing its destruction.

Ships o' th' Seas

Boat

Ship's Boat

The ship's boat is a large rowboat, sometimes equipped with a swivel gun, that is used for transport of crewmen and sometimes for boarding procedures. Hitting a ship's boat with cannon fire is done at -3 due to the small size of the craft. The boat can carry 6 to 10 men, unless it is also carrying cargo. It can carry up to one-half ton of cargo along with 2 crewmen. These boats were also equipped with a collapsible mast and sail.

Weight: 150 lbs. (75 kg.) **DC:** 15

Speed: 3-6 Knots **AV:** 16
(7-15 yd/m per Turn)

Handling: 2 **Toughness:** 1

Cost: 50p

Tiny

Coastal Fishing Boat

This is a small one-masted vessel used primarily for fishing off coastlines and in coves and inlets. It can make for a useful coastal raider as it can easily go where most other ocean-going vessels cannot. It can be crewed by a small band of brigands, twenty or fewer, but due to a distinct lack of space can only accommodate up to six 4-pounder cannons and 4 swivel guns. It does not stay out for long periods of time and so does not need much space for rations and supplies. Those using this ship as a raiding vessel would most likely have some form of nearby hideout to sail back to.

Weight: 10 tons (20,000 lbs.) **DC:** 150

Speed: 3-6 Knots **AV:** 20

Handling: 3 **Toughness:** 2

Cost: 1000p

Light

Naval Snow

This was one of the preferred patrol ships of the Royal Navy. The Snow had a fore and aft tri-sail, which allowed it to maneuver rather well in a light quartering wind and carried it quickly over the water. It carried a crew of up to 80 men and was typically armed with 8 six-pounder cannons. The Naval Snow was a two-masted ship with one gun deck.

Weight: 90 tons (180,000 lbs.) **DC:** 240

Speed: 5-11 Knots **AV:** 20

Handling: 3 **Toughness:** 2

Cost: 10,000p

Sloop

This light, fast vessel was a favorite of pirates and smugglers. It was a very maneuverable craft and sat shallow in the water, which allowed it to be maneuvered through shallower channels than most ocean-going vessels could go. These ships were capable of carrying a crew of up to 75 men and could be armed with up to 14 twelve-pounder cannons. The Sloop had one mast and one gun deck.

Weight: 100 tons (200,000 lbs.) **DC:** 250

Speed: 5-11 Knots **AV:** 20

Handling: 4 **Toughness:** 2

Cost: 12,000p

Schooner

The Schooner had many features that made it a good catch as a pirate vessel. It possessed a very narrow hull and a shallow draft, which allowed it to be maneuvered into coves and through shoals with little difficulty. It was crewed with 75 men and could carry 10 twelve-pounder cannons and 4 swivel guns. The Schooner had two masts and one gun deck.

Weight: 110 tons (220,000 lbs.) **DC:** 260

Speed: 5-12 Knots **AV:** 20

Handling: 4 **Toughness:** 2

Cost: 12,000p

Naval Sloop

This ship was used to hunt pirates. It was not much more than a slightly larger version of a Sloop with more cannons. The Naval Sloop was sharp-ended, which allowed for a faster attack as it could cut through the water more effectively. It was also fitted with seven pairs of oars that could be used through the gun ports for even more attack speed. It could carry a crew of up to 70 men and could be armed with 14 twelve-pounder cannons, but typically ran with a combination of six- and twelve-pounders. The Naval Sloop had only one mast and one gun deck.

Weight: 113 tons (226,000 lbs.) **DC:** 263

Speed: 5-10 Knots **AV:** 24

Handling: 3 **Toughness:** 3

Cost: 10,000p

Brigantine

A clear choice for combat rather than hit and run raids, the Brigantine's two masts could be rigged with many different types of sail, which made it more versatile than other ships. It could carry up to 100 crewmen and was armed with 10 eighteen-pounder cannons on one gun deck.

Weight: 150 tons (300,000 lbs.) **DC:** 300

Speed: 5-11 Knots **AV:** 24

Handling: 3 **Toughness:** 3

Cost: 20,000p

Medium

Merchantman

Though the “merchant ships” were intended for passengers and cargo, they were sometimes also used in times of war. They had three masts rigged with square sails, which gave them a bit more sail power than a Flute. The crew typically numbered in the twenties, but more would be required for a more combat-oriented vessel. The ship could be armed with up to 16 twenty-four-pounder cannons on one gun deck and could carry up to 100 crewmen.

Weight: 280 tons (560,000 lbs.) **DC:** 406

Speed: 5-9 Knots **AV:** 24

Handling: 3 **Toughness:** 3

Cost: 25,000p

Flute

The Flute was one of the more inexpensive ships to build for its size. It needed only a dozen crewmen to operate and could carry much more cargo than most other cargo ships its size. The Flute could carry up to twice its rated weight. It had a flat bottom and a round stern, which became the favored model of a cargo vessel. Unfortunately, it also became the favored target for pirates. The Flute could be manned with up to 200 crew members and armed with up to 16 twenty-four-pounder cannons on one gun deck. The Flute had three masts.

Weight: 300 tons (600,000 lbs.) **DC:** 410

Speed: 4-8 Knots **AV:** 24

Handling: 3 **Toughness:** 3

Cost: 30,000p

Heavy

Frigate

Sometimes called a “Man-O-War”, the Frigate was usually placed at the head of major sea shipments or convoys to deter pirates. It was a heavy

and impressive vessel with three masts. The ship carried 195 crewmen and was armed with a whopping 26 cannons on two gun decks, in a combination of twenty-four-pounders and thirty-six pounders.

Weight: 360 tons (720,000 lbs.) **DC:** 436

Speed: 4-8 Knots **AV:** 28

Handling: 3 **Toughness:** 3

Cost: 48,000p

Galleon

This mammoth of the seas served a dual purpose. It was used both as a Man-O-War and a treasure or merchant ship. Though the Galleon was an extremely sleek ship for its size, its design caused it to be easily rocked by the sea and to pitch and roll with the waves much worse than other ships. Most Galleons had four masts, but some were equipped with only three. This floating fortress carried around 40 cannons at the start of its service as a cargo vessel and 74 cannons by the late 1700s, though by this time it was used more for war than for its cargo capacity and was crewed by around 200 men. It was one of the few ships that could carry the massive forty two-pounder cannons and was typically armed with a combination of 24s, 36s, and 42s on its three gun decks, with the heaviest guns being on the lowest deck. It could also carry up to 40 passengers.

Weight: 400 tons (800,000 lbs.) **DC:** 440

Speed: 4-8 Knots **AV:** 28

Handling: 3 **Toughness:** 4

Cost: 60,000p

Other Pirate'n Vessels

Junk (Coastal)

The Hai-Chu'an (coastal junk) could carry about 200 men and 12 cannons (and sometimes more during war time as they were not required to carry any cargo other than what was needed for the men) con-

sisting of a combination of twelve- and eighteen-pounders. These ships were comparable in size to the Schooner. These ships had two to three masts.

Weight: 100 tons (200,000 lbs.) **DC:** 250

Speed: 5-11 Knots **AV:** 24

Handling: 3 **Toughness:** 2

Cost: 12,000p

Junk (Ocean Going)

The Yang-Chu'an (ocean-going junk) was capable of carrying 300 crew and carried 20 cannons (and sometimes more during war time as they were not required to carry any cargo other than what was needed for the men), consisting of a combination of twelve and eighteen-pounders. These ships were comparable in size to the Flute. These vessels had three masts.

Weight: 300 tons (600,000 lbs.) **DC:** 410

Speed: 4-8 Knots **AV:** 28

Handling: 3 **Toughness:** 2

Cost: 30,000p

Viking Longship/Corsair Galley

The Drakkar was the warship of the Vikings. These were the ships that were taken farther out into sea and taken to war. The Corsair Galley was much like the Viking Drakkar and the old Greek Trireme ships. Both had about 60 oars, 30 on each side, and could carry around 50 tons of cargo. The crew of the Viking ships usually consisted of the rowers (which could be anyone from slaves to the Viking warriors themselves), plus at least the same amount of warriors during times of war or on a large raid. The Corsair Galley usually held up to 240 slaves on the oars (4 to an oar), plus another 100 warriors, who could also serve as ship's crew. The Corsair Gallies usually were equipped with up to 14 swivel guns and two fixed forward-mounted 24-pound cannons. The Viking Longship would have cost the same in

their silver currency. The Corsair Galley had two masts while the Viking Longship had only one. Destroying the masts of these vessels will only drop the maximum speed by 2/3, as both vessels also have oars.

Weight: 80 tons (160,000 lbs.) **DC:** 230

Speed: 8-14 Knots **AV:** 24

Handling: 3 **Toughness:** 2

Cost: 8,000p

Ship's Crews

The cast and their adventures are the main focus of any game. However, a ship's crew can consist of 100 men or more, depending upon the size of the ship. For this reason, a ship's crew is described using a set of Qualities, Drawbacks, and generic Attributes that modify the rolls of the Cast Members.

A Captain must have a minimum Status level equal to the cost of the crew type before she is allowed to purchase it. Legend'ry crew may not be very willing to set sail with a Captain still barely wet behind the ears. However, if the ZM decides otherwise due to other circumstances, this rule can be waived.

Crew abilities may drop in a battle, depending upon how many are killed. This can be later repaired by hiring on more crewmen, but it is possible to hurt the Attributes by getting crewmen who are worse than the sea-hardened buccaneers you once had. If a ship loses more than 3/4 of its total crew, an entirely new crew must be purchased with Ship XPs and the new Attributes used instead. All Qualities the original crew possessed are also lost.

A Captain can upgrade a crew simply by paying the remainder of the points necessary to bring the crew up to the next level. Thus, a Captain who had a Seaworthy crew could spend 3 Ship XPs to raise them to a Vet'ran crew.

Each Crew type below has a Seamanship and Gunnery bonus that is added to any Seamanship or Gunnery rolls the Cast Members have to make while aboard the ship. The Willpower and

Constitution Attributes supplied are for those times when the crew must make Tests to avoid illness, fear, and other such hardships at sea. Hittin' the Deck is special and is described in more detail on p. 84. Essentially, it is the Dodge score for the crew and is used any time the crew needs to hit the deck.

Wet B'hind th' Ears (0-Point Crew)

These crewmen are usually still green. They've either been pressed into their first job at sea or they are just learning seamanship.

This crew has the following abilities that modify the various die rolls of the cast:

Seamanship +1, Gunnery +1, Willpower 2, Constitution 2, Hittin' the Deck 4, Skirmish 2

Seaworthy (3-Point Crew)

These crewmen have seen a few voyages and lived through them. They are a bit more hardened to the rigors of life at sea.

This crew has the following abilities that modify the various die rolls of the cast:

Seamanship +2, Gunnery +2, Willpower 3, Constitution 3, Hittin' the Deck 6, Skirmish 3

Vet'ran (6-Point Crew)

True veterans of the sea, these crewmen have seen their fair share of pretty much all that the sea can offer. They are battle ready and go about their tasks with an efficiency that would make a Navy captain jealous.

This crew has the following abilities that modify the various die rolls of the cast:

Seamanship +3, Gunnery +3, Willpower 4, Constitution 4, Hittin' the Deck 8, Skirmish 4

Legend'ry (8-Point Crew)

The storybooks are full of 'em: those pirate crews that can sail through heavy storms without so much as a blink. These are the types who have looked Death in the face many times and told her to go

jump in the sea. These crewmen are unflinching in their duty and would follow a good captain right into the mouth of Hell itself if she promised to bring them back out again.

This crew has the following abilities that modify the die rolls of the cast:

Seamanship +4, Gunnery +4, Willpower 5, Constitution 5, Hittin' the Deck 12, Skirmish 5

Other Crew Qualities

The captain can purchase other Qualities for her crew as well. A few Qualities are detailed below, but ZMs should feel free to create more as needed.

Competent Crewman (2-Point Quality/Skill Level): Someone on board is competent in one field, be it Medicine, Carpentry, or some other useful skill. Cast Members may draw upon this extra skill bonus when needed or it may be rolled on its own, if no other Cast Member possesses that skill.

Hale and Hearty (2-Point Quality): This Quality drops all crew losses by 2% and adds a +2 bonus to the Hittin' the Deck roll due to their ruggedness.

Fast Reaction Time (2-Point Quality): It matters not if the captain has Fast Reaction Time when commanding a vessel in ship-to-ship combat. The crew can only respond so fast to orders. That is, unless the crew has this Quality as well. If both crew and captain have Fast Reaction Time, it allows the ship to go first in combat. If only the crew has it, they still gain a +5 to Initiative rolls, but do not go first, as the crew can only respond quickly if the captain gives the orders equally as quickly. However, once they get the orders, they will become a flurry of activity.

Sharp Lookout (2-Point Quality): Grants the captain and other cast members a +2 bonus on Perception Tests, including those to spot immediate danger due to surprise.

Sickly (Variable Point Drawback): Someone brought some illness onboard and now most of the crewmen have it. This drawback is worth the same

amount as the Contagion Strength of the disease chosen. Any minuses from the illness affect the captain's ability to properly pilot and maintain the vessel. This illness does not just go away on its own and must be bought off like any other Drawback.

Unruly (2-Point Drawback): The captain or quartermaster must make a Contested Difficult Willpower Test to get them to do anything. If the roll is failed, the captain does not get to use any of the benefits from the crew. The captain may add any bonuses from Charisma or Status, or add Intimidation to the roll. However, any intimidation of this mob is likely to cause them to mutiny.

Life At Sea

Contrary to the romantic scene painted in Hollywood, life at sea was harsh. Still, for many, it was better than life on land. Some sailors had no choice in the matter, as press gangs forced them into service on a ship. There were no luxuries on board the ship such as rooms, private bathrooms, or privacy, but for pirates and privateers, it was a life of relative freedom. During those times when there was a lull in work, the crew would sing bawdy songs called shanties and dance and generally get drunk and carouse. Occasionally there would be fights, but they were overseen by the Quartermaster and were not to the death, as they could not afford to lose crewmen.

At the prow of the ship were the “toilets.” These were nothing more than holes that dropped the waste directly into the sea. At the rear of the ship was the only real room in the vessel. This was the captain's quarters and oftentimes doubled as a navigation room. Crewmen slept wherever there was room either on deck, on another level if the ship was big enough to have one, or in the hold. Fleas and lice were a constant problem, as not only did the crew have them, but rats, who were frequently unwanted passengers aboard a vessel, had them as well. These creatures would get into food supplies, bite the crewmen, and generally make a nuisance of themselves, and most crews created a detail

specifically for the hunting of the vermin. Many plague ships were created due to the vermin that stowed away on board ships. Poisonous spiders were also a problem on sailing vessels as the fruits and vegetables brought aboard frequently harbored these creatures.

At the very bottom of a ship was the ballast room or bilge room. This area was usually partially filled with rocks or other weights. Water from above and from cracks in the ship would collect in the bilge room. Those who had the unenviable task of manning the bilge pump were often nicknamed “bilge rats” and were sometimes put there as a form of punishment. The water at the bottom of the ship would stagnate and smell much like a swamp, adding to an overall stench aboard a ship. If a ship had a leak that would cause it to slowly sink, or there was a heavy storm, the bilge pumps would be manned constantly.

Food

Much of the food consumed on board most sailing vessels was dried meat and hard tack. Hard tack was nothing more than a hard biscuit made of flour, water, and maybe some lard for flavor. It was baked for a long time to allow it to dry out completely, and many of them were burnt because of this. Barrels of these biscuits would be taken on board a ship, though the crew would rather have eaten anything other than the biscuits. These hard disks were made even less appetizing by the bugs that would eat them. Maggots and weevils would infest the biscuits if they sat in the hold for too long. Veteran seamen could always be recognized in taverns by their strange habit of banging their bread on the table before eating it, for this is what they had to do at sea to make sure the biscuit they were about to consume was bug free. Livestock would also sometimes be brought on board ships; however, this was not a common occurrence.

Ships began carrying fresh fruit after it was discovered that eating citrus fruits kept away scurvy. This was usually in the form of lemons, oranges, and limes. The British sailing vessels gained a reputation for carrying lots of limes on board their

ships and their crewmen gained the nickname of “limey” as a result. Vegetables were also carried aboard sailing vessels, as even when withered, many of them could still be used in a stew. Salmagundi, which became a popular dish with those at sea, was nothing more than a spicy stew or salad made with whatever was on hand. The most common method of making the dish involved throwing together into a pot any varieties of meat on hand, fish, anchovies, turtle, cabbage, palm hearts, boiled eggs, onions, olives, oil, mangoes, mustard, garlic, vinegar and spiced wine. Truly, the cooks on sailing vessels had to be very creative with their ingredients.

Pirates liked their fare and their drinks hearty and spicy. Many of their foods were heavily spiced, and if the cook did not know what she was doing, the meal could have any number of herbs mixed into it. Aside from rum, other pirate drinks included bumboo, a drink made from rum, water, sugar, and nutmeg, and rumfustian, which was a blend of raw eggs, sugar, sherry, gin and beer. Pirates also greatly prized brandy, sherry, and port, which they always took from vessels when the opportunity presented itself. Seamen of all sorts also drank grog, which was nothing more than rum mixed with water, although there was a practical reason for doing so. The water stores on ships were rationed and occasionally went bad. The rum would not only supplement the water, but would help kill bacteria and any foul flavor in the water.

Press Gangs

Just one of the many reasons why there were so many discontented sailors in the Age of Sail. Press gangs were used, for the most part, by the various navies of the world, but they were occasionally used by merchant vessels and privateers as well. Their purpose was to go out and waylay people in towns, cities, and other areas and “press” them into service. This was a more polite description than “beat them into unconsciousness and throw them aboard a ship.” Press gangs forced people into service on board a vessel by knocking out and dragging them aboard a ship. Once aboard and out to sea they were

given an ultimatum, join or be thrown overboard. Likely, not many chose the latter. However, a captain had to be careful of these people, as they were more prone to mutiny.

Mutiny on the High Seas!

Mutiny was a very real occurrence during the Age of Sail. Those captains who could not manage to balance strictness with fair-handedness eventually found themselves without a ship. If they were lucky, they were given a longboat or were marooned on an island somewhere. If the crew were nice, they might even make it a tropical island. If they weren't so lucky...well, they tended to get real friendly with a noose at the end of a yardarm.

ZMs do not have to have this level of play in their game; they can decide to just leave it out completely or make it a ZM-dictated occurrence. Mayhap, the crews on Cast Member vessels are fanatically loyal and never mutiny. However, for those who wish to have some sort of measuring tool to determine whether a crew will mutiny, here is a method of doing so.

Each time the captain forces the crew to do something without discussion that the crew could disagree with, the crew needs to make a Difficult Willpower roll, adding any levels of Status and Charisma Quality the captain may have as a bonus to the roll. The ZM can impose a minus to this roll based upon the level of severity of the order or action. If this roll is failed, the crew gains one Mutiny Point. This is a black mark on the captain's record and the ZM should keep track of these points. If the Mutiny Points ever equal more than the captain's total Status, the crew will be uneasy and any little thing will cause them to mutiny. If the captain was still generally a good woman, the crew may simply vote her out of the position and let her continue to serve as one of the crew. If she was a horrible captain, the crew may visit any number of terrible punishments upon her.

Captains may also gain Mutiny Points by allowing food, rum, or supplies to run out, or because of unforeseen problems like illness, at the ZMs discretion.

Ship-to-Ship Combat

Naval combat is designed to run quickly and cinematically, without too many rules getting in the way of the enjoyment of the game. In a real naval battle with sailing ships there would be many things to consider. Wind trajectory, wave crest, facing, and the wonderful saber dance that had to be done to get the most guns to bear on the enemy without having their guns on you are just a few of the things that had to be figured into a real naval battle. Lucky for us (and our calculators) these concerns can be dropped overboard with the emplacement of some cinematic combat rules.

Piloting and Seamanship

Seamanship is the knowledge of how to make a vessel move through the various tasks that go on aboard the vessel, while Piloting is manning the wheel or tiller and actually maneuvering the vessel. The quartermaster of the ship makes a Seamanship Task roll before the pilot or captain makes the Piloting Task roll. Each Success in the quartermaster's roll is a +1 bonus to the pilot's roll. If the Seamanship roll is failed, a -1 penalty is applied to the Piloting Task roll for every 3 points the roll is failed by.

Saber Dancin'

During naval battles or chases the pilots/captains roll a contested Dexterity (or Handling) + Piloting roll modified by the quartermaster's or Crew's Seamanship Task roll. They can choose to close or increase the distance between the ships or even fire their cannons if they are close enough to the enemy. Each vessel gets one maneuver and attack action and one defense action per Turn; however, the one defense action remains valid for the entire Turn. Therefore, if multiple ships are attacking one vessel, that vessel only needs to roll one defense roll, which applies to all of the attacks in that Turn. Think of it as an Evasion roll.

When closing or increasing the distance a contested roll is made using Dexterity (or Handling) + Piloting, modified by the Seamanship Task roll. The ship with the highest Handling rating adds the dif-

ference between its Handling and the lowest Handling rating in the combat. The next highest ship does likewise, and so on. Additional modifiers are detailed below.

Faster moving vessel	+1 for each knot in difference in speed
Situational Awareness (wheelman only)	+2
Choppy Sea	-1
Cross Wind/No Wind	-2
Heavy Gale/Fog	-3

Distance is increased or decreased by a distance of 100 meters for each Success level above the opponent's Successes. If the faster ship wins, an additional 100 yards/meters can also be added to the distance increase or decrease for each knot the ship is going faster than the slower moving vessel.

Once a ship has gone to a distance of 10,000 yards/meters (that be a little over five an' a half miles, arrgh...) it should be considered a lost cause.

Wind and Tides

ZMs may add any bonuses or minuses they wish for other factors as they see fit. Wind speed, wind direction, stealing wind by sailing a certain distance from the rear of another vessel, etc., all can be added factors that can complicate a sea battle. However, adding too many variables can make for a slower combat session as the bonuses and minuses must be figured into the die rolls and recalculated with every direction change.

Acceleration & Maximum Speed

Ships can only accelerate so fast both in and out of combat. For the most part, assume that any ship wishing to accelerate can only increase speed by 1/2 knot per Turn. Wind, or a lack thereof, can change this factor, but that is left up to the ZM to decide. Once the ships have reached their maximum speeds

in a pursuit, Maneuver rolls are no longer needed to increase or decrease distance. The fastest moving ship will always increase or decrease the distance by 100 yards/meters per knot above the opponent; however, other factors may change this and allow for the impossible (can you say supernatural intervention?).

Positioning

Many of the maneuver rules work fine for a chase between two ships, or even multiple vessels moving in the same direction, but other factors should be taken into account if there is more than one vector of approach. If one of the targets is stationary, the vessels will automatically move closer using the rules above. The success levels of the moving target are calculated in 100 yd/m. increments, since the stationary target is not moving and gets no maneuver roll. In the instance of ships moving in a “head on” course, or near head-on course, the success levels are added together for both ships to determine closing distance per Turn.

If one ship is moving in from the side (of course this is a suicide maneuver, running straight into a broadside, but some zombie vessels may not care so much), it automatically closes 100 yards/meters due to its trajectory. It also receives a +2 bonus to the maneuver roll to close distance, on top of any other bonuses it receives for speed or maneuverability.

Fire Ye Long Tom

When a vessel is within a desirable cannon range, the captain or pilot can attempt to fire cannons. The first thing the pilot needs to do is get her weapons to bear, meaning getting the cannons in a position to fire upon the enemy vessel. Since cannons for the most part were located on the left or right sides of a ship, the pilot and crew had to constantly maneuver and turn, or tack, to get a portion of one side or the other facing the enemy vessel. There may be times when the ZM states that weapons are already to bear, but for the most part the pilot must roll a contested Dexterity (or Handling) + Piloting roll modified by the Quartermaster's or Crew's Seamanship Task roll, using the same modifiers as above in the Saber Dance section. Each Success level indicates

that 10% (round up) of the guns on a side have been brought to bear. Thus, if the player gets 3 Successes, 30% (round up) of the cannons on one side of the ship have been brought to bear and can be fired. In this type of combat, it is not necessary to determine where the cast is on deck. Those determinations are left for times when the ship is being boarded.

As some larger vessels could have as many as 20 guns on a side, it could become a headache to roll an attack roll for each cannon that is brought to bear. With this modification of the Automatic Fire – Burst rule in *AFMBE* (p. 102), only one attack roll is made for all cannons that are brought to bear. If the ship has three or fewer guns that have been brought to bear, simply use the Automatic Fire – Burst rules in the *AFMBE* main book with each Success level as one hit. If a ship has more than three guns on a side that have been brought to bear, use the Automatic Fire – Burst rule and make one attack roll for the first three guns. For each additional grouping of up to three guns add +2 to the attack roll.

Example: *Captain Blood has made a successful Maneuver roll and has brought eight of her guns to bear. The gunner rolls one attack roll for all eight guns with a +4 to the roll, since five more guns have been brought to bear and she gets +2 for each grouping of up to three cannons. The gunner has a Guns (Gunnery) skill of 4 and a Perception of 3 and rolls an 8 on the die. The ship has a Vet'ran crew, which adds +3 to the Gunnery roll. +4 is added to the final score for a total of 22, which is above the enemy's Defense roll of 18 and is six Success levels (AFMBE p. 95). This means that six of the eight cannons not hit their target.*

If the gunner desires to fire at a small target with one or more of those guns the minus for attacking that target should be used against the attack roll. If the attack roll is still enough to hit the ship after comparing the defensive roll to the attack roll then all cannons hit as above and those targeting the smaller target hit the target. If the minus drops the roll below the defense of the target, but the original roll was still enough to hit the ship, then only the cannons firing at the smaller target miss.

Example: *Blood's gunner has decided before the attack roll that two of those eight cannons are to be fired at the mast of the enemy vessel. -5 is imposed against the attack roll for firing upon a mast, which would bring the roll down to a 17. Since the enemy vessel's defense roll was a 18, this would bring the attack roll below what is needed to succeed in hitting the ship. However, since the original roll was enough to hit the ship, only the two cannons that were firing at the mast miss and four cannons still hit the ship. If the enemy vessel's defense had been a 15, all six cannons would still hit and two of them would hit the mast.*

Note, when dealing with a ship that has more than one size of cannon on deck, an equal number of cannons of each size must be firing, as the cannons were always staggered on a ship to keep it on an even keel (to keep it from leaning to one side or the other). Thus, if six cannons have been brought to bear and the ship has both 12 and 24-pounder cannons onboard, three of the firing cannons must be 12-pounders and three must be 24-pounders. If the 12-pounders are not in range, they may not fire.

Other Targets

Targeting a mast or other small section of the ship works much like targeting a limb in AFMBE. Masts are difficult targets to hit; however, if the damage done is in excess of DC/10, the mast comes down. This damage is cumulative when targeting a mast so keep track of it. If the ship only has one mast, the ship is now dead in the water until the mast is repaired, unless the ship is equipped with oars. If the ship has two masts, the speed of the vessel drops by one half, and if the ship has three masts, the speed drops by one third for each one destroyed until it is no longer mobile.

Hitting a sail is much easier to do, but it does not do a lot to the speed of the ship unless Sangrenel, Bar, Chain, or Bundle Shot is being used. If a sail is hit by one of these, no DC damage is done, but the ship must make a Toughness roll or lose 1 Knot in Speed until the sail is replaced. Lucky for most ghostly vessels, there's something other than wind driving them on.

Minuses to Striking Targets aboard a Ship

Sail	-1
Firing Across the Deck (See Hit the Deck! p. 84)	-3
Mast	-5
Cannon	-6
Human-sized Target	-6

Broadsides!

In the event that all cannons are successfully brought to bear, either by lucky rolls or by ZM determination, group all the cannons as you would for any other attack roll and determine the bonuses accordingly. Each grouping of up to three cannons above the first three adds +2 to the roll as mentioned earlier in this chapter. Also, a bonus of +5 is added to the attack roll for the broadside itself. Each Success level in the roll is one hit.

Example: *The ZM determines that Captain Blood manages to get a broadside on the enemy vessel. Captain Blood's ship is a Frigate and has 13 cannons on each side. As this is a broadside, all 13 cannons need to be calculated into the attack roll. The player determines that there are four groupings of up to three cannons (the last grouping only has one cannon in it, but it still counts) above the first three. This means that there is a +8 bonus added to the attack roll. Blood also gets +3 to the attack roll for her Vet'ran crew. Lastly, since this is a broadside, she gets to add +5 to the roll. Her total bonus is +16 and her gunner rolls a 7 and adds her Guns (Gunnery) of 4 and her Perception of 3 for a total roll of 30, well over the Defense roll of the enemy. Checking the Success levels, the ZM sees that this is 9 Successes, which means nine of the thirteen cannons hit their mark. If the gunner had rolled a 10 on the die, the role of luck rule (AFMBE p. 93) would apply and possibly raise the Successes high enough to allow all thirteen cannons to hit their mark.*

Bow Chasers

Occasionally, ships would employ one or two forward-fixed cannons on the fore of a ship, which

were called Bow Chasers. Some ships even sported a nasty surprise cannon in the aft section for those who felt like pursuing them. During combat, the captain of a vessel may decide to fire the Bow Chasers instead of attempting to get as many weapons to bear as possible in order to fire a warning shot or attempt to slow the other vessel by damaging sails or holing the ship at the waterline. Firing a Bow Chaser or Aft Cannon can always be done in combat, as long as it is facing the target.

Cannons and Reloading

For the most part, reloading cannons in the game is pretty automatic. Normally, it would take 6 Turns or more to reload the cannons for another shot. However, when jockeying for position is taken into consideration, by the time the ship gets back around for another shot, the cannons should be reloaded and ready to go. The only time reload time should affect game play is when the ships are at point blank range. Then, allow a Dexterity + Guns (Gunnery) roll for each ship. Each Success level drops one Turn from the reload time, to a minimum of 3 Turns. Failure indicates that the cannons were not properly loaded and fail to fire. A total roll of 5 or less indicates that something bad happens when the guns are fired and the ZM can be as devilishly cruel as she wishes.

Maneuvers

For those who wish a little more added excitement to naval combats, a number of maneuvers have been added below.

Shadow

The pilot must succeed in a Dexterity (or Handling) + Piloting Task roll with a -2 to the roll to keep behind another ship and stay hidden. The ship must be smaller or of the same size as the ship being shadowed. This maneuver is most useful for fooling a pursued vessel into believing only one vessel is behind her. Failure in the roll allows those on the

opponent's vessel to make a Perception + Notice Task roll at +3 to see the second vessel.

Steal Wind

With this maneuver a pilot attempts to keep at a certain distance to interfere in the wind the pursued ship is using, causing it to slow. The pilot rolls a Dexterity (or Handling) + Piloting Task roll with -3 to the roll. Success indicates that the pursued vessel slows by 1/2 knot and allows the pursuing vessel to decrease the distance by 100 yards/meters. Failure in the roll means that the Maneuver rolls are calculated as normal.

Sweeping Broadside

The pilot must succeed in a Dexterity (or Handling) + Piloting Task roll with a -5 difficulty to the roll. If successful, the ship banks hard, threatening to dip one side into the drink while quickly pulling all guns on a side into firing position. However, this maneuver drops the current speed of the vessel by 3/4, which can quickly mean the end of an encounter if the broadside misses. If the roll is failed, the ship dips too far and all hands must make Difficult Dexterity Tests to keep from falling into the drink. If the crew fails, 10% of their current numbers are lost in the briny sea. Even worse, the ship has pulled out of any proper position to fire and has still lost 3/4 of its speed.

Sweep the Deck

The Gunner aims cannons to fire across the deck of a ship, which causes the enemy crew to make a Hittin' the Deck roll (Hit the Deck! p. 84). The maneuver is performed at -3 to the roll. This is most useful for clearing the way for boarding the enemy vessel.

Damaging Wooden Ships

There's damage and there's damage-forms of attack that will kill a human being will do nothing to a wooden vessel. Bullets and hand-to-hand attacks must overcome a ship's Armor Value (see above), and then they will inflict a mere 1/10 the damage inflicted. Explosive and incendiary bullets do full damage (they still need to overcome the ship's Armor Value).

Solid cannon shot damage ignores armor, but inflicts 1/5 damage; cannonballs make fairly small holes in the ship, keeping its structural integrity relatively intact. Explosive shells and incendiaries inflict full damage. However, exploding shells were not generally fired from cannons on sea until the end of the 18th century, as they were too dangerous. And they were not used in any great measure until the beginning of the mid-19th century, and then mainly on land from the mortars and howitzers of the day. Chain, Bar, and other types of shot follow a different formula as mentioned earlier in this chapter.

Any time the ship takes more than 1/10 its Damage Capacity in damage on a single attack, roll a 1D10: on a roll of 9, a fire breaks out. A Dexterity + Seamanship Task roll must be made by the crew to put out the blaze. This Task roll is at -4 if the ship is in the middle of a combat. If the roll is failed, the fire will consume an additional D6(3) DC each Turn until a successful roll is made. This damage is cumulative, adding a multiplier of 1 each Turn the fire rages and spreads. Thus, the ship takes D6(3) the first Turn, D6(3) x 2 the second, and so on.

On a roll of 10, roll again; if the second roll is another 10, some of the ship's powder supplies explode. This inflicts D10 x 30 (150) points of damage and requires a second fire/explosion roll. If the second roll isn't a 10, nothing else happens.

Holing a Vessel

Sometimes an attacker may wish to intentionally cause a ship to take on water by "holing" the ship by firing its cannons into the enemy ship at the waterline. This causes the ship to slow, allowing a faster vessel to move in more quickly and overtake it. As the ship continues to take on water, the attackers can board the ship, take its cargo and supplies, and leave before it sank. The attack roll is made at -2. If the damage is 1/10 the ship's DC it begins taking on water. In game terms, the ship begins losing 4 DC per Turn due to its hold and lower decks filling with water. This damage is cumulative, so that if another 1/10 of the ship's DC is done at the waterline the ship would take 8 DC per Turn, and so on. This holing will cause the ship to slow by 1 knot and lose 1

point of Maneuverability every 5 Turns as well, due to drag and weight change. Bailing and manning the bilge pumps can stop this DC loss, but is difficult during the middle of combat. Bailing during combat causes a -1 penalty to all crew actions. This is because bailing requires crewmen to be pulled away from essential duties to bail.

Toughness

Once a vessel takes up to 3/4 of its total DC it begins having bad things happening to it, such as loss of maneuverability and even munitions hits. At this point, the ship must start making Simple Toughness Tests each time the ship takes damage. Each failed Toughness roll brings a D10 roll on the Toughness Failure Table (see p. 85), subtracting the Toughness of the ship, but adding any Success Levels from the attack. The result on the table is then applied to the ship, which could result in poor mobility, loss of speed, or much worse.

If the ship loses all its DC it is in danger of sinking and must make Simple Toughness Tests with -1 to the roll for every 10 points the ship has taken below 0 DC or sink in D10 x 2(10) minutes. Bailing will add +1 to the roll for each 10 men manning buckets. Manning the bilge pump will add +2 to the roll. Even if the roll is made, the vessel will sink in a few hours (roll D10-2, minimum 1 hour) if repairs aren't attempted. If the damage inflicted is more than double the ship's DC, the vessel is utterly destroyed.

Hit the Deck!

Crew can be lost by many means during a naval combat. They can be specifically targeted on a vessel as shot is intentionally laid across a ship's deck to take out crew or masts. They can be lost when a ship is hit in the hull as the cannon balls rip through, spraying the interior with wood shards and bouncing around the place. Any time the ship takes a hit, or cannon shot is strafed across the decks, the crew of a ship must make a Hittin' the Deck roll. This is just the Hittin' the Deck score for the crew and a D10. Cast Members must make their own Dodge rolls. If the result is higher than the attack roll, then the crew successfully hit the deck. If not, 10% of

All Flesh Must Be Eaten™

Toughness Failure Table

Result Effects

- 1-3 **Maneuverability.** Damage to the ship's maneuverability drops the Handling of the vessel by 1 and imposes -2 to all Seamanship rolls to maneuver.
- 4-6 **Decreased Speed.** Damage to the ship's sails has resulted in decreased speed. Drop the maximum speed of sailing vessels by 2. This also affects the current speed of a craft. Use the next highest result if the ship has no more sails.
- 7-8 **Solid Hit.** The damage done to the vessel is the maximum possible for the weapon type.
- 9-10 **Pounded Hull.** The ship has taken so much punishment that the Toughness of the craft has decreased by 1.
- 11-12 **Gapin' Hole.** The vessel takes x2 damage from the attack. Speed drops by 2 and Handling drops by 1.
- 13-14 **Massive Damage.** Chain reactions throughout the ship have taken their toll. Speed drops by half, Handling drops by 2, and 30% of crew are killed.
- 15+ **Catastrophic!** Roll D10. 1-2 = munitions/Powder room/Engine room hit - damage x10 from resulting explosion and the ship is on fire, taking D6(3) fire damage per Turn. 3-6 = Mainmast completely destroyed and takes down other sails as well; modern vessels lose all propulsion - ship is dead in the water. 7-9 = Massive hole opened in hull below waterline - ship will sink within D4x10 minutes...all hands abandon ship! 10 = catastrophic explosion setting the entire ship ablaze - all on board must make a Survival roll to be one of the survivors.

any remaining crew (round up) are lost. Damage from the cannons are halved and applied to the vessel itself, as the shot ricochets around the upper deck of the ship. Certain types of weapon shot can make it more difficult to successfully hit the deck. These are detailed below.

Cannon Balls: No modifier.

Bar or Chain Shot: -1 to Hittin' the Deck or Dodge rolls.

Grape or Canister Shot, or Volley Fire from firearms: -2 to Hittin' the Deck or Dodge rolls.

Sangrenel or Bundle Shot: -3 to Hittin' the Deck or Dodge rolls.

When crew are lost, a ship may be more difficult to pilot until more crew are picked up. Each time the crew drops by 1/4, the remaining crew lose 1 point in all bonuses, as well as Willpower. Hittin' the Deck stays the same. Thus, a crew that has been

reduced by half has all bonuses dropped by 2 and their Willpower dropped by 2.

Prepare t' Board!

One o' the main reasons t'attack a ship was to board 'er and take 'er cargo, or even the ship 'er-self. Blowin' up ships all day can be fun, but if you can't loot 'em 'cause you're a'sendin' 'em all down t'Davey Jones, it kinda takes all the profit outta the venture. So listen up, whilst we tell ye how t'go about board'n a vessel after ye got 'er in a position t'do so, arrgh...

When a ship is within 10 yards/m, a crew can begin boarding procedures. This is a dangerous time for both ships if there are still cannons available to fire, since this is essentially a broadside maneuver. However, keep in mind that cannons must now use the reload rules in the sidebar on p. 83. Boarding can be broken down into contested Simple Dexterity actions as one side attempts to throw and attach mooring lines and the other side attempts to

cut them loose. This can be attempted once a Turn. If the ship becomes successfully moored, the attackers can board the ship.

While boarding procedures are taking place, other crewmen are usually busy trying to whittle away at the remaining crews on either side. This is done as a Contested Dexterity + the crew's Gunnery Task roll with a bonus of +2 for the larger force. The loser in the roll loses 10% of the remaining crew, plus an additional crewman for each Success level the winner made above their roll. Once the ship is successfully moored, the attackers can pour over to the other vessel.

Skirmish

Once a ship has been successfully boarded, the opponents make Contested Dexterity + the crew's Skirmish Task rolls with a +2 bonus for the larger force. The loser in the roll loses 10% of the remaining crew, plus an additional crewman for each Success level the winner made above her roll.

Once a ship has lost 3/4 of its crew, the remaining crew must make a Morale roll, which is a Simple Willpower Test with modifiers to the Willpower as mentioned previously under the *Hit the Deck!* section. Failure in this roll means the crew will surrender, rather than continue the fight. They may try to escape, if they can, or throw down their arms and surrender. A crew that knows that there will be no quarter given will continue to fight, but will be at -3 to all combat rolls.

Cast Members during a skirmish should be rolled for separately and any crewmen they bring down in a Turn count toward lost crewmen in the Turn, no matter which side they are on.

Ramming and Fire Ships

Though ramming rarely happened during the Age of Sail, as most ships had discarded the notion of the ramming prow as being impractical, it could very well be used as a last resort by a captain who has run out of options. Ramming another vessel does damage to both ships, though less is done to the ramming ship. The attacker must maneuver the vessel to "point blank" distance (less than 100 yds) before a

ram can even be attempted, a tricky endeavor in itself. A contested Piloting skill Task roll is made with a bonus/minus based on the Seamanship Task roll of the crew. If the attacker wins, damage of D10 x (the ship's speed) is done to the target vessel, but half that damage is done to the attacking vessel as well. A bonus of +1 is added to the multiplier if the attacking ship is larger, or -1 if it is smaller. The damage to the attacking ship is lessened to 1/4 the damage if it is equipped with a ramming prow, though this was a rare occurrence.

Occasionally, Fire Ships were used to take out or damage many enemy ships at once, or to assist in taking over a harbor. All cannons would be loaded with shot and over filled with gunpowder. The wheel would be tied to keep the ship sailing in one direction and the ship would be set alight. As the ship burned, crewmen in ship's boats would tow the ship along to keep it on course until they were close enough to their enemy and then let it go. Any ship too close to the blazing vessel was in danger of catching fire itself. And if the ship's powder magazine went up, the exploding vessel would cause damage to an entire area as the superheated and over primed cannons blew, sending shrapnel out in all directions from the ship.

One Pilot skill Task roll is made for the Fire Ship with no bonuses for Seamanship Task rolls. Each other ship in the way must make a Pilot skill Task roll to avoid the blazing hulk. Every 2 Successes above the roll of the Fire Ship moves the vessel 20 yards away. Any ship within 10 yds of the Fire Ship is in danger of catching on fire, due to the burning embers on the wind. A successful Dexterity + Seamanship Task roll will avoid fires as the crew scrambles to put out any smoldering embers before they become worse. If the Fire Ship runs into another vessel on the way to its destination that vessel automatically catches on fire.

Each minute a Fire Ship is ablaze 1D10 must be rolled. On a roll of 10 the ship explodes. This number drops every minute, so that the first full minute it is a 10, the second a 9-10, the third an 8-10 and so on until the ship explodes.

Fire Ship Damage Radius

Ground: 10 yds

General: 40 yds

Maximum: 80 yds

Fire Ship Damage

Ground: D10 x 40(200)

General: D10 x 20(100)

Maximum: D10 x 10(50)

A Fire Ship acts as an explosive attack when it finally goes up, causing damage to an area in a radius. Any vessel within the radius must roll D10 to see if it is on fire. Fire breaks out on an 8 or 9. On a roll of 10, a powder keg has caught fire and explodes, which does the listed damage, and a second fire/explosion roll must be made for determining whether a fire has broken out. Crews must make Hit the Deck! rolls (p. 84) to avoid damage. If the roll is failed, the remaining crew amount drops by 10% (round up).

Maintenance and Repairs

There will come a time when a ship will need repairs. For the most part, a ZM should feel free to charge Cast Members a set charge for ship supplies for the typical maintenance and repairs that go on aboard a vessel during a sea voyage. These can be paid whenever the ship docks in port for supplies and would include costs for tar, nails, tacks, lumber and any other raw material needed for ship maintenance. Doing this will remove any accounting and supply headaches for both ZM and players. If the Cast do not pay this cost, they could find themselves with a leaky boat and no way to patch it.

When repairs are needed a Dexterity + Craft (Carpentry) Task roll is required with any minuses subtracted based on the difficulty of the task. ZMs may require multiple rolls to achieve the required number of successes to repair more severe damage. Each Success level rolled repairs 10 DC to a ship. A Carpenter may also stop a ship from taking on water. Each Success level in the roll drops the amount of DC loss per Turn by 1 DC. Major repairs may require a ship to be careened (run aground) or may require a shipyard at the ZM's discretion. All repair attempts take time, ranging from a couple hours to days. Multiple assistants could lower the time required. This too should be determined by the ZM.

Healing Crew

After a combat or a disaster that causes damage to the crew, the ship's surgeon (also called a chiron in the day) may attempt to use the Medicine skill to save crewmen. The surgeon makes a Dexterity + Medicine Task roll and saves 10% (round up) of the injured crew for each Success level in the roll.

Example: *The Queen's Pride has just survived a scrape with the Black Swan and its crew was damaged three times as a result, which took a total of 23 of the 80 crewmen out of action. The surgeon goes to work immediately after the battle and rolls Dexterity + Medicine. The surgeon has 2 Dexterity and 3 Medicine and rolls a 7 on the die. Not too shabby. Checking the Outcome Table in AFMBE p. 95, the ZM determines that this is 2 levels of success. The surgeon heals 20% of the injured crew, for a total of 5 crewmen. If she'd had some help in her endeavors, each assistant adding a +1 to the roll whether they had the Medicine skill or not, she could have possibly saved more lives. If any other crewmember had the Medicine skill, she could roll her own roll separately to attempt to save more of the crew.*

Healing With Magic

Each use of an Invocation, Chi Technique or Miracle that can heal a target will heal one damaged crewman per use. Thus an Inspired with the Touch of Healing Miracle can save as many crewmen as she is willing to expend Essence to do so. The remaining injured crewmen are assumed to be lost. Unless otherwise specified by the ZM, multiple spell-casters could essentially repair every injured crewmember from an encounter. The ZM may decide, however, that some were lost at sea or died immediately and cannot be recovered.

CHAPTER FOUR

Pete had taken six of his most battle-hardened men onto the island and deep into that dark wood. They knew that they might not survive the night, yet all would follow “lucky” Woolly Pete into the bowels of Hell. Now they crouched, peering out into a well lit clearing. It was then that he heard the first of the cannon fire and hoped that his ship would survive the night.

In the clearing, Pete could see a blazing bonfire set in the middle with shadowy forms dancing around it. Above the fire, a churning, roiling smoke rose into the sky, swirling out to become the fog that would shroud the ghost ship and the isle. Pete could see dark shapes stacked up in the gloom of the tree line, most likely the cargo from the *Pride*. His gaze lit across the clearing on a figure holding a strange rattle in one hand and a knife in the other, standing over a body. The figure wore a robe and had several odd trinkets dangling from leather cords from his neck. Though the figure had changed dramatically, Pete still recognized him and he stepped from the tree line, weapons at the ready.

“Well, if it isn't Captain Edward Linworth!” Pete called. His men followed his lead, waiting for the attack. “Ye look a bit peaked, perhaps the sea life ain't been t'yer likin'.”

The figure of Edward Linworth stopped chanting and gazed across the clearing. Linworth's voice was strange. It almost wheezed out of his throat. “Woolly Pete. I was wondering when you'd find this place. Since our last meeting, I've been rather anxious to add your ship and crew to my future armada.”

“Sorry I'll be disappointin' ye then.” Pete replied. “Soon as I send you and yours t' Hell I'll be headin' back t' England t' let 'em know yer ship was lost at sea.”

Linworth moved closer into the light and tilted his head. “You hear that? Those would be the cannon from my two ships turning the *Wave Cutter* into so much flotsam.” At Pete's scowl, he continued. “Oh, you did not know? Yes, I have two vessels. Two against one...I wouldn't wager on those odds. So you can join me willingly now, or join me later anyway. There is no other choice.”

Pete looked at the ugly, sunken features of Edward Linworth and made his decision. “No, sir. I believe there's one other choice open t'me. I can open ye up and send ye screamin' into that evil Loa's arms that yer worshipping'. See, I decided t' find a bokor meself. Seems the Baron Samedi gets very cross with those that go behind 'is back.”

Linworth tensed. Pete could almost feel the malice coming off the man in waves. Linworth dropped to the ground quickly, rolling up with a rapier that must have belonged to the body on the ground. “Kill them!” He spat out the words like venom.

The eight figures around the fire moved quickly to comply. They were dressed in heavy rotting robes which they shrugged off, revealing nothing more than the pale bones of skeletons beneath. Each of the clattering creatures held a heavy cutlass easily in its grasp.

Pete fired his drawn pistol at the leaping Linworth and caught him full in the stomach. The blow staggered the man but did not take him down. As he crossed swords with the undead captain, his men joined in the fray. Metal clashed against metal amidst the sounds of clattering bones, shouts of men, and the echoing cannon fire in the distance. Pete heard a scream from somewhere to his right but could not afford to look to see who had fallen. This undead Linworth was much faster than the living one and Pete had to dig deep into his knowledge of swordplay to keep himself from ending up spitted on the end of Linworth's rapier. Another groan caught his ear, sign that the tireless sword arms of Linworth's skeletal minions had wounded another of his men.

“Their 'eads, boys!” Pete heard one of the men say. “Tend t' their 'eads!”

Pete caught the thrust of Linworth's rapier on his saber and spun it wide, stepping in to slide his blade along Linworth's ribcage and step past. Linworth spun around, seemingly unaffected by the wound, and came in harder than before. Through the clashing of steel, Pete could hear the last of the cannon fire die away.

“You hear that?” Linworth taunted. “That is the final shot that heralds the arrival of your ship into my fleet. Give up now, and your death shall be quick!”

“I swore that I would stop this madness, and ship or no,” Pete crouched down suddenly, allowing the rapier to go over his head as Linworth overextended his thrust,

VODOU

“I will end you!” Pete’s saber plunged deeply in Linworth’s chest, staggering the undead captain.

“You think this wound can stop-?” The loud crack of the flintlock pistol Pete now held mere inches from Linworth’s forehead silenced any further retort.

“Nope,” Pete replied as the former Captain Linworth fell backward into the fire. “But I’d wager that will.”

The fire crackled and spat as the body landed. A horrible wail issued from Linworth’s ruined face and the fire blazed high, turning a deeper red. As quickly as it began, the terrible sound subsided. Pete looked around and realized that only one of his men had made it through the fight. They searched the little clearing and found a knapsack with Linworth’s logbook. Pete flipped through it and found that it contained Linworth’s confession of treason. He placed the book in his belt and the two survivors trudged back through the trees to the shore.

Pete gazed out into the haze of the slowly receding fog and could just make out the crossbeam from a mainsail. Suddenly, a shout from the water could be heard.

“Lo, on the island! Cap’n! You there?” It was McReady. The ship came into view as the fog melted away. It was battered and in sorry shape, but still afloat. They would need to stay on the island for a few days until the ship was seaworthy again, but with Linworth dead, the spell seemed to be lifted from the isle.

Pete had done what he set out to do, and he had the evidence needed to prove that the *Winslow's Pride* was indeed lost. Linworth would be called insane by the Sovereignty and no one would ever really know what had happened on the little isle except for Pete’s own crew. No one else would ever believe the story. It would just be another tall tale told in taverns and alehouses, another legend to tack onto the notorious Woolly Pete’s reputation. With the money that they would make from selling the “lost” cargo that sat abandoned on the island, Pete really didn’t care what folks said. It was all just part of the trade.



Introduction

Though *CJ Carella's WitchCraft* supplement, *Abomination Codex*, has a version of Voodoo using Invocations, it has a different feel than what this supplement is going for. Whether the Loa can be called gods or spirits, they are Higher Powers that are the central belief of a religion and their motivations and goals are unfathomable, even to those who worship them. They constantly test not only their faithful but also those around the faithful to keep them on the proper path. They can decide at any time that the practitioner is not worthy to use one of the many Miracles that they can bestow and simply not grant it.

In this section you will find new Inspired Miracles based on the Vodou religion, called Voodoo by the practitioners brought to New Orleans, the uninitiated, and of course the movie moguls in Hollywood. There is also more information on Vodou and those Loa that the “not so noble” might call on for assistance that would be useful for those using the Voodoo rules in the *Abomination Codex*. ZMs can use this system or the one in the *Abomination Codex*, if you prefer.

The author of this book has attempted to add some authenticity to the rules for Vodou, while at the same time adding the Hollywood Voodoo aspect to the rules to keep with the swashbuckler spirit of the book. This is not meant to mock the religion in any way or belittle its practitioners.

Those Who Call the Spirits

Jerald Abercrombie, Surgeon, Novelist, and Academic

Spending my time on the pirate ship Barnacle has given me time to explore this great world and see all the strange and wondrous things that many do not get a chance to witness in their lives. The strangest and most mystical yet are the black-skinned practitioners of a religion called Vodou. Within these disjointed pages, I hope to capture the knowledge of this religion and share it with the rest of the world.

In the Vodou religion there are four levels of follower or practitioner. The first level is the uninitiated, called the *Hounsi Bossale*. *Bossale* means “wild” or “untamed,” while *Hounsi* means “spouse of the spirit.” These are the followers who attend ceremonies regularly and appear to be preparing for initiation, but are not yet ready.

There are then three levels of initiation, the first being the *Hounsi Kanzo*. By this time, the novice has learned which Loa he is to serve. *Kanzo* refers to fire and signifies that the initiate has gone through his “trial by fire”, so to speak. He has undergone all the rituals for becoming an initiate, which signify death and rebirth and the initiation by fire, whereby he is cleansed by the fire.

The second level of initiation is the *Si Pwen*, which means roughly “on the point.” In this, the initiate undergoes more ceremonies on the patronage of his particular Loa. At this point, the person is considered a *Houngan* or *Mambo* and can use the *Asson*, or sacred rattle. Members who are at this level can be likened to ministers in the Christian faith.

The third level is called *Asogwe*. A *Houngan* or *Mambo Asogwe* is much like a bishop in the Christian faith. They can consecrate other priests and initiate other individuals as *Kanzo*, *Si Pwen*, or even *Asogwe*. Unless a Loa is present, they are the authority on procedure during a ceremony.

These levels of initiate do not have to be gained one at a time. Many who have gone to *Asogwe* do so in their first initiation ceremony,

which saves both time and money. Some first become *Si Pwen* and later go on to become *Asogwe*. Most who become *Hounsi Kanzo* rarely go beyond that level. Those rare outsiders during the Age of Sail who manage to become initiated are usually *Hounsi Kanzo*.

Houngans are male priests of the Vodou religion, while *Mambos* are female priests. Both have the same function in the faith. A *Bokor* is an evil *Houngan* or *Mambo* who traffics in black magic. *Houngans* and *Mambos* do not call upon the dark forces to do their bidding, nor do they create zombies. Those things are vile and an affront to the natural order. However, *Bokors* frequently call upon those forces, using them for their own ends.

In game terms, a *Bossale* is not an Inspired character. However, one may have levels of Occult Knowledge, Humanities (Vodou), and some Rituals knowledge. The *Bossale* can purchase the Gift and Inspiration Qualities during play, if he wishes to go through the ceremonies required to become a true initiate. Becoming an initiate costs money as well, as the prospective initiate must buy all the ritual accouterments. This should cost no more than 30 pieces of eight, unless he is going to a higher level of initiate, in which case it will cost up to three times more. He must also find an *Asogwe Houngan*, *Asogwe Mambo*, or in the case of someone who wishes to follow a dark path, an *Asogwe Bokor*, who will perform the ritual required to summon the Loa that has chosen the *Bossale*. In the Vodou religion, the worshipper does not choose the Loa; the Loa chooses the worshipper.

A *Hounsi Kanzo* has gone through the rituals required to become an initiate and must have the Gift Quality. However, he still cannot use Miracles except under certain circumstances. He has access to most Rituals, but there are certain Rituals that the *Hounsi Kanzo* cannot purchase. These are detailed later. A *Hounsi Kanzo* is not yet a *Houngan* or *Mambo* (or *Bokor*) and cannot actively call upon a Loa to possess himself or another person.

A Si Pwen or Asogwe is considered a Houngan or Mambo. The Si Pwen has the knowledge required to summon a Loa to possess himself or another. To actually speak to a Loa, those lesser initiates must seek out a Houngan or Mambo, unless the Loa actually wants to speak with the initiate and manifests on its own. However, this manifestation could just as easily take the form of a dream than an actual possession. The Asogwe is the one who is capable of doing the Rituals necessary for initiation.

Mounting

When a Loa possesses a person, it is called “mounting.” In effect, the possessed is being “ridden” by the Loa for a period of time. When someone is mounted, he does not remember anything that he did, unless the Loa specifically allows them to remember, and he has to be told later what transpired. When a Loa mounts someone his whole persona changes, including speech, mannerisms, and many times, style of dress. The possessed takes on all the characteristics of the Loa.

While the Loa has control of the host, it cavorts, dances, eats and drinks, and generally enjoys all the pleasures of the flesh that it can before it relinquishes the body. This is especially true of Baron Samedi and the Ghede Loa, who do not even have to be summoned to manifest.

Angering a Loa while it has mounted a host is unwise, as it could lead to physical assaults from the Loa. This does depend upon the Loa in question, however. Some Loa may just use Vodou against the offender, making his life a living Hell until he makes some form of appeasement to the angry Loa. ZMs should feel free to use any Miracles against the offender, as they see fit. A physical brawl with a Loa is most unwise, as the Loa will still protect the host, making the body that much harder to kill. Enhanced Attributes, doubled Life Points, or even protective Miracles are fair game when a ZM must use a Loa in this manner. Remember, these are little gods and should be powerful.

Some Loa may grant boons for allowing them the use of the host, but this is not always the case. Some of them simply get a perverse pleasure from causing

the mount mischief, especially if the host learns a lesson from the experience.

Vodou and Animal Sacrifice

In the Vodou religion, animals are frequently ritually sacrificed to summon or appease a Loa. Hollywood has taken this practice and turned it on its ear with various horror movies and depictions of grisly killings at an altar, usually involving scantily clad maidens or sad-eyed animals. In this respect, Hollywood has gotten it only partially right. Yes, there are indeed animals ritually sacrificed and they more than likely have sad eyes. However, the scantily clad maiden is a product of Hollywood imagination, as is what happens to the animal after it is sacrificed.

In truth, animals that are “sacrificed” ritually to a Loa are “consumed in the casting.” These ritually prepared animals are actually cooked up specially as part of the ritual and eaten in a ceremony where the Loa is invited to dine on the ritually prepared meal with the followers who have prepared it for him. In these ceremonies, the Loa usually appears in spiritual form or riding one of the faithful, and dines on all the delicacies that the faithful has laid out for them. Other times, the animal is given to the less fortunate after it is sacrificed so that they may make a meal of it. On very rare occasions, an animal is sacrificed and not consumed, such as when sacrificing to Agwe, but for the most part, the animal is indeed eaten.

However, this is a book about zombies and horror and if the ZM wants scantily clad maidens being ritually sacrificed to a Loa for favors, or evil Bokor killing creatures on a whim to appease their god, by all means do so.

The Loa

Some of the Loa in the Vodou religion have been mentioned already in the *Abomination Codex*. However, there is information here on those Loa from that supplement that can expand upon the information already supplied.

When a character picks up the Inspiration Quality to become a practitioner of Vodou, he must choose a Patron Loa. This dictates, to a degree, which Miracles the Inspired can choose. A Vodou Inspired can choose any Rituals, as he does not have to call upon the Patron Loa. However, most Rituals are lengthy affairs and cannot be cast with any degree of speed. Some Rituals are dark or evil affairs as well and should be used with care, lest the character find himself in a bad way with a Loa who wants something in return that he may not be willing to give. Rituals can contact any type of Loa that the favor is being asked of, not necessarily the Patron.

The Grand Master

Much like many other modern religions, those who practice Vodou follow one god above all, Gran Met, or Grand Master. He is all powerful and all knowing but tends to be aloof, distant, and detached from human affairs.

The Loa are lesser entities by comparison but more readily accessible, and ultimately answer to Gran Met. All granted abilities funnel through these entities from the power of Gran Met.

Rada Loa

The Rada Loa were brought from Africa and as a religion are around 10,000 years old. They are more beneficent and passive in nature than the other Loa and are generally the benevolent “gods” of the pantheon.

Agwe

Agwe is the sovereign of the sea. His domain is the flora and fauna of the sea, as well as all ships that sail the sea. His symbols are tiny boats and brightly painted oars and shells. His offerings are placed upon a raft. They include a sacrificial ram, champagne, ceremonial drums, and many varieties of food and drink. The raft is taken to a place on the sea where it is believed Agwe's underwater home lies and once the offerings are on the raft, it sinks into the sea. If the raft does not sink, Agwe has not accepted the offering and some other offering must be made instead. Agwe is one of the three husbands of Erzulie.

Aspects: The Sea and all things on it or in it

Possible Miracles: Becalm, Blessing/Curse, Earth's Bounty, Call Storm, Cleanse/Befoul Food or Water, Elemental Immunity, Visions

Aida Wedo

She is the snake Loa and the companion of Damballah. Her domain is fire, water, wind, and rainbows. She shares Damballah's function as cosmic protector and giver of blessings. She is the mother figure and, coupled with Damballah, has domain in fertility, new life, conception, and childbirth. Her symbols are the rainbow and the serpent, which sometimes depicted as a great serpent with rainbow-hued scales. Her favorite color is white and she is offered white chickens and eggs, along with bananas, which is her favorite food. She is the antithesis of dark sorcery and her name is often invoked when trying to lift black magic or dark sorcery.

Aspects: Fertility, Fire, Water, White Magic, Wind, Wisdom

Possible Miracles: Becalm, Blessing/Curse, Call Storm, Call Wind, Cleanse Food or Water, Divine Insight, Earth's Bounty, Visions

Aizan

She is the wife of Legba and the Loa of the marketplace and herbal healing. Her symbol is the palm leaf and her colors are white and silver. She protects markets, public places, doors, and barriers and has deep knowledge of the spirit world. She is also the mate of Loco (Loko). Aizan has a good, loving heart, but she punishes those who have made mistakes. However, she is not a sadistic woman and only does so to correct their behavior in the future. She will punish adults who take advantage of the young, the rich who take advantage of the poor, the strong who take advantage of the weak and the husband who takes advantage of his wife. She has the ability to purify her surroundings and to exorcise malevolent spirits from her devotees.

Aspects: Healing, Protection, Purification

Possible Miracles: Blessing, Cleanse Food or

Water, Let the Punishment Fit the Crime, Loa's Sanctuary, Protection of the Weak, Touch of Healing, Visions

Azacca

Azacca, or simply Zaka, is the Loa of agriculture and is generally known as the brother of Baron Samedi. He is a simple farmer and is greatly respected by peasants. He is usually barefoot, carries a sack, and wears a straw hat. He is suspicious by nature and fond of quibbling and has a fear and hatred of townsfolk. His voice sounds much like a goat and he is known for the gossip he spreads and for his girl chasing. He controls the fields and is very watchful of details. He notes who is treating whom in what manner, who is flirting with whom, and who says what to whom. Azacca loves food but is rude and voracious in eating it. He often runs away to hide while eating.

Aspects: Agriculture, Knowledge of Others Nature

Possible Miracles: Animal Speech, Call Animal, Control Plant Life, Divine Insight, Divine Sight, Earth's Bounty, Growth, One with Nature, Prodigious Plant Visions

Damballah

Like his wife, Aida Wedo, Damballah is a serpent Loa. He is a benevolent, innocent and loving father. He is the embodiment of wisdom, but his messages do not always convey well. He is known to whistle or hiss because he has no speech. He radiates a comforting presence. He is the bringer of rain. He prefers foods that are white and one offering to him would be an egg in a bowl of flour or champagne or milk. His sanctuary contains a basin of water that is believed to have healing powers. He is also the embodiment of love and luck, and married couples pay their respects to him so that they will have a long and happy marriage. He grants riches and allows treasures to be discovered, which could easily be associated with luck.

Aspects: Bringer of Rain, Fertility, Love, Luck, Wisdom

Possible Miracles: Becalm, Blessing, Call Storm, Cleanse Food or Water, Divine Insight, Divine Sight, Earth's Bounty, Touch of Healing, Visions

Erzulie

Unlike many of the other Loa, Erzulie is not a Loa of elemental forces but of ideals, dreams, and aspirations, and as such is the most loved of the Loa. She is the mistress of coquetry and may simply visit with her servants. She eats and drinks with great delicacy and dresses in silks and fresh flowers and other signs of her femininity. She loves to dance and is the most graceful of the Loa. Erzulie loves men and will dance with them, kiss them, and caress them. However, at the end of a visit, she will always begin to weep. The sorrows of the world are just too much for her. This tearful and sad side of Erzulie is what allows women to accept her in her haughty ways. She is married to Damballah, Ogoun, and Agwe. Erzulie favors those who are passionate and has a soft spot in her heart for those who have been wronged by lovers.

Aspects: Love, Passion, Vengeance

Possible Miracles: Baron's Lust, Blessing/Curse, Divine Beauty, Divine Insight, Divine Sight, Evil Eye, Illusions of the Trickster, Let the Punishment Fit the Crime, Protection of the Weak, Visions

Legba

Legba is one of the most important Loa in Vodou. He or his counterpart Carrefour is the first one called in a service, so that he can open the gates to the spirit world, enabling communication with the other Loa. No Loa dares show itself without Legba's permission. He is a small, crooked old man who walks with a twisted cane and smokes a pipe. He carries a sack with food in it. He is the embodiment of justice and magic.

Aspects: Wisdom, Magic, Crossroads, Justice

Possible Miracles: Blessing/Curse, The Binding, Confusion, Divine Insight, Divine Sight, Let the Punishment Fit the Crime, Loa's Sanctuary, Protection of the Weak, Visions

Loco

Loco is the spirit of vegetation and guardian of sanctuaries. He is associated with trees and gives healing properties to leaves. The Loa of healing and patron of herbs, doctors always invoke him before undertaking a treatment. Offerings to Loco are placed in straw bags which are hung in tree branches.

Sometimes he is portrayed in the form of a butterfly and at others he is human and smokes a pipe and carries a walking stick in his hand. His favorite colors are red and white. Offerings to this Loa include black or white goats or russet-colored oxen. Loco has an extensive knowledge of medicinal herbs. It is said that Houngans and Mambos receive their knowledge from Loco. He is also known for his good judgment and is often called in as a judge during conflicts. He is known for his intolerance of injustice. Loco sometimes transforms into the wind and listens to people without them knowing he is there.

Aspects: Healing, Justice, Truth, Vegetation

Possible Miracles: Blessing/Curse, Earth's Bounty, Call Wind, Control Plant Life, Divine Sight, Let the Punishment Fit the Crime, Loa's Sanctuary, Protection of the Weak, Speak True, Touch of Healing, Visions

Ogoun (Oggun)

Ogoun is the warrior Loa and is mighty, powerful, and triumphal. He is the Loa of masculinity, war, blacksmiths, and blood. It is Ogoun who is said to have planted the idea of rebellion in the slaves and helped them win their freedom by giving them strength and power. The machete or saber is Ogoun's favored weapon and his favorite color is red. Ogoun demands rum from his subjects and is a ferocious drinker. Other gifts to Ogoun include tobacco, as he smokes cigars, and red roosters. Ogoun has many aspects, which include:

Ogoun Bthalah: Loa of alchemy.

Ogoun Shango: Loa of lightning.

Ogoun Tonnerre: Loa of thunder.

Ogoun Fer: Loa of the sword, iron and metals; characterized by stability, order and authority

Aspects: Blood, Blacksmith's Fire, Might, War, (in his other forms he has other aspects, as mentioned above)

Possible Miracles: Becalm, The Binding, Blessing/Curse, Call Storm, Create Fire, Elemental Immunity, Holy Fire, Laugh in the Face of Fear, Loa's Constitution, Protection of the Weak, Skin of Ogoun, Smother Fire, Strength of Ten, Turn Blow, Visions

Petro Loa

The Petro Loa are the dark "gods" of the pantheon. Though not necessarily considered evil in many circumstances, they are much less compassionate and more aggressive than their Rada counterparts. The Petro Loa were conceived when a need for such deities arose during the enslavement of the African people. As the Rada Loa were passive and defensive in nature, the Petro Loa gave the Vodou followers the aggressiveness and ability to attempt to break the chains of slavery.

The Rada Loa will only assist a follower who makes a promise of service to them. The Loa will take revenge on the follower if that promise is not kept.

Bosou Koblamin

Petro Loa of war, he is a violent but not very reliable Loa. He protects his followers when they are traveling at night. His appearance is that of a man with three horns. The three horns represent strength, wildness, and violence. His favorite food is the pig, which should be prepared as a sacrifice to summon him.

Aspects: Protection to Travelers at Night, Strength, Violence, War

Possible Miracles: Blessing/Curse, Cloak of Night, Confusion, Laugh in the Face of Fear, Loa's Constitution, One with Nature, Protection of the Weak, Skin of Ogoun, Strength of Ten, Turn Blow, Visions

Erzulie Jan Petro

She is a sea spirit and protector of temples. She can be violent, as all Petro Loa can, but she is actually a neutral entity. She likes the smell of perfume and lotion.

Aspects: Protection, The Sea, Violence

Possible Miracles: Becalm, Blessing/Curse, Cleanse/Befoul Food or Water, Earth's Bounty, Loa's Sanctuary, Protection of the Weak, Turn Blow, Visions

Maître Carrefour

Also called Mate Care-For by pirates or simply Kalfou by practitioners. It generally means Master of the Crossroads, or master of chance. Carrefour is the counterpart and opposite of Legba and both control the crossroads. Were it not for him, the world would be a more ordered and rational place. He controls the dark forces of the spirit world and allows the crossing of bad luck, deliberate destruction, misfortune, and injustice. Carrefour is the grand master of charms and sorcery and is associated with black magic. He is the origin of darkness and the moon is his symbol. He has knowledge of the human condition and develops ways to help individuals cope with problems. He is a magician and likes to use tree leaves in his magic. He has the ability to change people into animals and then control them.

Aspects: Crossroads, Luck, Darkness, Magic (especially black), Charms

Possible Miracles: Blessing/Curse, Cloak of Night, Confusion, Curse of Insects, Divine Sight, Evil Eye, Illusions of the Trickster, Visions

Marinette-Bwa-Chech

Marinette "of the dry arms" is the most dreaded of the Petro Loa. She is a servant of evil and is respected by werewolves, who hold services in her honor. The screeching owl is her symbol and her ceremonies are held under a tent and lit with a huge fire in which salt and lamp oil are thrown. She is offered chickens that have been plucked alive, goats, and sows. However, no one may touch the animals while they are prepared and the offerings must be buried. She wanders the woods and goes to her secret place where her offerings are left.

Aspects: Darkness, Evil, Violence

Possible Miracles: Befoul Food or Water, Cloak

of Night, Curse, Curse of Insects, Divine Sight, Evil Eye, Illusions of the Trickster, Skin of Ogoun, Strength of Ten, Turn Blow, Visions

Simbi

He is guardian of fountains and marshes and his rituals are held near springs. He is a very knowledgeable Loa and spends a lot of time learning about the nature of illnesses of supernatural origin and how to treat them. Simbi protects those who have good relations with him and turns his back on those who do not. He is the Petro Loa of the coast and one of the few respected members of the Petro family. He also belongs to the Rada because of his nature. However, sometimes he is neglected by Rada devotees and he is gnawed by hunger and so tends to be cruel. He lives in springs and rivers and cannot stand being away from water. Children who go to fetch water at springs run the risk of being kidnapped to work for Simbi under the water for a few years, particularly if they are fair-skinned. However, he always gifts them with second sight for their trouble.

Aspects: Healing, Knowledge, Rivers, Springs and Swamps,

Possible Miracles: Becalm, Blessing/Curse, Earth's Bounty, Call Animal, Cleanse/Befoul Food or Water, Divine Insight, Divine Sight, Elemental Immunity, Evil Eye, Let the Punishment Fit the Crime, Touch of Healing, Visions

Ti-Jean-Petro

This Loa is depicted as a dwarf with one foot. Ti-Jean-Petro often protects and assists black magic sorcerers. He is also recognized under the names of Petro-e-rouge, Ti-Jean-pied-fin, Prince Zandor, and Ti-Jean-Zandor. He has a violent and passionate nature.

Aspects: Protection, Black Magic, Violence

Possible Miracles: Blessing/Curse, Cloak of Night, Confusion, Curse of Insects, Divine Insight, Divine Sight, Evil Eye, Illusions of the Trickster, Skin of Ogoun, The Binding, Touch of Healing, Visions

Ancestral Loa

The Ancestral Loa make up the many spirits of the dead and are transitional figures, standing between life and the finality of death. They are all considered a family in themselves, the father of which is Baron Samedi, and thus are separate from the Rada and Petro Loa.

Baron Samedi

The Baron is the head of the ancestral loa and is the master of cemeteries and guardian of knowledge. He is also the loa of eroticism and sexuality and is enamored of women. He is known as a total clown and makes constant use of obscene words and songs, and performs obscene dances. The Baron is a cynical, jovial, coarse sort and his language is full of the unexpected. His symbol is a cross upon a tomb and his tools are the pick, hoe, and spade. He has a fondness for food and drink and his favorite foods are hot peppers, roasted corn, roasted bananas, and salt herring. The Baron's day is Saturday and his favored color is black or purple. During rituals to the Baron, black goats or chickens, tobacco, rum, and black coffee should be offered. When he appears, he wears formal black or purple attire and a high silk hat with dark glasses and a cane. He drinks rum that has had twenty-one hot peppers steeped in it and he smokes cigarettes, sometimes two at a time. When he speaks he has a nasally voice. The Baron is neither good nor evil and when he is pleased, he's quite a clown, but when angered, he can be difficult to deal with. On November 2, the faithful visit cemeteries and light candles in honor of Baron Samedi. Also, the grave of the first man buried in any cemetery is dedicated to The Baron and a ceremonial cross is erected on the spot.

He is the keeper of cemeteries and primary contact when a person wants to speak with the dead. Those wishing to speak with the dead must first solicit him before they are allowed to do so. He and his wife, Maman Brigitte, are responsible for reclaiming the souls of the dead. As keeper of the cemetery, he is in contact with the dead and so knows anything they might've known. He is quite generous with this information and even when he is

clowning around, if he is pulled aside and asked a serious question, he will give a serious and reliable answer. Baron Samedi is also the protector of children and generally does not like to see children die. He believes that they need a full life. For this reason, he is the Loa to go to when seeking help for a sick child. However, he is the last resort for most others for healing since he must decide whether to grant the healing or take the sick person instead. Lastly, he is the master of death magic, zombies, and the changing of people into animals. Anyone attempting to do this type of black magic must first seek the help of Baron Samedi.

Aspects: Death, Trickster, Healing, Knowledge, Magic

Possible Miracles: Animal Metamorphosis, Animal Speech, Baron's Lust, Blessing/Curse, The Binding, Divine Insight, Divine Sight, Illusions of the Trickster, Laugh in the Face of Fear, Let the Punishment Fit the Crime, Loa's Constitution, Loa's Sanctuary, Touch of Healing, Visions

Loa Ghede

The term Loa Ghede actually represents the spirits that have crossed over into the spirit realm. There is any number of Loa Ghede in the spirit world, but to contact them, one must first speak with Baron Samedi, for he controls the spirit realm. The Loa Ghede are the spiritual children of Baron Samedi and Maman Brigitte and are created from the souls that The Baron and Brigitte have reclaimed. Loa Ghede, like Baron Samedi, can possess anyone at anytime. They also dress and act much like Baron Samedi when they manifest.

Aspects: Much the same as The Baron, but to a lesser degree

Maman Brigitte

Maman Brigitte is actually British in origin and is descended in lore from the Celtic Goddess Brigid and is one of only a couple white Loa. It is thought that she was brought to Haiti by Scottish or Irish indentured servants. She is the wife of Baron

Samedi and together they reclaim the souls of the dead to take them to the spirit realm and turn them into Loa Ghede. Her mannerisms are the same as her husband's and she can be just as lewd and obscene. She drinks the same type of rum The Baron drinks and is given the same types of offerings. The grave of the first woman buried in a cemetery is dedicated to Maman Brigitte and a cross is erected there in her honor. She is invoked, as is The Baron, to cure those who have been brought to the point of death from illness caused by magic.

Aspects: Death, Healing, Knowledge, Magic

Possible Miracles: Animal Metamorphosis, Animal Speech, Baron's Lust, Blessing/Curse, The Binding, Divine Insight, Divine Sight, Let the Punishment Fit the Crime, Loa's Constitution, Loa's Sanctuary, Touch of Healing, Visions

Vodou Miracles

Inspired Miracles can be found on p. 64-66 of the *AFMBE* Main Book and are granted by various Loa in this section. Below are more Miracles that can be used by the Vodou practitioners, or by any other Inspired.

The Loa are wild spirits and as such tend to grant Miracles under looser circumstances than most other Divinities, allowing their Miracles to be used on anyone. However, they are also fickle and may deny a request just because they feel like it. Also, many of the Loa constantly test their faithful to keep them on the proper path. So, as the rules of using Miracles in everyday circumstances do not always apply (See *AFMBE* p. 62, Using Miracles), the Loa may have some other agenda and simply not grant the Miracle.

Animal Metamorphosis

The Miracle allows the Houngan, Mambo or Bokor to transform himself, or another, into an animal of his choosing. This Miracle normally lasts for 5 minutes per 5 Essence spent in the Miracle. However, the transformation can be made permanent by expending 30 permanent Essence. A Houngan or

Mambo would only make a transformation permanent in order to teach the target a lesson and would change him back as soon as they thought the victim learned his lesson. If they turn them back, another 30 temporary Essence must be spent to break the spell, but the permanent Essence previously spent will also return if the Houngan removing the effect was the same one who placed the Miracle on the victim. A Bokor may bestow this Miracle permanently upon a victim simply because he wishes to be malicious or cruel. The target can attempt to resist the transformation, in which case the Houngan or Bokor must make a Contested Difficult Willpower Test against the victim to transform him.

Animal Speech

This Miracle allows the Houngan to speak with one type of animal for a period of time. The Houngan can ask the animal questions, convince it to do something, or even have an easier time teaching it tricks. The Miracle costs 5 Essence to use and works for 10 minutes per Willpower level of the Houngan. However, not all animals are receptive to conversation and may not stop to listen to what the Houngan has to say. Also, many animals can only converse in the simplest terms. For example, a monkey may be able to express in detail where something is located and understand detailed questions, while a bat may only be able to use one word phrases to convey messages.

Baron's Lust

This Miracle causes a powerful and insatiable lust to burn deep within the target's veins. The target will go to great lengths to quench this lust, including going against his own moral codes. Targets with an unshakable will may be able to fight off the lust. The Miracle costs 2 Essence points per Strength level of the Miracle. The target may make a Contested Simple Willpower Test against the Inspired's Willpower + Miracle Strength Test. Success results in the victim finding the will to shake off his "unwholesome" feelings. Failure means that the victim throws all moral codes and caution to the wind and loses all control to debauchery and wanton lustful aban-

don for one hour per Strength level of the Miracle. At the end of it all, the victim must make a Difficult Constitution Test or fall unconscious due to exhaustion. The Baron loves to see this Miracle work on those who are stuck up, aloof, or prissy, and may even grant a bonus to the Inspired if the Miracle is being used against such people.

Call Animal

This Miracle allows the Houngan to call a number of animals to an area. Unless the animals can be spoken to, they will act as a typical animals of their type. The Houngan can call one animal that is human-sized or larger, two small animals (chimpanzees, dogs), four petite animals (housecats, capuchin monkeys), eight tiny animals (hamster, rat, bat), or sixteen minute animals (field mice, beetles) per 5 Essence spent. Unless the animal(s) can be spoken to, they may just leave as soon as they arrive or they may terrorize the area, depending upon their disposition.

Call/Becalm Storm

Summons a rain that can quench a drought, provide a source of water, or even make an enemy miserable. The Miracle summons or becalms a tropical shower in an area, including on the sea, for 5 Essence Points. The downpour can be made more severe, turning into a full storm, or becalmed for 15 Essence Points. A full-blown tempest can be called or becalmed for 30 Essence Points. The cost of the Essence expenditure drops by one quarter by decreasing the power of a storm by half. However, the storm cannot be affected further after that point.

Call/Becalm Wind

Calls a beneficial wind that can be used to increase the speed of a ship or even deter a vessel. For 5 Essence Points the Houngan can create a controlled wind to fill the sails of a ship, or slow an enemy ship. He can also stop a wind of this magnitude for the same amount of Essence. For 10 Essence Points this can become a strong wind, capable of blowing over rickety structures and

possibly causing people on precarious surfaces to make a Simple Dexterity Test to remain on their feet, or the Houngan can becalm such a wind. For 20 Essence Points, this can become a powerful gale, capable of knocking over small wooden structures and causing those on uncertain footing to make a Difficult Dexterity Test or fall to the ground. Likewise, the Houngan can becalm a heavy gale for 20 Essence. The cost of the Essence expenditure drops by one quarter by decreasing the power of the wind by half. However, the wind cannot be affected further after that point.

Cleanse/Befoul Food or Water

The Houngan can make water potable and food untainted. There are Bokors who can do the reverse, causing food to turn and water to become foul. For every 5 Essence Points spent, the Houngan or Bokor can affect one gallon of water or 5 pounds of food. However, there are limits to the capability of the Miracle. Massively rotten food cannot be cleansed, nor can water from a cesspool. Likewise, food or water that has been blessed or protected by magical means cannot be fouled with this spell; however, there are more mundane methods to do so.

Cloak of Night

This Miracle cloaks the traveler in shadow, making him harder to see at night or in darkness. The Miracle costs 2 Essence to use, but grants a +3 bonus to any rolls to avoid notice at night, on all Notice rolls involving vision to spot the recipient. The effect lasts for one hour per level of Willpower the Houngan has.

Confusion

The target of this Miracle becomes confused, making it difficult to make perception or Intelligence based Tasks or Tests. The Miracle costs 4 Essence and the victim has -3 on all Intelligence and Perception Tasks and Tests for the duration. The victim may make a contested Difficult Willpower Test to avoid the effects of the Miracle. The effect lasts for one hour per level of Willpower the Houngan has.

Control Plant Life

Causes plants to suddenly begin to of their own accord to attack enemies, ensnare them, or just generally get in the way. The Houngan can give the plants simple instructions and the plants will do them to the best of their ability; after all, they are just plants. The Miracle costs 5 Essence per square yard/meter of plant life affected. Small plants grip with a Strength of 2, while larger plants, such as vines, grip with a Strength of 4. Trees grip with a Strength of 4 or more, depending upon the size of the tree. Damage done depends upon the size of the plant striking the target. For example, a thin vine or briar might inflict D4 times its effective Strength in damage (and may even cause slashing damage), while a large tree branch might inflict D8 or even D10 times its effective Strength in bash damage. ZMs should determine a plant's DC and AV for purposes of destroying it. The effect lasts for 10 minutes per Willpower of the Houngan.

Curse

The Houngan can call upon a Loa to bestow levels of bad luck upon a victim. This Miracle works much like the Blessing Miracle on p. 64 of the *AFMBE* Main Book. The only difference is that the Luck levels are Bad Luck. Items cannot be cursed in this manner, however. The Houngan would need to use this Ritual to create a cursed charm or fetish.

Curse of Insects

Usually only used by a Bokor, this causes the victim to begin retching uncontrollably as beetles, worms or spiders come from his stomach and out his mouth. This curse is very debilitating, imposing a -5 penalty on all actions. The victim may make a Difficult Willpower Test every half-hour to hold off the retching; while retching, he loses D10 Endurance per half-hour. The Miracle's effect lasts for one hour per level of Willpower the Bokor possesses and costs 30 Essence to use. The effect can be made permanent and must be removed by a Houngan or Mambo, or by the Bokor who put the curse on him. However, a Bokor will not enter into a permanent curse lightly, as it is a permanent drain of 40 Essence Points.



Divine Beauty

The Houngan can call upon certain Loa to grant amazing beauty onto a person. The boon is temporary but grants an Attractiveness of +5 onto the recipient. The effect lasts for 2 hours per level of Willpower the Houngan possesses. The Miracle costs 10 Essence to use and the bonus does stack with other positive levels of Attractiveness. Negative levels of Attractiveness are replaced for the duration.

Divine Insight

Some Loa have vast amounts of knowledge and can impart that knowledge to a Houngan. This Miracle costs 5 Essence to use, but can impart some knowledge to the Houngan that he did not originally possess. This allows the Houngan to make a Simple Intelligence Test to see if the information has been imparted. Success means that he has the proper information. In effect, this is rolled as a skill roll and it can be used to determine anything from the laws in an area to where Uncle Bob hid his will.

This Miracle is slightly different from the Visions Miracle in that it imparts actual knowledge that someone once possessed instead of visions of guidance. If The Baron is called upon to grant this Miracle, he may actually send the Ghede that has the knowledge to the Houngan directly. Only one piece of knowledge can be gained at a time using this Miracle. The Houngan cannot ask for knowledge of all history from two thousand years ago to the present day, but he can ask for the history of one famous battle that happened a hundred years ago or the myth or legend of one specific creature. ZMs may, at their discretion, add bonuses or penalties to the roll, depending upon the age or rarity of the knowledge being asked for.

Earth's Bounty

When this Miracle is used, it allows the Houngan to gain double the provisions from an area. The bounty depends greatly upon which Loa is called to help with this task. Calling Agwe, for example, would allow for double the fish to be pulled out of the sea while calling on Azacca or Loco will allow him to forage double the food in the wilderness. See

p. 44 for information on foraging in the wild. The Miracle costs 5 Essence to use.

Elemental Immunity

Some Houngan have the ability to walk on hot coals without so much as a blister, while others can be struck by lightning only to get right back up and call it a sign from the Loa. When this Miracle is used, it temporarily confers immunity from one type of element. The Houngan spends 20 Essence points but can withstand the full brunt of the particular element chosen without so much as a scratch for one Turn per Willpower level he possesses.

Evil Eye

With this Miracle, the Bokor (or possibly a vengeful Houngan or Mambo) can place a curse upon someone he looks upon. The Bokor must glare at the target, preferably through one eye, and point at him, speaking the curse in a strong and loud voice. The victim may make a contested Simple Willpower Test to shrug off the curse as nonsense; otherwise, he gains the Accursed Drawback at a level dependent upon the severity of the curse. The cost is 5 Essence per level of the Accursed Drawback and this expenditure is permanent if the Miracle succeeds. However, the recipient has the curse until a Houngan or Mambo (who will no doubt do some research into why the man is cursed) either removes it, or the man atones in some way. If there is a means of atonement added to the curse, it does not have to be spoken aloud to the victim, but the ZM does have to be made aware of it.

Illusions of the Trickster

The Houngan can create full sensory illusions that last for a short period of time and can fool all senses, including touch, to an extent. The illusions cannot kill, though the victim may believe he is going to die. These illusions are usually used to teach someone a lesson, like giving a greedy man four wooden buttons that look and feel just like doubloons. However, the Miracle can also be used as a scare tactic, as the entire floor suddenly becomes alive with spiders or a mass of snakes suddenly appears in a person's bed. The Miracle can be done

beyond line of sight, but the Houngan needs the name of the victim, as well as something personal from the victim such as a hair or nail clipping, or some item he holds dear. The victim must make a contested Simple Willpower Test to make the illusions go away, otherwise, they stay around for one minute per Willpower level the Houngan possesses, unless the Houngan stops the illusion before that time. Any damage done to the victim by the illusion is Endurance damage only and may knock the victim unconscious, but cannot do any real harm, unless the victim does something to harm himself. This Miracle costs 8 Essence points per cubic foot (.03 cubic meters) of the illusion.

Laugh in the Face of Fear

The Houngan or the target of the Miracle can literally shrug off all but the worst horrors imaginable. However, the affected will also laugh boisterously or even maniacally when faced with it. This laughter does not cause minuses to actions, but can be disconcerting to his own companions and to the enemy. The miracle grants the recipient the Nerves of Steel Quality for 10 minutes per Willpower level of the Houngan. Those who are already petrified with fear who have this Miracle used on them are allowed another Fear Test with the bonus granted by the Nerves of Steel Quality. If the recipient already has the Nerves of Steel Quality, then he is afraid of nothing, even going so far as to laugh in the face of the Mad Gods themselves. The Miracle costs 10 Essence to use.

Let the Punishment Fit the Crime

Some Houngan can inflict a victim with a karmic form of punishment. Anytime the afflicted does a foul or evil deed, he gains a point of Bad Luck, as the Drawback, which can be used by the ZM to make the character's life hell. However, if the character does good acts, these levels are taken away and could even, with greatly virtuous deeds, receive points of Good Luck for his trouble. The Miracle costs 15 Essence points to use and the target may make a contested Simple Willpower Test to keep from suffering the curse. If failed, the curse remains until the Houngan, or another Vodou practitioner removes it.

Loa's Constitution

The recipient of this Miracle can eat and drink prodigious amounts without suffering any ill effects, just as if he were a Loa. He also receives a +5 bonus to all other Constitution Tests regarding illness, poisons, or fatigue. The Miracle costs 10 Essence to use and is in effect for one hour per level of Willpower the Houngan possesses.

Loa's Sanctuary

When this Miracle is used upon an area, it causes all in the area, or all who enter the area, to act in a civil manner. Combat and aggressive action are nearly impossible while in the area. Words can be heated and those affected can be angry, but unless

Animals and Zombies

The Loa's Sanctuary Miracle affects animals and zombies in varying ways. Most animals attack not from anger, but from hunger, fear, or a need to protect territory or den. When dealing with animals, first roll a D10. On a roll of 1-3, the animal in question is hungry and looking for food. If it is given food, no further rolls need be made. Otherwise, it may make a Simple Willpower Test with a minus equal to the Willpower of the Houngan to act as it chooses. If the animal is not hungry, then no further rolls need be made, unless the ZM feels it appropriate. The animal may even sense the relative safety of the area and stay around or simply move on.

Zombies, though also mostly motivated by hunger, are also supernatural/unnatural creatures in the eyes of many Loa. Mindless zombies will recoil from the area and wait at the periphery, or simply look elsewhere for more easily obtainable food. Intelligent zombies must make a Difficult Willpower Test with a minus equal to the Willpower of the Houngan just like any other intelligent being, but even if they succeed, they take damage equal to half the Willpower of the Houngan each Turn they are within the sanctuary.



they succeed in a Difficult Willpower Test with a minus equal to half (round up) of the Houngan's Willpower, they cannot act on that anger. In fact, some who leave a Loa's Sanctuary wonder later why they didn't act upon their anger, but by then it is usually too late. Those who are outside the area can act normally, but only at range. Those inside the area can only act to defend themselves. The Miracle costs 15 Essence to use and lasts for one hour per Willpower level the Houngan possesses. It affects a 5-yard/meter radius per Willpower level of the Houngan, and the Houngan can drop it at any time. Loa's Sanctuary can only be placed upon a stationary object (i.e., a patch of ground, building, etc.). The Miracle is most typically used to make a shrine or church safe during a ceremony or ritual; however, it could also be a great Miracle to use during negotiations.

One with Nature

The Houngan, and all who travel with him, can move twice as fast through hostile terrain and wilderness environments. Also, all Survival skill attempts are made with a +4 bonus, as the land seems to acquiesce to the needs of the Houngan. The land will also hide tracks, adding a penalty of -4 to any tracking Task rolls to follow the Houngan. The Miracle does not work at sea, but will work in a marshy environment. It remains active for one hour per Willpower level the Houngan possesses and costs 10 Essence to use.

Prodigious Plant Growth

This Miracle causes one plant to grow to epic proportions quickly. The Houngan must touch the plant for the Miracle to work; however, it will work on all plant life. The plant will grow two times its original size per 3 Essence spent on the Miracle. This growth is temporary and the plant will return to its original size after 10 minutes per Willpower level of the Houngan. However, this is plenty of time for many plants to become definite deterrents or even lunch. Plants that are eaten after they have grown do not shrink back to their original size in the stomachs of those who have eaten them, and those that grow berries or other fruit do not have giant fruits, just more of them. ZMs should determine how much DC, AV, and/or BV a giant plant has to determine just how much of a deterrent the plant becomes.

Protection of the Weak

The Houngan or target of the Miracle gains great prowess and ability, but only to defend those weaker than himself. When this Miracle is used, the recipient gains a +3 bonus to all attack rolls and damage rolls for the duration, as well as a +2 bonus to defense rolls while actively protecting another (standing in front of and defending a huddled child or badly wounded companion, for example). He also receives two levels of the Increased Life Points Quality temporarily and a natural AV of D6+6. Unlike the Berserker Quality, damage to the protector comes off the temporary Life Points first. All Survival rolls and Consciousness Tests are made at +3 and the protector is completely immune to fear. Lastly, the protector regenerates damage at his Constitution per minute, which is most beneficial in a protracted siege where the zombies just won't take no for an answer. This Miracle costs 40 Essence to use and remains active until the threat is gone, or until nothing has attacked for 24 hours, whichever comes first.

Skin of Ogun

The Houngan can imbue his skin, or the skin of another, to become as armor. For every 3 Essence points spent, the Houngan can add an AV of 1 to the target's skin, to a maximum of 10 AV. This lasts for 1 minute per Willpower level of the Houngan, but is usually more than long enough to see the recipient through a hostile encounter.

Speak True

Certain Loa can cause a person to speak nothing but the truth, which can be handy when your followers call you in as a Judge. For one hour, the victim can speak nothing but the truth, no matter how secret or harsh the truth may be. The victim can just keep quiet, but anything he says will be the absolute truth. The Miracle costs 5 Essence to use and can be resisted with a contested Simple Willpower Test.

Touch of Corruption

This Miracle is usually only used by Bokors and those who follow evil. It works the same as

the Touch of Healing Miracle on p. 64 of the *AFMBE* Main Book, but reversed, allowing the Bokor to cause damage to the target or cause diseases. Thus, for 1 Essence Point spent, the Bokor can cause D4(2) points of damage instead of heal it. For 2 points he can cause Mild diseases, Moderate ones for 5 points, Serious ones for 15 points, and 25 points for Terminal ones. The Bokor must touch the target for this Miracle to be effective. For diseases, the victim gets to make a Contested Difficult Willpower Test against the Bokor to resist the effects.

Turn Blow

When this Miracle is used it allows the flesh of the Houngan to actually turn one attack aside. In effect, the Loa actually makes the body of the Houngan able to withstand damage, just as if he were being ridden by the Loa. This only works against one attack, but it could be a real lifesaver if some buccaneer has his pistol trained right on the Houngan's cranium. It lasts until a combat attack is successfully made on the Houngan. It does not "stack", meaning that it cannot be placed upon the same target multiple times to avoid multiple attacks. The Miracle costs 10 Essence to use and will completely block one attack. However, depending upon the attack, the Houngan may be knocked down. The Miracle may negate the damage from a pistol or cannon ball, but he will more than likely be knocked down by the attack, at the very least.

Vodou Rituals

Not all affairs are instantaneous in Vodou and the proper Loa need to be contacted or placated in order to do something specific. Whenever a ritual is performed, an Intelligence + Rituals skill roll must be made to determine success or failure. Each Success level in the roll will allow the Houngan to gather D4(2) ambient Essence from the area to use in the ritual. If an animal is sacrificed to the Loa the Houngan can gain D10(5) more Essence for the ritual. If a human is sacrificed, half of the Essence of the victim is available to the practitioner. These

Essence points can be spent instead, or in addition to, the Essence from the Houngan, which keeps the Essence expenditures of the Houngan from draining him too far. If the Rituals roll fails, the collected Essence is lost.

Other factors can figure into the roll, such as the disposition of the Loa being contacted, the time of year, or even the materials used in the ritual. The ZM can set a difficulty based on any of these factors, if he wishes. An example would be granting a bonus to a ritual that requires the permission of Baron Samedi by doing the ritual in a graveyard, at night, and offering the Baron some quality rum and cigars. Alternatively, a penalty could be imposed for attempting the same ritual on a boat in the middle of the ocean and offering a wet stogie.

ZMs should try to avoid the “You spend an hour, you roll, the ritual works” scenario. In all instances, these rituals should be played out by the ZM and players, which will make the whole ritual more interesting and fun as the Cast must deal personally with the Loa they are calling. To make it even more of a supernatural occurrence, the ZM can make the Rituals roll in secret. This way, the players may not know until the very end of the ritual if they have succeeded or failed.

Rituals are purchased just like Miracles (see *AFMBE* p. 62, Acquiring Miracles).

Charm or Fetish Ritual

This allows the Houngan to create a magical charm or fetish that serves a specific function. The item could grant the wearer good luck or insight or even protection. The Houngan must first contact the proper Loa and make the proper offerings. The most likely Loa summoned are Legba, Aida Wedo, Maitre Carrefour, Baron Samedi, or Maman Brigitte, but other Loa may be asked instead.

The size of the item partially determines the amount of Essence spent in the creation of the item. An expenditure of 3 Essence must be spent per pound the item weighs, to a minimum of 3 Essence. Adding a Quality or Drawback costs the same amount of Essence as the points for the Quality or

Drawback. Thus, creating a cursed item that makes the wearer have constant nightmares would cost one additional Essence point for the Nightmares Drawback on top of the points for the item itself.

The Houngan can opt to make the item temporary or permanent, depending upon how the Essence is spent. If the item is to be temporary, the Essence is spent and the Houngan cannot get those Essence points back until the item is used or activated. If the item is to be permanent, the Essence expenditure is also permanent. Any Blessings or Curses made permanent always use the maximum bonus or penalty that is imbued into the item and can be used once per game session. Blessings/Curses can be made to be always active for double the Essence cost, making the bonus or penalty always active.

The Houngan can make the Essence expenditure less by causing the item to need to draw Essence from the wearer to be used. This drawback drops the Essence cost for the creation of the item by one third (round up). The usual Essence expenditure for a Miracle would then come from the wearer every time it is used. Items with Qualities or Drawbacks cannot be created with this drawback. Blessings/Curses can also be limited to a bonus or penalty against one effect, such as magic, which drops the cost to 2 Essence per bonus/penalty. The entire ritual takes one hour plus one half hour for each item created.

Thus, a Cast Member who has a permanent ring that has a +2 Blessing of Magic Protection that is always active, has a bonus of +2 against magic that is added to all rolls against magic. The cost for said item is 14 permanent Essence (3 Essence for the ring + 4 Essence for the plus 2 Blessing [at the reduced cost for being only against magic] x 2 for always active).

Cleansing Ritual

This ritual works virtually the same as the Touch of Healing Miracle in *AFMBE* p. 64, and all Essence expenditures are the same. This ritual allows someone who cannot use Miracles to heal a target by making a Rituals Task roll. The ritual takes one half hour to set up and perform.

Initiation Ritual

The Initiation Ritual is a lengthy affair where the Houngan initiates a follower, giving him more status within the religion. In essence, the follower is made a full initiate or even a priest. Only an Asogwe Houngan, Mambo, or Bokor may use this ritual of initiation. In the ceremony, Legba is called to allow the other Loa to cross. Once this is done, the initiate will be mounted by the Loa that has chosen him. Other Loa often show up to these rituals, as they all love a good party. The entire ritual can take as little as one hour to several hours, depending upon when the Loa are finished with the affair. The Houngan must spend 40 Essence points for the summoning, some of which can be from ambient Essence. Once the ritual is over, the follower is now an initiate of the Loa that has chosen him. Though this does not grant The Gift or Inspiration Qualities, it does allow the initiate to purchase them. He will still need the Experience Points to take them, along with any Miracles he may wish to purchase.

Ritual of Curse Removal

Removing a curse involves not only calling upon the Loa of the Houngan performing the ritual, but the Loa that originally cast down the curse as well. The Houngan summons his Loa and asks it to beseech the cursing Loa to remove the curse from the victim. The ritual itself could take as little as a few minutes to hours, depending upon how willing the Loa are to listen. The Houngan must then spend the same amount of Essence (not permanent) as went into the original curse to appease the cursing Loa and then must make a Contested Difficult Willpower Test against the Houngan, Mambo, or Bokor who called for the curse. If the Houngan wins, the curse is lifted. However, curse removal is not always cut and dried when dealing with the fickleness of the Loa. A Loa may ask that some task be performed in lieu of the Essence expenditure, which could become an adventure in itself as the cursed individual is sent off to perform the task in question. A Houngan or Mambo will not enter into a curse removal lightly, preferring to know if the victim deserves the curse or not. In this case, he will usually make use of other Miracles such as Divine Insight or Visions first to determine if the curse is deserved.

Ritual of Immortality

This ritual does not confer true immortality, but it does allow the Houngan to live for a lot longer, provided he does not run into any lead balls, sharp objects, poisons or other mishaps. He must still eat, drink, sleep, relieve himself, and avoid exposure to disease and other hazards. The Essence expended in this ritual must all come from the initiate. For an expenditure of 20 permanent Essence, the Houngan's life span is greatly increased. Aging progresses at one tenth the normal rate. For 40 permanent Essence, the initiate's aging stops altogether. For 50 permanent Essence, the initiate gains regeneration at 1 LP per Constitution level every minute, and for 60 permanent Essence the initiate can regenerate 1 LP per Constitution level per Turn.

The initiate gains this ability for as long as he is in favor with his patron Loa. If he should ever anger his patron or go against the wishes of his patron, the power could be taken away on a temporary or even permanent basis, at which time the Houngan will begin to age as normal. A particularly malicious Loa might make him revert to his true age, which could be a problem if the Houngan was 150 years old. This ritual takes 12 hours of preparation, ceremony and supplication and costs 100 pieces of eight for all the ritual components.

Ritual of Supplication

With this ritual, an initiate can call upon a Loa to ask a question or to plead with it to remove a curse. This ritual is also used when trying to appease a Loa. The Success levels of the Rituals roll are used to determine how many questions can be asked of the Loa and how long it will stay. Each Success level in the roll means the Loa can be asked one question and stay around for one minute. To sway a Loa to remove a curse or forgive a follower, the initiate must make a Difficult Willpower Test with a bonus equal to the Success levels in the Rituals roll. The ZM may add additional bonuses or penalties to the roll depending upon the circumstances. The initiate must expend 15 Essence points in the ritual. The whole ceremony takes one half hour, plus the time that the Loa stays around.

Voodoo Doll Ritual

Used mainly by Bokors and occasionally by Houngans and Mambos, this ritual is used to create a special doll to use against an enemy. The doll itself can be made from many different materials, from beeswax to wood to stuffed cloth. Something personal of the victim is also required and needs to be made a part of the doll by sewing, kneading, or otherwise sealing it into the material. An Intelligence + Craft Task roll must be made with a minimum of two Successes. The ZM can decide how long it will take based upon the materials used. Once the doll is created, the practitioner must make a successful Rituals Task roll and expend 10 Permanent Essence into the doll. Once created, it can be used to inflict harm and hardship upon the victim that it represents. Treat the damage as “non-lethal”, doing 1 LP for every 4 EPs of damage. However, it still causes excruciating pain and the victim must make a Simple Constitution Test to do more than writhe around in agony, holding the afflicted area. Even after the initial damage, if the damage is left on the doll, the victim will be at -2 on any task using the affected area and will be in constant pain. Other Invocations or Miracles may be used on the doll as well, affecting the victim as though it had been used on him directly.

There are two methods to remove the influence of the doll. The first is by having another practitioner remove the curse, which will make the doll and its contents useless for any further torment. The practitioner must make a Contested Difficult Willpower Test against the attacker. If successful, the doll and components become useless, melting down, exploding, or just becoming inert. The second way is for the victim to get the doll and destroy it himself. However, only he can destroy it in this manner, lest he suffer the same fate as the doll.

Zombie Powder Ritual

This is the ritual for creating a special powder that can turn a living person into a mindless zombie. In Haiti, there is actually such a powder, but it does not work as shown in many Hollywood movies. The powder is made with many plants and herbs and one important ingredient – blowfish poison.

The small amount of poison is diluted further with the plants and other herbs, allowing the Bokor to use the powder to make someone fall into a deep coma where all life signs seem to stop. The victim is then buried in a cemetery where he awakes later and are dug up by other minions of the Bokor. The mind of the victim is sometimes damaged by the experience, but superstition is such that he actually believes himself to be a zombie under the control of the Bokor. The victim is now considered a zombie but is still very much alive. The powder can also be used as a supernatural poison, turning the victim into an unliving, unbreathing zombie, if the ZM wants a more supernatural element.

The ZM should decide whether the powder creates the dead version or the living version of zombie. Information on both types of Zombie Powder is detailed later in this chapter.

To create the powder, the Bokor must call upon Baron Samedi for permission to create it, for only Baron Samedi is the master of Death. The ritual must be performed either at a shrine or altar to Baron Samedi or in a graveyard or burial ground. The ZM should give bonuses for description and preparation on the part of the Bokor and minuses for a lack thereof. The Bokor needs several specialized herbs and plants and the poison. He may buy these for 20 pieces of eight or collect them himself, which will take some time foraging and fishing.

The Bokor must make a Rituals roll to properly summon the Baron while mixing and grinding the ingredients together. The number of Success levels is important here as it also determines the Strength of the powder. The entire ritual takes an hour to perform and the Bokor must spend 20 permanent Essence to create the powder. Some or all of these Essence points can come from collected ambient Essence. The ritual creates enough Zombie Powder for 10 doses. See the Vodou Items of Power section on p. 109 for information regarding Zombie Powder.

Zombie Ritual

This ritual is used to create a real live, well, unalive, zombie. The ritual calls Baron Samedi, who must allow the creation of a zombie. If the Baron

decides that the Bokor should not be allowed to create the zombie, then the Bokor must either give up or contact even darker Loa, who may ask a hefty price in return. However, if the Bokor does contact another Loa for this favor, he may gain the wrath of the Baron.

It costs the Bokor 10 Essence points to create the basic zombie from this supplement. The Bokor can add other Aspects to the zombie by paying the cost of the Aspect in additional Essence. Also, by spending an additional Essence point per zombie in permanent Essence, the zombie is tied to the Bokor and controllable. The Intelligence Aspects of the zombie determine just how much detail can be added to any commands given to it.

The ritual should take place in a graveyard, burial ground, or shrine or altar to the Baron or some evil Loa. The Bokor needs a corpse for each zombie he wishes to create, which needs to be in at least fair condition. The corpse can be created “reanimator” style and pieced together from various corpses to get one full body if no intact bodies can be found. The Bokor also needs all the ritual accoutrements to appease the Loa he is trying to contact. The accoutrements should cost no more than 50 pieces of eight in total. The ritual takes one hour for the setup and summoning plus one half-hour per zombie created.

Vodou Items of Power: Fetishes, Assons, and Bochio

Asson

This is a mystical rattle used by Houngans, Mambos and Bokors. It is made from a gourd and filled with snake bones. Making one from scratch requires the necessary components and two days of ritual preparations. Two Success levels in an Intelligence + Craft (Woodworking) Task, three Success levels in an Intelligence + Rituals (Vodou) Task, and an expenditure of 10 Essence are required. The Asson provides 2 Essence for Ritual purposes and a bonus of +3 to all Rituals rolls. The Essence bonus is only for those rituals that do not require permanent Essence expenditures.

Bochio of Protection

(Cost to Create 18 Permanent Essence)

A Bochio is a small, carved wooden figure, which was the precursor of the Voodoo Doll. Originally, these small carvings were used primarily as protective charms and love magic. When Voodoo came to New Orleans and Europe, the doll changed somewhat, as practitioners were no longer allowed to carry them. Instead, practitioners began carrying around the European “poppet dolls”. These dolls gave rise to the notorious Voodoo Dolls of many a horror movie. This particular doll grants a protection bonus of +3 on all rolls to ward off magic, Vodou, or witchcraft (but not Mind Powers) while the owner carries it.

Fetish of Foraging

(Cost to Create 10 Permanent Essence)

This small fetish is made from various bones, feathers, bits of wood and other things collected from the forest floor and strung together on a strip of leather. This Fetish calls upon Loco. It confers the Earth’s Bounty Miracle on the wearer while foraging for food in the wilderness and drains 5 Essence from the wearer when used.

Zombie Powder

(Cost to Create 20 Permanent Essence)

This powder is created by Bokors for the purpose of turning victims into mindless zombie slaves. The powder is a combination of various herbs, plants, bones, and blowfish poison. About ten minutes after the victim ingests the powder, usually in food or drink, he must make a Simple Constitution Test against the Simple Strength Test of the Zombie Powder.

CHAPTER FIVE

They knelt there on the deck of the Wave Runner, their black skin glistening with sea spray and blood. The wounds on the bodies of the two brothers were fresh and the shackles around their wrists and ankles bled freely. The bosun of the Wave Runner stood not far away, a cat o' nine tails held in one hand. He had the look of a man who was forever angry at everything. In front of the two men, the captain of the Wave Runner stood. He was dressed as a member of the Royal Navy, as were many of the crew. He held his tricorn hat under his left arm and his right hand rested on the hilt of his rapier. His face showed no mercy or remorse for his actions. In the background, a small ship finished its fiery descent into the sea.

“You are charged with piracy on the high seas. You will be taken to the mainland where you will be tried for piracy and then hanged from the neck until dead. May God have mercy on your souls.”

“But you do not understand! We are not pir—!” The cat o' nine tails struck again, knocking the brother who spoke to the deck.

“Shut up you, or we'll throw ya overboard right now!” The bosun spat as the cat struck several more times. “Bloody pirate dog!”

Suddenly, the other brother leapt forward to grab the captain's rapier. As it cleared the sheath, a crack as of thunder sounded and a hole appeared in the brother's back. He gasped as he fell forward to the deck, his life spilling out onto the wood. The brother who had spoken froze as his sibling fell to the deck, a look of shock and horror on his face. Then he moved to his dying brother and tried to console him, but there was nothing that could be done. A sound tore from the man's throat, a cry of defiance, of sadness, and of rage.

As the two lay there on the deck, the captain contemplated the mistake. They were to bring in pirates alive, not kill them while they were chained up. These men hadn't even been pirates. He was quite aware of that fact now. He'd let the previous night's encounters get to him and now he had condemned many innocent men to death. This was nasty business, made more so by this incident. If the Navy found out about his mistake, it could mean his own death. He made a quick decision and called to the bosun.

“Bosun, we didn't manage to take anyone alive in this encounter. They all refused to surrender and all went down with the ship. Understand?”

“Aye, captain,” the Bosun replied, drawing his own pistol.

The shot rang out and ended the quiet words of the brother, though the last words sent a chill through the captain.

“Agwe...take us home...”



Several days later, burnt flotsam slid up onto a shore shrouded in mist. Two bodies lay in the wreckage as it came to rest. The people from the village found the brothers and carried them back to their home. When the village Mambo saw the two brothers, a low sob began to emerge from her throat. As she looked upon her dead sons, the rage began to fill her being.

“I swear by the Loa that I will know what has happened. And when I do, someone will pay dearly!”

VOODOO QUEEN OF THE SHROUDED ISLES

History

1664

The *Raven's Claw* was one of the fastest ships that sailed the seas. It was a powerful merchantman that could outrun ships smaller than itself and outgun some of the bigger vessels. It was also the property of a notorious pirate gang that had been causing the Royal Navy of England fits. The gang never left anyone alive and no one knew exactly who the captain was.

The gang would pretend to be a foundering merchantman, flying a flag to denote that they needed help. Many ships had fallen victim to their ruse and as a result, the Royal Naval vessel the *Wave Runner* was dispatched to track down this pirate gang and bring them all in to hang for piracy.

The *Wave Runner* happened upon a merchantman near the Caribbean isles after a harrowing experience with a pirate vessel that struck several times out of the night. Thinking that they had been assaulted by the *Raven's Claw*, they were on edge when they saw a foundering vessel flying a white flag of truce. Believing this to be a ruse, they sailed within range and pounded the ship with cannon fire. It was no surprise that the merchantman returned fire, but the battle ended quickly as the merchantman began sinking beneath the waves, most of its crew dead or dying.

The *Wave Runner* slid up to the sinking vessel and crewmen were sent to pick up the remaining crew. The only two left alive on the ship, which had been manned by a light crew, were the captain and his quartermaster. Both were black Haitian men from the isles and adamantly denied their part in any piracy. The brothers had been returning home with goods from other parts of the world and were blown off course by a terrible storm that had knocked down their sails and damaged their ship.

The captain of the *Wave Runner* realized his mistake too late, after torturing the two men for information on any pirate cohorts. He realized that taking them back now would surely stain his record as the Navy would learn of his mistake. Fortunately, or possibly unfortunately for him, the decision was

made for him by fate on what to do with the two brothers. One of the men lunged for the captain's rapier and was shot by a crewman of the *Wave Runner*. Knowing what he had to do to save his own neck from the gallows, he ordered the other brother killed and both dumped into the sea. No one would know of the mistake he had made. Or would they?

Before the brothers were killed and dumped overboard, one was heard uttering a prayer to one of the Haitian Vodou Gods and it made the captain's blood run cold even though he was not a superstitious man. Somehow, he knew that this was not yet over. He was so right.

Homecoming

The two brothers washed up on the shore of their island home, a small island shrouded in mist. The Loa of the sea had indeed brought them home to their village and family. When their mother learned of their deaths and saw the wounds on their bodies, she became filled with a terrible rage and swore death on those responsible. She called on the Loa for help in finding out what had happened and learned the fate of the two brothers. The Loa Ghede that were once her sons told a tale of pain and fear and the knowledge burned as white hot rage in the Mambo's mind. That rage could not be contained and she stalked out into the wilderness of the island, deadly intent in her eyes.

Once away from the village, she called upon many Loa, begging for the power to exact her vengeance upon her enemies. So filled with hatred and anger was she that she called upon even the Petro Loa, who answered her prayers for the power to destroy. However, the poor woman, so distraught from grief, failed to remember one important lesson. What you ask for from the Petro Loa is not always what you get, or want.

Three Loa answered her plea: Erzulie-Jan-Petro, Ti-Jean-Petro, and Marinette-Bwa-Chech. The three granted her request for vengeance for the ultimate price, her very life. As she dropped to the ground, her life fading away rapidly, the seas began to boil and the sky darkened. She began to realize too late her mistake...

Now the island is a dark place where no one returns from. Some say that the Petro Loa gave her back her soul and she is now quite mad and continues to seethe, killing all who set foot on her island.

Up from the Locker

The Mambo who gave away her life for an ill-conceived vengeance caused a terror to sweep across the world that would not soon be forgotten. Waterlogged corpses resting in Davey Jones' Locker began to climb out onto the shore. Some still held a spark of their former existence, while others seemed to bear a horrible plague that caused other corpses to rise as well. Even the remains of ships and crews were rising from the depths to continue their dark business. The Mambo had inadvertently shaken the cradle, and Hell awoke.

The World Today

The world is much different than what is written in the history books. England is indeed suffering from a plague, but it is no ordinary illness that keeps wars brewing and people hiding in the cities. Tattered vessels ply the sea-lanes and plunder any ships that hold living men, while groups of the living dead band together to feast upon the coastal towns and villages. Graveyards of corpses rise as plague-bearing zombies travel through the countryside, spreading their dark plague to any human remains that may lie there.

The religions of the world believe this to be the final days of the earth, the days that were said to be coming. Many have sent their priests out into the world to help wherever and whenever they can, but there seems to be no way to stop the plague. Not since the Black Death has the church seen so much death and misery.

England was hit the hardest as the men of the *Wave Runner* landed in port. They immediately fell ill and died soon after. However, that was not the worst of it, as the corpses rose a short time later, biting and killing those around them. The disease from the men spread quickly and a panicked populace took to their homes in a desperate attempt to hide from the terrible plague that caused corpses to rise

and kill mercilessly. The military was called out and the Navy also responded, beating the walking dead back and holding large sections of the city of London. Those sections are now picketed with wood and stone barricades and the harbor is clear of the undead hordes.

Other lands fared little better as the dead from the seas caught them unawares. Many coastal towns fell quickly under the assaults from both walking dead and the tattered ghostly vessels appearing in their harbors. Farther inland, news spread and the people were able to prepare, but it is only a matter of time before things get desperate.

Enter the Cast

Cast members can be from many different walks of life and work well as Norms, Survivors, Inspired, or even zombies. The setting can be played at the start of it all or in the days or months after the Rise.

The world looks grim, but the men and women of the seas have not been idle. The pirates and privateers have formed a Libertalia government system and formed treaties and laws of their own. The Pirate's Code has been expanded and all of the pirates and buccaneers are now part of a large democracy of sorts. Many have also been given privateer status that extends to all buccaneers in the pirate government. As has always been the case, the pirates have set up in the islands of the Caribbean and the lands of South America. They sail out to strike at the enemy whenever they can and occasionally help those living who are in need of it. However, there are still those "brethren of the Coast" who are working only for themselves. The pirates and privateers of the world are a double-edged sword. Some are one of the last rays of sunlight in a world that has become very dark, while others are heartless marauders contributing to that darkness.

Another group of people has not been sitting idle either. The Inspired of the world have been working to help wherever there is a need. Some even sail aboard pirate or naval vessels, assisting against the undead marauders and foul denizens of the ocean depths. Others act as protectors of towns and vil-

lages in this time they believe is the Final Days. Even the Vodou priests, who were not spared from the ill-conceived vengeance of one of their own, have come together to assist in trying to stem the tide of undead that plagues the entire world. However, not even the Loa seem to be able to stop what has begun.

On rare occasions, swashbucklers will be brought down by the undead and rise with all the drive and memories they possessed in life. It does not happen very often, but when it does, it brings rise to new legends of unstoppable swashbuckling champions of right, capable of standing against the undead denizens. These men and women of legend seem larger than life and indeed look that way to those who do not know their terrible secret: that they are actually just like the enemy.

Places to Go

There are still places to go in the world and even places to buy, sell, and carouse in from time to time. Many cities and towns have shrunk, but walled themselves off from the terrors of the outside world. The world is a bad place to be in right now, but there's no reason you can't go get a nice stiff shot of rum and a companion for the evening.

ZMs are encouraged to create as many pockets of humanity as they wish in this time of terror and even populate them with mostly normal citizens. However, much of the talk around the bar tables will be news of the outside world as those on the inside only have the information that brave souls bring in from their travels.

There's plenty of plunder for the taking, provided you can get it away from the undead denizens that are hanging around it. Many of the undead no longer have a need for it, so it all just sits, waiting for some brave swashbuckler to come and get it. Money is still a commodity, as are fine jewels and other riches; however, barter has also returned in many areas. Some people believe that if this is indeed the End Days, there is no more use for money and they would rather have something they can actually use. Thus, pirates are just as likely to get a good price for goods as they are gold or jewels.

There are still many undiscovered regions of the world at this time. The Americas are still vast landmasses of unexplored country and perfect areas to go for the exploration-minded swashbuckler.

Story Ideas

The following sections present brief ideas for adventure in this setting.

The Wave Runner's Return

The frigate called the *Wave Runner* arrived in London harbor, after its failed attempt to find and destroy the pirate ship *Raven's Claw*. Its arrival in port was before the brothers finished their fateful journey back home and the Mambo inadvertently doomed the earth. No one was as of yet aware of what was about to befall the city of London. The crew disembarked and went to find lodging and visit with loved ones while the blood from their earlier encounter was washed off the decks.

However, as the seawater was sliced across the deck and mingled with the blood of the two brothers, far away, words were being spoken and a curse uttered. The blood sank into the boards of the deck, slowly staining the ship a deep, dark crimson. As those washing the ship looked at the stain that was beginning to spread, in the city of London the entire crew was falling ill. The sickness hit suddenly and it was all they could do to keep from being driven mad from the pain. In only two hours, their bodies had begun to turn pale and dark bruising appeared all over them. Their agonized screams went on for another hour before they were suddenly silenced, as life left the crewmen.

Before the city even had time to gather all the victims of what appeared to be the worst plague since the Black Death, the bodies began to rise from where they lay, biting and viciously mauling anyone in their vicinity. Many people were wounded or killed by the crew of the *Wave Runner*, as the crew seemed to head back to their ship. By this time, the entire ship had turned a deep crimson and looked dark and foreboding.

Just as the militia began to relax as the ship raised anchor and hoisted sail, they could hear shouts of panic within the city. They soon began to realize that the worst was yet to come. Those who had been killed by the crewmen of the *Wave Runner* rose from where they lay and attacked the city dwellers. The plague spread rapidly, as those who could not get to safety were killed and subsequently rose to begin the process anew.

The military fought the horde to a stalemate and the people of London retreated back into the center of the city. Pickets were erected as quickly as humanly possible by as many of the residents as could physically do so. Eventually, they were able to spread out and connect to the harbor with the help of the Naval vessels there. Now, even though there is still the threat of the living dead, London has returned to a pseudo-normal state.

This is a good starter for the beginning of the Rise and sets the Cast up for many adventures. The Cast can be members of the militia or constabulary of London, privateers or swashbucklers just visiting the city, or even regular city dwellers. During the early part of the Rise, the adventure is your standard “hold out and survive” story. Later, the Cast can be part of the rebuilding and protection efforts for London, building pickets and walls to keep out the remaining undead, while reports come in from ships and travelers of the fate of the rest of the world. Despite the hopelessness of the situation, London has survived rather well. Of course, one major problem in the city, such as a fire for example, could tear the whole thing down in an instant.

And just what happened to the crew of the *Wave Runner*, you ask? Well, those poor souls of the *Wave Runner* are now in a cursed existence out on the ocean. They wander the seas, attempting to atone for their mistakes in a desperate bid to be able to die and end their tortured existence. Their ship is now called *Blood's Judgement*, and it is the scourge of undead pirates everywhere. However, its crew still keeps an eye on the horizon for a black-sailed ship called the *Raven's Claw*.

Using this part of the setting, the Cast can play zombies as part of the zombie crew of the red ship





Voodoo Queen

Strength 2 **Constitution** 7
Dexterity 3 **Intelligence** 2
Perception 3 **Willpower** 7
DPs: 150/250 **Speed** 20
Essence 124
Skills: Brawling 2, Rituals (Vodou) 5
Attack: punch D4 x 2(4), kick D4 x 3(6)
Miracles: Call Storm, Cloak of Night, Confusion, Curse, Curse of Insects, Evil Eye, Holy Fire, Skin of Ogoun, Strength of Ten, Touch of Corruption, Turn Blow.
Rituals: Zombie Ritual (calls on Marinette-Bwa-Chech)
Weak Spot: None (+10)
Getting Around: As in Life (+6)
Strength: Dead Joe Average (0)
Senses: Life Sense (+6), Like A Hawk (+2)
Constitution: USDA Prime (+10)
Sustenance: All Flesh Must Be Eaten (0), Who Needs Food? (+8)
Intelligence: Language (+1), Long-Term Memory (+5), Problem Solving (+15)
Willpower: Will of Iron (+8)
Spreading the Love: Only the Dead (-2)
Special Features: Gift (+5), Increased Essence Pool (+20), Inspiration (+5), No Pain (does not feel pain; see *Atlas of the Walking Dead*) (+1), Regeneration (+5),
Power: 177

known as *Blood's Judgement*. They will only truly permanently die when they have atoned for their mistakes of the past. ZMs should use a ship from Chapter 6: The Black Fleet for *Blood's Judgement*.

Return to the Shrouded Isle

They say that she called down a curse, something dark and terrible, and the Gods answered. She fed her very essence into the curse and gave it form and no one knows what happened to her. Some say the Loa took her away from the mortal world. Others believe that she may still indeed be there, living on that mist-covered isle to this very day. One thing is for certain, all those who go to that island never return.

Or so the legend goes. This adventure seed can be used not only for this setting but for a more modern setting as well, if you wish.

In this adventure seed, it's learned that the Voodoo Queen did not die—well, not completely. Her rage carried her onward, allowing her to exist, in a manner of speaking, beyond the grave. She is now a pure elemental force of rage, hatred, and vengeance...and she resides on the Shrouded Isle. She is in control of the zombies that inhabit the island, zombies that were once the entire populace of the villages there. She has also taken over those zombies that crawled from the sea onto the island. She is completely unreasoning and terribly frightening in her rage. She will hunt down any who trespass on the island and she will have a feast in their honor. Too bad the captive becomes the main course in the feast. To onlookers, this feast looks something like a terrible parody of a Loa ceremony, but there is no mistaking to whom the feast is for.

The zombies can be of any variety the ZM wishes and they are all under the complete control of the Voodoo Queen. When a living person steps foot on the island, she becomes aware of it and will send her zombies to find him and cut them off from his ship. The zombies of the island will do their best to hunt down intruders and bring them back alive for the feast, as they are better when they are alive and screaming. Other zombies who arrive on the island may be caught so that the Voodoo Queen can try to control them; otherwise, they are simply destroyed.

The Cast can be anything from swashbucklers looking for adventure, to heroes looking for a way to end the curse, or even shipwrecked crewmen happy to see the first bit of dry land in days. They can be from any timeframe, as this one works just as well in a modern setting as it does in the Age of Sail. Whichever way the adventure is run, the plague will not end with the destruction of the Voodoo Queen, as the magic that created the curse has spun way out of control and now not even the Loa can seem to be able to stop it. However, ending the Voodoo Queen's un-life will put a stop to the zombies on the island, but getting to her to do the job will be the real piece.

The Raven's Claw

There is indeed a ship on the ocean called the *Raven's Claw*. No one can seem to agree on just who captain's her, but one thing is certain, few escape the clutches of the *Raven's Claw*.

Elena Maria Corazon was the daughter of a Spanish nobleman who explored the wilds of South America and Mexico. Elena always loved the tales of swashbucklers and sailing on the open sea. When she was just a young girl, she talked her father into allowing her to be trained in fencing. By the time she was eighteen, she was an accomplished swordswoman and an able pilot. She had grown to be a beautiful woman with black and glistening hair.

On her twentieth birthday her father disappeared on an expedition into South America. No one knew what had happened to him, but Elena wanted to find out. Using some of her new inheritance, she acquired a ship and crew and headed for South America using copies of her father's old maps.

Halfway to their destination the crew began to get antsy. They weren't too keen on a female captain and decided to try to mutiny. Elena was furious and fought like a wild animal, killing six crewmen in the first minute of the mutiny. After several more of the instigators fell to Elena's sword, the mutiny broke. A number of the crew had even rallied to her side, seeing the ferocity of her onslaught. When all was said and done, all of the mutineers were slain and their leader hung from the main mast as a reminder

to the rest of the crew. However, no reminder was needed. The crew took to calling her Lady Raven and the ship became known as the *Raven's Claw*.

They found the inlet where her father was to have anchored and they rowed ashore. As they followed the maps they began to feel on edge, as though the entire jungle were closing in on them. It was not long after that when they were attacked.

The creatures looked as rotting corpses, but they were quick. They fought the monsters off but not before losing several men. One of the creatures had a familiar necklace. Elena picked it up and found that it was the necklace her father had always worn. She looked at the horrid thing at her feet and knew that it was her father. She shed a few tears in silence and decided to press on in hopes of finding out what had done this to her father.

Days into the jungle she saw what her father had been searching for. A small spring in a clearing came into view. The water looked clean and clear and shimmered as it came from the ground. The pool was made all the more inviting by the fact that their water had run out. The men fell to the ground and began to drink deeply from the pool. After a minute Elena joined them. Soon some of the men began to feel ill and faint. They dropped and began to convulse in a foul humour. Elena and others from her group seemed fine, however, and all they could do was look on as their companions died. Then they arose once more.

Elena knew then what had befallen her father. Some who drank from that strange pool would die and become those things they had fought several days earlier. As for others, she and the other survivors were filled with renewed energy. They felt as though there was nothing to fear from these creatures that used to be their fellow crewmen. They fought ferociously, taking down the zombies within seconds. As they stood there a realization dawned. Much like those poor souls, the pool had transformed them as well, but into something much better.

Now the crew of the *Raven's Claw*, led by the dark-haired beauty Lady Raven, ply the seven seas, using their abilities to make a name for themselves and plunder all they can.

Elena Maria Gorazon a.k.a Lady Raven

silver screen swashbuckler

Str 4 **Dex** 5 **Con** 5
Int 3 **Per** 4 **Will** 4
LPs 68
EPS 44
Spd 20
Essence 25

Qualities/Drawbacks

Attractiveness (3)
Damage Resistant (5)
Fast Reaction Time (2)
Hard to Kill 4 (4)
Honorable (-2)
Immortal (0)
Increased Life Points (1)
Reckless (-2)
Regeneration (10) (2 LPs per Turn)
Resources (3)
Sea Legs (2)
Status (6)

skills

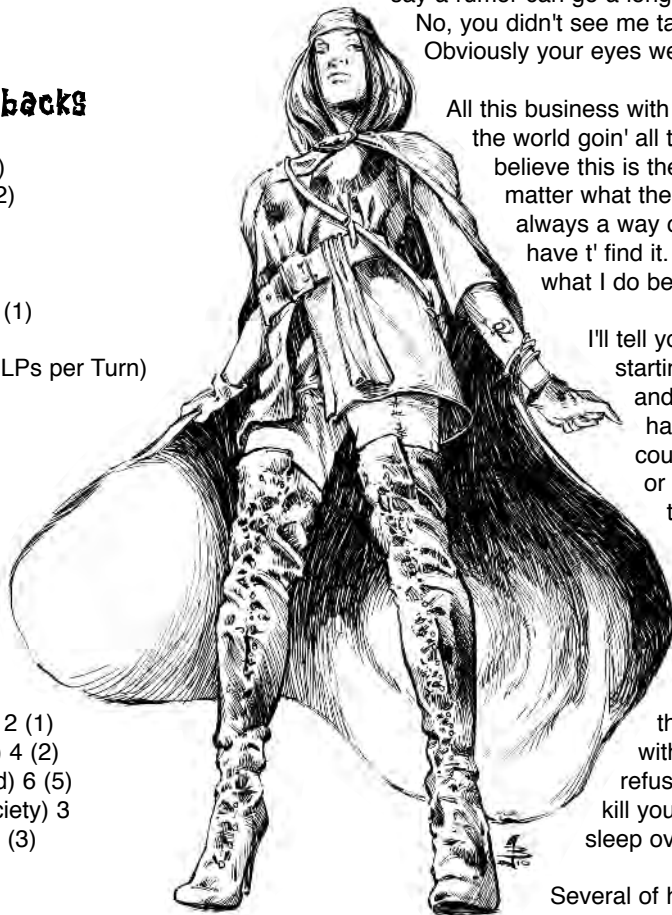
Acrobatics 3 (2)
Brawling 5 (3)
Climbing 3 (2)
Dancing 2 (1)
Guns (Pistol) 4 (3)
Haggling 2 (1)
Hand Weapon (Club) 2 (1)
Hand Weapon (Knife) 4 (2)
Hand Weapon (Sword) 6 (5)
Humanities (High Society) 3
Language (English) 4 (3)
Navigation 4 (3)
Notice 4 (3)
Riding (Horse) 2 (1)
Seamanship 5 (3)
Seduction 3 (2)
Stealth 4 (3)
Survival (Sea) 4 (2)
Swimming 3 (2)

gear

Cutlass, 4 Flintlock Pistols, Large Knife

Personality

Ah, the well of immortality! Oh, that's a myth. Yes, they say it's in South America somewhere, but my father died trying to find it. You're best served stayin' away from there. As t' my success, well...let's just say a rumor can go a long way. A sword wound? No, you didn't see me take a sword wound. Obviously your eyes were playing tricks.



All this business with the walking dead and the world goin' all t' pot. I can't say I believe this is the end o' the world, no matter what the church says. There's always a way out of a scrape. Y' just have t' find it. Me, I'm just happy doin' what I do best.

I'll tell you what Englez, I'm startin' t' like you. Join me and my crew and you can have all the adventure you could ever hope for. It's that or a trip with your captain there to visit Davey Jones.

Quote

"As Captain of the *Raven's Claw* I give you this chance to surrender without a fight. If you refuse, I will regret having to kill you, but will not lose any sleep over it. What say you?"

Several of her most faithful crewmen also survived the ordeal at the spring. ZMs can create any other crew necessary by adding the package below to a crewman.

Well of Immortality Benefits

Damage Resistant (5), Increased Life Points (1), Regeneration (2 LPs a Turn) (10), Immortal (Cast Member does not age, but can still be killed in the traditional sense)

In this seed the Cast can be swashbucklers who have run afoul of the *Raven's Claw* or privateers sent to find her and bring her in. They can find copies of the maps that led to the spring and become as Lady Raven and her crew. Or they can begin play as the crew of the *Raven's Claw* themselves, taking on the roles of Lady Raven and her companions who survived the draught from the pool.

An important note: Elena and her companions have special abilities bought as Qualities. Some of these are indeed Aspects. There's nothing wrong with buying Aspects as special abilities for Cast Members as long as the ZM has no objections. However, there must be a very good explanation as to why the Cast Member has special abilities "beyond those of mortal men." Also the setting has to allow for such abilities. A setting where the Cast are all Norms, for example, would not be the place to add a Cast Member with special abilities. The ZM will dictate what is allowed and what is not during character creation.

Elena is created with more Points than Silver Screen Swashbuckler allows. She is an experienced Cast Member and as such has a few more points here and there. ZMs who wish to start her earlier in her marauding career should use the skill amounts in parentheses and drop her Status to 2.

Her ship, the *Raven's Claw*, is a Flute and is crewed by a Vet'ran crew. It is crewed by 100 loyal men (and a few women as well) and carries seven 24-pounder cannons on each side and an 18-pounder at both front and rear of the ship. It is also equipped with 10 swivel guns. The Lady Raven's Jolly Roger is of a skull with a raven perched atop it.

That's a Wrap

No campaign lasts forever, and a ZM who desires an end to the campaign may allow the death of the Voodoo Queen to herald the end. As the Voodoo Queen dies her minions begin to fall, which only leaves those zombies not created by the curse, including undead Cast Members and some zombie pirate gangs. Once the zombies under the control of the Petro Loa fall, the rest of the campaign can center on the destruction of rogue zombie gangs and disposal of the corpses, along with rebuilding the cities of the world. Many areas of the world will become plague infested for a while as the corpses rot where they fell.

Alternatively, the Cast may need to find a way to convince the Petro Loa to remove the curse, or they may need to do something for the Baron Samedi in exchange for returning the zombies to their graves. The Baron is fickle and may ask for just about anything from the Cast, but once he has it, he will return all the zombies to their graves in a grand exodus.

Lastly, some other method may be needed. Perhaps the Cast must go on a holy quest to retrieve the Ark of the Covenant to destroy the zombies. Or maybe the Pope himself charges the Cast to find some holy relic that will rid the world of the zombie menace. Perhaps the zombies are never destroyed. The modern world would be a very different place.

These are just simple suggestions and ZMs may come up with all sorts of endings for their campaigns.

Th' Livin' Dead

Plague Bearer

These creatures shamble from place to place, bringing the zombie plague to other areas. They will either kill someone in the community or simply corrupt a graveyard or burial ground.

Strength 2 **Constitution** 4

Dexterity 2 **Intelligence** 0

Perception 2 **Willpower** 2

DPs: 54 **Speed** 4

Essence 12

Skills: Brawling 2

Attack: punch D4 x 2(4), bite D4 x 2(4) (+6 per Turn)

Weak Spot: All (0)

Getting Around: Life-Like (+3)

Strength: Dead Joe Average (0), The Lunge (+3), Teeth (+4)

Senses: Like the Living (+1)

Constitution: Tough as Nails (+5)

Sustenance: Blood (-2), Occasionally (+2)

Intelligence: Animal Cunning (+2)

Willpower: The Every Zombie (0)

Spreading the Love: Only the Dead* (-2)

Special Features: Increased Dead Points (+2), Spitter (range 2 yd./m.; damage 2 LPs/Turn)** (+4)

Power: 29

* Those who are killed by the plague bearer's bite and feeding will become a plague bearer if they die from the result.

** The spit confers the zombie plague on corpses. The zombie typically goes into a graveyard and spits on the graves. The zombies made in this way are just normal zombies, not plague bearers.

Minion o' Davey Jones

These waterlogged zombies are great for crews of undead pirate vessels. Their blackened shriveled hearts still pump, but it's not blood that courses through their bodies, but sea water.

Strength 4 **Constitution** 2

Dexterity 3 **Intelligence** 2

Perception 2 **Willpower** 2

DPs: 25 **Speed** 12

Essence 15

Skills: Brawling 2, Hand Weapon 2, Seamanship 2 (if on a ship)

Attack: punch D4 x 4(8), kick D4 x 5(10), or by weapon

Weak Spot: Heart (+7)

Getting Around: As in Life (+6)

Strength: Strong Like Bull (+5)

Senses: Like the Living (+1)

Constitution: Fresh One (0)

Sustenance: All Flesh Must Be Eaten (0), Occasionally (+2)

Intelligence: Language (+1), Long-Term Memory (+5), Problem Solving (+15)

Willpower: The Every Zombie (0)

Spreading the Love: Only the Dead (-2)

Special Features: Graft (+5), Increased Dead Points (+1)

Power: 57

Voodoo Zombie

The zombie here is taken from the excellent AFMBE supplement *Atlas of the Walking Dead*, with only a couple of minor changes. The book is a wonderful sourcebook for undead from all over the world for use in any Unisystem game. ZMs are encouraged to use this zombie for the *Zombie Powder Zombie*. Zombies made with the *Zombie Ritual* are much more diverse and can be any zombie type the ZM chooses.

Voodoo zombies are made by a magical ritual conducted by skilled voodoo priests known as *bokors*. They are chosen before death, and some accounts speak of a special potion or poison that is used to kill them. The bokor then goes to their grave and raises them from the dead as mindless, shambling creatures that are mostly used as slaves. If a remote plantation never hires hands, and its owners keep to themselves, rumors inevitably spring up that it is worked by zombies. Believers in this tradition pity zombies, rather than fearing them; instead, what they fear is that they or one of their family may share the zombies' fate.

Voodoo zombies are not always mindless, and some of them are aware of their condition. However, all of them lack the will to do anything except what their masters command them. They work tirelessly and require nothing but food to keep them going. According to tradition, the only thing a zombie owner must be careful of is salt; this must be kept out of their diet at all costs, because any taste of salt somehow breaks the zombie's slavery, and it immediately leaves and claws its way back into its grave, becoming permanently dead.

Many voodoo zombies have degenerated somewhat owing to the means of their creation, but some retain vestiges of their former abilities and personalities. Some are even a little stronger than they were while they were alive.



Living Zombies

Some modern anthropologists believe that zombies were - and may still be - real, but they are not actually dead. Instead, they are given a drug that induces a deathlike coma, and the bokor gives them an antidote after recovering them from their graves. Their loss of willpower and other faculties is thought to be due to a combination of the drug's after-effects, brain damage suffered while in the coma, and belief in the reality of zombies ("I have become a zombie, therefore I must behave like one").

If this theory is incorporated into a game, it might be possible to reverse the zombie condition by the use of drugs and other medical therapies, but these will take a great deal of research to develop. It may even be possible for a Houngan to reverse the effect, since the victim would firmly believe that a Houngan could save him from his plight. On the other hand, it could be that the condition is irreversible, and the unfortunate zombie - while not actually dead - will need to be institutionalized for the rest of his life. This choice is for the Zombie Master to make.

Special Aspect

Enslaved (Power: -4)

(From *Atlas of the Walking Dead*)

The creature serves its creator or some other master, and has no initiative of its own. It is only able to follow orders, and in the absence of orders, it stands still and does nothing. Its Willpower may not exceed 1, but its Intelligence can be higher - the better to understand its orders, and, of course, to realize the hopelessness of its condition.

At the lower level (-4 Power), the creature has some kind of a way out of its condition. In folklore, a voodoo zombie will be freed if it tastes salt, for example, returning to its grave and becoming just a dead body once more. The Zombie Master can adjust the points value according to how easy or difficult this condition is to fulfill.

Zombie Powder (Voodoo Zombie)

Strength 2 Constitution 2

Dexterity 1 Intelligence -2

Reception 1 Willpower 1

DPs: 26 Speed 2

Essence 5

Skills: Brawling 2

Attack: As normal human.

Weak Spot: Any [0]

Getting Around: Slow and Steady [0]

Strength: Dead Joe Average [0]

Senses: Like the Dead [0]

Sustenance: Daily [0], Regular Food [0]

Intelligence: Dumb as Dead Wood [0]

Spreading the Love: Ritual (Curse, Special ingredients required, only performed by Inspired) [-3]

Power: 5

Bonus Aspects: Up to 5 chosen from Diseased Corpse [3], Enslaved (freed by eating salt) [-4], Getting Around (Life-Like) [1], The Hug of Death [8], Language [1], Long-Term Memory [5], Nest [Varies], Noxious Odor [5], Senses (Like the Living) [1], Strength (Strong Like Bull) [5], and Tool Use (level 2 maximum) [3/level].

Traveling Mountebank

SURVIVOR

Str 2 **Dex** 4 **Con** 3

Int 4 **Per** 4 **Wil** 3

LPS 36

EPS 30

Spd 14

Essence 20

Qualities/Drawbacks

Charisma (+2)

Covetous (Greedy) (-1)

Cowardly (-1)

Hard to Kill (+2)

Resistance (Poison) (+3)

Situational Awareness (+2)

Skills

Acting 3

Brawling 1

Cheating 2

Dodge 2

First Aid 2

Guns (Pistol) 1

Haggling 3

Hand Weapon (Sword) 2

Notice 2

Riding (Coach/Wagon) 2

Running (Marathon) 1

Sciences (Alchemy/Chemistry) 3

Sleight of Hand 3

Smooth Talking 3

Stealth 2

Storytelling 2

Unconventional

Medicine (Herbalism) 3

GEAR

Horse-drawn coach with stage and sign, 1 case of White Lightning Miracle Tonic, 2 flintlock pistols, a sword cane, fine clothing and travel-worn clothing, various beakers, bottles, vials and herbs.

Personality

Hurry up and get your bottle of White Lightning Miracle Tonic! Guaranteed to cure whatever ails you. Soon as the road up north clears I'll be traveling on, but you can still get your bottle of tonic now. Use it for a week and it'll balance your humors, cure your disease and make you feel great!

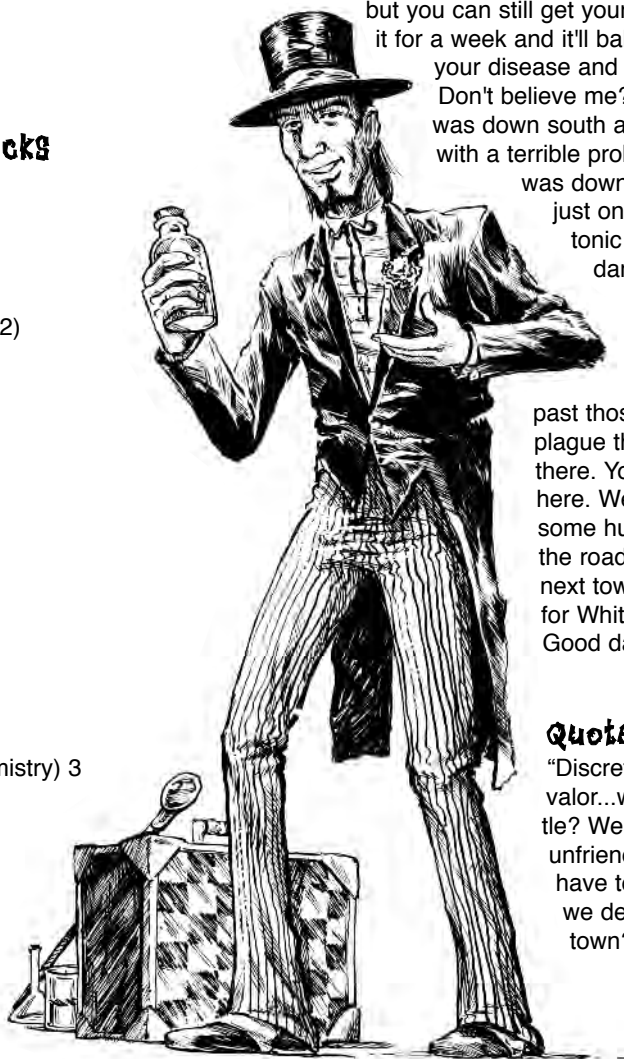
Don't believe me? Well, just last week I was down south and a man came to me with a terrible problem. He said his wife was down ill with a plague. Well, just one week on my miracle tonic and she was back up, dancing and singing like nothing had happened.

Oh I wouldn't recommend going down that way. I barely made it

past those undead cretins that plague the countryside down there. You're best staying right here. Well, as I see you have some hungry guests coming up the road there, I best be off. The next town will only wait so long for White Lightning Miracle Tonic! Good day!

Quote

"Discretion is the better part of valor...what's that? Another bottle? Well, as I see someone unfriendly coming I think you'll have to hop aboard here while we deal. Care to visit the next town?"



Vodou Practitioner Inspired

Str 3 **Dex** 3 **Con** 3
Int 3 **Per** 4 **Will** 4
LPS 34
EPS 35
Spd 12
Essence 70

Qualities/Drawbacks

Gift (+5)
Honorable (-2)
Inspiration (+5)
Increased Essence
Minority (African-Haitian) (-3)
Pool (+10)
Physical Disability (Missing Eye) (-3)
Prejudice (-1)
Recurring Nightmares (-1)

Metaphysics

Animal Metamorphosis (+5)
The Touch of Healing (+5)
Turn Blow (+5)

Skills

Brawling 2
Craft (Woodworking) 2
Dodge 3
Hand Weapon (Sword) 2
Intimidation 2
Language (English) 2
Occult Knowledge 2
Rituals (Vodou) 3
Smooth Talking 3
Stealth 2

Gear

Ceremonial clothing, non-magical bochio, bottle (1 pint) of rum, a bit of tobacco

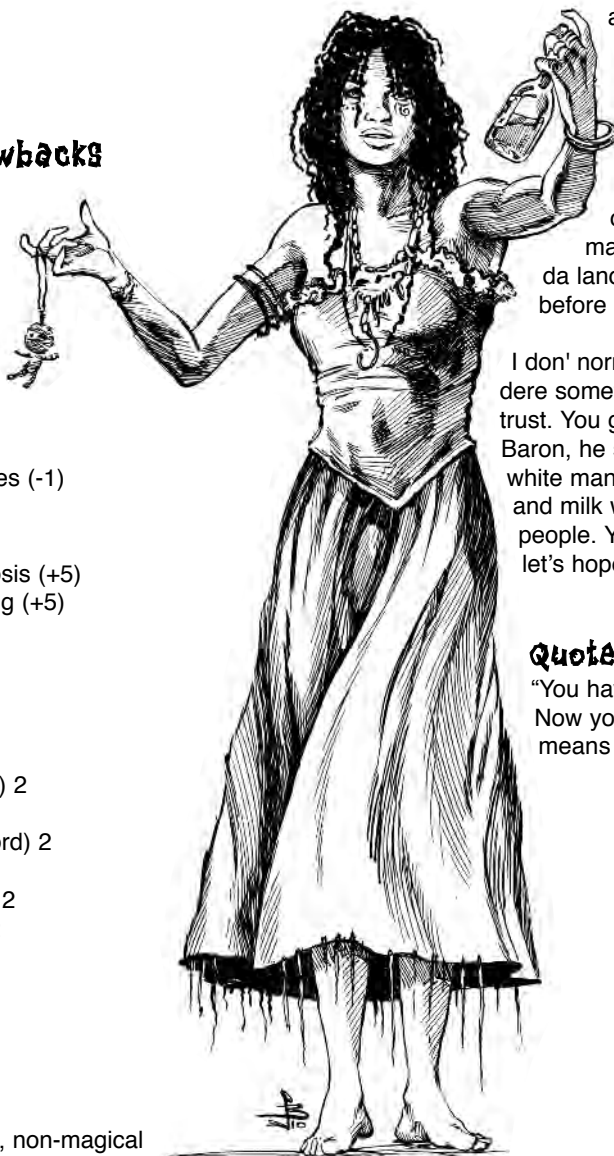
Personality

I see more den you know wit this eye, white man. I know what has caused all dis sufferin' an' it ain't stoppin' wit the white man. We all gonna suffah before dis is ovah. Some o' you don' know what I know, but I can tell you. Da Loa tole me t' tell you an' help da white man, even though dey inadvertently caused it by killin' da sons of a Mambo. Now she terrible mad an' called up baaad mojo on da land. Yup, we all gonna suffah before dis is ovah.

I don' normally trust your people, but dere sometin' about you dat I tink I can trust. You got an honest face...an' da Baron, he say you okay. Even though a white man caused my eye to go blind and milk white I still see da hearts of people. Yours seems pure enough. Now let's hope it's strong enough.

Quote

"You have made the Loa very angry. Now you must learn what it really means to be a stubborn ass!"



CHAPTER SIX

“Aye, me lad, make sure ye keep one eye out fer th' Black Fleet t'night,” the swarthy bosun said as the young crewman moved up the rigging toward the crow's nest. The bosun was a portly man, but strong. He had lost his leg below the knee in a cannon misfire and it had been replaced with a wooden post. For all his girth, he was still pretty spry on that fake leg and he'd gained the nickname “Ol' Thumper” from the crew, for the noise he made when he walked.

“But the Black Fleet's just a legend, ain't it, Bosun?” the youth replied. He was still a green crewman, but he was quickly learning. He had come aboard after a vessel had crossed the path of their ship, *Bennet's Pride*, and had the audacity to round upon it. The boy chose to go on the account rather than face the Fates at sea in a longboat.

“Aye, 'tis a legend. 'Tis also true. Seen 'em m'self, I 'ave. They come out of a ter'ble fog, sweepin' down on a ship like Hell itself. They ne'er give quarter an' they ne'er leave no one alive!”

“Then how did you get away, sir?” The boy was beginning to get a look on his face, half disbelief and half apprehension. “I mean, if they leave no one alive...”

“Well, when the firin' started, a powder keg blowed up on th' deck an' I got shot o'er board like so much flotsam. When th' ship went down, I was able t'old onto a piece o' the mast 'ead an' was eventually picked up by a schooner th' next day.” The bosun stopped, and looked off at nothing, like he was seeing something out of a horrible memory. “They was a ter'ble sight. They was all rotten an' drippin' an' some were even ghostly in appearance. Aye, they was a frightful sight! So, keep a lookout t'night fer any sudden fog banks or dark sails that appear all sudden-like. It could be th' Black Fleet!”

“Aye-aye, Bosun.” the boy said as he continued his climb to the crow's nest, fear beginning to creep into his body. He knew Ol' Thumper was just trying to scare him. The legend of the Black Fleet was an old tale. His father used to tell it to him when he was a lad helping out on the fishing boat. It was a ghost story, nothing more. Still, he couldn't help but feel a little apprehensive. As he looked out he could see nothing but clear horizon in the night. There was nothing to be seen as far as he could...but wait! Wasn't that a sail? He had to have missed it in the darkness. He told himself that it was just the darkness playing tricks on him. It was then that the fog rolled in.

The Black Fleet



History

1519

A fleet of 10 ships, all under the command of a Spanish privateer named Don Bartolome de Alva, set out to look for more new lands and wealth in the recently discovered New World. His vessels sailed down the South American coast, searching for a likely place to find either natives or old ruins. They dropped anchor and made for land in their long-boats, hoping to find something that would make the trip worth the time and resources.

They searched the jungles looking for anything that could be of value and found nothing but vegetation. They were about to give up and head back to the ships when one of the crewmen spotted what looked like carved stone in the side of a hill.

Investigating, they found some sort of temple, overgrown with hundreds of years of vegetation. As they cleared away the growth, they discovered a sealed entrance, probably that way for centuries. The door looked as though it was set in the carved mouth of some idol or god of whomever once dwelled there. The face of the god looked vaguely frightening, a gloating skull-like face that stared at all who dared enter its presence. Not to be deterred from their quest for valuables, they managed to destroy the door and enter the temple. They searched inside, finding a number of traps that took their toll on some of the crewmen, until they came upon a room, lit by some eerie light.

Sitting on a strangely carved altar was an exquisite crystal skull that leered menacingly at them with black onyx eyes. There were other treasures in the room and the privateers began packing up everything, including the skull. Unfortunately, none of

them could read the ancient script carved into the altar and had no idea what they had just done in their greed. The skull was packed away with all the other treasures and transported back to the ships. Then the privateers set sail back toward Spain with their prizes. They would never arrive.

Halfway home, a terrible storm blew in and they were tossed like so much flotsam on the waves. Their ships could not take the strain and one by one, they foundered and sank. They realized too late that the skull must have been cursed and as the flagship sank beneath the waves, Don Bartolome heard the skull speak. The fleet would be cursed for eternity for their transgression and they would not be able to rest until the skull was returned to the temple. Then Don Bartolome, along with the rest of his fleet, sank into the blackness of oblivion.

However, their sad tale did not end there. Death was only the beginning. On the following night, ten black vessels suddenly appeared on the sea, right where Don Bartolome's fleet had sunk, and took a heading toward South America. At the prow of the flagship stood a figure, a horrid, pale human whose flesh seemed to almost glow white in the moonlight. In its hands, a leering crystal skull looked out over the waves toward its homeland. Don Bartolome and the Black Fleet were returning to that land to return the skull and hoping to put an end to the torment that they felt in their new existence somewhere between life and death.

The skull was returned to the temple and as the Black Fleet sailed off into the night, the ships began to vanish one by one into a fogbank, never to be seen or heard of again...at least, until now.

The Black Fleet Comes!

The Black Fleet has been a tale to frighten young children for many years, but that was all it was. However, strange tales have been coming in from grown men, hardened seamen, telling of a group of black ships that seemed to appear from nowhere and strike without warning. Ships have been lost mysteriously and pirates were the most popularly accepted culprits. However, when a naval snow had a close encounter with what was described as a fleet

of black ships, like something straight out of Hell, people began to take the tales more seriously.

Governments began blaming other governments for the vicious attacks on shipping lanes and no one seemed to be listening to the rumblings of the captains and old sea dogs who believe the stories of the Black Fleet. Meanwhile everyone in the seats of power are considering war, which only adds to the confusion.

Privateers went out in search of the Black Fleet or those living culprits responsible for the attacks to no avail. Ships that did find them never returned. Occasionally, one or two survivors would be found among the debris left behind by an attack. They would tell of strange figures that seemed to be able to shrug off all wounds and even walk through walls. They would also say that the forms were not human, or at least not living humans. The higher echelons of power refuse to believe in such hearsay from those obviously driven mad by a stint on the sea. But those who have witnessed the Black Fleet know that they are indeed nightmare made flesh, and no one knows why they have returned.

The Curse Revisited

1690

While searching for more Aztec treasure, a Spanish explorer, Pedro Salazar, happened upon an ancient temple in South America. The temple was crudely sealed, so it was a simple matter to enter. Inside, a crystal skull sat on a pedestal leering at the explorers with black onyx eyes as they entered the room. It seemed to glow of its own accord with a strange inner light that bathed the room in an eerie red luminescence, which faded as the skull was removed from the pedestal. Salazar's men took the skull and began their trek back to their ships and home. As night fell on the coast of South America, a thick fog rolled in and ten black ships slid from the cover like the harbingers of Death.

Salazar's vessels, two sloops and a frigate, were well underway and had made good time as dawn found them far out to sea on their way back to Spain. Around midday, the crew spotted sails on the

horizon and they attempted to tack to avoid the vessels that were fast approaching. However, their flight was to no avail and the vessels managed to catch up, sliding within cannon range.

The battle was quick and the frigate was spared, but only to be boarded by the crew of the attackers, who were pirates. The pirate captain ordered the ship to be searched, cleaned out and set alight. Salazar was shot and dumped overboard and the ship was thoroughly searched. It was then that the pirates found the skull. The pirate captain ordered the skull to be stowed with the rest of the treasure. Then the frigate was burned as the pirates left the scene.

So Where Is It?

The skull made its way to a wealthy French nobleman who paid an exorbitant amount of money for it. It is on display in his estate for his own personal amusement. However, this causes problems, the first being that now the Black Fleet has no idea where the object went. Their second problem is that they cannot step foot onto land for any great length of time, and even if they did, their appearance would be a definite disadvantage. The Black Fleet also has no way of tracking the skull, other than tracking the one who took it from the temple and he is dead. Until they manage to learn the fate of the skull they are set on their current course of action, sacking ships in the hopes of finding it in transit.

However, their one-track minds are set on their current path, which makes any type of parlay a difficult prospect to say the least. This makes their search even more problematical as they leave no one alive and do not listen to those they attack.

The Plague Spreads

It would be quite enough if the Black Fleet were the only problem the world had to face, but this is not the case. Occasionally, the Black Fleet will destroy a ship and that ship's crew will possess the willpower to return from their watery graves with all their memories intact. Unfortunately, they also return with their dark and evil tendencies amplified greatly. These undead corsairs are the new terrors of the Seven Seas that raid towns and villages

on the coasts from time to time. Even the living pirates fear these marauders, as they tend to give no quarter, even to other pirates. On those rare occasions when they do, the alternative is to be killed, marooned, or pressed into service on the undead pirate ship. Signing onto an undead pirate vessel means, of course, that the person signing on does have to die first, which is not something that appeals to many pirates.

Other strange occurrences have been cropping up lately as well. Strange and deadly creatures are beginning to appear in the world in dark places. The Black Fleet knows what is causing the problems of the world, but they aren't talking... at least not yet. The malevolent magic in the Crystal Skull is beginning to leak out into the world, causing old and dark things to return to the world of the living. This is a perfect opportunity for ZMs to flex their creative muscles in creating new and horrid creations to assail the Cast with. This is also a great setting to introduce those creatures from the excellent *AFMBE* supplement, *Atlas of the Walking Dead*.

Even if the skull is returned to the temple, Pandora's box has been opened. The Black Fleet will return to its watery grave, but the other horrors unleashed upon the world because of the magic from the skull will remain.

Story Ideas

The following sections present brief ideas for adventure in this setting.

In Search of The Skull

No one can fathom the reasons why the Black Fleet is terrorizing the Seven Seas. No one who has seen the ships up close has been able to make any type of parlay with the black vessels. The pleas for parlay and mercy seem to fall on deaf...or at least dead ears. Indeed, it seems as though the crews of the ships are looking for something specific. Ships have been discovered foundered and wrecked, but still with full cargo. Entire crews have been killed, but nothing taken. It is indeed a mystery.

It is a mystery that many wish to solve, which is where the Cast enter. The Cast can be anyone from privateers or pirates in the right place at the right time to naval officers picked for a “mission of utmost importance.” England desires an answer as to why their ships have been disappearing at the hands of unknown assailants. If the Cast are pirates, they may be granted a pardon if they assist the crown in finding the culprits and bringing them to justice. If they are naval officers, they are given orders to do the same. Privateers would be given special dispensation and letters of marque to stop whomever is responsible.

The Cast can research the matter, as there have been survivors and the stories have been running wild in the taverns and alehouses. The ZM can make these rumors as easy or difficult to find as he wishes, depending upon how fast he wishes the campaign to move. The Cast may hear rumors in an alehouse or they may have to go track down a survivor who may not be very receptive to questioning. They may even have to fight for the information.

The rumors tell of sorry-looking black ships that appear as if they were once Spanish vessels. None of the black vessels flies any colors, not even the Jolly Roger, save one. Some believe that ship to be the flagship of the fleet. The flag is of a Spanish privateer named Don Bartolome de Alva, though it will be more difficult to find this information unless the Cast can contact a Spanish nobleman or find it in Spanish records. Once that piece of the puzzle is found, the Cast can learn of the Don's interest in South America and may be able to find information from his expeditions, as they were documented in Spanish records.

From here the Cast may decide to try to find De Alva in an attempt to parlay or they may follow the original route of De Alva along the shores of South America. De Alva will not be very receptive to parlay, though certain methods may work. The Cast may hire a voodoo shaman to contact Baron Samedi to try to speak with De Alva. Or they may attempt to get aboard De Alva's flagship. De Alva is the only member of the fleet crew that can speak, but getting him to do so may be difficult. The ZM should reward any ingenious methods the Cast may come up with for speaking with De Alva.



Entering the wilds of South America on the trail of De Alva's original exploration can open up a load of land-based adventure. ZMs can add any encounters they wish here, including some from the *AFMBE* supplement *Atlas of the Walking Dead*. There are also some other undead later in this chapter the ZM can use. The Cast will eventually stumble upon the old temple with its empty altar. Some of the pictographs show a skull with black eyes being carried to a shrine looking much like the one the Cast is standing in. Fallen behind some rubble in the temple is an old journal from the final expedition of De Alva. The final page reads: "We are all accursed for our sins against this ancient God. The skull is a danger to all and should never be taken from this place again. Now we shall rest in peace." Anyone holding this book when attempting to talk with De Alva will have his undivided attention.

However the Cast come about speaking to the ghost De Alva will eventually tell the Cast of the plight he and his crew are in. They know the skull is gone, but not where it is. They have been looking for it on sea, hoping to catch it in transit. They cannot go on land very far for the rising of the sun banishes them back to the sea. All they can do is follow their current course of action. The skull must be found and returned as it holds a corrupting influence that has been leaking into the world since it has been removed from the temple. This corruption is causing all manner of strange occurrences in the world and if it is not stopped, it will continue to get worse.

The Marquis Philip D'Ornay of France has the crystal skull. He purchased it from a merchant for a handsome price and has it on display in his mansion. He has plans for a ball where he can show off his latest piece of art to the aristocracy. However, he has no clue that the skull is causing the odd occurrences in his lands, and incidentally everywhere else in the world. He is a pompous man and loves to show off his status and does not believe in superstitious nonsense. Unfortunately, he is about to learn that superstitious nonsense does not care if he believes or not.

The Cast can track down the skull through any ingenious means they can devise. The ZM may

even throw them a bone if they get bogged down and allow them to learn of a large "to do" happening in France where a nobleman there is going to be showing off his newest piece of art. There have also been strange things going on there, such as disappearances and sightings of creatures that reside in the dark places in the night. The Cast may attempt to crash the party or even somehow pull strings to get invited.

However, soon after the Cast arrive, the mansion will be beset upon by hordes of the walking dead. Seems the local corpses in the surrounding countryside have been busy recruiting and are now being drawn to the skull. The Cast will not only have to fight D'Ornay's guards, and possibly D'Ornay himself, to retrieve the skull, but they will have to battle the hungry dead to escape with the skull. Once away from the carnage, the Cast may either give the skull back to De Alva or return it to its resting place themselves. With that done the Black Fleet will return once more to its watery grave. However, the corruption that was leaked will remain.

We of the Black Fleet

If the ZM wishes, the Cast can be the crew from one of the Black Fleet ships, sent out in a different direction to try to find the Crystal Skull. Unlike the other undead in the fleet, the Cast should be able to speak, though no one they question will know where the skull is located. They may eventually find out where the skull is located through various means. Perhaps they find someone during a land raid who has seen the skull. Mayhap they run into the same merchant who sold the skull to D'Ornay. Either way, they will have to find a way inland to assault the D'Ornay mansion. Perhaps they are the undead that attack the mansion during the ball. If D'Ornay escapes with the skull how will they track him down if he goes further inland? They may need to find something that allows them to ignore the sun's rays or perhaps find some ally that can help them bring D'Ornay out of hiding.

Undead Cast Members that are part of the Black Fleet crew should have the same Special Aspects as the Black Fleet Pirate on p. 132.

All Flesh Must Be Eaten™

That's a Wrap

Ending this campaign can be done easily, whether the corruption in the world remains or not. A good end to the campaign can involve returning the skull to its resting place. Once there, the Cast can go back to their normal lives, with the occasional run-in with weirdness. A true end to the campaign and all the corruption caused by the crystal skull could involve the destruction of the skull. However, the skull is an ancient relic and as such should have no simple way to destroy it. This could involve some quest to find another relic to destroy it with, such as the great hammer Mjolnir of Thor or a trip to a sacred volcano. The ZM can devise any method of destruction he wishes. Once the skull is gone from the world, those creatures created by the corruption from the skull will disappear, cease to be, or just fall dead where they stand.

Arrgh! They Be Zombies!

The Black Fleet

The ships of the Black Fleet are frightening to behold. They look like tattered and beaten wrecks. How they remain afloat despite holes in the hull and missing boards, no one can say. The ships have turned black from age, rot, and rough conditions. Their sails have been torn and are only tattered remains in some places. However, for all this, they are still supernaturally fast and can overtake all but the fastest ships on the sea.

The ships are able to produce a fogbank that drives before them and masks their approach. The fogbank is a maximum of 1,000-yards (meters) radius around the ship. Those on board the vessel creating the fog can see through it just fine, but those things they see look hazy. The fog dissipates quickly once the ship is no longer creating the fog, at around 50 yards per Turn.



They can also become ghostly allowing the ship to literally go through another vessel. Everything on board at the time becomes ethereal as well. Even more horrifying is that the ghostly crewmen can do this too, becoming insubstantial and ghostly in appearance when they need to.

The ships of the Black Fleet are very difficult to destroy. While they are ghostly they take no damage and even when solid they only take half damage from attacks. Even when destroyed, ships from the Black Fleet will rise again on the next night to terrorize the seas once more.

Lastly, the Black Fleet cannot sail in the light of day, disappearing as soon as the sun's light hits them. Everything aboard the vessel disappears with it, retreating to the spirit world where the ghosts of sunken pirates and their ships dwell until the next night when they can continue their journey. This would be considered a ship Drawback/Aspect at -10 points.

Black Fleet Ship

See Chapter 3, p. 73 for a list of ships. The stats are virtually the same, with modifications detailed below.

Special Features/Qualities/Drawbacks: Damage Resistant (+5), Fire Resistant (+5), Fog (+20), The Quick Dead (add 3 Knots to the maximum speed of the vessel) (+10), Ghostly Form (+10), From The Ashes (+10), Banished by Day (-10)

Black Fleet Pirate

These zombies are extremely pale and gaunt, with sunken eyes and determined expressions. Their clothes are tattered and are the same color as the ships they sail.

Strength 4 **Constitution** 3

Dexterity 3 **Intelligence** 2

Perception 3 **Willpower** 3

DPs: 38 **Speed** 12

Essence 33 **Daring:** 1-2

Skills: Brawling 3, Hand Weapon (any) 3, Seamanship 3

Attack: punch D4 x 4(8), kick D4 x 5(10), or by weapon

Weak Spot: All (0)

Getting Around: As In Life (+2), Life-Like (+3)

Strength: Strong Like Bull (+5)

Senses: Like A Hawk (+2),

Constitution: Fresh One (0), Hardy Specimen (+2)

Sustenance: Who Needs Food (+8)

Intelligence: Language (+1), Long-Term Memory (+5), Problem Solving (+15)

Willpower: The Every Zombie (0), Willful Lot (+2)

Spreading the Love: Nobody Loves Me (-5)

Special Features: Damage Resistance (+5), From the Ashes (+10), Ghostly Form (+10), Increased Essence Pool (+3), No Pain (does not feel pain; see *Atlas of the Walking Dead*) (+1)

Power: 83

Siren/Mermaid

One of the stranger effects the Crystal Skull has had on the sea is the mermaid or siren. Once legends and myths of the sea, rumors are springing up anew from sea dogs who claim to have seen them. They are said to be stunningly beautiful and that no man can resist their charms, but they show their true forms when they are about to feed. These undead denizens of the deep come in two forms. The first is the form they begin with, the upper torso of a human which has been devoured from the waist down. Its entrails hang rope-like into the depths of the ocean and can be used to grapple victims and strangle them while the creature is feeding upon them. These creatures have been nicknamed “shark bobbars” by some seafarers, as they look like humans who have been eaten from below. This name is not far from the truth.

The first sirens were in fact shipwrecked men and women who had been eaten by sharks while bobbing in the ocean. Those of a vengeful or corrupt nature invariably arose as strange zombies who could attack victims with their whip-like intestines or attach themselves to the hind portions of certain sea creatures like dolphins or sharks. They look like supernaturally beautiful men and women until they taste blood, then the Glamour fades and they show their true form, that of a horrid blue-complexioned drowning victim with sharp, needle-like teeth. They typically attract men and women off boats and shores with calls for help or beautiful music. Their beauty and seductive ways only adds to the enticement.

Those sirens who have attached tails to their bodies cannot use their entrails as a whip or grapple, but are far more adept at swimming in the ocean.

Siren/Mermaid

Strength 3 **Constitution** 2
Dexterity 3 **Intelligence** 2
Perception 2 **Willpower** 2
DPs: 40 **Speed** 10/25
 (swims as a dolphin when it has a tail, allowing for the faster speed)
Essence 14
Skills: Brawling 2, Dodge 2, Hand Weapon (Spear) 2, Seduction 4, Singing 5, Swimming 4
Attack: punch D4 x 3(6), bite D4 x 2(4) (+6 per Turn), or by weapon
Weak Spot: All (0)
Getting Around: As In Life (+2), Life-Like (+3)
Strength: Dead Joe Average (0), Iron Grip (+1), Powerhouse (+2), Teeth (+4),
Senses: Like the Living (+1), Scent Tracking (blood) (+2)
Constitution: Fresh One (0)
Sustenance: Blood (-2), Weekly (+4)
Intelligence: Language (+1), Long-Term Memory (+5), Problem Solving (+15)
Willpower: The Every Zombie (0)
Spreading the Love: Only the Dead (-2)
Special Features: Attractiveness (while Glamoured only) (+6), Entrail Whip* (+2), Glamour (+2), Graft (+10), Increased Dead Points (+1),
Power: 81
Entrail Whip: (For more information, see *Enter the Zombie* p. 52) Causes D4(2) x (Str -1). Can grapple/strangle. Must target specific location. 10DPs to sever. Has Str 4. AV D6+1(4).

Exploring Privateer

SURVIVOR

Str 4 **Dex** 3 **Con** 4

Int 3 **Per** 3 **Will** 3

LPS 42

EPS 38

Spd 14

Essence 20

Qualities/Drawbacks

Attractiveness (+1)

Contacts (Nobility) (+3)

Cruel (-1)

Fast Reaction Time (+2)

Hard to Kill (+3)

Honorable (-1)

Sea Legs (+2)

Showoff (-2)

Status (+4)

Skills

Brawling 3

Dodge 3

Guns (Gunnery) 2

Guns (Pistol) 3

Haggling 1

Hand Weapon (Knife) 3

Hand Weapon (Sword) 3

Florentine Fighting Style

(Sword/Knife) 2

Notice 2

Seamanship 2

Seduction 2

Stealth 2

Survival (Sea) 1

Gear

Old but reliable schooner, flintlock pistol, large knife, rapier, fine clothes, spyglass

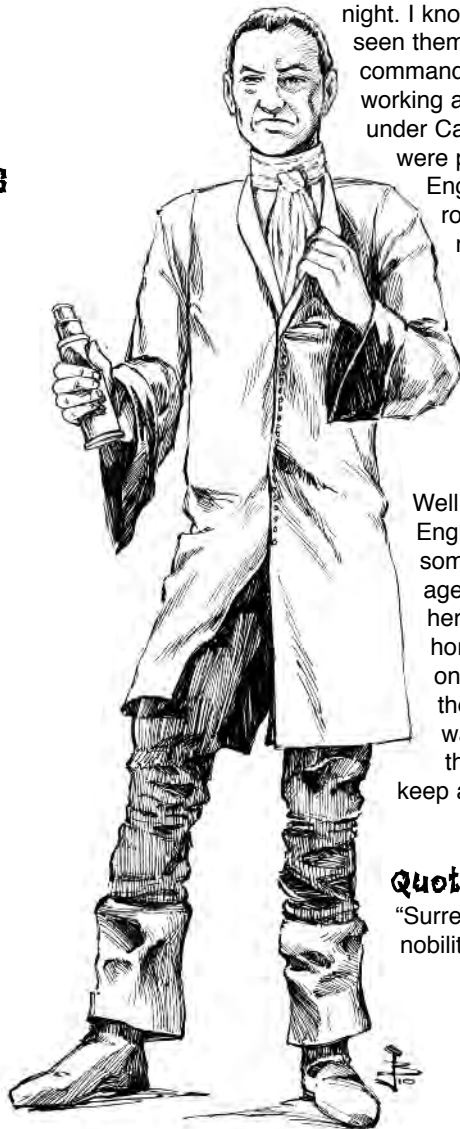
Personality

Trim that sail, lad! It's time we were off. We have to beat the evening, for the Black Fleet prowls the night. I know you don't believe me, but I've seen them. It was right before I was given the command of the *Sparrowhawk* here. I was working as Quartermaster on the *White Dove* under Captain Jonathan Carmichael. We were privateering for some noble in England. It was night and the fog had rolled in quick. They slid out of the night and pounded the ship with a barrage of cannon fire. Well, the *Dove* didn't last long and the ghosts from those black ships poured over onto the *Dove*, killing her crew. In the fight I was knocked overboard.

Well, when I was rescued I went back to England and pulled some strings with some of the nobles I know and managed to land the command of this ship here, but I'll never forget what those horrid things looked like bearing down on the *White Dove*. Hope I never see them again, but if I do, well you don't want to know what I might do. Till then, get up to the crows' nest and keep a good eye on the horizon.

Quote

"Surrender your vessel in the name of the nobility of England or prepare to be sunk."



Weasely Crewman

Norm

Str 3 **Dex** 3 **Con** 2

Int 1 **Per** 3 **Wil** 2

LPS 30

EPS 26

Spd 10

Essence 14

Qualities/Drawbacks

Acute Senses (Vision) (+2)

Attractiveness (-1)

Cruel (-1)

Natural Toughness (+2)

Situational Awareness (+2)

Skills

Brawling 2

Climbing 3

Craft (Knotwork) 2

Craft (Sewing) 2

Dodge 3

Guns (Pistol) 2

Hand Weapon (Club) 2

Lock Picking 2

Notice 3

Seamanship 2

Smooth Talking 2

Stealth 3

Swimming 2

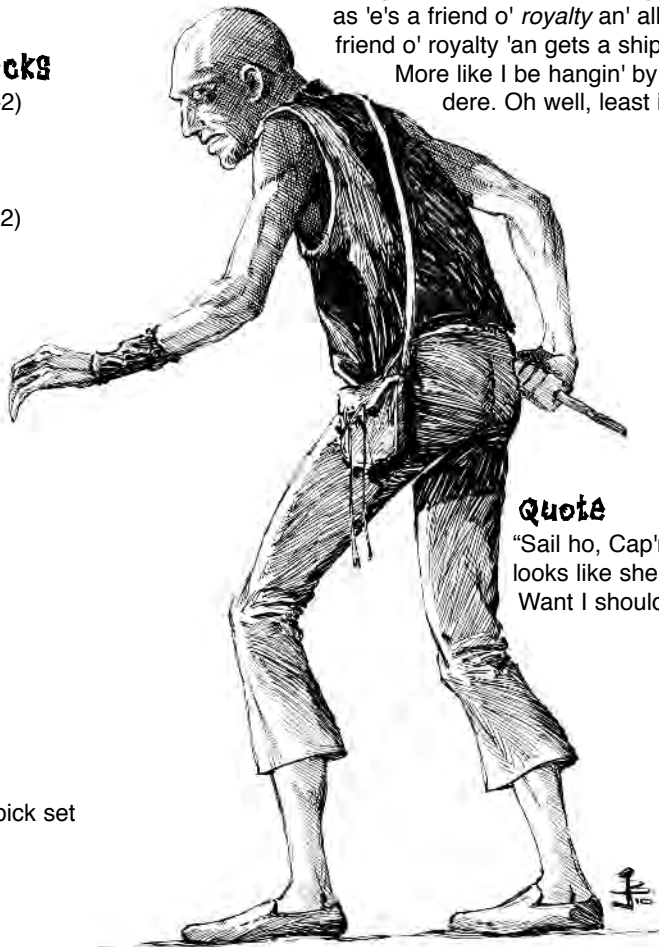
Gear

Sewing kit, cudgel, lock pick set

Personality

Why is me up 'ere in 'e crows nest? Well, 'cause me Cap'n say so, 'at's why. Cap'n says me gots a sharp eye, me do. Says I look out into th' darkness real good like t'keep 'n eye fer dem Black Fleet ships, 'e says. Only I ain't neva' seen none. I thinks th' Cap'n a might bit crazy, I do, but 'e gots da run o' da ship, as 'e's a friend o' royalty an' all. Maybe me makes a friend o' royalty 'an gets a ship o' me own one day.

More like I be hangin' by me neck aside Cap'n dere. Oh well, least it's cool up 'ere.



Quote

"Sail ho, Cap'n! Off th' port! She looks like she's founderin' she do! Want I should send th' colors up?"

CHAPTER SEVEN

Captain Benjamin Donner of the Naval ship *Adventure*:

Day 22: “It has been several days since we left the last of our islands and haven't seen sign of any other island. The Dark Sea is vast and lonely with only stars to guide our way. Our food reserves are beginning to run thin and nerves are frayed. I don't know how much longer the men will be able to hold out. We had hoped that the islands were not far off and we could possibly find provisions on the way. Looks like we were wrong on both counts.”

Day 24: “Yesterday, we ran into a terrible fogbank. It was of a color that I had never before seen in fog. It became more difficult to keep the ship on an even keel and we were not even sure if we were still plodding in the same direction. We have since tried to correct course, but I fear we may have become lost in this vast expanse.

“Some of the men have been talking of forcing us to turn back, but I feel that we are so close to proving the theories and hypotheses of the scholars. We have to continue on! I just know that we'll find another island soon. Perhaps one where we can restock our hold and rest for a time. The men deserve it.”

Day 25: “Our navigator gave out today. We are stranded until he recovers. I fear the worst and do not want to admit it, but perhaps the men were right. This was folly. I think I will break out the final reserves and at least we will go out with a bang. A couple of the men have become sick since leaving that strange fogbank.”

Day 26: “The sick men died and we have prepared them for burial at sea. At least the navigator is back up and well. The next time, if there is one, I'll recommend multiple navigators working in shifts. The men are more restless than ever. They actually had a meeting today to determine what is to be done now. Our food is almost gone and there has still been no sight of land. I fear that if we do not find something soon I'll be meeting my end on the yardarm.”

Day 27: “My God! Last night the dead men arose. They attacked those on deck, biting and scratching like wild animals! Luckily, only a couple men were hurt and no one died, but the men are screaming for blood now. I only hope they can be calmed down.”

Day 28: “The men are calmer now. I told them I'd hand the ship over to them willingly if we found nothing by tonight. They have agreed to continue on for one more day.”

Day 28, Night:

“We have done it! We have found one of the islands! It is the most beautiful thing I've ever seen! We are setting sail for it and hope to reach it soon.”

Day 29: “My hand is shaking as I write this. God it was horrible! We saw a sail nearing as we began approaching the island. We slowed and raised a flag of truce. As it got closer it fired its guns on us. It was then that we saw the black flag with a huge red eye emblazoned



upon it. The ship sped in and attempted to come close enough to allow boarding. The men fought well, but they were tired and hungry and now they are dead. I'm writing this now barricaded in my cabin, hoping that someone will find my journal. Perhaps another ship will be sent out to explore this region of the Dark Sea. Maybe they will find it before they run into those...things. They were all dead, but they moved as though they were alive. They called themselves Necronians and they fought like demons. Now my crew is dead and I fear I'm next."

Day 30: "Somehow, I survived. They left the ship where it drifted and went back to whatever Hellish land they came from. I don't have the power of a navigator, but I do have some ability to pilot. I'm going to try to reach the island nearby. Hopefully they who know of the Dark Sea and can assist me. Otherwise, I may have to try to get home on my own through the Dark Sea, through the eternal night sky, back to Earth."

Islands in a Dark Sea

History

In 1492, Leonardo Da Vinci drew up the plans for a flying machine. However, what he did not tell the world is that he had also determined that there was a power in the universe that could be tapped. He did not feel that the superstitious population was ready for the information and he hid it away in obscure or coded writings.

In 1544, Copernicus told the world his theories that the Earth revolved around the sun and even wrote a book on these findings. Though this theory was not widely accepted, it did draw the attention of a few people, including the church. Galileo also found this theory interesting and using an improved version of the telescope invented by Hans Lipperhey, he learned that Copernicus' theories were true. He made many other discoveries concerning what he called "the Dark Sea."

In 1616, a committee convened with the Inquisition to refute the possibility that the sun was the center of the universe and that the earth revolved around it. They claimed that it was erroneous and the very philosophy was absurd. Galileo went off to further prove what he already knew to be true and found Da Vinci's old plans for the flying machine. He pored over the plans for months and finally came to the conclusion that Da Vinci had stumbled upon a source of power that was unheard of before. Da Vinci called this power Essence and claimed that this power could be tapped by certain people strong of will. Keeping these findings to himself, Galileo began building the machine.

When the Inquisition finally came for Galileo, he had just finished the final preparations and in a daring move, he leapt on the machine and sailed into the sky. He spiraled upward as the authorities looked on and drew quite a crowd under him as the word spread. As he climbed ever higher, he could feel the energy coursing from him into the machine. He passed haze, and then clouds, then more haze and it began to get dark around him. Not realizing how far he had gone, he looked down and almost faltered. He could see the Earth below just like it was a huge, round map and the people were no

longer visible. Realizing that he was not going to be able to continue much farther, he began his steady descent back down to Earth.

No one would have believed it if they hadn't seen it for themselves. His rise through the clouds and descent back again was an historic event. It opened up avenues that were never before dreamed. Fueled by what he saw, Galileo began more research on Essence and travel into the dark space that he had nicknamed the Dark Sea. As soon as the news spread, he gained funding from many nations interested in seeing the "Islands in the Dark Sea" firsthand. The nicknames stuck and people began calling the worlds "Islands" and the dark space the "Dark Sea." With his newfound money, Galileo made many new discoveries concerning Essence and how it pertained to the Earth and humans.

He learned that the Earth held huge stores of this Essence, but that it could not be tapped in the vast reaches of the Dark Sea. Only by being on Earth was one able to use the resources the land held. He also learned that humans themselves had personal stores of the power that would replenish over time when it was used, and that, much like a muscle, the body could be developed so that a human could hold more. Finally, he learned that, much like the flying machine, items could be created to feed off this power. With this last bit of knowledge, he began an academy for the gifted and began testing candidates for inclusion into the Galileo Institute Navigators Guild. These students would be trained to expand upon their potential and be taught to use their Essence to power great sailing ships into the Dark Sea to explore the other islands like Earth that were out there.

In 1618, three comets appeared in the sky, heralding the beginning of the voyage of the *Adventure*, a frigate built to travel the Dark Sea in search of more islands. Each of those pinpricks of light, they now knew, had to be suns with more worlds like their own orbiting around them. The *Adventure* took off on its maiden voyage into the unknown.

In 1619, long after the time the *Adventure* was supposed to return, a strange sailing vessel came out

of the clouds and came to rest in the sea near England. It sailed in and was met by a large force of naval ships. A white flag was raised and a call to parlay was made. When the two ships met, the officers aboard the naval ships were surprised to find the captain of the *Adventure*, Benjamin Donner, aboard the alien vessel. Though his tale was a horrific and sad one detailing the death of his crew at the hands of a horrible race called Necronians, he was heralded as a hero and he and the ambassadors from another world were treated to a banquet in their honor.

Once information was exchanged, the Dark Sea Explorers Guild was created and an alliance drawn up between the people of Earth and those of V'raax, and the scramble to explore the Dark Sea began in earnest.

The year is now 1643. Galileo is dead, but he has begun the world on a journey through the dark regions of space to an eventual goal. Explore the Dark Sea and build an alliance with other worlds to try to thwart the plans of those creatures called the Necronians in their goal to take over all the Islands in the Dark Sea.

The Dark Sea

The Dark Sea is an unknowably vast region filled with many islands and many differing races. As some have come to realize, there are usually several islands orbiting each sun and not all of these islands are safe. Some take the breath from crews, while the very air can crush others. Some planets are poison to land upon and some are nothing more than a great sea of gases which can affect the crews in differing ways, depending upon the type of gas. Many captains will not even consider an island unless it looks much like Earth does. However, even that is no guarantee.

Many Essence items have been created for the explorers so that they may be better protected in the harsh and wild Dark Sea. Masks that make breathable air and testers that check the density and toxicity of the air are fairly common on vessels.

Improvements in weaponry have decreased the need for gunpowder, as many weapons can now be powered with both Essence and gunpowder. Other devices, such as Ship's Essence fields and personal Essence fields, have been designed as well, affording the crew greater protection. Various Essence-powered items are detailed later in this chapter.

The people of Earth have learned that there are far more things out there than they have ever seen before. The Explorers Guildsmen have found aliens with strange technology and even plants and animals that have never before been encountered. Some of these are safe for contact, while others are very dangerous and leave some of the crewmen dead when met. These aliens are usually approached with great care to determine how amenable they are to alliance with other races.

This setting is a ZM's chance to let her creativity shine, and use as much or as little of the other Unisystem lines as she wishes. There's an entire Dark Sea to fill out there and the Explorers Guild won't wait forever. They could run into a race of apes, or a land of strange vehicles, huge buildings that touch the sky, or magic and Mad Gods. They could stumble upon a world in the throes of its final days of judgment where angels and demons battle for the very souls of the mortals on the planet. Plus, with certain other Cinematic Unisystem lines, the ZM can make strange beasts and demons that roam the islands of the Dark Sea. And don't forget the use of Aspects to create not only the undead, but living creatures as well.

The Hungry Sea

Explorers in the Dark Sea have learned that it is not a good idea to fall overboard into the Dark Sea. There is a force in the sea that slowly kills anyone who falls overboard by leeching out her life force. Some explorers believe it to be some invisible race of creatures or even ghosts, but no one knows for sure. However, men have been found floating in the Dark Sea, dead and frozen.

Anyone who falls into the Dark Sea cannot breathe and begins taking D8(4) EPs per Turn until reaches 0 Endurance, at which time she passes out

and begins suffering LP damage of D10(5) per Turn. Once the victim drops to -10 LPs she must begin making Survival Tests each Turn until she is either rescued or dead. After about 30 minutes the body freezes and the victim is dead. Each Turn the victim is unconscious and without a supply of oxygen, she must make a Simple Constitution Test with a cumulative -1 for every Turn after the first Turn she falls unconscious. A failure indicates the victim has suffered brain damage due to a lack of oxygen and should be given a mental, or possibly physical, Drawback if she survives.

The Necronian Corsairs

In the Dark Sea, there are evil and cruel races just as there are good and just ones. However, there is no humanoid race out there as old or as despicably evil as the race known as the Necronians. Hailing from a far-off dead planet called Necron, the Necronians desire to take over all islands in the Dark Sea and use the rest of the races as slave labor and a food source.

The Necronians were always a warlike race, but they were not always in their present form. Long ago, they destroyed their own world in a cataclysmic war that made their home planet a barren wasteland and destroyed the other planets that were orbiting their sun. The sun itself died and is now nothing more than a dense ball of some unknown material. Their blasted world lies in the center of a huge asteroid field that was created by the destruction of the surrounding planets.

Somehow, their race continued on in a form that is neither living nor dead and their warlike nature and yearning for conquest were amplified. They search the Dark Sea for more worlds to add to their empire...and food stores. Necronians look, for the most part, like the skeletons of humanoids. They were once human-like, but taller and broader of shoulder. However, many have changed their appearance even more to strike fear into their enemies; adding fangs or giant wings or even horns and spines. They not only treat this as a tactic of sowing fear into the hearts of their opponents, but also as a sort of ritual, like scarring or trophy collecting.

Aside from natural weaponry, most improvements are nothing more than cosmetic changes to make the Necronian more frightening. When a limb or other body part is grafted onto the Necronian, any flesh left on it melts off, leaving only white bone.

Necronians can make more of their kind, as their souls are eternal and can be called back at any time to infest other bodies. This is done by taking a victim back to their home world and performing a ritual that will call the soul of a Necronian to feed off the Essence of the host and thereby take over the body. The victim is alive when this takes place and the procedure is excruciatingly painful, as an unseen force devours the soul. Once the Necronian soul has taken a host, the flesh literally melts off the bones of the newly created Necronian and disintegrates. It is not known what causes this phenomenon, but it is quite frightening to behold, unless you're another Necronian. These bodies are smaller than the original Necronian skeleton, but it doesn't affect the power of the soul possessing it.

Necronians feed off the Essence of victims, devouring the souls of their captives for sustenance. They do not always kill the victims they feed off of, preferring to drain them slowly to keep them docile but alive. They really enjoy those with high concentrations of Essence, such as Inspired or Navigators. If a victim is killed by Essence drains, he cannot be used to create another Necronian, as the summoned soul needs to devour the soul of the victim.

Necronians also have the ability to create liquid Essence by draining victims using a strange chair-like device. The victim is strapped in and tubes are attached to various places on her body. When the machine is turned on, it literally drains the vital Essence of a person and distills it into a clear liquid. The device and the effect of its distilled Essence effects on other creatures that imbibe it are detailed later in this chapter.

Story Ideas

The following sections present brief ideas for adventure in this setting. Any story of exploration or piracy can work well in this setting, as the backdrop is so vast. Strangely, *Star Trek* and other sci-fi exploration settings can be good fodder for this Deadworld. Disney's *Treasure Planet* is also a good example of what can be done in this setting.

The Enemy of My Enemy

The Cast find a planet that is being harassed by a Necronian vessel. A group of Necronians are on the planet, making life difficult for the humanoids that live there. The humanoids seem friendly enough. They are only about 5 feet tall and thin with a grayish complexion. They have no Essence Ships and seem very docile and passive. The Cast can attempt to take out the group of Necronians that are on the planet. If successful, the natives of the planet will offer thanks in the form of a huge banquet.

However, stories of horror never have a happy plot and this one is no exception. On the planet, there is one night in the year when the docile natives transform, becoming horrible creatures that hunt and devour any living thing they can find. The hideous creatures have razor-sharp teeth and claws and move with lightning speed. The Cast will have to make it back to their ship or survive the night.

Even worse for the Cast, the Necronian ship in the Dark Sea has come down to see what happened to the group of Necronians on the planet. Now the Necronians are in the same fix as the Cast, as the creatures eat both flesh and bone. Can the Cast temporarily ally with the Necronians, or will the Necronians be just one more danger in the night?

A New Threat

The Cast come across a strange metallic ship of an unknown design crashed on a planet that is mostly tropical rainforest (see "Zombies from Beyond" p. 143). Many types of unintelligent beasts live here (the *Terra Primate* Core Book has animals that can be useful here). The ship is large and oblong. It looks sort of flattened and comes to a point at one

Typical Necronian

Strength 4

Dexterity 3

Perception 2

DPs: 58

Essence 17

Skills: Brawling 2, Dodge 2, Guns (any) 2, Hand Weapon (any) 2, Seamanship 2

Constitution 3

Intelligence 2

Willpower 4

Speed 17

(The Necronians can also have other skills as the ZM needs them, but this adds to the Power of the zombie)

Attack: punch D4 x 4(8), kick D4 x 5(10), or by weapon

Weak Spot: All (0)

Getting Around: As In Life (+2), Life-Like (+3)

Strength: Strong Like Bull (+5)

Senses: Essence Sense (+4), Like The Living (+1)

Constitution: Fresh One (0), Hardy Specimen (+2)

Sustenance: Soul Sucker (+5), Weekly (+4)

Intelligence: Language (+1), Long-Term Memory (+5), Problem Solving (+15)

Willpower: Resilient (+5)

Spreading the Love: Ritual (Complex Ritual) (-3)

Special Features: Graft (+10), Increased Dead Points (+2),

Power: 76

This is the typical Necronian with no changes made to its body. Other Aspects may be added to the basic Necronian and include:

Teeth (+4), Claws (+8)

Hand Gun (See *Enter the Zombie*; weapon is actually integrated into the bones of the arm and runs off the Essence of the Necronian) (+3)

Ribs of Doom (see *Enter the Zombie*) (+3)

Sword Arm (see *Enter the Zombie*; weapon is either an actual sword melded into the bone, or fused, hardened bone) (+2)

Natural Weapons (horns, blades, spines, hooks, spikes, etc.) (+1 Power for small weapons D4 x Strength; +2 Power for medium weapons D6 x Strength; +3 Power for large D8 x Strength)



end. One side is severely smashed, like something huge hit it. At the rear are strange ports that smell like something was burned in them. The ship is much bigger than a galleon and is made completely of some shiny metal. When the ship crashed, it left a deep trench along the ground in its wake. With a little close investigation, the Cast may be able to find an entrance into the ship.

As the Cast are looking over the ship, the ZM can have a pack of wild animals find the Cast and attack (velociraptors would work well for this; *Terra Primate* p. 232). At the same time, they can find an entrance to the vessel and relative safety from the creatures that have now surrounded the area. Once they drop through the portal, there is a hum as it closes and then clicks. It seems it is now locked.

Once inside, they will find that there is lighting of some strange type illuminating the hall they drop into. They are near what looks like a doorway, which looks as though it once had a door but is now twisted steel. The interior of this room is only lit by flashing lights of varying colors. They can see 20 large human-sized canisters within the room. Wires or hoses go from the canisters to walls, ceiling, or the various blinking things in the room. All of the canisters are open and look as though they could've held humanoids. Whatever was in there are gone now. Or are they?

The Cast will have to search the strange ship and will eventually run into the Shock Trooper Zombies that once occupied the canisters. They will have to try to avoid the Shock Troopers while trying to find a way out of the vessel. The ship is big enough to allow a number of halls, rooms, and odd discoveries, including any ultra-weird tech the ZM wants to introduce.

The Cast can eventually make their way to the front of the vessel, where they will find a room with some form of blank sheet of glass. This is a view screen, but it is dead and blackened, like it was hit with lightning. There are bodies here, but they are charred and difficult to identify. However, the computer is not and it makes its presence known as soon as the Cast enters the bridge. The computer can speak and has a limited form of artificial intelligence.

If the players work intelligently, they may be able to glean information from the computer and even get help in getting out. Evidently, a massive asteroid (the Cast may

need clarification on what exactly an asteroid is) struck the vessel as it flew near the planet. The ship was forced to crash land on the planet. When the systems temporarily went down, the Shock Troopers were released and set about their programmed task to seek out and destroy all living humanoids. Normally, the containers would be dropped onto the surface of a planet and then they would open. They were not supposed to open in the ship. Now the Shock Troopers are loose in the vessel.

If the Cast can set up a tracking device for the computer (a task that they need to be outside to accomplish and the computer can walk them through) then the computer can open one of the emergency hatches to the outside. However, the creatures from earlier are still out and about and may be a problem. If the Cast do not think of it, the computer may be able to suggest that they lead the Shock Troopers outside. It would kill two birds with one stone and occupy both forces while the Cast puts up the tracking device. Without the supply of electricity from the ship, the Shock Troopers will eventually run out of power. The computer can also tell them where there is an instant transportation device that they can use to get them back to their ship. It is in one of the rooms on the vessel. However, it will not tell them where until after they have set up the tracking device.

Once the Cast accomplish this task, they can then get the transport device, a small black box with buttons on the side and a strange glowing rod sticking from the top. When the proper sequence of buttons is pressed (another thing the computer will not tell them until after they put up the tracking array), a blue light comes out of the rod and passes along the Cast standing around it and they will reappear beside their ship. The ZM can decide if the transport device comes along with them.

That's a Wrap

Much like any other space setting, there really is no simple way to end this one. There will always be new regions to explore/exploit and new items to plunder. It is possible that the main villains of the setting, the Necronians, could be stopped, putting an

end to their brand of terror in the Dark Sea. Even then, there are still many places to go, as the people of Earth are a curious lot and high adventure is always just around the next nebula.

Others Who Ply the Dark Sea

There are many other races and creatures that reside in the Dark Sea or its islands. ZMs are encouraged to make up any race or creature necessary for their own setting, or borrow from the many other quality Unisystem products out there.

Pirates

Just as in the past, pirates roam dark places, plundering other ships and selling to whomever they can. The pirates in the Dark Sea are just as ruthless, daring, and boisterous as pirates ever were, though not all are human. This is a perfect time for players to play pirates of any race they and the ZM can dream up. A pirate campaign in this setting can be filled with adventure as many pirates of the day were also explorers of a sort, logging anything special that they might find on their voyages in journals. Exploring buccaneers will find many adventures in the Dark Sea.

Zombies from Beyond

No one knows where these creatures came from. Some believe they came from another dimension, while others believe that they came from the edge of the Dark Sea. They seem to be the first vanguard or perhaps scouts of an unknown enemy. Their ships look strange, something like a flattened bullet, and hover over a planet, dropping their first wave, the Shock Troops.

These "Shock" Troops are created by integrating powerful circuitry and wiring into the bodies of corpses. The bionic integration not only turns the corpse into a programmable zombie but also gives it certain abilities.

First, a small box of complex circuitry is surgically implanted into the side of the corpse's head. This is effectively the zombie's brain. It has a secondary

outlet that can be used to connect to an electrical source, allowing the zombie to recharge. The box allows the zombie to think and react within the parameters of its programming. Circuitry is run down the arms of the corpse and attached to surgi-

cally implanted conductors. A charge can be run through the conductor to shock whatever the zombie is touching. The conductors can also fire a bolt of lightning-like electricity at a target up to 5 yards/meters away.

ZfB "Shock" Troops

Strength 4 **Constitution** 2
Dexterity 2 **Intelligence** 2
Perception 2 **Willpower** 2
DPs: 15 **Speed** 4

Essence 39

Skills: Brawling 2, Hand Weapon (club) 2

Attack: punch D4 x 4(8) (D6 x 4(12) with Shocker), kick D4 x 5(10)

Weak Spot: Brain (+6)

Getting Around: Life-Like (+3), Leaping (+3), The Lunge(+3),

Strength: Strong Like Bull (+5)

Senses: Life Sense (+4), Like the Living (+1)

Sustenance/The Menu: Daily (0), Electricity (-1)

Intelligence: Long-Term Memory (+5), Problem Solving (+15), Teamwork (+4)

Spreading the Love: Nobody Loves Me (-5)

Special Zombie Features: Arc (+6), Kinetic Shield (+5), Increased Essence Pool (+5), Shocker (+4)

Power: 67

Shocker (Power +4): The zombie can cause its hands to become electrically charged, allowing it to do D6 (3) x Strength damage with a punch. The damage is D6 (3) if the zombie merely touches a victim. If the zombie uses a metal weapon it can conduct the electricity through it to do an additional D6 (3) damage per strike. The power costs the zombie 1 Essence point per charge. Certain non-reactive materials, such as insulated rubber, negate this effect.

Arc (Power +6): The zombie can, at certain times, actually cause electricity to jump or arc to a source of metal that is within 5yds/m away. The electrical arc causes D6x3 LPs of damage. This power costs the zombie 10 Essence to use and can be done at will as long as the zombie has the Essence to use it.

Kinetic Shield (Power +5): The zombie can turn on a kinetic field that is powerful enough to actually slow down weaponry and decrease the damage of most weapons that are kinetic in nature. For 1 Essence point per turn the field can deflect D8x2 (+8) damage, just like armor. The reasons for the fluctuating damage are that the field flickers as electricity is wont to do, and is not a steady current. For 2 Essence points per turn the field can deflect D8x3 (+8) damage. For 3 Essence per turn the field can deflect D8x3 (+18) damage.



Using the ambient electromagnetic energy in an air, the zombie can leap great distances. It can also create a “bubble” of kinetic energy that can deflect kinetic damage.

The motives of the Shock Troops are a complete mystery to the researchers of Earth, as is the method of their creation. However, one thing is certain, they are working for someone or something and expeditions have been planned for finding those who are pulling the strings of these strange monsters.

The Faceless Ones

Strength 4 **Constitution** 4

Dexterity 3 **Intelligence** 2

Perception 2 **Willpower** 2

DPs: 52 **Speed** 14

Essence 18

Skills: Brawling 2, Dodge 2, Hand Weapon (any) 2, Seamanship 2

Attack: punch D4 x 4(8), kick D4 x 5(10), or by weapon

Weak Spot: All (0)

Getting Around: As In Life (+2), Life-Like (+3)

Strength: Strong Like Bull (+5)

Senses: Like the Living (+1)

Constitution: Tough as Nails (+5)

Sustenance: Who Needs Food? (+8)

Intelligence: Language (+1), Long-Term Memory (+5), Problem Solving (+15)

Willpower: The Every Zombie (0)

Spreading the Love: Nobody Loves Me (-5)

Special Features: Damage Resistance (+5), Displacement (+4), From the Ashes (+10), Increased Dead Points (+1), No Pain (does not feel pain; see *Atlas of the Walking Dead*) (+1)

Power: 69

The Faceless Ones

Long ago, the Faceless Ones were normal, living humanoids. They were part of a military dedicated to protecting their planet from any alien invaders that would seek to conquer it. When the Necronians came to invade their world, they fought bravely at first; however, they quickly began to sense the futility of resistance and fled. With the defenses broken, the Necronians swooped down on the planet and devoured all of the humanoids who lived there, leaving none alive as their ultimate punishment for resistance. Only the group that fled the battle survived, though it was not for long.

Though they did not realize it, the ancient creed of their world would doom them to an undead existence, forever roaming the Dark Sea until they atoned for their cowardice:

“Never falter or surrender in the face of adversity, lest oneself be lost forever.”

As they fled, they all began to change. Their vessels became as ghost ships and they all fell to the decks in the throes of death. Their flesh turned white and their faces completely disappeared, replaced by a dark void. Their military robes turned black and tattered and their bodies became resistant to damage and pain. When it was over, they began to rise from the decks, realizing that they were no longer alive and not dead, but something in between. However, the most horrific transformation went by unnoticed until one of them killed herself, stricken by the hopelessness of their situation. The rest of the men were shocked when the man returned the following night in a sudden flash of white light. It was then that they realized that they were truly cursed.

Never would they be able to rest until they atoned for their cowardice. Now they search the Dark Sea for a way to atone, knowing that one day they will have to return to their world and take it back from the Necronians, but not knowing if even that will be enough. Until then, they are cursed to roam the Dark Sea without identity or honor.

Essence Ships

The Makers are those who have learned the art of creating Essence Ships. They have learned to tap great amounts of the Earth's Essence to infuse a vessel with power. Making an Essence Vessel requires the Gift Quality, so that the Maker can tap the Essence of the planet and weave it into the ship's being. She must also know the proper Ritual involved in the creation of an Essence Ship and therefore must have the Rituals Skill. The Ritual takes a full 24 hours to perform and an Essence expenditure based upon the size of the vessel.

Ultra-Light Vessels (gliders, ornithopters, horseless carriages, rowboats): 50 Essence

Light Vessels (naval snow, sloop, brigantine, coastal junk): 100 Essence

Medium Vessels (merchantman, flute, sea going junk): 250 Essence

Heavy Vessels (frigate, galleon): 500 Essence

Most Essence shipyards are built upon places of high Essence power, allowing for a massive amount of Essence to be drawn. However, the Ritual takes 24 hours, as the Builder acts as a conduit for the raw Essence and cannot hold it all at once. This Essence must be threaded throughout the entire being of the vessel, which takes time. A Willpower + Rituals Task roll at -3 (making an Essence Item is a Very Difficult procedure) is required to successfully cre-

ate an Essence Ship. If this roll is failed, the Essence could not be drawn in sufficient amounts to create the ship. If a natural 1 is rolled, there may be problems. If the total still equals a 9 or greater, the vessel may have a Drawback, at the ZM's discretion. If the roll is below 9 after any Skill and Attribute bonuses have been added, then the Cast Member must succeed in a Simple Willpower Test or suffer overload, as the raw Essence floods her being.

Once the vessel is infused with Essence, it is ready to be used. The vessel has a permanent "bubble" of Essence around it, allowing those within it to breathe normally. A crewman must never fall overboard or her life will slowly be devoured by the hungry force that resides in the Dark Sea.

Purchasing an Essence vessel usually costs 5 to 10 times more than a normal vessel, depending upon the Maker or the circumstances.

Powered by Essence

Ships require Essence to travel the Dark Sea. They get this Essence from any crew, passengers, and Cast Members that are aboard. On sailing vessels, all aboard are always 1 Essence below their maximum, as the ship drains a negligible amount of Essence from everyone. This grants the vessel an unlimited supply of Essence while all are aboard and allows it to travel non-stop as long as there is a crew to pilot it. When no crew members are aboard and a ship has been properly stowed, it will remain in place. Much like any other normal ship, an Essence ship cannot be piloted by any

Willpower Test Failure

- | | |
|------------------|--|
| 1 or less | The Maker's entire cellular structure begins to break down and damage is D10 x 8(40). If the Maker dies as a result of the damage, she will literally explode. If not, she cannot even tap Essence for D4 years. |
| 2-3 | The Maker takes D10 x 3(15) damage and can not tap Essence for D4 months. |
| 4-5 | The Maker's personal Essence drops to 5 and will not recover for D4 +1 days, and she can not tap Essence for the same period of time. |
| 6-8 | The Maker suffers a temporary overload and her personal Essence drops to 5, which will begin to recover after 12 hours. She cannot tap Essence for 48 hours. |

fewer than a skeleton crew of 10 men, as there is too much to do to keep the ship on a steady course and there is not enough Essence available to move the ship. Of course, running on a skeleton crew is dangerous, as many merchantman vessels of the day learned, as there isn't generally anyone available for guns and defense.

A ship that has lost its crew to death or some other mishap will drift around, tossed by the currents, just as it would in the ocean, though no Essence is needed for this.

Travel in the Dark Sea

An Essence Ship can move much faster in the Dark Sea than it can on an Island. The Galileo researchers believe this to be because of friction and the same force that keeps things rooted to the ground on an Island, gravity. The Dark Sea has none of these things and as a result, Essence Ships can sail a distance that would normally take years in only days for the same amount of Essence expenditure.

A ship on land (or above it) travels at its usual listed speeds. In the Dark Sea, the large sailing ships travel much faster. Ultra-Light vessels such as rowboats still move slowly. Since distance in the Dark Sea has not been accurately calculated it is represented simply as days of travel. All ships in the Dark Sea have a timepiece, which tells the crew how much time has passed. A day of travel in the Dark Sea can be anywhere from 12 to 24 hours, depending upon the crew. Crews need to rest after a period of time and must work in shifts if the vessel is to travel non-stop.

During combat situations, the standard knots listed for a ship still apply in regard to pursuit or escape. When traveling, the knots of a ship represent how many sectors a ship can travel in a day. A sector is represented as one square on a grid. A ship traveling at 5 knots per day would reach V'Raax in 14 days, as V'raax is approximately 70 sectors away from Earth's system. For those who really care about such things, each 10 sectors are approximately 1 light-year of distance.

Combat in the Dark Sea is virtually the same as in a normal ocean. Ships square off against each other on the same plane, regardless of whether there is no up or down in space. No one is sure why this phenomenon occurs, but it seems to be a product of the magic placed within the vessels or the perspective of those building them. Future supplements may introduce a three-dimensional space combat system which can be used in this setting to add more "realism" to combat in the Dark Sea.

Other Essence Items

Makers can not only create ships, but other items powered by Essence. Some of these items are detailed below.

To make an Essence item, the Maker must expend 5 Essence points per pound that the item weighs, to a minimum of 5 Essence. This Essence is used to "attune" the item and prepare the focusing crystals. The item must have a focusing crystal for each ability that it is to possess, which limits the amount of abilities an item can have. Rings and small pieces of jewelry can only really hold one or two crystals, while a sword can hold multiple crystals in pommel and cross-guard and large pieces of furniture can have many.

The Maker must spend an amount of Essence for each ability, depending upon the ability. If a Quality is to be placed into the item, Essence must be spent based upon double the cost of the Quality. A ring that makes a person fearless, for example, would cost an additional 6 Essence Points for the Nerves of Steel Quality. However, these abilities are always active while the owner wears the item.

If it is to be a special magical power, such as an Invocation or Miracle, the ZM needs to find a Miracle or Invocation that is close and use the Essence cost there. If one cannot be found, the ZM should make an Essence cost up based on other Miracles or Invocations that are vaguely similar.

When using Miracles for this purpose, they are not in the strictest sense of the word "Miracles." They are more magical effects and not Miracles. When the Maker creates such items he is using a ritual to create a magical effect that works much like the Miracle, but it does not come from a higher power. Thus, they will work regardless of how they are used, unless the ZM states otherwise due to other supernatural circumstances.

An Essence firearm can be made one of two ways. It can be made to fire a shot of lead, as normal, but using Essence as the propellant, or made to fire pure bolts of Essence. If the weapon fires lead shot, each shot must be loaded in manually, which only takes one Turn. The Essence expenditure for one shot costs 3 Essence. A weapon that fires pure Essence has an Essence cost of 6 Essence per blast and does the same damage as a normal flintlock. However, the Essence Bolt Flintlock does not have the normal minus for the weapon and also can fire multiple times without having to reload. It costs 5 Essence per pound of the weapon, plus any additional Essence if the weapon has its own power source, or for any other powers it may possess. It also costs 3 additional Essence for an Essence Propellant Flintlock or 6 additional for an Essence Bolt Flintlock. A Blunderbuss will still work as a shotgun if it is made as an Essence Bolt Flintlock.

Most Essence items drain the Essence of the user to power them. Essence items can be made to be self-sufficient and self-recharging, but this costs additional Essence, based on how much Essence the crystal holds and how fast the item recharges. One Essence point must be spent in the item's creation for each Essence point the crystal normally holds. If the device recharges one Essence per hour, it costs an additional 10 Essence. If it recharges one point per minute the cost is 15 Essence, and 20 Essence if the device recharges one Essence per Turn.

Some abilities can be made to be "always on." In effect, the power in the item is always functioning and does not require a supply of Essence. Things

such as Blessings can be always on, granting their ability all the time in the form of a permanent bonus to something. A weapon that is permanently blessed, for example, has a bonus to all attack rolls and may even damage or turn away supernatural creatures. Generally, the ZM is the final arbiter as to whether an ability can be made to be always on. This will cost double the normal Essence cost for the power. Thus, a sword that is permanently blessed with a +2 bonus would cost 12 Essence, on top of any other Essence costs to create the item.

A power in an item can be made to function only a certain number of times per day, which lowers the cost of that ability only. If the power functions only three times per day, the cost of the ability is 20% lower. If it functions only twice per day, the cost is 30% lower, while a power that functions only once per day costs 40% less (round up). Thus, an item that calls Holy Fire once per day would cost 12 Essence, instead of 20, on top of any other Essence costs for the item. For obvious reasons, a power cannot be always on and only function a number of times per day. A power that only functions a number of times per day does not require an Essence expenditure from the wielder.

Once the Essence cost for the item has been calculated, the Maker must make a Willpower + Rituals Task roll at -3 (making an Essence item is a Very Difficult procedure). There is a -1 to the roll for each power beyond the first placed within the item, due to the complexity of weaving multiple powers into one item. If the roll is failed, the Maker loses all the Essence for the creation of the item and the ritual fails. If the Maker was using a place of power, half of the Essence must still come from the Maker.

Purchasing an Essence item usually costs 5 to 10 times the cost of a normal item, depending upon the Maker and the circumstances.

Example: A player wants to create a blessed sword that can fire off a bolt of lightning. He wants the weapon to be a broadsword and have a +2 bonus to attack rolls, which would cost 20 Essence for the weight of the item and another 12 for the bonus. Then, he wants the weapon to discharge a bolt of lightning that does D6 x 4(12) damage and run off of

its own power. He wants it to recover 1 Essence point per minute and wants the crystal to hold enough Essence for two charges. Looking in the *WitchCraft Core Book* on p. 213, the ZM sees that it costs 1 Essence per D6 for the *Lightning Bolt*, which would cost 4 Essence for the D6 x 4(12) bolt. The cost of the crystal itself to hold the required Essence would be 8 Essence, plus an additional 15 Essence for the ability to recover 1 Essence per minute.

Calculating the required Essence, the ZM determines that it will cost a Maker 59 Essence to create. The penalty to the creation roll is -1, due to multiple abilities in the one weapon.

Essence Weapons

Essence Bolt Flintlock Pistol

This finely crafted pistol is decorated with gold filigree and holds a red crystal in the bottom of the grip. The crystal holds 24 Essence, enough for 4 Essence Bolts, and recovers 1 Essence Point per minute. The weapon does D8 x 3(12) damage. (Creation Cost 55 Essence)

Sword of Nicholas Lightning Wielder

This broadsword has a bluish sheen and two blue crystals on the cross-guard of the weapon. It is finely crafted and seems to hum faintly when it is removed from its sheath. The weapon has a bonus of +2 on all attack rolls and can fire a bolt of lightning on command. It holds a store of 8 Essence, which returns at 1 Essence per minute. The Lightning damage is D6 x 4(12) and drains 4 Essence from the crystal when used. (Creation Cost 59 Essence)

Essence Gear

Air Mask

This strange apparatus is an invention of the V'Raaxi and fits snugly around the mouth and nose of the wearer. It creates breathable air inside the mask, allowing the wearer to breathe in places where there is no air, or where the air is foul. The

device has one pale blue crystal in the front of it, which holds 40 Essence, enough Essence to power it for about 20 minutes. Luckily, the crystal recovers one Essence point per minute, which extends the amount of time that the item can function without interruption. (Creation Cost 52 Essence)

Figurehead of the Protectorate

This device is used as the figurehead on a ship. It is designed as a lion with a great shield emblazoned on its breast. It has two large crystals for eyes. One crystal creates a mystical barrier around the vessel, while the other protects the vessel from fire. The barrier crystal holds 20 Essence, enough Essence for a barrier of 100 DC. It recovers 1 Essence per minute. The other crystal dampens any fire that hits the ship, dropping the multiplier of the fire damage by 3. This power is always active. (Creation Cost 295 Essence)

Alien Qualities

V'raax

(Cost +5)

The V'raaxi are a saurian-like race of humanoids from the planet V'raax. The males are around 6 feet tall and the females are around 5 feet 7 inches. Their scaled bodies are anywhere from blue to green in color and their eyes are yellow with black slits for pupils. They are predominantly meat eaters but have left their barbaric ways of eating uncooked food long ago. They do not eat what they would term intellectuals and will communicate with those they encounter. The V'raaxi have lithe and toned bodies and their scaly skin affords them some protection from damage.

The V'raaxi have the following:

+1 Strength and Dexterity

Natural Armor Value D8 + 8(12)

Night Vision (+3 bonus to vision, only at night)

Stubborn (once they have set their mind to doing something, it is difficult to dissuade them from their task)

Navigator Survivor

Str 4 **Dex** 3 **Con** 4
Int 3 **Per** 3 **Wil** 3
Lps 42
EPS 38
Spd 14
Essence 20

Qualities/Drawbacks

Artistic Talent (+3)
Delusions (Grandeur) (-1)
Fast Reaction Time (+2)
Hand/Hook (-1)
Hard to Kill (+2)
Honorable (-1)
Humorless (-1)
Physical Disability (Missing Resistance (Vacuum) (+2)

Skills

Brawling 2
Climbing 2
Craft (Cartography) 4
Dodge 4
Guns (Pistol) 2
Hand Weapon (Knife) 2
Hand Weapon (Sword) 2
Language (V'Raaxi) 2
Navigation 4
Notice 3
Play Instrument (tin whistle) 3
Seamanship 3
Stealth 2

Gear

Essence Bolt Flintlock Pistol (see Essence Weapons earlier), cutlass, case with cartographer's tools, ink and paper, tin whistle, hook (attached to stump)

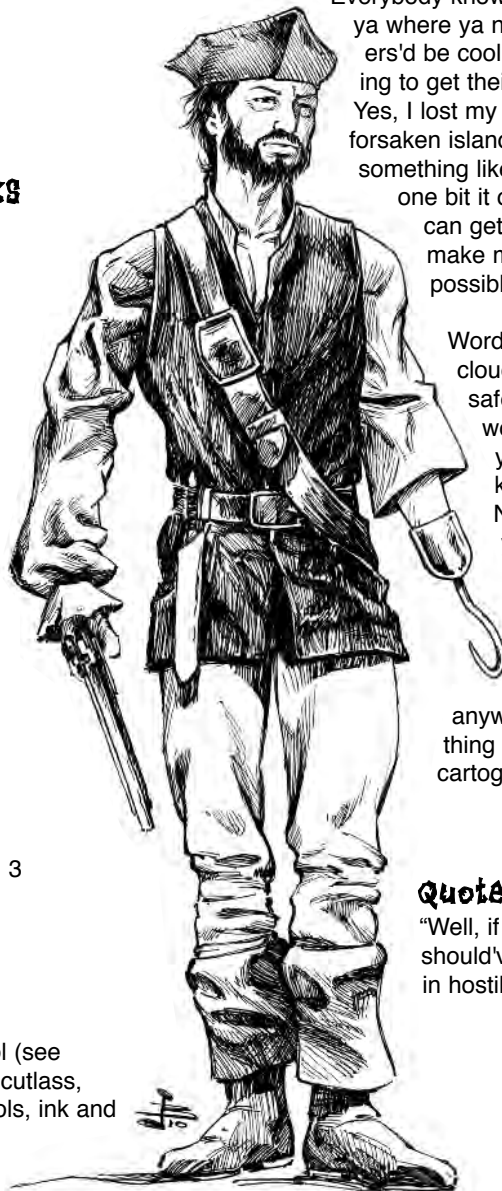
Personality

Everybody knows that it's us navigators that get ya where ya need to go. Without us the explorers'd be coolin' their heels somewhere still trying to get their ships to the next set of islands. Yes, I lost my hand a while back on some God-forsaken island when a big thing that looked something like a rat and a dog all rolled into one bit it off. I had a hook attached until I can get up the money to have someone make me a magic hand. Heck, I know it's possible. Seen one on an island once.

Word of warnin', don't go near red clouds in the Dark Sea. They ain't safe and if any of your men are wounded when you go in there you'll wish you hadn't gone. I don't know what's worse, having a Necronian ship bearin' down on you or your own crewmen dying and coming back as some undead thing. And you best have a good cartographer with you when you go out. Maps of the Dark Sea, accurate ones anyway, are like gold out here. Good thing I'm both a great navigator *and* cartographer.

Quote

"Well, if you'd followed my map like you should've, we wouldn't be off course and in hostile territory. If I wasn't here..."



V'raaxi Explorer

Survivor

Str 3 **Dex** 3 **Con** 2

Int 1 **Per** 3 **Wil** 2

Lps 30

EPS 26

Spd 10

Essence 14

Qualities/Drawbacks

Charisma (+1)

Fast Reaction Time (+2)

Honorable (-2)

Increased Essence Pool (+2)

Situational Awareness (+2)

Status (+5)

V'raaxi (Natural Armor (D8 + 8(12)),

Night Vision (+3 to vision at night),

Stubborn (+5)

Skills

Acrobatics 3

Brawling 3

Climbing 2

Guns (Pistol) 3

Guns (Gunnery) 2

Haggling 2

Hand Weapon (Spear) 2

Hand Weapon (Sword) 4

Language (English) 2

Notice 3

Seamanship 3

Stealth 3

Gear

Air mask, Essence Bolt Flintlock Pistol,

saber, spear, serviceable Essence

Schooner

Personality

Thessse Necronianss that they callss themselfess have been a pain for sssome timesss. Oness cannot explore the dark sssea if oness is constantly attacked by an enemy that can't diesss. When an ally fell right from our sskyss we were ecssstic. The Donner toldss usss of hiss race, Hu'manss, and that we could ssend an emissssary to their world if he could be taken backsss to hiss home. We ssaw thissss ass an opportunity to join with another peoplesss against the Necroniansssss and explore the dark sssea to find othersss like usss who were under the heel of the Necroniansss.

The Hu'mansss were quick to takes up the sstick of chal-lenge and joined into an alliance with the V'raaxi. They built many sshipsss quickly to explore the dark sssea. They are indeed a sstubborn and prideful race, but then again, sssso are we. They have learned much from usss just as we have learned from themss.

Quote

"Necroniansss! Hard to port, mensss! We mustss outrunsss them or fightss!"





CHAPTER EIGHT

The farmer stood up from where he had fallen. He couldn't believe the carnage on the battlefield that was no more than ten miles away from his land. When he had joined the rebellion he had no idea that it would be like this. The battle had been terrible. He looked down upon the fallen in the fields around Quang Nam and wondered if they had won or lost.

He looked down at himself, noting how blood-soaked his clothes were and the large ragged slice in his shirt across his stomach. Memories came flooding back to him in an instant and he dropped to his knees. For the first time since the battle had started, he could not feel the hammering of his heart in his chest. As he placed his hand in his shirt to feel for that telltale sign of life that he knew was no longer there, he heard his leader, Nguyen Hue, speak.

“Welcome back to the land of the living. We won.”

Pieces of Eight

Tay Son Rebellion

The information in Chapter Two under Asian Piracy (p. 24) gives a bit of general history on the Tay Son Rebellion. In this Deadworld, players can play Asian or even European pirates caught up in the struggle or Asian naval officers during the Rebellion. On p. 155 is a Rebellion timeline for those who wish to add the historical battles into the setting or wish to know what was going on in the rest of the world at that time.

For even more Asian-martial-arts-zombie-slash-buckling action, ZMs can add the rules for martial arts and zombies from the *AFMBE* supplement *Enter the Zombie*.

18th Century Vietnam

Since the 17th century, Vietnam had been split by the ruling classes of Trinh to the north and Nguyen to the south. Fifty years of civil war between the two had damaged the economy of both lands until a truce between the two brought an end to the wars for close to 100 years. However, this did nothing to heal the lands, and the peasant class of Vietnam became impoverished and oppressed further by the ruling class.

Fed up with the way things were in their country, three brothers started a revolt in the south, supported by the peasant and merchant classes. They recruited from pirates, peasants, merchants, and military deserters and formed a huge rebellion, which quickly seized the Quang Nam and Binh Dinh provinces in the south. They then moved to Qui Non, which became the Tay Son capital. The Tay Son had effective control over southern Vietnam by 1778 and all the ruling class, also named Nguyen, were slain except sixteen-year-old Nguyen Anh, who escaped to the Mekong Delta.

Nguyen Anh gathered supporters and retook Gia Dinh, which would be named Saigon much later, and the city changed hands several times until the Tay Son crushed Nguyen Anh's fleet in 1783. Not dissuaded by this defeat, Anh met up with a French missionary named Bishop Pigneau de Behaine and asked for his help in gaining French support to crush the rebellion.

Though Behaine found no support from the crown, he raised the funds on his own for two ships that he crewed with French Navy deserters and returned to Vietnam in 1789.

Meanwhile, the Tay Son had toppled the Northern Trinh Dynasty in 1786 and united north with south, though this was only temporary. The three brothers set themselves up as rulers of the north, central, and southern regions of the country and restored the Le Dynasty, at least for ceremonial purposes.

The remaining Le emperor, not willing to sit still and be a figurehead, fled north to seek Chinese assistance in defeating the Tay Son. The Qing dynasty of China sent an army to retake the Le dynasty city of Thang Long and restore the Le Emperor to the throne. That same year, the second eldest brother, Nguyen Hue proclaimed himself Emperor Quang Trung. He marched north with 100,000 men and 100 elephants and attacked at night, routing the Chinese army, which consisted of 200,000 men. Quang Trung then reestablished friendly relations with China, requesting recognition of his rule.

By the time Quang Trung died in 1792 with no successor to the throne, Nguyen Anh and his French support had taken much of southern Vietnam back from the youngest and least capable of the brothers, Nguyen Lu. Anh continued to receive ships and support from Behaine and solidified his hold on Vietnam. His cause was also greatly aided by divisions within the Tay Son leadership following the death of Quang Trung, as there was no longer a strong leader in the group. Anh finally took Phu Xuan in 1801 and finally finished off the Tay Son rebellion in 1802.

We Three Brothers

The three brothers, Nguyen Nhac, Nguyen Lu and Nguyen Hue, were much like Robin Hoods of Asia. They had the motto, "Seize the property of the rich and give it to the poor." In villages that the Tay Son controlled, oppressive landlords and officials were punished, taxes were abolished and the tax and land registers were burned to the ground, prisoners were freed from local jails, and food was

distributed from the storehouses to the hungry. The Tay Son were very popular with the peasant and merchant populace and many of their recruits were from those castes.

The Deadworld

Nguyen Hue, later to be known as Quang Trung, was not only a masterful military leader and martial artist, but also learned of a secret magic that could restore his dead soldiers. This he used to great effect, raising his fallen to continue the battle and elevating the Tay Son to their lofty heights. However, upon his death, the power died with him and his forces crumbled to dust.

Hue had seen a captured black man raise a corpse from the dead with the power of his “Iwa” Gods. Seeing a definite military benefit to this, he began to delve into the dark arts of China. He learned that he could call upon the Yama Kings of China to achieve this goal. He called upon the Yama Kings and Chin Kuang Wang, ruler of the living dead, answered. Hue was granted the power he requested and thus began his descent into the dark paths of the Yama Kings.

By the time he crushed the Chinese army at Thang Long over half of his army were undead. The undead kept their memories and abilities and some gained other more supernatural abilities as well, but they were in fact dead. No hearts beat in their chests and no blood flowed in their veins. This did not matter to most of them since they were continuing to liberate their country from oppression.

Nguyen Anh, seeing this power at work in 1783, acquired priests of his own and brought his own undead army into play. As his own men fell, or those of the French, he raised them to continue the battle. Now each side had an undead army.

Once the battles were won and Anh took the final city in 1802, he had the priests that he had used executed to destroy the undead army, lest someone attempt to use it against him later by subverting the priests and having them turn on him.

Complications

When dealing with the Yama Kings one must always remember not to give them the upper hand. While the battles rage, Chin Kuang Wang is gathering his own recruits and sending them off to foment chaos on both sides of the war. The Yama Kings now hold a presence on both land and sea, covertly striking out at the living world in an attempt to weaken it and gain a foothold. There's no telling what is in store for the future if the Yama Kings get their way, now that their power has been unleashed upon the world.

Recently, Hue has begun acting strangely; dark, sinister, much crueler now than when the rebellion began. The corruption of the power is allowing Chin Kuang Wang to temporarily enter and control Hue. Even his brothers are beginning to wonder what could be wrong, but as long as the rebellion is pressing forward, no one is looking too closely. Meanwhile, Chin Kuang Wang plots and waits for the day when he can manifest physically upon the Earth.

Story Ideas

The following sections present brief ideas for adventure in this setting. Much like the *Mein Zombie Deadworld* in the *AFMBE* core book p.188, the land is in the middle of a war. The Cast can be on either side, or simply caught up in the middle of the struggle.

Story Idea 1

One of Anh's priests is being sent overseas to meet with one of Anh's secondary forces. The death of one of the priests would be a painful blow to Anh's forces. Recently, a spy for Hue has learned of the priest's trip and Hue has sent loyal members of the rebellion in a covert attempt to take out the priest.

If the Cast are loyalists to the rebellion they are the ones sent on this covert operation. If they are from Anh's forces they will be those detached as the priest's bodyguards. Either way, the Cast is in for plenty of adventure and combat as those of the opposing side try to make sure their plans fail.

The ZM can add plenty of adventure both on sea and land as the secondary force lies somewhere inland.

Story Idea 2

The Cast come across an enemy vessel running fast and a sea battle ensues. As the battle goes on, several mysterious junks materialize seemingly out of nowhere and attack both sides. The ships run aground in an inlet of an island after being hammered mercilessly. The inlet is defensible, but both ships are damaged too much to make any kind of escape. Repairs will have to be made and it will take a concerted effort from both sides to put one whole ship together from the two damaged ones. The enemies will have to set aside their differences and work together to survive.

Aboard one of the vessels is an item that the Yama King Chin Kuang Wang wants. The item is a Tibetan Singing Bowl, which supposedly has the power to cause the owner's enemies to temporarily halt what they are doing. It also has the power to allow the one who carries it to manifest whenever he wishes on another plane of existence. With it he hopes to gain a better foothold in the mortal world and crush all who oppose his forces. It was mere chance that the ship was in the middle of a battle when he sent his minions to attack it. The added wrinkle of the other crew has caused a problem for him. If they band together to try to escape, he may very well lose the item. If they find out what it is he is after, they may use it against him to escape the island, provided they can learn how it works.

He will send his minions overland to assail the survivors while keeping a blockade in place around the mouth of the inlet. The survivors will have to work together to set up defenses and get the ship ready. Somewhere along the way, they may even find out what it is that these mysterious undead minions want and how to use it to escape the island.

The Cast can be on either side of the war in this scenario. The ZM may even have Cast Members on both sides to create plenty of intrigue and inter-party conflict. The Chinese and Vietnamese Cast

Members would have to put aside their differences and try to get the Supporting Cast on both sides to cooperate if they want to escape the island.

Timeline

1771 The Nguyen brothers hide out in the hills and begin gathering recruits from the peasants, merchants, and deserters in the region.

1773 The Rebellion takes Qui Non. Nguyen Nhac pretends to be a captive in a cage and frees himself at night to open the gates for the rebellion forces. Tay Son forces also take Quang Nam and Quang Ngai.

1774 Nov. Trinh troops led by Hoang Ngu Phuc reach Thanh Hoa. The Trinh army crosses the Gianh River, the border between the Trinh and Nguyen territories.

1775 Trinh forces take Quang Nam after defeating the Tay Son troops. Summer - Nhac makes an alliance with Trinh. Winter - Hoang Ngu Phuc's army withdraws from Quang Nam to Phu Xuan.

1776 North - February/March. Disease-ridden Trinh forces retreat from Phu Xuan to Thuan Hoa. Hoang Ngu Phuc dies in bed at age 64 and is replaced by Bui The Dat. Eighth month - Bui The Dat is recalled and Pham Ngo Cau is named the new governor of Thuan Hoa. South - Early in the year, Tay Son attack north toward Phu Xuan and force Due Tong to flee to Cochinchina. Nguyen Lu takes Gia Dinh through a naval attack. The Nguyens retake Gia Dinh and Lu is forced to return to Qui Nhon. Nhac builds a walled capital at the site of the ancient Cham capital at Do Ban. Nguyen partisans, led by Do Thanh Nhan, create the Dong Son army.

1777 Early in the year, Trinh acquiesce to Nhac's demands, and appoints him governor of Quang Nam. Third month - Nhac sends Lu and Hue to retake Gia Dinh and they do. Nguyen Anh formally takes over as head of Nguyen forces. Lu and Hue return to Quang Nam, leaving their officers in charge in Gia Dinh.

1778 Nguyen general Do Thanh Nhan recaptures Gia Dinh. Nhac proclaims himself Emperor, inaugurating the Thai Duc reign era. Nhac sends an

army to attack southward, the Nguyen troops win many battles and threaten even Quang Nam.

1779 Spring - The Tay Son recapture Can Gio. The Nguyen troops are forced out of Gia Dinh again. The Nguyen forces retreat to Tam Phu, assemble a 5,000-man army and counter-attack. The Dong Son army attacks at night and is victorious in its surprise attack. The Dong Son go on to retake Gia Dinh, then find Nguyen Anh and bring him back to the city.

1780 Nguyen Anh proclaims himself king. Anh, fearing Do Than Nhan's ability and military power, has him killed and then woos the Dong Son army to his cause.

1782 Nhac and Hue attack Can Gio and then drive Nguyen Anh out of Gia Dinh, where they burn and pillage the businesses of ethnic Chinese and kill more than 10,000 Chinese. Nguyen Anh is driven out of Gia Dinh and seeks refuge on the island of Phu Quoc. Nhac and Hue return to Qui Nhon. Nguyen forces led by Chu Van Tiep recapture Gia Dinh, and Nguyen Anh returns. In the north, Trinh Sam dies, and his appointed successor, Trinh Can, is overthrown by an elder brother, Trinh Tong. The ensuing political chaos forces many supporters of Can to flee the capitol. Among these refugees is Nguyen Huu Chinh, whose political patrons had been allied with the Can faction. Chinh takes his family south and joins the Tay Son, becoming a trusted military advisor.

1783 Lu and Hue attack again, driving Nguyen Anh back to Phu Quoc; a pursuing Tay Son fleet is destroyed in a storm, but Nguyen Anh manages to flee to Siam.

1785 Tay Son fleet destroys a joint Nguyen-Siamese force at the huge battle of Rach Gam-Xoi Mut in the Mekong delta region; this sets back Nguyen efforts to retake southern Vietnam by several years, and the Tay Son turn their attention to the north. The Nguyen ruler returns to Bangkok to rally his supporters.

1786 Based on the advice of Nguyen Huu Chinh, the Tay Son set about to conquer some of the territory seized in 1774 by the Trinh. Nguyen Nhac

authorizes an army led by Hue, Chinh and Lu to advance to seize Thuan Hoa, the former Nguyen territory from the Hai Van pass to the Gianh River. Buoyed by their success, Chinh advises Hue to continue his campaign and use his momentum to advance to Thang Long. Disobeying Nhac's instructions they do this and enter Thang Long in early July. There Hue announces that the Le are now free of Trinh domination, and he is rewarded with high titles and the hand in marriage of one of the Emperor's daughters, Ngoc Han. Once the Tay Son leave, the Trinh quickly come back to Thang Long and attempt to reassert their traditional political authority. Nguyen Huu Chinh, now based in Nghe An, heads north at the behest of the Le Emperor in an effort to put down the Trinh.

1787 Divisions appear to emerge between the Tay Son brothers. The reasons are not completely clear, but may involve several issues: Nhac's taking a disproportionate share of the booty from the north, his sleeping with Hue's wife, and more generally Nhac's reluctance to allow Hue a greater degree of power.

Hue and Nhac fight for approximately three months in the later winter and spring of 1787. Hue eventually besieges his elder brother at Qui Nhon. The siege is finally lifted when Nhac appeals to fraternal harmony. In the aftermath of this fight, Nhac cedes some of his territory south of the Hai Van pass.

In the summer of 1787 there is growing concern by Hue about Nguyen Huu Chinh's own political ambitions in the north.

1788 November, Nguyen Hue declares himself Emperor Quang Trung in Phu Xuan and heads north again.

1789 Chinese invasion force of 200,000 troops marches unopposed into Hanoi, as the Tay Son have engaged in a strategic retreat; during the lunar New Year celebration, the Tay Son forces fall on the Chinese, totally destroying them and taking the capital on the 6th day of the lunar New Year.

1792 Quang Trung enters into correspondence with the Portuguese in Macao, hoping to encourage

their traders to visit his ports instead of the Nguyen ports in the far south. Quang Trung announces plans to launch a massive and definitive attack on the Nguyen; he issues an edict to the peoples of Quang Ngai and Qui Nhon informing them of the impending attack and encouraging their participation. Quang Trung plans to open the Sung Chinh Library of Nom texts; he is suddenly taken ill and dies in September.

1793 The “monsoon wars” begin, in which Nguyen Anh uses the prevailing monsoon winds to launch repeated, and repeatedly unsuccessful, attacks on the Tay Son stronghold at Qui Nhon. Nguyen Anh's forces attack Qui Nhon and set ablaze Nguyen Nhac's entire navy; Nhac appeals to his young nephew in Phu Xuan for assistance, which is granted, and the troops coming from the north drive off the Nguyen.

1794 There is a shakeup in the Tay Son government, as an effort is made to oust the regent, Bui Dac Tuyen. The coup is successful in ousting Tuyen, who was seen as a danger to the stability of the regime. The coup however did little to stem the slow decline of the Tay Son polity, and this period was the melting away of some key Tay Son supporters, including Nguyen Thiep.

1799 The Nguyen are finally successful in seizing Qui Nhon and forcing the Tay Son troops to retreat north toward Phu Xuan; the Tay Son soon counter-attack, and the Nguyen are besieged in the citadel.

1800 The Nguyen decide to surrender Qui Nhon, and to concentrate their efforts on the by now relatively lightly guarded Tay Son capital at Phu Xuan. This falls to the Nguyen, dividing the Tay Son armies.

1801 Nguyen Anh initiates his final campaign against the Tay Son; the Tay Son are forced to flee northward in an attempt to hold out in Hanoi

1802 Nguyen Anh finally captures Thang Long in June; he then orders the public flogging of some key Tay Son supporters, including Ngo Thi Nham. Nham is beaten at the Temple of Literature in Hanoi and dies shortly thereafter of his wounds.

Weapons

Bi Shou (Dagger/Knife): Treat as either Large or Small Knife (*AFMBE* p. 132).

Chiang (Spear): The spear was typically around 8 or 9 feet (meters) long with an 8 inch, double-edged blade. The weapon usually had a tassel of dyed horsehair around the base of the blade. The weapon does damage as a Spear (*AFMBE* p. 132).

Chiang Zhu (Bamboo Spear): This is nothing more than an 8 or 9 foot (meters) bamboo shaft that has been cut at an angle on one end. The weapon is not very sturdy and usually did not last long, but was the only spear-like weapons available to many peasants.

Damage D6(3) x (Strength -1) and can be used two-handed, which adds -1 to the effective Strength of the wielder. Wt 1/1, Avail C.

Dao (Sword): A slightly curved sword approximately 19-24 inches in length. It is a single-edged weapon with a point. Use the same stats as for Short Sword (*AFMBE* p. 132).

Shi-Zi Jen (Sword): named the “Lion-Head” or sometimes “Tai-Chi” sword, this weapon would sometimes sport a brightly colored cord or tassel on the pommel. The blade is straight and sharp on both sides. The weapon is a total of 3 feet (meters) long. Use the same stats as for a Katana (*AFMBE* p. 132).

Zombies of the Tay-Son Era

These zombies are on both sides of the war. When someone is brought back as a zombie, use the Basic Zombie Template and overlay the character's abilities. Total his Skills, Qualities, and Attributes, minus Drawbacks, and subtract his from 90 along with the 5 for the Basic Zombie Template. The remainder is what can be used to purchase Aspects, including Long-Term Memory and Problem Solving. Norms always seem to come back a little more buff than when they checked out. It must be all that karmic balance.

The Tay-Son era zombies all come back a little different, so Aspects and such can be changed depending upon what the ZM needs at the time. The zombie

Zombie of the Tay-Son Era

Strength 3 **Constitution** 3
Dexterity 4 **Intelligence** 2
Perception 2 **Willpower** 2
DPs: 34 **Speed** 14
Essence 16
Skills: Hand Weapon (any one) 2, Martial Arts 1
Weak Spot: All (0)
Getting Around: As In Life (+4), Life-Like (+3)
Strength: Dead Joe Average (0), Powerhouse (+2)
Constitution: Fresh One (0), Hardy Specimen (+2)
Willpower: The Every-Zombie (0)
Senses: Like the Living (+1)
Sustenance: Who Needs Food? (+8)
Intelligence: Language (+1), Long Term Memory (+5), Problem Solving (+15)
Spreading The Love: Nobody Loves Me (-5)
Power: 41

above is the base zombie with no extras. ZMs can add additional Aspects, Qualities, Drawbacks and Skills onto this base to obtain the desired effect. Skills are added on a one-for-one basis.

Those who possess the *Enter the Zombie* supplement may add those Aspects as well and use the Martial Arts rules within, adding Martial Arts Moves to the zombies.

Yama King Zombies

The zombies of the Yama King are much more standardized in their creation. Chin Kuang Wang only creates more individualized zombies from those he finds worthy of being one of his champions. The zombies below are more primal and can only follow the direction of Chin Kuang Wang or his champions. These zombies also spread the Yama King's taint to others they kill, constantly adding to Chin Kuang Wang's army. Not even the Tay-Son zombies are immune to this taint and will arise to join the armies of the Yama King.

Chin Kuang Wang

The physical manifestation of Chin Kuang Wang is a terror to behold. He is a huge blackened skeleton dressed in opulent robes and a headdress or crown. He always appears with several of his champions, who will do whatever he says without question. The Yama King is a powerful creature and should be used with caution by the ZM, lest his Cast Members find themselves languishing in one of the many Chinese Hells while their bodies join Chin Kuang Wang's army.

At the beginning of the Rise Chin Kuang Wang will not be able to manifest physically on the Earth. As time goes by, the Yama King will gain in strength and power so that he can manifest for short periods. In the latter stages of the war, Chin Kuang

Yama King Zombies

Strength 2 **Constitution** 2
Dexterity 3 **Intelligence** 1
Perception 2 **Willpower** 1
DPs: 25 **Speed** 10
Essence 11
Skills: Martial Arts 1, Hand Weapon (any one) 2
Attacks: Punch D4(2) x 2, Kick D4(2) x 3, or by weapon
Qualities: Increased Dead Points (+1)
Weak Spot: Brain (+6)
Getting Around: As In Life (+2), Life-Like (+3)
Strength: Dead Joe Average (0)
Constitution: Fresh One (0)
Willpower: Mindless Pawn (-2)
Senses: Like the Living (+1)
Sustenance: All Flesh Must Be Eaten (0), Occasionally (+2)
Intelligence: Tool Use 1 (+3)
Spreading The Love: Only the Dead (-2)
Special: Regeneration (2 DP/minute) (+4)
Power: 27

Chin Kuang Wang

Strength 8 **Constitution** 5
Dexterity 5 **Intelligence** 4
Perception 7 **Willpower** 7
DPs: 110/210 (See *AFMBE* p.147, Other Damage)
Speed 20 **Essence** 87

Miracles: Touch of Corruption (5), Unholy Fire* (5)

Skills: Hand Weapon (Staff) 4, Martial Arts 4, Notice 4

Attacks: Claws D6(3) x 8, Punch D4(2) x 8, Kick D4(2) x 9, Staff (swing D8(4) x 9, punch D6(3) x 8)

Weak Spot: None (+10)

Getting Around: The Quick Dead (+10), Increased Attribute (+4)

Strength: Claws (+8), Damage Resistant (+5), Increased Attribute (+2), Iron Grip (+1), Monstrous Strength (+10)

Constitution: USDA Prime (+10)

Willpower: Will of Iron (+8)

Senses: Life Sense (+14), Like Nothing You've Ever Seen (+10)

Sustenance: Who Needs Food? (+8), Soul Sucker (+5)

Intelligence: Increased Attribute (+4), Language (+1), Long-Term Memory (+5), Problem Solving (+15)

Spreading The Love: Only the Dead (-2)

Special: Billy Bones (+15), Displacement (+4), Fog (+10), Increased Essence Pool (+10), Regeneration (4DPs/Turn) (+20)

Power: 218

***Unholy Fire:** This Miracle is a corrupt version of the Holy Fire Miracle on p. 65 of the *AFMBE* Main Book. A crack appears in the ground at the feet of the victim and black fire from Chin Kuang Wang's domain engulfs the target, causing the same damage as the Holy Fire Miracle. The victim may be able to leap out of the way of the Hell furnace, but at -4 to the Dexterity + Dodge Task roll, due to the suddenness of the attack. Those with Situational Awareness (*AFMBE* p. 46) are only at -2 if they make a successful Perception + Notice Task roll; those with Danger Sense (*Pulp Zombies* p. 42) may add their levels of Danger Sense to the Dodge roll as a bonus if a successful Perception + Notice Task roll is made.



Bad Guys and Miracles

Beings of vilest evil, Dark Gods, and Devils can also have access to Miracles, if the ZM desires. Chin Kuang Wang has access to two Miracles, one of which is a modification of the Holy Fire Miracle in AFMBE p. 65. When these creatures use Miracles, the Miracles tend to affect anyone the wielder desires, not just supernatural foes. Of course, if the wielder in question is a mortal, he still may not get the Miracle granted by his Evil Overlord. In the case of Chin Kuang Wang, the wielder is a God and a God can do pretty much whatever it wants.

Wang can manifest for much longer, joining in some of the more decisive battles he is planning. The ZM should decide just how long he can manifest on a case-by-case basis.

ZM Warning: This creature is a god and therefore is very tough. Caution should be used when using this creature to assault the Cast as gods tend to do things such as smite armies and turn Cast Members into paste. The Cast should be much more powerful themselves and possibly have a couple legendary weapons or ancient Chinese secrets by the time they meet with Chin Kuang Wang face to face, and then only with a slew of Supporting Cast to take some of the damage.

Nguyen Hue

“Nguyen Hue had curly hair, thick skin, shining eyes and a bell-sounding voice who was very swift, strong and brave.”

Quang Trung, a National Hero by Hoa Bang

“At night, the light from his eyes lights the mattress when he sits there without candle.”

A Brief Story of Tay Son

Nguyen Hue has begun to change since he gained the power to raise the dead. He seems to be slipping into madness and no one knows why. The truth of the matter is much darker, for Chin Kuang Wang has found a way to temporarily use Hue as a vessel and the Yama King occasionally possesses him to further his own goals. Hue is at war in his own head and it's only a matter of time before something in his mind snaps and he descends down the road of madness.

Nguyen Hue

Strength 4
Dexterity 5
Perception 3
LPs: 50
Speed 14

Constitution 4
Intelligence 4
Willpower 3
EPs: 37
Essence 20

Qualities/Drawbacks: Charisma (4), Fast Reaction Time (2), Hard to Kill (4), Honorable (-1), Nerves of Steel (3), Status (6), Zealot (-3)

Skills: Bureaucracy 2, Climbing 2, Dodge 3, Guns (Pistol) 2, Hand Weapon (Sword) 4, Hand Weapon (Spear) 3, Language (Chinese) 4, Martial Arts 4, Myth & Legend (Chinese) 4, Myth & Legend (Vietnamese) 4, Notice 3, * Persuade 4 (See *One of the Living* p.14), Research/Investigation 3, Riding (Horse) 3, Running (Marathon) 2, Sciences (Military Strategy) 4, Stealth 4, Survival 3, Writing 2

When Nguyen Hue is possessed his demeanor changes. He becomes much darker and more sinister and haughty. He gains +3 to his Strength, Dexterity, and Constitution and gains Damage Resistant and Regeneration (3 LP/Turn) (*AFMBE* pp. 151 & 159, respectively), but gains 2 levels of the Cruel Drawback.

*Persuade is used to influence large groups of people through speeches and the like and can be found in *One of the Living* p. 14.



Tay Son Rebel

Survivor

Personality

You! Wake up! Do you want the soldiers to sneak up on you and slit your throat while you sleep? I heard the call of the Nguyen brothers several years ago and joined gladly. To see how the people have become downtrodden disgusts me. I have killed a number of Anh's men, both the living ones and the undead, Chinese, and the foreign dogs that have come to help Anh. I took this weapon from one of those foreigners and learned to use it. I hope to make more to help in our cause. One day our dream will come to pass if we are all vigilant and steadfast.

Try to learn to sleep with one eye open from now on or you will die a swift death at the hands of Anh's men or the Republic. You would do well to remember that. For if you fail in your duty and do not die, I will kill you myself.

Quote

"Death to the oppressors!"



Str 3 **Dex** 4 **Con** 3

Int 3 **Per** 3 **Will** 4

Lps 43

EPS 35

Spd 14

Essence 20

Qualities/Drawbacks

Hard to Kill (3)

Light Sleeper (2)

Natural Toughness (2)

Reckless (-2)

Resources (-4)

Situational Awareness (2)

Zealot (-3)

Skills

Climbing 2

Craft (Weaponsmith) 4

Dodge 3

Guns (Handgun) 2

Haggling 3

Hand Weapon (Club) 3

Hand Weapon (Spear) 3

Language (Chinese) 4

Martial Arts 3

Myth & Legend (Asian) 3

Notice 3

Running (Dash) 2

Stealth 3

Seamanship 3

Gear

Chiang, flintlock pistol, lantern, powder horn, 12 shot

All Flesh Must Be Eaten™

Peasant Farmer

Norm

Str 2 **Dex** 3 **Con** 3
Int 2 **Per** 2 **Wil** 2
LPS 36
EPS 26
Spd 12
Essence 14

Qualities/Drawbacks

Acute Senses (Hearing) (2)
Good Luck (4)
Hard to Kill (2)
Internal Compass (1)
Resources (Miserable) (-4)

Skills

Craft (Farming) 4
Dodge 3
Hand Weapon (Club) 3
Hand Weapon (Spear) 2
Martial Arts 2
Myth & Legend (Asian) 3
Notice 2
Riding (Cart) 2
Stealth 2
Survival (Jungle) 2
Unconventional Medicine (Herbalism) 3

Gear

Chiang Zhu, peasant clothes, pouches of medicinal herbs, cutlass, case with cartographers tools, ink and paper, tin whistle

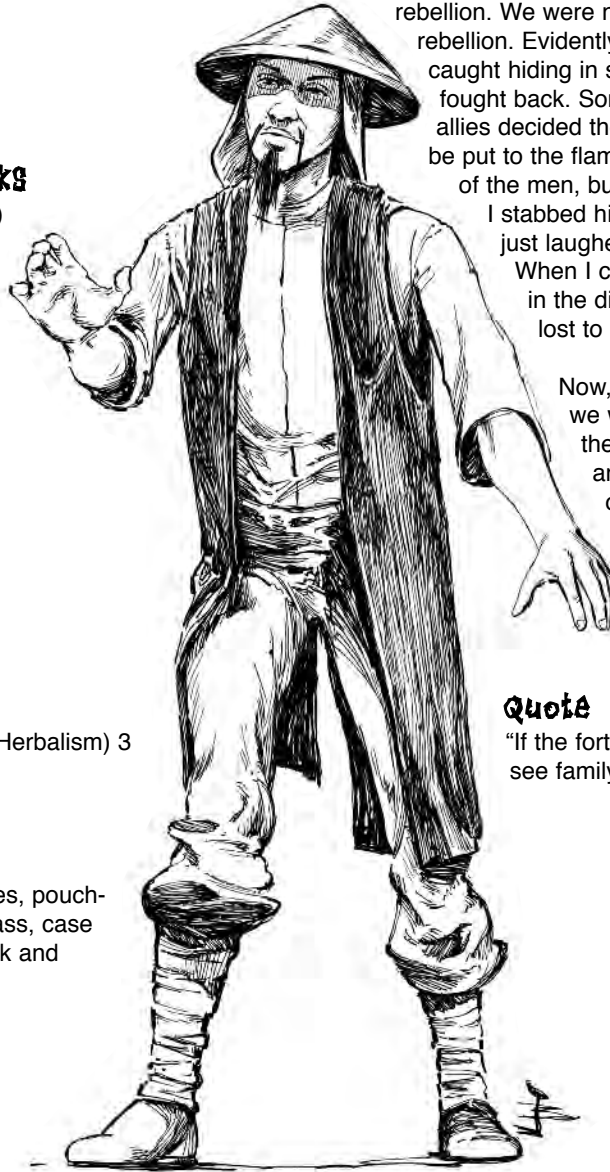
Personality

My wife and sons were killed when Anh's forces came in and burned our village for aiding the rebellion. We were not even part of the rebellion. Evidently two rebels were caught hiding in someone's stable and fought back. Some of Anh's overzealous allies decided the entire village was to be put to the flame. I fought against one of the men, but he would not go down. I stabbed him many times, but he just laughed and hit me hard. When I came to I was face down in the dirt. My home, my family lost to me.

Now, Nguyen Hue says that we will get revenge upon them all. That we will win and push them all out of our land. He also says that death will not stop us. I pray he is right.

Quote

"If the fortunes be with me I will see family avenged."



Undead Mercenary

Zombie

Str 4 **Dex** 4 **Con** 4

Int 2 **Per** 3 **Wil** 3

DPS 42

Spd 16

Essence 20

Weak Spot: All (0)

Getting Around: Slow And Steady (0)

Strength: Claws (+8), Dead Joe Average (0)

Senses: Like The Dead (0), Infravision (+6)

Sustenance: Who Needs Food? (+8)

Intelligence: Language (+1), Long Term

Memory (+5), Problem Solving (+15)

Spreading The Love: Nobody Loves Me (-5)

Special: Graft (+5)

Power: 90

Qualities/Drawbacks

Adversary (-2)

Attractiveness (-2)

Berzerker (5)

Cruel (-1)

Covetous (Greed) (-2)

Hard to Kill (3)

Secret (Plays Both Sides When Necessary) (-3)

Skills

Acting

Brawling 2

Climbing 2

Disguise 2

Haggling 1

Hand Weapon (Sword) 3

Hand Weapon (Staff) 1

Language (Vietnamese) 2

Lock Picking (Mechanical) 3

Martial Arts 2

Notice 2

Research/Investigation 2

Sleight of Hand 2

Smooth Talking 3

Stealth 3

Streetwise 2

Surveillance 2

Gear

Dao, disguise kit, lock picks, backpack/rucksack, giau chiz (Staff)

Personality

We all come back different. Me, I'm a grafter. Unlike those other mysterious zombies from neither side of this war, I don't need to consume the flesh to stay alive. Nor do I need this Dao to kill you. I merely need my hands. When I

joined this war I was in Anh's regiments. They praised me when I was alive for I had the spirit of the Dragon within me when I fought, though they paid me very little for my efforts. Then I died under a mass of rebels. They were

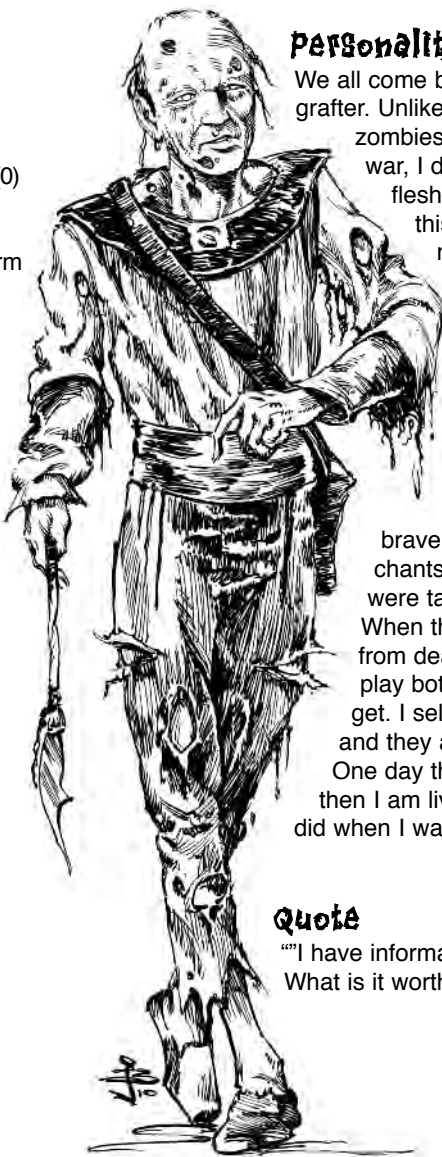
brave souls for farmers and merchants. And they had a cause and were taking what they wanted.

When the priests brought me back from death I decided it was better to play both sides for whatever I could get. I sell information to both sides and they all praise me for my efforts.

One day they may catch me, but till then I am living much better than I ever did when I was alive.

Quote

"I have information that may be of use. What is it worth to you?"



The Aztec Lord's Curse!

Where am I? He thought. He couldn't remember much after the foray into the jungles of Mexico. Wherever he was it was terribly dark. He tried to clear his thoughts and focus on what had happened after they had entered the wilderness.

He could remember a fight. It had been dark and the camp was ambushed by what looked like natives in the gloom. Before they knew it, half of the group was on the ground and the other half was completely surrounded. He vaguely remembered the faces of the natives closest to him in the gloom and he felt a new wash of fear. They had looked shriveled, like corpses that had lain in a hot and dry place for a long while. He remembered crying out before darkness descended upon him.

When he awoke, he could see forms standing over him. He had been lying on some stone slab at the top of some strange triangular building. He was tied down and he remembered straining at the ropes to escape the blade he saw plunging toward his chest.

He screamed as realization dawned on him. That blade had driven deeply into his body. Even now he could feel it sawing, feel the hands reaching in, feel his heart...

In the darkness his soul screamed in silence as his heart continued to beat rhythmically inside its clay jar, along with a thousand others within a dark cave.

1525

After his defeat in Tenochtitlan, Cuauhtemoc had become an auxiliary in Cortez's expedition into Honduras. An Indian who had converted to Christianity told Cortez of a supposed plot against him, and Cuauhtemoc was tried and hanged for treason. Cuauhtemoc's last words to Cortez were, "I knew what it was...to trust to your false promises; I knew that you had destined me to this fate since I did not fall by my own hand when you entered my city of Tenochtitlan."

However, events had already been set in motion after the taking of Tenochtitlan that would ensure the vengeance of the Aztec Gods. Three Aztec priests met in secrecy before being taken and

placed a curse on a number of golden artifacts. If ever the last Aztec emperor was killed by Spanish hands, a curse would befall all those who owned the cursed gold or anything made from the cursed gold. Then the gold was surrendered to Cortez and the Conquistadors.

Cortez sent the gold back to Spain. He could not have known that the gold was cursed, or that killing Cuauhtemoc would eventually result in his demise. He returned home in 1528 to face some accusations against him and learned that one of his comrades from the expedition into Tenochtitlan had unexpectedly left and hadn't been heard from since. He visited the family of the man and was given some of the man's effects, which consisted of a letter and a small locked chest. The letter spoke of a sudden illness that the man swore was the result of a curse and of his irresistible desire to return to Mexico. He claimed in his letter that the gold that he had kept was cursed and others that he had given the cursed gold to had fallen ill recently as well. Cortez decided that these were merely the ramblings of a sick man and took the locked chest with him, leaving it locked until he had more time.

Cortez returned to Mexico in 1530 and funded a number of expeditions on his own. Eventually he once again returned to Spain, but he was not well received at court and soon retired. In 1545, he finally remembered the chest, he had forgotten. He opened it, looked at the effects in the chest and found a small Aztec medallion. He took the medallion and placed the chain around his neck, hoping to gain some of the old luck of his early expeditions. With that one act, he cursed himself and died of illness in 1547. Though he was buried, his grave was seemingly desecrated a short time later. Some say that grave robbers took his body, while others believe that he arose from the dead to return to the place where he had spent most of his days, the Mexican frontier.

If Only It Had Ended There

1692

Those in possession of the original Aztec gold that was cursed, or anything made from it, have

begun to feel an urge to go to Mexico. These people leave their families and their lives behind and do everything they can to head into the Mexican wilderness. Once there, they are never heard from again. However, there are rumors from those who have taken them there of some strange happenings. They tell of Tenochtitlan being rebuilt by the hands of possessed men and women and of human sacrifice and cannibalism. Truly, the place is cursed.

As with many rumors, the truth is far more sinister. Those traveling to Mexico are being used to rebuild Tenochtitlan. Their master is the last Aztec emperor, Cuauhtemoc, reborn as an undead zombie lord. Even worse, those who make the migration are being taken to undergo a ritual that kills the victim and transfers the soul of an Aztec into the corpse. The corpse is “ridden” by the Aztec and can eventually function like a normal human, but no heart beats in the chest. Those were removed and placed into jars, along with the souls of the victims, which were in turn hidden away. The Aztecs work to rebuild their lost civilization, using the bodies of the descendants of those who destroyed it.

The Aztecs hope to build a stronger empire with the knowledge they have acquired from the minds of those souls trapped in the jars. They hope to one day become a force that will visit the same fate on the people across the ocean that those people had visited upon the Aztecs. They are in the process of rebuilding Tenochtitlan and beginning to build ships that will carry them across the water to the homes of their enemies.

Enter the Cast

The Cast can be swashbucklers who just happen to stumble onto the mess, or friends or acquaintances of someone who has recently left mysteriously for Mexico. Alternatively, they could be officials sent to check into the rumors that things aren't quite right in Mexico, or searching for some noble who has recently vanished there. Once there, the zombies of Tenochtitlan will try to cut them off from their transportation, take their ship to use for their own vessels, and attempt to capture the Cast to be used as more hosts or as a food source. Either way, the

Cast will have their hands full trying to get out of Mexico with their body parts intact.

If the Cast does manage to defeat the zombie lord, the ZM has many options available. The curse could end if Cuauhtemoc is slain, or the remaining zombies could continue on, naming a successor as Aztec emperor. The cycle could continue anew with more people migrating to Mexico and the new zombies raising the emperor once more and putting him into another body. The Aztecs could continue on in secret this way, becoming a true force to be reckoned with later once they have a mighty empire in Mexico. They could begin to strike out with their new Aztec designed ships, becoming a new threat at sea. Lastly, they may even become strong enough to launch a full offensive against the people of Europe, whom they see as the enemy.

Story Ideas

The following are brief ideas for adventure in this setting.

Into Mexico

The Cast are on the trail of a merchant vessel that disappeared. It has been gone for several months and was last seen changing course and heading for the Americas. Those who hired the Cast hold no high hopes for the crew, but would like the cargo back and will pay handsomely for it. They know that the ship headed from Jamaica with their cargo, but do not know where it went from there. The Cast can learn in Jamaica that the captain of the vessel said something about being sick and that he needed to go to Mexico, though he would not say why. Some of the crew were also acting strange.

The Cast can travel to Mexico in search of the missing ship. The ship is moored in a secluded inlet and is abandoned. It looks like the entire crew simply left the ship to go into the Mexican wilderness. The cargo is missing from the hold of the ship, but the ship itself seems intact, though eerily vacant.

The Cast can enter the wilds of Mexico in search of the cargo. They may be beset by various hazards

from poisonous frogs to snakes to any manner of natural hazards and even the undead denizens themselves. Cuauhtemoc has patrols of Aztec Zombies and Soulless wandering around the area looking for anyone who may have landed or straggled away from the original group.

The Cast will eventually find what they are looking for when they stumble upon a section of the Aztec city being rebuilt by Aztec Zombies and Soulless that are still wearing the clothes of the crew of the merchant vessel. The Cast will find the boxed and sealed cargo nearby (one cargo of cursed Aztec gold please!), but will have to get it back out of the jungle and onto their ship or onto the merchantman.

Less scrupulous Cast Members may open the cargo and decide that one or two items would not be missed and doom themselves to a return trip to Mexico in the future.

Story Idea 2

The ZM may advance the timeline a bit and allow the first Aztec vessels to begin crossing the oceans. These ships are much like the Corsairs in Chapter Three, p. 76 and are crewed by Aztec Zombies and the Soulless.

The Cast are hired to travel to a coastal port town to pick up an emissary. It is imperative that the emissary reaches his destination so someone is sent with the Cast as an advisor, should something go wrong. When they arrive they discover that the town has been destroyed and burned. It is easy to see that it was attacked, perhaps by pirates. However, pirates in that large a number usually do not destroy an entire town and leave half the goods behind. In the rubble is a golden medallion of some strange make. The Cast may be able to determine that it is of Aztec design. Another strange thing is that there are no bodies anywhere, though blood can be found in several locations throughout the town. It's as if any survivors simply left the scene.

The Cast can determine that there are tracks from quite a number of people heading out of town. The advisor will want the emissary found, of course, and is authorized to raise their payment if they search for the emissary, though if the Cast decide to do it

out of the kindness of their hearts, the advisor will not mention this fact. The Cast can follow the trail to an old abandoned fort, which looks less than abandoned, as there are people walking around on the wall.

Whatever the Cast believes here is fine when they see what looks like a person from the town walking along the wall. However, the Aztec Zombies have landed and cleared out the town, adding the townspeople to their army. They are using this area as a staging point. Only the emissary is still alive and for good reason. It seems that the commanding Aztec Zombie likes the look of the emissary, who happens to be an attractive duchess, and wishes to take her back to Mexico to have the priests place the soul of his beloved into her body.

The Cast can come up with ingenious methods to get inside and break away with the emissary. Or they can follow the Aztec Zombie and his ship all the way back to Mexico to attempt a daring rescue at the altar. Either way, they are in for a fight with the walking dead.

That's a Wrap

Slaying Cuauhtemoc and his three priests could herald the end of the campaign. Only they can create more Aztec Zombies. Once they are gone, the only zombies left can only make the Soulless variety. Also, finding and destroying the heart jars would destroy the Aztec Zombies. With their jars destroyed, the Aztec Zombies would turn to ash and their Soulless zombie minions would become free-ranging undead and much easier to take out.

Cuauhtemoc

Cuauhtemoc has arisen from the grave as a large skeletal undead. He wears the trappings of his station, including a headdress, and is a truly frightening figure. He wields a large wooden club with razor-sharp obsidian blades embedded in the sides, which he uses to smite the enemies of the Aztec people.

Cuauhtemoc uses an ancient ritual to make a vessel for the spirits of the Aztec people, by ritually removing the heart of a restrained victim and plac-

ing it in a specially prepared jar. The soul of the victim is taken with the heart when this is done. The jar is sealed away and the chest of the victim stuffed with special herbs, which acts as a tie or focus for the soul that will control it. The mind of the tormented in the jars can be accessed by the possessing entity and its knowledge used.

Since this ritual essentially kills the victim's body when the heart is removed, the ritual cannot be contested by the victim. However, the heart remains beating in the jar and can possibly be placed into another body later with magic or Miracles (this is completely up to the ZM).

Note: The three priests that originally cursed the gold are also walking around and are much the same in appearance as Cuauhtemoc. However, they only have 10 levels of Increased Essence Pool, no Regeneration, and the Resilient Willpower Aspect (Willpower 4).

Aztec Zombies

As the Aztec zombies are possessing entities, priests may be able to exorcise them from the corpses they inhabit. This requires a lengthy ritual (approximately one half-hour per attempt) and an expenditure of 20 Essence from the Inspired. The zombie must be restrained while the ritual is being done and the ritual cannot be interrupted. It also requires a contested Difficult Willpower roll between the Inspired and the possessing entity. If the Inspired wins, the body falls lifeless and the possessing spirit flees. If failed, the Inspired must continue the ritual, with another roll and another Essence expenditure of 10 points per additional attempt.

The Aztec Zombie can Spread the Love. To do this, one must devour the heart of its victim. The victim becomes a zombie of the soulless variety, under the control of the Aztec Zombie.

Cuauhtemoc

Strength - **Constitution** -

Dexterity 4 **Intelligence** 2

Perception 3 **Willpower** 7

DPs: 100/200 (See *AFMBE* p. 147, Other Damage)

Speed 23 **Essence** 116

Skills: Brawling 3, Hand Weapon (Club) 3, Rituals (Aztec) 5

Attack: punch D4 x 7(14), kick D4 x 8(16), Club D8 x 7(28) (slash/stab)

Miracles: Call Storm, Curse, Evil Eye, Holy Fire

Rituals: Trap the Soul (see text above)

Weak Spot: None (+10)

Getting Around: The Quick Dead (+10)

Senses: Life Sense (+6), Like A Hawk (+2)

Sustenance: Who Needs Food? (+8)

Intelligence: Language (+1), Long-Term Memory (+5), Problem Solving (+15)

Willpower: Will of Iron (+8)

Spreading the Love: Ritual (Complex Ritual, Only done by an Inspired) (-4)

Special Features: Billy Bones (+15), Gift (+5), Increased Essence Pool (+20), Inspiration (+5), Regeneration (+5), No Pain (does not feel pain; see *Atlas of the Walking Dead*) (+1)

Power: 148

The Soulless

A Soulless is under the control of the Aztec Zombie who ate its heart. They are mindless and without direction or purpose unless controlled by the Aztec Zombie. When a controlling Aztec Zombie is destroyed, the Soulless under its control will go off on their own, losing their Teamwork Aspect and becoming mindless eating machines.

Aztec Zombies

Strength 2 **Constitution** 2
Dexterity 3 **Intelligence** 2
Perception 2 **Willpower** 2
DPs: 15 **Speed** 10
Essence 12
Skills: Brawling 2, Hand Weapon (any) 2
Attack: punch D4 x 2(4), kick D4 x 3(6), or by weapon
Weak Spot: Heart (+7)
Getting Around: Life-Like (+3), As In Life (+2)
Strength: Dead Joe Average (0)
Senses: Life Sense (+4), Like The Living (+1)
Constitution: Fresh One (0)
Sustenance: Heart (-3), Who Needs Food? (+8)
Intelligence: Language (+1), Long-Term Memory (+5), Problem Solving (+15)
Willpower: The Every Zombie (0)
Spreading the Love: Only the Dead (-2)
Special Features: Damage Resistance (+5), No Pain (does not feel pain; see *Atlas of the Walking Dead*) (+1)
Power: 51

The Soulless

Strength 2 **Constitution** 2
Dexterity 2 **Intelligence** 1
Perception 2 **Willpower** 2
DPs: 26 **Speed** 4
Skills: Brawling 2, Hand Weapon (any) 2
Attack: punch/tend D4 x 2(4), or by weapon
Weak Spot: All (0)
Getting Around: Life-Like (+3), The Lunge (+3)
Strength: Dead Joe Average (0)
Senses: Life Sense (+4), Like The Living (+1),
Constitution: Fresh One (0)
Sustenance: All Flesh Must Be Eaten (0), Daily (0)
Intelligence: Dumb as Dead Wood (0), Teamwork (+4), Tool Use 1 (+3)
Willpower: The Every Zombie (0)
Spreading the Love: Nobody Loves Me (-5)
Power: 17

Curious Noble

Survivor

Str 3 **Dex** 3 **Con** 4

Int 3 **Per** 4 **Wil** 3

Lps 47

Eps 35

Spd 14

Essence 20

Qualities/Drawbacks

Addiction (Alcohol) (-1)

Disease (Tuberculosis, Early Stage) (-4)

Hard to Kill (3)

Nerves of Steel (3)

Resources (Wealthy) (3)

Secret (Slummin') (-1)

Status (Minor Noble) (5)

Skills

Brawling 3

Climbing 2

Dancing (Ballroom) 3

Dodge 3

Gambling 4

Guns (Pistol) 3

Hand Weapon (Sword) 4

Humanities (Etiquette) 4

Notice 4

Riding (Horse) 3

Seamanship 3

Stealth 2

Streetwise 3

Gear

Rapier, flintlock pistol, powder flask, 12 lead shot, sloop with seaworthy crew, large supply of herbs for tea remedies (Tuberculosis), large amount of spending cash

Personality

I'd heard the tales of Mexico and Aztec gold ever since I was a lad. I'd even heard of the power of the Aztec priests and how they could call upon their gods to punish those who trespassed on their soil. Truthfully, I believe the stories of ancient curses and dark secrets to be all a load of hogwash, personally. Still, it might be fun to go exploring in the wilds of that land and see all the wondrous sites that Cortez saw there. Perhaps we'll even see one of these *creatures* seafarers keep talking of in the local taverns, not that I go to taverns mind you, detestable places. Still, this piece of Aztec gold I got from an old captain too much into his cups is intriguing. I simply must see if there is any more there.



Quote

“Good God, man! I shall prove once and for all that these Aztec ghosts do not exist, and maybe even bring back a memento or two.”

Scholar

Norm

Str 2 **Dex** 3 **Con** 2

Int 3 **Per** 2 **Will** 2

LPS 34

EPS 23

Spd 10

Essence 14

Qualities/Drawbacks

Acute Senses (Vision) (2)

Covetous (Conspicuous) (-2)

Hard to Kill (2)

Honorable (-1)

Landlubber (-2)

Obsession (Cataloguing/Researching) (-2)

Resources (Middle Class) (1)

Skills

Brawling 1

Dodge 3

First Aid 2

Guns (Pistol) 2

Hand Weapon (Club) 2

Language (Latin) 4

Notice 2

Research/Investigation 3

Riding 1

Sciences (Botany) 4

Sciences (Insectology) 3

Sciences (Zoology) 4

Stealth 1

Unconventional Medicine

(Herbalism) 2

Writing (Academic) 3

Gear

Trunk of beakers, vials, and bottles, walking stick (large club), flintlock pistol, powder flask, 12 lead shot, several blank journals, ink Vial, quill pen, bottle of fine sand, random tools

Personality

To explore the dark regions of Mexico as Cortez did, such a wonderful prospect! I shall be able to add the research and journals to my already great collection, maybe even write a treatise one day. I've signed on with a nobleman who has decided to fund an expedition there. I hope to find plenty of new and interesting things to catalog while I'm there.

Supposedly, there're some strange things going on there. Not that I believe in hokey religions and ancient curses, mind you. Probably some other natives to the land moving into the Aztec lands and chasing off anyone who goes there. But we're taking plenty of precautions and the men are all stalwart and hearty. I'm sure we'll fare fine out there. Now, if you'll excuse me, I must prepare my supplies for the journey...where did I put my quill...?



Quote

"Fascinating! I've never seen this type of plant before; I must take a sample back!"

Dead Men's Tales

In this section are a number of small scenarios that can be used for those times when the ZM has run out of ideas. They can be slipped into a campaign and run for a night or two of fun until the ZM has recovered, or used as a springboard for other ideas.

An Eye in the Storm

The Cast can be a group of swarthy swashbucklers looking for a secluded place to anchor and hide from the Navy, adventuring privateers looking for new sights, or even merchants or naval officers, blown off course by a storm and in need of repairs. Norms, Survivors and Inspired all work well here.

There is an area of land that even the zombies will not enter. It is a forbidding patch of forest surrounding a quiet inlet that has not yet been colonized. It has plenty of wood for building and plenty of area for foraging and farming. However, none of the crew knows much about the place.

The Cast should reach the inlet during the day, which will give them plenty of time to look around. Along the outside edge of the forest lies a small village which can be reached by walking along the beach and around the forest. The village could be a prime place to resupply and should be something the Cast may want to check out. The villagers seem friendly enough, but they worship some pagan God and seem very guarded and untrusting of newcomers. The Cast should pick up on this rather swiftly once they enter the village.

Asking about the forest reveals that the villagers do not go into it because it is "sacred" and their God protects it and does not allow them to enter it. The villagers claim that they have no place for the men to stay and so they must remain on the beach, but not to do anything to harm the forest.

Harming the forest is a subjective term and anyone even taking fruit from the nearby trees is considered to be harming the forest. However, the villagers will not go into detail about this, only that the forest should not be defiled. If no Cast Member can be baited into taking from the forest without permission, a Supporting Cast Member will do just as well.

Once the deed has been done, anyone staying on the beach near the forest during the night will be attacked by strange little creatures that smell of decay and look as though they are made up of all manner of decaying plant life and human and animal remains. They are a ghastly sight (Fear Test at -3). They will try to kill as many of the group as they can, dragging corpses and unconscious victims back into the forest whence they came.

If any of the Cast enter the forest in pursuit, they quickly find themselves hopelessly lost. Though they may not have gone far, they still cannot find their way back out. It's as if the forest just swallowed them up. The Cast will quickly realize that whatever they do, they cannot find a way back out of the forest that suddenly seems to go on forever. Soon, the Cast will begin to realize that they are being watched. They may become paranoid as the feeling grows, adding to the forbidding atmosphere of the place. Just when they think the problem couldn't be worse, strange things begin to happen.

The area is being protected by a powerful nature spirit. It can take control of trees, plants, animals and even the dead plant life that litters the ground. It has no interest in talking, if it even can, and only wants to keep everything out of the forest by any means necessary. The spirit will use the forest to attack the Cast, occasionally taking control of an animal or tree, or creating strange little 3-foot-tall creatures out of the dead plant life and human and animal remains on the forest floor.

Occasionally, the cast can make Perception + Notice Task rolls at -4 to notice what looks like a small spring, deeper into the forest. However, as the Cast begins to move in that direction, they realize that it has slipped behind them, or beside them, still off in the distance. To get there, the Cast will need a secondary point of reference. The best way would be to tie a line to something and change course every time the rope bends around something, but the ZM should reward other ingenious methods of getting there.

The spring is magical, healing those who drink from it of all illnesses and taking away the distortion that has been causing them to wander around in circles. The spring also makes those who drink its

waters immune to illness and disease! The only catch is, the spirit does not want anyone touching the spring, and with good reason. Any human flesh or blood that enters the spring itself will instantly pollute the water, destroying its magical properties. In the middle of the spring is the source of the spirit. A shiny black stone juts up from the middle of the pool. If the stone is destroyed, so is the spirit. However, to get to the stone requires wading across the pool. After, the Cast drinks the water, they may either leave or attempt to destroy the spirit, which will turn the

area into just another ordinary forest and destroy the spring in the process.

Once out, the Cast finds out that the rest of their crew were attacked by zombies while they were in the forest. Some of the remaining zombies fled toward the village. Investigating the village will reveal that all the villagers are zombies. Destroying the spring and spirit has returned a curse that was placed upon the villagers long ago. There are some old logbooks in a building that can be found with this information in them, if the Cast decides to search the village. The Cast will be attacked by the zombified villagers and will have to fight their way out of the village and back to the ship with whatever they can manage to take from the village.

Animated Tree

This is for a small tree. ZMs can adjust the stats here for a larger tree, if desired.

Strength 6 **Constitution** 5
Dexterity 2 **Intelligence** 1
Reception 1 **Willpower** 5
DPs: 152* **AV:** D8 x 2 +8(16)

Essence 20

Skills: Brawling 2

Attack: tree limb D6 x 6(18)

Weak Spot: All (0), Fire (-5)

Getting Around: Life-Like** (+3)

Strength: Hardy Specimen (+6), Strong Like Bull (+5)

Senses: Life Sense (+2), Like the Dead (0)

Sustenance: N/A

Intelligence: Animal Cunning (+4)

Spreading the Love: Nobody Loves Me (-5)

Special Features: Natural Armor (+4)

Power: 16

* DP for the Animated Tree was calculated using (Strength + Constitution) x Diameter in Inches + 20. Doing this amount of damage to the tree will destroy it or bring it crashing down.

** The tree moves at Dexterity 2 for purposes of striking things with its limbs. Unless the ZM wishes, the tree cannot actually move from where it's rooted.

Compost Creatures

These little critters are made from the decomposing matter on the forest floor. They stand about three feet tall and wield little wooden spears in combat.

Strength 2 **Constitution** 2
Dexterity 3 **Intelligence** 1
Reception 2 **Willpower** 2
DPs: 26 **Speed:** 10

Essence 12

Skills: Brawling 2, Hand Weapon (Spear) 2

Attack: punch D4 x 2(4), wooden spear D6 x 3(9) (slash/stab)

Weak Spot: All (0), Fire (-5)

Getting Around: As in Life (+6)

Strength: Dead Joe Average (0)

Senses: Life Sense (+4) Like the Living (+1)

Constitution: Fresh One (0)

Sustenance: Who Needs Food? (+8)

Intelligence: Animal Cunning (+4)

Willpower: The Every Zombie (0)

Spreading the Love: Nobody Loves Me (-5)

Power: 17

ZMs can use the Rise of the Walking Dead zombies in the *AFMBE* book p. 168 for the zombie villagers.

A Handful of Shillings

A group of marauding undead pirates have taken over a small coastal town, forcing the townspeople into servitude and occasionally feasting on a “sacrificial lamb” or two. These pirates are cruel and do what they please to the townspeople and take what they please from the town. As a result, the townspeople are poor and a few of the people are thinking of looking for assistance out of their plight.

Of course, doing so is much easier said than done, as the pirates actually live in the town and nearby in a wood and stone fort. Anyone they catch attempting to get help from other towns or from those passing through become “guests” in a feast and are eaten alive. However, one man has recently escaped, badly wounded, from the pirates and has disappeared. No one knows of his fate, but he is their only hope at this point of getting out from under the yoke of the pirate gang.

Enter the Cast

The Cast can be anything from a group of swash-bucklers just looking for an adventure or members of the local constabulary from another town, dispatched by the local lord to look into the matter. They could even be from the town itself, fed up with the mistreatment and ready to make a stand against the horde. They can be simply passing through town or even the ones to find the badly wounded man on the road.

The townspeople are poor, only able to scrape up a few shillings for each of the Cast Members, so they are having a hard time finding champions for their cause. However, they will set the Cast up in the town while they are there and feed them as well. They do know that the pirates have a lot of money and treasure, at least half of which is from the town. The townspeople only want what was taken from them and the Cast can have the rest.

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Avast! Thar be ghastrly things that sail these waters!

Whether labeled privateers or buccaneers, everyone feared pirates during the Age of sail. Now the pirates have something to be afraid of . . . the livin' dead! From voodoo queens to ghost ships, swashbuckling with zombies is a whole different jug of grog.

So tighten them sails! Hoist the Jolly Roger an' go on the account with the brethren o' the sea! But 'ware the shout from the crows' nest, "Arrgh! Thar Be Zombies!" They'll be after more than ye gold! So trim the sails and hoist the Jolly Roger. Arrgh! Thar Be Zombies!

ARRGH! Thar Be Zombies is a supplement for the All Flesh Must Be Eaten roleplaying game. In it, you will find:

- Information on the Age of Sail and the Golden Age of Piracy, including everything you need to know about life as a pirate.
 - Plenty o' new Qualities, Drawbacks, and skills for yer piratin' crew.
 - New Zombie Aspects for the undead spat forth from Davy Jones' Locker.
- New Metaphysics rules for voodoo Miracles, rituals and the creation of fetishes.
 - Rules for cinematic sword-fighting and ship combat.
- New weapons, new gear, and an assortment of ships from swift sloops to gun heavy galleons.
- Three full Deadworlds and two short ones, takin' yer sea dogs from a dark and shrouded isle to islands in a dark sea of an entirely different sort.
 - A slew of Archetypes that can be used to flesh out any pirate game.



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