

Eye of Jargos

A one-shot adventure for Bechamel!

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The ship on which you have traveled the sea sank during a terrible storm. An insane inverted cyclone has shattered your vessel into wooden splinters! The crew members were thrown overboard, and the ship sank like a stone. You have somehow survived, holding onto various barrels or shattered remains of the ship. Luckily for you, after several minutes of hellish storm, the sea miraculously cast you to the rocky beach of a small, unmarked island.

The heroes lost most of their equipment. They might have kept one or two weapons (at most dealing Str+d6 damage) and personal tools (including lockpicks or basic ingredients for sandwichcraft)... but sadly, they do not have any fresh water nor food. The storm and the fight for survival left them Fatigued. Let each player roll Vigor or Athletics (their call) to represent how well they withstood the storm and waves: if they succeeded, they're Tired (-1), and if they fail, they're Exhausted. Elves have a +2 bonus to this roll, and mechaovens don't have to make it at all.

Anyone trained in Boating realizes that the heroes' ship should not have deviated from the course — but the sudden storm was a part of massive tornado-like ring of wind and thunder, sweeping the vessel into the storm like a hand of a titan sweeps grains of sand.

Now, if the heroes look to the ocean, they can see an unusual phenomenon — a “standing wave” — a veritable wall of water. There's some zapping, crackling sounds coming from it. It looks as if the ocean waves created a “wall”, a ring of water and storm around the island. The more learned heroes (Science +1 roll) could have realized that the temperature here is much higher than it should be in this region. In truth, they're inside an eye of a permanent anti-cyclone.

The stony beach where the adventurers have crashed is located at the bottom of a tall cliff. At the top of this wall, hundreds of meters above them, on thick ropes hangs a strange, basket-like wooden construction, resembling a bird's nest. Around that massive building strange creatures circle in the air.



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The heroes are lucky — after a couple of minutes of scouting around they discover a narrow path leading upwards. The higher they climb, the lush the vegetation is. A Survival roll will easily allow them to find food for one person, a raise — for two. Resting for an hour with proper food will restore one Fatigue level. Two raises on the Survival roll will allow the players to see that apart the usual pineapple and wild, sour citrus fruit, some bushes are also overgrown with strange berries. Any chef-wizard will recognize them as useful ingredient, worth 25 crowns. With a proper kitchen, they might be able to use them in magical dishes.

The closer the explorers get the top of the cliff, the thinner the forest gets — they can see that someone comes here to cut trees and gather food. If you want to, you can spice up the travel, and let the heroes encounter a giant (non-venomous) spider or two, but that's unnecessary. The heroes are probably tired anyway.

When the heroes climb to the top of the cliff, they can plainly see that the island is in the eye of an unusual anti-cyclone. The “water wall” surrounds the island on all sides and dark, storm clouds form over the wall, shooting lightning bolts at it. The strange winged creatures who circulated around the structure, get closer and land near heroes. They're mutants calling themselves harpies — bat-like creatures with



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humanoid torsos and prehensile feet. They have wings in place of arms.

The mutated creatures address the heroes in screechy, inhuman bird-like voices, order them to enter “the house”. That's the weird “nest” the heroes have seen before. They can escort them willingly, but if the PCs resist, the harpies will fight to incapacitate them. Climbing down requires no rolls, the harpies will assist any PC.

The House of Jargos

Jargos is a dwarven traitor — a mercenary chef-wizard who has served on the Garlic Crusades but defected to the blood-drinkers. He was rewarded well, with access to the dark recipes stored deep on the island of Rhu-barb, and shortly after the war, he has gathered his servants and slaves and set out to discover the secrets of the Endless Archipelago but... Like the heroes, he has also crashed on this island. Being something of an inventor apart from a chef-wizard, he started to tinker and try to make the most of the situation — he experimented with the ingredients, trying to turn both his servants, previous victims and subsequent survivors into strange winged mutants, hoping that they can fly away, sneaking under the stormy clouds.

Jargos has always considered himself to be a scientist, chef-wizardry being only one of his interests. He also dabbles in gnomish arts of engineering and tries to apply his magical cooking skills to his inventions. Being quite mad, he has decided that to escape from the island he needs to build a flying machine powered by the harpies. Unfortunately, these creatures are too weak to carry him, the machine and supplies... even after his experiments on himself. Jargos is looking for a new way to escape from the island and is close to working on an alternate solution to the problem. But when the strong, vigorous heroes appear...

Harpies lead the heroes to their strange home. The characters need to climb down the ropes, to enter the top floor. These are dark and cramped servant quarters, inhab-



ited by the mutated harpy-like servants, some still clinging to their past... but many have degenerated, and communicate only in grunts and screeches. Most of them rest upside-down, like bats. The heroes are led down, to meet the “master” in person.

Jargos himself altered his body – which caused him to lose a lot of his body mass and crumble into a ruin of a dwarf he used to be. Still dressed in the tattered black robes of a dark ally of the Bloody Monarchy, he sits in a chair in some kind of strange machinery (his “multi-shot”) in his bedroom/workshop/magi-kitchen/dining room.

If the heroes went down willingly, he politely greets them and explains his backstory given above, claiming that he was disgusted by the behavior of the so-called Crusaders. As befits a proper evil magician, he can't resist bragging that he has created Worm Food, a new spell-dish with which he wants to escape the island... but hasn't experimented with it yet. However, in the end, he says, he wants to return to his original plan: "I have built a flying machine, and if

you agree, we can abandon the island together with all the the treasures I found here. If you drink this potion, we can all fly away together.” He pours a goblet of a thick, brownish liquid for each hero, and his servants offer the PCs the drink.

According to the best traditions of sinister sorcerers, Jargos technically won't lie – the heroes will fly away, dragging him in the “machine”, as harpies – then he will let them go.

If any hero is stupid enough to drink the potion offered by Jargos, they should make a Vigor roll. A success means the character needs to roll in Food Poisoning table in Bechamel, a raise – that the hero is unharmed. Failure means the hero starts mutating, and is Shaken. A proper spell-dish made within a week can cure him, depending on the trappings (usually healing or succor would be enough). Critical Failure means that the hero will start to turn into a harpy (assuming all its stats, but remaining a Wild Card). It will happen when he draws a face card as an initiative card or after 5 minutes, whatever comes first. On the plus

side, the elixir will not give Jargos any kind of control over the hero, so the mutant PCs can continue to fight against him.

Hopefully the intrepid explorers refuse to take the elixir and either accidentally or as a gesture of insult pour out the content of the goblet. The spilled liquid melts a part of the wicker floor as it bursts into vile smoke. Jargos calls the guards, eats his buttery roll of speed, and decides to overpower the heroes with his multi-shot.

- **2 Harpies** per PC (3 if their Rank is at least Veteran)

- **Jargos** with his multi-shot

Escape from the House of Jargos

Jargos still wants to make use of the heroes, perhaps as slaves or as experiment subjects. Neither he nor harpies try to kill them. The defeated heroes will be hanged in cages – massive wicker baskets dangling from the lowest floor of the Jargos' laboratory. Jargos wants to heal their wounds using his nutritious dishes. The adventurers will be fed with unprocessed food – fruit gathered in the jungle. If the heroes treated the winged slaves of the mad chef-wizard reasonably well, one of the harpies will tell them that Jargos wants to heal their wounds, then use his transformative pancakes to change the newcomers into harpies as well.

It's fairly easy to escape from the cage: the heroes can swing in their baskets shifting their weight until they hit the wall of the cliff. The impact should shatter the wicker rods. The hero needs to grab onto the top of the basket in exactly the right moment – which requires an Athletics roll. Failure to do so means that the hero starts falling. He can make another Athletics +2 roll to grab a wall, otherwise he'll fall for 10d6+10 damage.

Of course, other ways of escaping are a possibility: the small gate on the top of each basket is actually tied with a knot – it's relatively easy to open it, using either Athletics and Thievery -2 penalty. Edges like Scavenger, McGyver, Property Damage or

magical cookery abilities using the Herbalist or Gadgeteer Edges to improvise a simple sandwichcraft power can also help. And, if everything else fails, devourers can just eat the cages. Particularly clever attempts should be awarded with a Benny. Anyone who escapes and climbs up, will have to face three harpy guards – or only one if it's night.

The harpies stashed the gear of the heroes on the bottom floor of the house – as well as weapons taken from assorted victims of shipwrecks, and heroes can equip themselves with any reasonably common item (no gadgets) and restock their pantry. They can safely climb up to the laboratory, and surprise Jargos in his small cot near the wall. The harpies won't defend him this time.

Fly, swim or sink

If the heroes want to rest in Jargos' house, they can only do so for two weeks, as his harpies will stop repairing the ropes. The house will start to crumble down and will crash to the bottom (roll a d6 every day after the fourteenth – 6 means that today the ropes break) and the heroes should be able to predict this.

After defeating Jargos, the heroes can safely search his house for loot. Apart from the \$250 worth of gems and valuables stolen from the earlier shipwreck survivors or found ashore, the heroes can also ransack his pantry and examine his inventions. If there is no chef-mage in the party, assume that the heroes can find one dish per power known to Jargos. But any trained chef-wizard will also find rare ingredients worth 15 PP, book of recipes known to Jargos (she can choose the powers with specific variants when he gains the next Advance) and several prototypical dishes, including the smelly Worm Food – barrel of specially treated worms.

Deciphering the notes of Jargos will take a check of Cooking -1 or arcane skill. They're mad scribbles, describing the food that will summon a giant monster and tame it briefly. Jargos hopes that it will be strong

enough to traverse the anti-cyclone under the waves. The heroes should sail out and cover themselves in the wriggling worms (Food Poisoning table, anyone?), and this should summon a giant beast. Jargos hopes it won't swallow the users... because he's not sure how to get out! The heroes can also try out the "flying machine" - Jargos' simple prototypical biplane... without a tangible fuel source. He planned to use harpies to gain altitude and then glide across the border of the cyclone, between the waves and the storm clouds. Heroes can use Science and Jargos' laboratory to improvise a fuel source (most likely alcohol distilled from jungle fruit), but they can also use Repair or

Science to rebuild the biplane as a glider – they can set fire to the jungle or create an explosion to rapidly gain altitude. If the heroes make a good plan, they can make a Piloting roll to safely navigate out... luckily encountering an elven sailing ship.

If the heroes use Worm Food near the rising wall of water, it will shimmer, and a giant blue fish will emerge... and swallow their raft in a single gulp. Will it take them to a magical underwater kingdom? Spit them out in the middle of Moonshine lake? Or maybe the heroes will find a group of lost souls living inside the fish, planning to make it gag? This depends just on you, Master Chef.

Jargos

Jargos has become a small, twisted figure of a dwarf due of the abuse of chef-wizardry snacks and perhaps because of the influence of the strange island, but as his fellow Garlic Crusaders could swear, he's always been deranged. He is fascinated by the anticyclone around the island, but he still desires revenge on his brethren and his dream is to flee and then send flying servants to puncture the eyes of his fellow dwarves!

Attributes: Agility d8, Smarts d10, Spirit d8, Strength d4, Vigor d4

Skills: Academics d6, Cooking d8, Healing d10, Intimidation d8, Persuasion d8, Repair d10, Science d10, Shooting d8, Spell-cooking d12, Taunt d6.

Pace: 4; **Parry:** 2; **Toughness:** 3

Edges: Arcane Background (Chef-wizardry), Command, Hold the Line, Rich, MacGyver, New powers, Power Points, Scullery Boy.

Hindrances: Ugly, Small, Vengeful (Major), Mean.

Powers [20 PP]: *healing* (sweet milk), *environmental protection* (nuts in crunchy shell), *obscure* (badly burned cake with cloud of smoke obscuring sight), *sloth/speed* (lemon cakes of fattening/sugar rush), *warrior's gift* (heady brandy).



Gear: Saber (Si+d4), Jargos' multi-shot - see below, kitchen (+1 for Spell-cooking tests).

Special abilities:

Multi-Shot: Jargos is a skilled technician and thanks to his engineering and weird cookery, he has created a rapid-fire machine casting lead bullets... powered by the frantic pedaling of the operator. When he meets the heroes, he's already mounted in the saddle. He can use this weapon to target the PCs: Range 3/6/12, Damage 2d10, AP 4, RoF 3. It can hold 50 shots (and shoots 10 per action). Reloading the weapon takes 2 actions. Only Jargos knows how to handle this weapon and is the right size and build to shoot from it. He uses his Shooting to operate it, and since it's mounted, he has no penalty for Rate of Fire.

Jargos' Harpies

Transfigured servants are mostly devoted to Jargos and believe that their master has transformed them into monstrous, inhuman beings, but if they serve him loyally, they will return to their human form. Some, however, have already managed to fly away,

survive the thunderstorm and settle on other islands. Perhaps they even breed true.

It shouldn't be impossible for a trained chef-wizard to prepare an antidote for the permanent harpy transformation... but it will require ingredients not found on the islands.

Attributes: Agility d6, Smarts d6, Spirit d6, Strength d6, Vigor d6

Skills: Athletics d8, Notice d8, Fighting d6

Pace 2/8, **Parry:** 5, **Toughness:** 5

Gear: Spears (Str+d6, Reach 1, Range 6/12/24 if thrown). They wield them in their feet, so can't fight when on ground.

Special Abilities:

- **Flight:** Pace 8