

# 50 Fathoms

## PLAYER'S GUIDE



Here Be Monsters

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Explorer's Edition





### **Explorer's Edition**

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**Shane's Dedication:** For Michelle, my bonnie lass

**Cheyenne's Dedication:** For the Pirate Queen, Eli Danger



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# FOREWORD

In 2003, I stumbled on a link to Disney's upcoming *Pirates of the Caribbean* and saw some incredible concept art, including a band of undead pirates walking along the bottom of the ocean. I called my wife, Michelle, in to see the artwork and she said simply "That should be your next game."

I went back to whatever other project I was working on, but couldn't get that image out of my mind. That's usually where the trouble starts.

By evening that night I had a title—"50 Fathoms." I liked the alliteration. But what did it mean? Well, "fathoms" implied something was underwater. Would this be an underwater game? No, that wouldn't be pirate-like, and I was definitely getting a pirate vibe. So what was underwater? What was...flooded. Ah. The world was flooded. But why? That would be the evil, of course. The evil the heroes would have to fight.

I'm not overly embarrassed to say I didn't know just how deep 50 fathoms was at first. So I looked it up. Hmm. A fathom is six feet. So 50 fathoms is about 300 feet of water. Ooh. That resonated. I saw in my mind a scene from *Water World* where Kevin Costner's character dives deep down into the ocean amid the old skyscrapers. That sounded like fantastic exploration and adventure.

Michelle and I kept talking about it over the next few days and she added some great twists. I don't remember who came up with what exactly now, but somewhere in the excitement scurillions, kraken, and kehana (shark men!) were born. I wanted a *Pirates of Dark Water* feel as well—that and *Thundarr the Barbarian* are two of my favorite cartoon series. The masaquani in this book are directly inspired by the former.

I started writing. The words poured. But what structure would I use? I had just finished *Evernight*, which was our first "scripted" campaign. I was really happy with that as essentially a long adventure, but the next time out I wanted to try something less linear; where the Game Master and players could have more agency—more freedom of direction.

I had learned from *Deadlands* that a massive backstory can be difficult to communicate or work into the campaign. But without a backstory it wasn't really a world—just a genre book.

I wanted momentous events that affected the world, but not in an intrusive way. The pirate genre is all *about* freedom, after all.

Some of my favorite computer games had an overarching plot but still allowed me to go wherever I wanted. The *Fallout* series and *Sid Meir's Pirates* are two great examples of this. I can travel around the map getting into trouble and following up the leads I'm interested in, but every now and then something related to the main plot comes along and reminds me there are larger events going on in the world.

From that simple premise, the Plot Point Campaign was born. *50 Fathoms* proved a natural fit. The map-based approach, and the inclination for most groups to travel around Caribdis running into encounters worked great, and would eventually draw them into the fight against the Sea Hags.

This has proven far harder to replicate in other settings—at least in such a natural fashion. *Necessary Evil* has an excellent Plot Point Campaign as well, but missions are largely given to the heroes rather than flowing naturally from their actions.

Next came the real meat of the backstory. I have a one-shot adventure I run sometimes that features a nasty sea hag, and the only thing better than that is three sea hags! I also started reading everything I could get my hands on about pirates, and quickly knew my love of real-world history meant I had to find a way to get historical figures from Earth into Caribdis. Hence came the Maiden, the portal she opens between worlds, and the tragic secret you may discover if you play this epic tale.

We started playtesting and my friend Zeke Sparkes came up with the idea for the doreen. In fact, his character defined the entire race and their terrible fate. Christy Hopler's character, Kyla Kidd, was also very memorable as I'd read a great book on Captain Kidd that very convincingly argued his innocence. (Kyla's adventures have since been turned into a trilogy of short fiction you can find on our website.)

Things really came together when I started getting Cheyenne Wright's amazing art. It looked great in black and white. It's phenomenal now in scintillating, three-time Hugo Award-winning color. This is one of the books I'm most proud of. I hope you like it!

Shane Lacy Hensley  
August, 2011



# 50 FATHOMS

The visitors are English, French, Spanish, Dutch, and Chinese. Some are honest privateers—more or less. Others are scurvy pirates fresh from bloodletting in the Caribbean or the Spanish Main. A few are even corsairs from the rich Mediterranean. The darkest souls are slavers, trading human cargo across the merciless Middle Passage. All have one thing in common—they are here because the Maiden led them into the storms, out of their own worlds and into the Devil's Cross, a tempest-tossed region of mystery and death in the alien world of Caribdus.

The natives of this world are a very different sort. By far the most dominant are the masaquani, who are nearly identical to humans, though perhaps a bit more exotic and varied in appearance. Winged atani are rare, as are crab-like scurillians and outcast half-ugaks. Savage kehana thrive in sunken volcanic flumes, or battle with the last survivors of their racial enemies, the lonely doreen. Mysterious kraken scour the isles on some unknown quest, and massive grael harpoon deadly norwhales in the Cold Sea. Brutal Red Men roam the Thousand Isles for prey, or serve as cutthroats on the most bloodthirsty pirate sloops.

Caribdus is home to many fantastic creatures. Giant crabs scurry along the reefs. Massive orcas prowl the cold depths. Flocks of razor wings descend upon hapless sailors and cut them to ribbons. Here there be monsters.

## WATER, WATER, EVERYWHERE

Caribdus is a water world, but it wasn't always so. It was once several small continents with many prosperous cities, towns, and villages.

That was before the Sea Hags.

The natives say a trio of witches, triplets with raven-black hair and eyes to match, were discovered working dark sorcery in the masaquani city-state of Ograpog. The three were tried, sentenced by King Amemnus himself, and bound to posts at the edge of Ograpog's cliffs to drown with the rising tide.

With their dying breaths, the sisters cursed Amemnus and his beloved kingdom. As the tide rose, it began to rain. It was a mere drizzle at first, but by the time the waves finally crashed down on the witches' heads it had become a tempest unlike any Caribdus had ever seen.

The rain continued for months, covering the site of the witches' execution in 50 fathoms of water. Whispers began that the rain would not stop until King Amemnus was dead. The people of Ograpog turned on their liege and chased him to a great ledge overlooking the ocean. The king and his most loyal guards fought over the drowned ruins of their city, killing scores of their own citizens before finally being dragged screaming off the ledge—into the sea.



## THE SEA HAGS RISE

While Caribdus was drowning, the witches' corpses floated in the depths, too foul even for the fish. As King Amemnus' life ebbed in that same sea, the sisters' death curse came true. Their horrid bodies filled with unlife and returned to the world as something far more powerful—the Sea Hags.

## THE DEVIL'S CROSS

That was thirteen years ago.

Now the Sea Hags lair in the middle of the Devil's Cross, a region of constant storms bordered on four points by inhospitable rocks that have dashed many a ship to splinters.

From this damned region come their minions—bloodthirsty pirates, horrors from the depths, and ghost ships filled with damned crews.

No living being is safe as long as the Sea Hags and their minions prowl the Thousand Isles. A vague prophecy says a stranger will one day defeat them, but as yet, few have even tried.

## THE FLOTSAM SEA

The epicenter of the witch's curse has created a massive hole into which the waters of Caribdus swirl. For 60 leagues all around the Devil's Cross the ocean is a slow, sinking whirlpool full of debris from the death of a world. Goods, corpses, shipwrecks, and the flora of millions of acres float upon this Flotsam Sea, miring ships that try to ply it in its soggy embrace.

The Flotsam Sea has become the hunting ground of many foul creatures. A race of previously unknown ocotopoids dwell in the muck, as do hordes of drowned sailors who have risen from the depths as loathsome undead.

Still, good crews can escape this dread place. A few ships from Earth manage it every month.

## THE MAIDEN

Soon after the hags arose, visitors from another world began to arrive. The strangers claim a mysterious spirit resembling a crying girl drew them into a fierce storm. When they emerged, they found themselves in the white capped squalls of the Devil's Cross.

The natives call humans "visitors." They seem to come from various lands in a world called "Earth," between the years of 1400 to 1815.

## A WORLD OF MAGIC

Caribdus is full of magic. Wizards control the elements, magic artifacts abound, and bizarre and monstrous creatures walk, fly, and swim about the land. Even the geography itself seems enchanted.

## ELEMENTALISTS

A few races of the Thousand Isles have learned to control earth, fire, water, and air.

Earth mages help grow crops, speak with and control mammals, mend ship's timbers, and even sunder the very land itself.

Fire mages are much feared for their destructive power. They launch balls of fire from their fingertips and are devastating to enemy ships.

Water wizards are wanted on every vessel, for they can heal wounds, make sea water drinkable, and communicate with the many beasts of the ocean to aid in navigation.

Elementalists who have mastered the winds of Caribdus are the most valued of all. They can move ships even when becalmed, settle storms, speak with avians to find land, and toss aside enemy missiles with their fantastic mastery of the gales.

Even visitors to the drowned lands—humans—can become masters of the elements, learning to harness wind, wave, sand, and flame for their own ends.

## BLOOD MAGIC

The ugaks practice something called blood magic that requires the sacrifice of sentient beings. Their shamans can summon flocks of razor wings, cast deadly bolts of black energy, and—it is rumored—summon physical manifestations of their jungle gods.

It's unknown how the Sea Hags learned this magic. Most thought it was something only the Red Men could master.

Octopons also seem to have some sort of black magic, though it's possible it's just elemental energy twisted to new uses. This is another mystery for the sages of the Thousand Isles.

## THEOLOGY

Only the ugaks have gods. Other Caribduns believe in spirits and the afterlife, but do not worship them or have established religions.

Many visitors still cling to their faith, but Earthly churches have gained few converts in the Thousand Isles.











## MAKING HEROES

Making heroes for *50 Fathoms* is as easy as creating characters for any *Savage Worlds* game. Perhaps the hardest part is figuring out what *kind* of character to play from so many adventurous choices. Once you do that, actually filling out your character sheet is a breeze.

Below are a number of common character types inhabiting the world of Caribdus.

**Common Folk:** Not every great hero of the Thousand Isles has to start as a pirate or privateer. Some are ordinary men and women—carpenters, seamstresses, or craftsmen—who are caught up in extraordinary events. These souls are perhaps the greatest of all heroes, for they do not look for adventure, fame, or wealth, but deal with the dangers of the Thousand Isles out of necessity or to protect their friends and family.

**Explorer:** Caribdus is a changed land. Mountains are now islands and once inaccessible peaks are now within reach. Several explorers are known to be roaming Caribdus, mapping these new features and searching for new wonders.

**Hunter:** The interior of most islands is ripe with game—some of which is more than capable of fighting back. Hunters explore the jungles, deserts, and mountains of Caribdus in search of meat to sell the towns and villages. Some are solitary souls armed only with a single musket and a brace of pistols. Others lead hired skinners to cut up and rapidly transport the meat back to civilization.

**Inquisitor:** Some characters are not what they seem. Inquisitors travel about in disguise, searching out elemental mages and learning their habits so that they can capture them and take them to Torquemada for confession and execution. Beware if you choose to play an Inquisitor, however, for you will certainly be forced to betray those closest to you (see page 23).

**Marine:** Marines fight from the decks of ships. They are well-trained in fighting and shooting, and the best have long muskets and metal armor which they don whenever a fight looms near.

**Merchant:** The economics of the fractured world are still being discovered. Player character merchants travel the three seas attempting to discover new markets. They help establish company trade routes, negotiate prices, and ensure goods head where they're needed.

**Officer:** Ships commissioned by nations or one of the three shipping companies appoint officers to run their crews. They were either given their commission due to their wealth or birth, or more rarely, earned their position "through the ranks."

**Pirate:** True pirates are thieves looking to get rich off the hard-earned fortunes of others. Most are able seamen of course, but aren't necessarily good fighters. Pirates rarely attack crews who can fight back, preferring to prey on the weak for easy plunder instead.

**Privateer:** Those who hunt pirates with official commissions from rulers or shipping organizations are called privateers. Theirs is a dangerous job, for pirates fear the noose and rarely surrender without a fight. Privateers must walk a fine line as well, for those who "turn pirate" are rarely granted mercy by those who trusted them.

**Questor:** Some of Caribdus' most noble souls search the Thousand Isles for ways to defeat the Sea Hags. These men and women have been named "questors" by others. They gather clues about the witches and chase tales that might tell them how to kill the hags and return the world to its former grandeur—or return the visitors to Earth.

**Sailor:** Not every sailor is a treacherous cutthroat. Some are honest seamen who simply prefer the roll of the ocean to work on land.

**Salvager:** Many treasures lie on the sea floor waiting to be recovered by those with the ability to dive deep. Doreen, kehana, and kraken can do so on their own, but other races need access to water magic to explore the depths. Salvagers scour the shallows looking for these finds, plumbing the depths of drowned cities, forgotten banks, or watery manors.

**Sea Rover:** These weapon masters are mercenaries who specialize in fighting aboard ships. They hire out their cutlass for a share of any treasure, and rarely care whether their employers are honest merchants or scurvy pirates.

**Ship's Mage:** Valued more than all other crewmen are those who have mastered elemental magic. Their specific role depends on their specialty. Fire mages are best used offensively, water mages can heal and hydrate sailors on long voyages, air mages ensure speedy trips, and earth mages are handy for ships destined for island exploration.



**Super:** Those who watch over a ship's cargoes are called supers. These men must tattoo their arms with their given names, and carry a piece of paper sealed by one of the Great Ports as well. Only they can vouch for the legality of ship's cargoes—but they are also the first targets of pirates as well. Purchasing the necessary license, tattoo and seal requires a hefty fee, but supers are well-paid for their efforts. See page 42 for more details on ship's supers.

**Surgeon:** Water mages and their healing magic are rare, so the bloody work of patching together blasted flesh often falls to the ship's surgeon. These dedicated souls are usually given extra shares or higher salaries for their valuable work.

**Treasure Hunter:** Rumors of vast treasure hordes—such as that of the dread Francis L'Ollonaise—are common. Those who gain some clue to their location—or better yet a map—search the Thousand Isles relentlessly for these treasures.

**Whaler:** Many men and women hunt the white norwhales of the Cold Sea or the smaller beasts that lurk around the isles. Grael make excellent harpooners, as do Red Men.

## CHARACTERS

Once you've figured out what kind of character you're going to play, it's time to figure out your character's statistics. You'll find a character sheet designed specifically for this setting both in the back of this book and at our website at [www.peginc.com](http://www.peginc.com).

### 1) RACE

First choose a race. The player character races of Caribdus, a brief description of their history, their benefits, and the rules for playing them are presented on the pages following this section. Read through these and choose a race now.

It's a good idea to read over all the races. Besides the fact that your character should have a working knowledge of the other people of Caribdus, there are a few important clues to the backstory of *50 Fathoms* hidden in the racial histories as well.



### 2) TRAITS

Now it's time to figure your hero's attributes and skills. Unless a racial description says otherwise, your character starts with a d4 in each of his five attributes: Agility, Smarts, Spirit, Strength, and Vigor. You then have 5 points to distribute among them as you choose. Raising an attribute a die type costs 1 point, and you may not raise an attribute above d12 (though the massive grael may raise their Strength to d12+2 if desired).

You also have 15 points to buy your skills. Raising a skill by a die type costs 1 point as long as it's no higher than the attribute it's linked to. It costs 2 points per die type to raise a skill over its linked attribute.

The skills on the next page following are available in *50 Fathoms*. See the *Savage Worlds* core rules for complete information on the skills and how to use them.



## SKILL LIST

Boating	Persuasion
Climbing	Repair
Driving	Riding
Fighting	Shooting
Gambling	Stealth
Healing	Streetwise
Intimidation	Survival
Investigation	Swimming
Knowledge	Taunt
Lockpicking	Throwing
Notice	Tracking

## LANGUAGES

The people of Caribodus speak masaquani. Any human who has been in the Thousand Isles for at least six months can read, write, and speak it, and has a free d6 in Knowledge (Masaquani).

Kehana and kraken have their own language, which they speak fluently. Player characters of these two races also have a free d6 in Knowledge (Masaquani). Other races may buy Knowledge (Kehana) or Knowledge (Kraken) as usual if desired.

## SECONDARY STATISTICS

**Charisma** is a measure of your hero's likability, and is added to Persuasion and Streetwise rolls. Your Charisma modifier is +0 unless changed by Edges or Hindrances.

**Pace** is equal to 6".

**Parry** is equal to 2 plus half your Fighting.

**Toughness** is equal to 2 plus half your Vigor.

## 3) SPECIAL ABILITIES

Now decide if you want any Hindrances. If so, you may now use the points from them to gain one of the benefits below. You may take one Major Hindrance (worth 2 points) and two Minor Hindrances (worth 1 point each).

**For 2 Hindrance points you can:**

- Raise an attribute one die type, or
- Choose an Edge.

**For 1 Hindrance point you can:**

- Gain another skill point, or
- Gain an additional \$500

## 4) GEAR

A hero starts with the clothes on his back and 500 silver pieces of eight (sometimes listed in this book as \$500 for convenience), which have the same value as Caribdun silvers. You'll want to spend some of that now on armor, weapons, and whatever other equipment you want. You'll find a complete list on page 25–28.

## 5) BACKGROUND

Finish up by filling out your hero's background. Think a bit about where he came from, how he survived the flood if a native, or how he came to the Thousand Isles if a visitor.





# ATANI

Atani are tall, thin, glider-folk with wing-like membranes stretching from their arms to their sides. They have pinkish skin, all colors of hair and eyes, and are as free-spirited as the winds they float upon.

Atani originated in the 200-foot high boughs of carroway trees, once quite common around Caribdus. Unfortunately, carroway are exquisite white hardwoods that were ruthlessly harvested by masaquani. The Kieran Empire in particular conquered many carroway forests, killing their inhabitants for the precious wood to satisfy a long line of greedy emperors.

Before the flood, there were seven great carroway forests left in Caribdus. Now only one remains, Maroa, on the island of Cuwayo.

Maroa is a fantastic treetop city that stretches between the boughs of the trees, the lowest now only 30' above the water. Only atani may live in Maroa, making it and the Kehana Flumes the only two exclusive settlements on Caribdus.

The relative wealth of the atani have made others quite jealous. The atani look down upon a crude collection of shanties on the nearby beaches called "Below Town," where traders wait to buy the precious carroway fruits (see page 48).

**Names:** Atani names tend to be graceful, like the atani themselves: Ras Araway, Vana Harran, and Kalas Sonway are all famous heroes of the glider-folk.

## RACIAL EDGES & HINDRANCES

- **Agile:** Atani are nimble creatures, and so start with a d6 Agility instead of a d4.
- **Gliders:** Atani can glide with a Climb of -2. On the table-top, they descend 1" vertically for every 2" moved horizontally. They also gain a new Agility-based skill, Flying, at d6. This may be improved normally.

A successful Flying roll during a round in which an atani glides allows it to stay level for that round. A raise allows them to climb 1", but sacrifices 2" of horizontal distance.

A complete absence of wind ruins the atani's gliding ability, causing them to drop like stones.

- **Weak:** The atani's hollow bones make them frail compared to most other races. It costs 2 points to raise their Strength during character creation, and they must dedicate two advances to raise their Strength afterwards.





# DOREEN

Smooth blue to gray dolphin-like skin and the fierce spirit of a hunter are the hallmarks of this semi-aquatic people. Doreen don't have gills but spend a great deal of time in water. They are "breath hold" divers and can stay underwater for well over half an hour before needing to breach for fresh air.

Doreen are hunters and nomads, following fertile fishing grounds and herds of giant sea-beasts. They typically erect temporary homes on nearby islands, then abandon them when food becomes scarce. They move frequently and must swim great distances to their new locations, so most own no more than they can easily carry on their bodies—including a sharp knife.

The Sea Hags' flood forced the beach-dwelling doreen into the water. Thousands of the "gray folk" gathered at their ancestral home when the waters rose. They were eventually forced to leave their drowned island, but these natural swimmers had few boats. They swam for leagues in a great herd while trying their best to keep the weak afloat and protect them from ravenous predators. This is called "The Long Swim."

Miraculously, over a thousand made it east to the home of the kehana. There was no love lost between these two races—the savage fish-men hunted doreen whenever they caught one isolated and alone. But the kehana were the tribe's only hope. The tired gray-folk threw themselves on the mercy of the fish-men—and were slaughtered by the hundreds.

The survivors fled south, tired and chased by the relentless and bloodthirsty kehana. Less than 300 made it to the newly-formed island of Sprith.

These days, most doreen prefer to live as hermits, hunting alone until they meet their inevitable fate.

Some doreen try to find company, though even these lost souls are quiet shadows, alone even when surrounded by loyal companions.

Ship captains welcome these hunters as guides or as aquatic scouts. Their unfettered life style makes them easy travelers, and their

ability to quickly leap into the depths to unfoul anchors or fight off waterborne foes makes them a valuable addition to any crew.

**Names:** Doreen are a sad race, for very few of them are left. Most have forgotten their tribal names, which were once short simple words that can be distinguished underwater such as Fayd, Klays, Trix, or Bak. Sadly, there is rarely any reason to distinguish among multiple doreen these days.

## RACIAL EDGES & HINDRANCES

- **Coup:** Ranged weapons have little use underwater, so doreen rely on cunning and stealth to get close to their prey instead. They take great pride in getting as close as possible before making a kill.

Every time a doreen kills a foe with a Strength and Toughness at least as high as his own (including armor or other enhancements) with nothing larger than a knife, he gains a Benny.

- **Racial Enemy:** Doreen hate kehana and suffer a -4 Charisma penalty when dealing with them.

- **Sea Hunter:** Doreen are consummate hunters and know a great deal about the seas they swim.

They add +2 to any Stealth or Survival roll made while underwater.

- **Semi-Aquatic:**

Doreen are native to both water and land, and so start with a d6 in Swimming. They use their entire bodies to effortlessly glide through the water, moving their full skill level while swimming (-2" for every multiple of a doreen's Load Limit carried).

Doreen are "breath hold" divers and can stay underwater for long periods of time on just one breath of air. A doreen gains a Fatigue level after every 15 minutes he holds his breath. On reaching Incapacitation, the swimmer makes an immediate Vigor roll (and another each minute thereafter) to stay conscious. If the roll is failed the diver has drowned. Once above water, he recovers one level of Fatigue every five minutes.





# GRAEL

Grael are gray-skinned humanoids with immense layers of fat, beady black eyes, and short, dull tusks. Their obese appearance belies their muscles, which grow quite large beneath the burden of their naturally blubbery skin. Visitors sometimes call them sea-lions, a name the grael take pride in once they learn just what a "lion" is.

Grael live in prides composed of their immediate families. Most dwell in crude stone huts on the far northern island of Arfk, but many are recruited by pirates and the like for their brawn and so set sail for promises of booty and violence.

**Names:** The grael are unique in that they name themselves. When a baby grael first emerges from its mother, it clears its throat of embryonic fluid with a loud grunt. That grunt becomes its name, giving the grael such names as Rark, Flunk, Hok, and so on. It doesn't seem to matter much to the grael that many of their people share similar names.

## RACIAL EDGES & HINDRANCES

- **All Thumbs:** Grael prefer simple and durable tools designed to club, smash, or gash their foes. They aren't mentally equipped to handle advanced weapons such as crossbows, muskets, or cannons. They suffer a -2 penalty when using any sort of mechanical device.

- **Blubber:** Grael have 1 point of natural armor due to their blubbery skin, and add +4 to Fatigue rolls made to resist cold. They subtract 2 from Fatigue rolls made in extreme heat.

- **Dumb:** Grael aren't deep thinkers. It costs 2 points to raise their Smarts during character creation, and they must dedicate two advances to raise their Smarts afterwards.

- **Semi-Aquatic:** Grael begin play with a free d6 in Swimming. They do not move any faster in water than most, but like doreen, they are "breath hold" divers and can stay underwater for long periods of time on just one breath of air. A grael gains a Fatigue level after every 15 minutes he holds his breath. On reaching Incapacitation, the swimmer makes an immediate Vigor roll (and another each minute thereafter) to stay conscious. If the roll is failed the diver has drowned. Once above water, he recovers one level of Fatigue every five minutes.



- **Size +1:** Grael average 5' tall and weigh over 300 pounds, giving them +1 to their Toughness. This is in addition to the +1 Toughness bonus granted due to their blubbery hide. Their Size makes it impossible for them to use most goods that aren't specifically made for them (such as armor).

- **Slow:** Grael have a base Pace of 4 on dry land.

- **Strong:** Grael begin play with a d8 Strength instead of a d4. They may purchase their Strength up to a d12+2. The Professional and Expert Edges can increase this to d12+4.





# HUMAN

Some natives see them as an infestation. Others as saviours.

The truth is that humans are like any other race. Some are as pure as the snows of Arfk while others are as black as the Coaker Mountains.

Humans are called “visitors” or “earthlers” by the other races, though it is something of a misnomer for few believe they will ever find a way home. “Newcomers” might be a more appropriate term since they’ve now been here for 13 years.

Though they come from many places and many times, all humans have one thing in common—they were brought into Caribdus by the Maiden. At some point in their life they boarded a ship. A thick mist rolled in and the captain and crew heard what sounded like a woman crying. They pushed through the fog, expecting to find a lone survivor of some tragic shipwreck. Instead, they saw only the ghostly outline of a young girl. She hovered above the sea, weeping loudly—but as if through a distant doorway.

The sailors pressed on, whether toward her or away from her, and found themselves in unfamiliar waters. A storm approached as if from nowhere, suddenly surrounding the vessel and threatening to tear it to splinters. The ship sailed on, slowly sailing into a morass of green debris, jutting timbers, and the bloated corpses of things that weren’t quite human.

At this point tales often diverge. Some ships never made it out of the Flotsam Sea, but survivors were picked up by scavengers long after. Other vessels pressed through the green morass and were attacked by long-dead sailors crawling up the bow from the depths, or alien octopons.

The humans of Caribdus can come from any country on Earth, from any time between 1400 and 1815. Any person who ever set foot on a ship can be drawn into the mists by the Maiden.

Only children of 13 years or younger can be natives. Humans and masaquani can produce offspring as well. The child physically resembles his parents’ features as with any babe, but mechanically he must choose to be either a human or a masaquani.

Humans and other races, even the atani, do not produce offspring, though matings are commonplace.

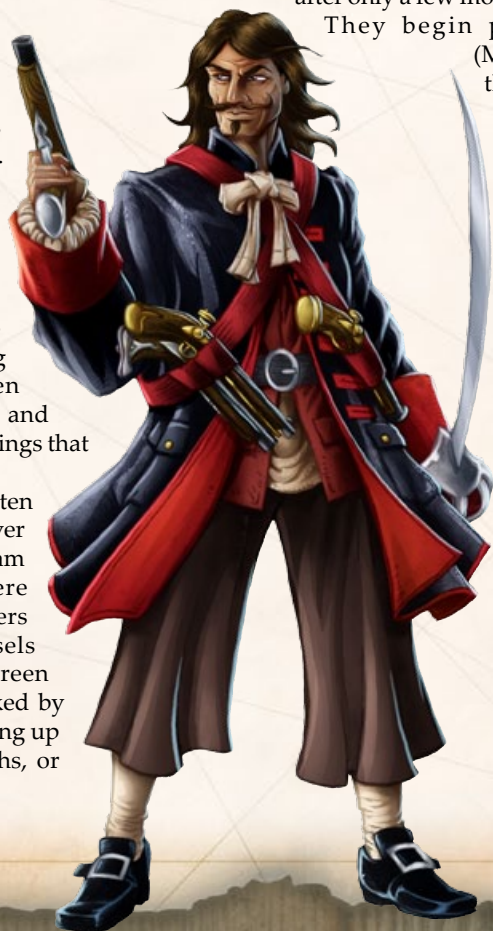
Language is a major barrier to those who first arrive in Caribdus. Fortunately, the tongue spoken by the rest of the world is masaquani, and it is quite easy for humans to learn.

## RACIAL EDGES & HINDRANCES

- **Free Edge:** Humans begin play with an Edge of their choice. They must meet the requirements of the Edge as usual.

- **Masaquani:** Humans can speak masaquani after only a few months among the Caribduns.

They begin play with Knowledge (Masaquani) at d6, allowing them to engage in normal conversations, but not duplicate specific regional accents.





# KEHANA

Kehana are fish-like humanoids who originated in Caribodus' seas long before she was flooded by the Sea Hags. Kehana have many colors, much like the fish from which they ascended. Most are gray, blue, or deep red in color, though some are jet black and others have vibrant stripes or spots of yellow or green. All have short fins that run from their brows to the small of their backs, and this can be many different colors as well. Sharp teeth and fish-like eyes are their most prominent facial features.

The "fish men," as visitors call them, can breathe in both air and water with little difficulty. They tend to dry out quickly, however, and die if denied hydration.

Kehana hunt in packs, cruelly toying with their prey before finally devouring it "raw and wiggling."

Scholars who try to claim that kehana are just a different culture are dead wrong—as a race they really are cruel and callous, even to their own. The most famous example of their cruelty occurred when the last of the doreen swam to their flumes and asked for shelter. The kehana feasted on the gray folk for days, then chased the survivors south until they were finally overtaken or escaped.

Kehana heroes are those who have left their race to join the surface world. They have grown tired of the water-world, or perhaps have even decided the fish-folk are backward savages. These self-appointed exiles want to be more like the surface races—particularly humans and masaquani. They tend to wear fancy clothes (though often inappropriately) and spend their Booty on the trappings of what they consider "civilization."

**Names:** Kehana have burbling names that are unpronounceable to others. They rarely rename themselves, but are often given names by others—usually visitors who delight in giving them inappropriate monikers. Reginald, Red Stripe, Harold, and so on have all graced the fish men.

## RACIAL EDGES & HINDRANCES

- **Aquatic:** Kehana have webbed fingers and toes, and can move at their full Swimming skill while in water (–2" per load limit penalty). They may speak underwater as well. Kehana begin play with a free d6 in Swimming.

- **Dehydration:** Kehana must immerse themselves in water (salt or fresh) at least one hour out of every 24. Those who don't are automatically Fatigued each day until they are Incapacitated. The day after that, they perish. Most kehana simply jump in the ocean and drink of the sea around them to avoid this fate.

- **Habit (Unwholesome Appetite):** Kehana prefer to consume their food live—"raw and wiggling," as they say. Atani, humans, masaquani and the more civilized races find this disgusting. The fish men suffer –2 to their Charisma, except among other kehana.

- **Racial Enemy:** Kehana hate doreen and vice-versa. Kehana societies hunt the weak "gray folk" relentlessly and inflict grotesque tortures upon them. Kehana suffer a –4 Charisma penalty when dealing with doreen.

- **Teeth and Claws:** Kehana have sharp teeth and claws. They can attack with either as a standard Fighting attack for Str+d4 damage.





# KRAKEN

Kraken are tall, slender, red to purple-skinned humanoids with squid-like features. Though they are ill-liked by most for their aloof and mysterious ways, many are naturally gifted elementalists. Such individuals are highly sought after by ship's captains, but rarely welcomed by their crews.

The kraken once lived in a single great city, half-submerged and half-afloat, called Tar Tarris. They had the greatest fleet in the world, comprised of a dozen Great Ships and thousands of smaller attack vessels. This great fleet sailed against the Sea Hags soon after the witches rose but was destroyed. Worse, the witches retaliated by leveling Tar Tarris, killing thousands more innocent kraken in their rage.

Now a single Great Ship remains. High Admiral Caspian of the kraken gathered all those who survived. He kept a small number of his greatest warrior-mages aboard the Great Ship and told the rest to wander the world until they found a way to defeat the witches.

The kraken Admiral still wanders the Thousand Isles on some great and mysterious quest unknown to all others. The rest of his people continue the mission, or have given up and go about their own personal quests.

These wanderers are much like the doreen, whom they admire. Both are the last of their race, and will probably never see their people truly thrive again.

Though most kraken are mages, some are fierce warriors as well. Those who once served in the kraken navy wield feather-light scimitars engraved with exotic images of the sea. Kraken bone swords are enchanted, but only for the kraken themselves.

**Names:** Kraken's true names are unpronounceable bumbles and glurps. Wary of becoming mocked like the kehana, they name themselves. These vary, but tend to be single long words such as Keraptis, Jaraquay, Telimos, and Faniferous.

## RACIAL EDGES & HINDRANCES

- **Aquatic:** Kraken have webbed fingers and toes, and can move at their full Swimming skill while in water (–2" per load limit penalty). They can speak underwater as well, allowing them to cast spells normally while submerged. Kraken begin play with a d6 in Swimming.

- **Dehydration:** Kraken must immerse themselves in water (salt or fresh) at least one hour out of every 24. Those who don't are automatically Fatigued each day until they are Incapacitated. The day after that, they perish.

Kraken mages with *elemental manipulation (water)* use the higher of their Vigor or Spellcasting skill to avoid dehydration Fatigue.

- **Natural Talent:** Kraken have a natural affinity for elemental magic. They start with 10 additional Power Points. Those without an Arcane Background simply ignore this benefit, but may make use of it immediately if they later become elementalists.





# MASQUANI

The dominant species of Caribdis before the flood were the masquani (mass-a-kwan-ee). They are near-human in appearance, but with far more exotic and varied skin and hair colors (deep blue to bright pink). They also seem to have more variance. Fat masquani can easily exceed 400 pounds, tall individuals can reach seven feet, and short masquani look almost like dwarves of human legend.

Masquani cities were the largest and most like Earth's in the dark ages, but without a feudal tradition or knights and armor. Elemental magic replaced the development of science in many realms, though a few forward-thinking rulers, such as those of Ograpog, emphasized both in their nations' universities.

Before the flood, there were two great masquani empires and a number of lesser states. By far the most enlightened was that of Ograpog. All races were welcome there, and the laws were established to treat all individuals equally. In practice, aggressive species such as kehana and half-ugaks suffered some discrimination, but the rules of Ograpog were at least set up to discourage such things.

The Kieran Empire was—and is—quite different. Other races are not welcome there, and the slightest offense could land a stray grael, ugak, kehana, or scurillian in irons. Kraken are revered there, not because of any inherent acceptance of their race but because of the immense power kraken mages can wield.

Like all races of the Thousand Isles, Masquani did not have gunpowder prior to the arrival of the visitors, but they have adapted to its use very quickly.

## MASQUANI CITY-STATES

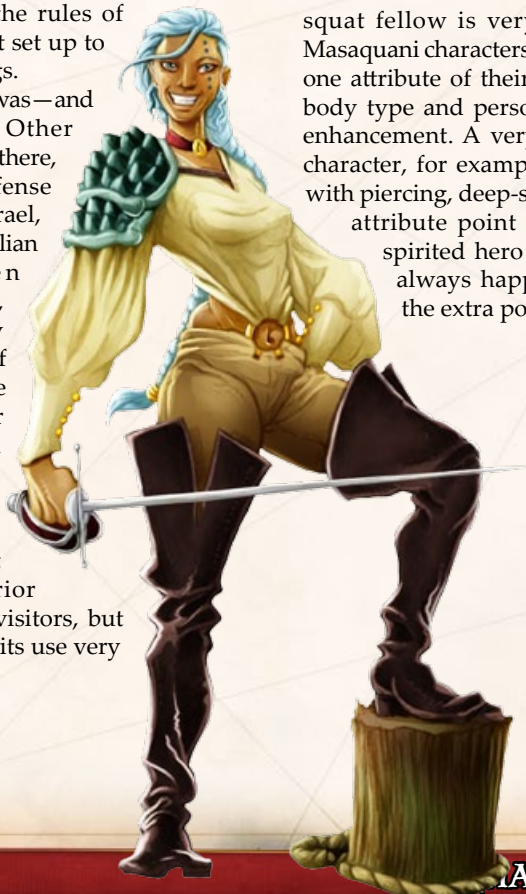
Two large masquani nations existed before the flood—Ograpog and Kiera. Ograpog was the name of both the island and the city-state that ruled over it. The Kieran Empire's borders are now deep underwater, but what remains are two large islands and several smaller ones. The people of Ograpog and Kiera have engaged in many wars in their past, so grudges remain and fights between former soldiers, sailors, and even common citizens are frequent in the bars and taverns of Caribdis.

Several independent masquani confederations existed prior to the flood, but their people had little sense of common identity. Masquani consider themselves from Ograpog, Kiera, or "somewhere else."

**Names:** Masquani first and last names always start with the same first letter, such as San Salls, Daris Drak, and so on. Children are given the last name of their mothers.

## RACIAL EDGES & HINDRANCES

- **Iconic:** Most masquani are iconic—a tall, thin individual is very agile while a short, squat fellow is very strong or very tough. Masquani characters have an extra point in any one attribute of their choice. Their character's body type and personality should reflect this enhancement. A very strong, very intelligent character, for example, might be solidly built with piercing, deep-set eyes (and take the extra attribute point in Smarts). A dumb but spirited hero has a vacant stare but is always happy and upbeat (and puts the extra point into Spirit).





## RED MEN (HALF-UGAK)

The Red Men of Torath-Ka are savage barbarians who look something like red-tinged neanderthals. They are massive brutes with dirty brown hair and brown eyes and limited intellects.

Most are too brutal to put aboard ships with good-hearted crews, but they are sometimes captured and pushed toward their captor's foes as "shock troops."

Occasionally, Red Men escape and mate with humans or masaquani. The children of these (typically unwilling) pairings are called a variety of things, none of them polite. Half-ugak or—incorrectly—Red Men are the least offensive.

Half-ugaks usually have terrible childhoods. Most who survive are raised in secret by their parents or sold into slavery from an early age. Such rearing does little to improve their natural hostility.

Pirates and privateers alike find half-ugaks fantastic crewmen.

They are simple enough to obey orders yet barbaric enough to terrify many foes before a shot is fired or an axe is swung.

## UGAK RAIDS

A few years before the flood, ugak raids against southwestern Ograpog dramatically increased. A large number of half-ugaks resulted from this period. King Amemnus chased the Red Men back to their jungle highlands (now Torath-Ka), but a number of newborn half-breeds were left in the path of this brutal campaign.

**Names:** Half-ugaks have single, short names such as Ug, Lak, or Tonga if they were raised by Red Men. It is considered rude to give a half-ugak a masaquani family name, but a few brave souls have done so regardless.

## RACIAL EDGES & HINDRANCES

- **All Thumbs:** Half-ugaks do not easily understand complex devices, including clocks, crossbows, cannons, pistols, and the like. They suffer a -2 penalty when using such contraptions.

- **Clueless:** Half-ugaks are not worldly creatures. They may ignore this penalty only when checking for common "survival" type skills, such as where to find shelter, whether or not a particular food item is poisonous, and so on.

- **Dumb:** Half-ugak brains are less developed than most. It costs 2 points to raise their Smarts during character creation, and they must dedicate two advances to raise their Smarts afterwards.

- **Outsider:** Half-ugaks are universally reviled or at least shunned by other races as savages. They suffer -2 to Charisma.

- **Strong:** Red Men are strong, as are their half-breed children. They start with a d6 Strength instead of a d4.

- **Tough:** Half-ugaks are hearty souls. They begin play with a d6 Vigor instead of a d4.

- **Tough as Nails:** Half-ugak player characters begin play with the Tough as Nails Edge.



## SCURILLIANS

Scurillians are unique among Caribduns, for they are the product of tampering by a kraken archmage named Tal Rathus hundreds of years ago. Rathus captured a number of the giant crabs found on so many of Caribdus' shores even before the flood and experimented on them with a strange mix of elemental sorcery—and some say dark magic. The creatures gained true sentience and revolted against their creator. Rathus died beneath their snapping pincers, but the “scurillians” were born.

These strange creatures have never been fully accepted by most of Caribdus, but the genius given them by Rathus makes them valuable accountants, scientists, navigators, quartermasters, and even mages.

Though most avoid combat, they are well-suited to it when pressed. In addition to grasping arms, hard shells, and telescopic eyes, they also have two sharp, vice-like pincers.

The crab folk are unsocial creatures and so do not form their own exclusive communities, but rather live in and among others as their work takes them. Scurillians do not couple well either and rarely “marry.” Because of this there are perhaps less than 200 of these creatures in all of Caribdus.

**Names:** Scurillians have single short names that always end with an “s” sound: Equais, Sachas, Kalsas, Weavas. Scurillians do not have last names.

### RACIAL EDGES & HINDRANCES

- **Pincers (Str+d6):** Scurillians use their humanoid arms normally. They may also attack with one or both pincers as well. Attacking with one pincer does not incur a multi-action penalty, no matter what else they do that turn. Attacking with both pincers inflicts a multi-action penalty on both pincer attacks, but has no bearing one way or another on other actions taken that round. In effect, the pincers act as an entirely separate creature. The “claws” are considered ambidextrous as well.

If not being used to attack, scurillians add +2 to Strength rolls when grappling due to the vice-like nature of their claws.

- **Mean:** Without fail, a crab-man's natural state is one of constant irritation. They find others dull and too-easily excitable. Their constant “crabbiness” subtracts 2 from their Charisma.

- **Keen Mind:** Scurillians' brains are wired to remember details and easily deal with mathematics. They add +2 to any Common Knowledge roll made to remember details of some past event or to any Knowledge roll that requires mathematics or memorization of some sort.

- **Shell:** Scurillians have a hard shell over their torso, adding +3 to their Toughness in that area. They have only 1 point of armor on their arms and legs. Scurillians gain no benefit from other armor (assuming it can even be fitted somehow) unless it is higher than that of their shell. If so, use that armor value instead—they do not “stack.”

- **Telescopic Eyes:** Scurillians gain +2 to Notice rolls made to detect anyone sneaking up behind them, and can peer over cover with little exposure. Targeting an eyeball suffers a –8 penalty. A hit for at least 2 points of damage destroys that eye and makes the crabman blinded and Shaken. Scurillian eyes do grow back after six months (and several molting cycles!).





## NEW HINDRANCES

### BRANDED (MAJOR)

The character was caught committing acts of piracy at some point in the past. He escaped the noose but received a brand on his face labeling him a pirate. He suffers -2 Charisma among non-pirates. Any vessel he is on that is boarded by privateers is thoroughly searched and the cargo manifest scrutinized. If the character is caught committing an act of piracy by authorities such as the Spanish Guild or the British East India Company, he is summarily executed.

### JINGOISTIC (MINOR/MAJOR)

The character dislikes people from other cultures and believes his own culture to be far superior—a jingoistic Englishman, for example, dislikes masaquani and grael as much as the French or Spanish. He cannot help belittling other cultures at every opportunity.

A character taking the Minor version has -2 Charisma among other cultures. The penalty increases to -4 for the Major Hindrance.

### LANDLUBBER (MINOR)

Not everyone in Caribdis is a sailor. For some, the workings of a ship are incomprehensible.

The character cannot buy Boating with his starting skill points. Although he can learn it through advancements, the character never quite grasps the basics and receives a -2 penalty to all Boating rolls.

### SEASICK (MAJOR)

Suffering from seasickness on Caribdis is a big problem. The character must make a Vigor check each time he boards a ship. On a success, the character manages to control his sickness. With a failure he suffers a -2 penalty to all trait rolls until he spends an hour on dry land.

Woe betide the character when caught in a storm! He must make a Vigor roll at the start of each round until the storm abates or his sickness kicks in. He still rolls if already suffering seasickness—a failed Vigor roll increases the penalty to -4.

### SQUANDEROUS (MINOR)

Your hero is particularly loose with his resources, sometimes spending the equivalent of a year's pay in a single week of drunken debauchery. The cost for carousing is doubled! See page 38 for a complete description.

## NEW EDGES

Arcane Resistance is not appropriate for 50 *Fathoms*, but see Mark of Torquemada (p. 23).

### HEROISM

The heroes and villains of Caribdis are reckless and daring. During character creation only, your hero may take one Seasoned Edge. He must meet all other requirements for the Edge as usual. This Edge isn't "free," the usual Rank requirement is just waived.

## BACKGROUND EDGES

### ARCANE BACKGROUND (MAGIC)

**Requirements:** Novice, Smarts d6+, Human, Kraken, Masaquani, or Scurillian

There is only one type of Arcane Background available to player characters in Caribdis: Magic. Such characters are called elemental mages, and must choose a single element—earth, fire, water, or air—to serve.

Mages' power comes from the bound spirits of these raw elements. Their spells are limited and specialized, however, so young wizards must choose carefully. Water wizards can quench a crew's thirst and heal their wounds. Fire mages excel at pure destruction. Earth mages are defensive in nature and handy to have along when exploring the Thousand Isles. Wind wizards serve utilitarian purposes, keeping ships moving when becalmed or slowing foes.

See pages 50 through 54 for a list of available spells.

Mages can master more than one element with time and patience. See the Elemental Mastery Edge for more information.

### BOOTY!

**Requirements:** Novice, Boating d6+, Fighting d6+, Shooting d6+

The character served as a pirate in the past and still retains some of his past booty. He begins the game with a roll on the King's Ransom entry of the Booty Table (p. 104). Any relic found should be determined randomly.

### KRAKEN BONE SWORD & ARMOR

**Requirements:** Novice, Kraken

Kraken who served in the Kraken Navy were equipped with enchanted bone swords and armor. A character with this Edge still retains his gear from his service, or perhaps inherited it from a fallen companion or relative.

The kraken bone sword and armor are formed from the skeletons of long-dead sea beasts called leviathans. The blade is a "long sword" that does Str+d10 damage and weighs only four pounds. The armor forms a rib cage and "bracers" along the arms. It offers +3 Armor and weighs only 15 pounds. The sword does only d6 damage in the hands of a non-kraken, and the armor offers only +1 protection. Neither are considered magical when worn by other races.

## NATURAL SWIMMER

**Requirements:** Novice, not available to Aquatic and Semi-Aquatic races.

Your hero wasn't literally born in the water, but some might believe he was. He takes to it like a fish and can hold his breath longer than most others. Natural swimmers add +2 to their Swimming rolls, add +1 to their Swimming Pace, and can hold their breath 50% longer than others of their species. In a world mostly covered in 50 fathoms of water, this Edge can be quite important.

## COMBAT EDGES

### BILGE RAT

**Requirements:** Novice, Agility d8+, Fighting d8+

Scuttling around in the bowels of the ship doesn't suit every sailor, but this character has learned to adjust to the cramped conditions below deck.

The character no longer suffers the -2 penalty when fighting below decks (see page 36). If the weapon has a Reach value the -2 penalty applies as normal.

### IMPROVED BILGE RAT

**Requirements:** Seasoned, Bilge Rat

The character can use any weapon below decks without incurring the -2 penalty for fighting in cramped conditions.

### CLOSE FIGHTING

**Requirements:** Novice, Agility d8+, Fighting d8+

This Edge is for skilled knife-fighters such as the doreen, who pride themselves on defeating their opponents up close and personal.

Close fighters move inside most weapons' reach, adding a bonus to his Parry equal to the

enemy weapon's Reach +1 for that particular foe. No bonus is granted if the foe is unarmed or using a knife or other small weapon.

*Example: A doreen with Close Fighting battles a kehana with a cutlass (Reach 0). The doreen's Parry is raised by +1.*

## IMPROVED CLOSE FIGHTING

**Requirements:** Novice, Close Fighting

Close fighters train to go for vital areas and weak spots for quick and lethal kills. The attacker adds a bonus to his Fighting roll equal to his enemy's Reach +1.

## DIRTY FIGHTER

**Requirements:** Seasoned

There is no honor among thieves, and Caribbus has more than its fair share of scurvy dogs. Those with this Edge will do anything to win out in a fight.

This scoundrel is particularly good at tricks. He adds +2 to all Trick maneuver rolls.

## REALLY DIRTY FIGHTER

**Requirements:** Seasoned, Dirty Fighter

The knave is extremely skilled in tactical deceit. By describing the trick and spending a Benny, he may automatically get the drop on any single opponent.

## OVERSIZED WEAPON MASTER

**Requirements:** Seasoned, Fighting d8+

The character may use two-handed melee weapons with one hand. The minimum Strength for using the weapon still applies as normal.

## RAMMING SPEED!

**Requirements:** Seasoned, Boating d8+

When all else fails, a ship can be used as a weapon. The captain receives a +2 bonus to perform a Ram maneuver if captaining the vessel. In addition, the ship takes only half damage from ramming attacks it delivers (one-quarter if the ship is fitted with a ram).



## LEADERSHIP EDGES

### BOARD 'EM

**Requirements:** Novice, Command, Throwing d8+

The character is a master at judging when to launch grapples against enemy vessels. When he leads the boarding party group Throwing rolls to grapple an enemy vessel receive a +4 bonus.

### MASTER OF COMMANDER

**Requirements:** Seasoned, Smarts d8, Boating d10+, Intimidation d8+, Command, must be sole Captain of the vessel when the Edge is used

Crews who serve under these skilled leaders add +2 to their Boating rolls.

## POWER EDGES

### ELEMENTAL MASTERY

**Requirements:** Seasoned, Arcane Background  
Elemental mages choose a single element when first starting out. As they advance in experience and wisdom, they may slowly learn to master other elements as well. There is a steep price to pay for this, however.

Elemental Mastery may be purchased as an Edge at any time (after becoming at least Seasoned), but it may only be taken once per Rank. (Legendary characters may take the Edge every other time they advance instead.)

Unfortunately, the elemental spirits are jealous creatures. Each additional element mastered

subtracts 1 from all of the mage's Spellcasting rolls. If an earth mage begins to learn the secrets of water, for instance, the earth spirits become offended and distant. A character who knows two elements suffers a -1 penalty, and one who knows three suffers a constant -2 penalty.

Spells that may be learned by multiple schools, such as *elemental manipulation*, are automatically known for all schools. If a water mage takes Elemental Mastery (Fire), for example, he can now use the *elemental manipulation* spell for both elements.

**Archmage:** When all four elements have been mastered, the character is called an archmage. At this point he has managed to strike a balance between earth, fire, water, and air. The spirits are appeased and he no longer suffers any penalties. He may also choose spells from any of the four elemental schools.

There is only one known archmage on all of Caribbus, Tressa the Red (though it is rumored several kraken archmages may yet live). Tressa lives in a magical island atop a geyser in the Teeth (see page 48).

## PROFESSIONAL EDGES

### BOARDER

**Requirements:** Novice, Boating d6+, Climbing d8+, Throwing d8+

Many captains instill courage in their men by offering additional rewards to the first man



to board an enemy vessel. Few survive to claim their prize. Through skill and luck the character has survived dozens of boarding actions and feels empowered by the adrenaline rush.

All Climbing and Throwing rolls involving ropes are made at +2. Anytime he is the first allied character to board an enemy vessel he receives a Benny.

## GUNSMITH

**Requirements:** Novice, Smarts d8+, Knowledge (Metallurgy) d8+, Repair d8+

Gunsmiths can repair broken firearms and cannons given fire, metal, suitable tools, and a Repair roll. This takes four hours per device, or half that with a raise. They may also use molds to make shot for these weapons (see page 26).

## MARK OF TORQUEMADA

**Requirements:** Novice

The dread inquisitor Tomas de Torquemada controls a legion of underlings to help him in his nefarious quest—the complete extermination of all Caribdis' mages. Those who pledge themselves to his cause, honestly and truly, are made inquisitors and painfully branded upon their left breast with the sign of the cross. From this day forward, the character gains the Improved Arcane Resistance Edge (which is not otherwise available in this setting).

The Edge comes with a price though. Torquemada knows what is in a person's heart, and does not impart his brand to those with no intention of fulfilling their duties. The character is expected to bring Torquemada a minimum of one mage every six months. Those who fail are not banished, but are sent after more powerful targets to regain the High Inquisitor's trust.

## MERCHANT

**Requirements:** Novice, Persuasion d8+

A character with this Edge is skilled in buying and selling large lots of cargo for resale. Commodities on the Master Trading Table (page 43) cost 25% less.

## MASTER MERCHANT

**Requirements:** Novice, Merchant

The merchant now sells cargoes for 25% more than listed on the Master Trading Table (page 43).

## MUSKETEER

**Requirements:** Novice, Shooting d8+, may not have the All Thumbs Hindrance

Some characters have a natural affinity with firearms, or have trained for years to load quickly even while under fire.

Characters with this Edge can reload a firearm in a single action. They may walk while reloading, but may not run. The Edge does not apply to cannon, only to personal arms.

## ROPE MONKEY

**Requirements:** Seasoned, Agility d8+, Climbing d10+

Rope Monkeys are those sailors who may as well have been born in the rigging. They always seem to know just the right rope to cut and pull to swing to some other part of the ship and can ride the lines down to avoid an otherwise nasty fall.

Rope Monkey has two functions. The first is to allow a character on the exterior of the ship to move to any other exposed part of the ship by swinging from the rigging. This counts as the character's movement and requires a Climbing roll. If successful, he moves to any other external area of the ship. He may not move further this action even by "running." With a raise, he can move and gains momentary surprise on any foes, adding +2 to any Fighting attacks and damage rolls for the round. This can also be combined with a Trick maneuver.

Rope Monkeys may also use this ability in forests with tall trees. In that case, the Climbing roll is made at -2 and the character may reposition himself within d10".

A foe who wants to take his free attack at a Rope Monkey swinging out of melee must subtract 2 from his roll. The same applies to characters with First Strike—they suffer a -2 penalty to their Fighting roll.

Rope Monkeys may also make a Climbing roll any time they fall from a ship's rigging (and are conscious). Success means they take half the usual falling damage by grabbing onto ropes as they tumble. With a raise, the sailor manages to slide down a rope and suffers no damage.

## SCOUT

**Requirements:** Seasoned

Scouts have learned to watch the signs and trust their instincts when it comes to navigating Caribdis.

Anytime the Game Master draws a face card while traveling (indicating a random encounter has occurred—see page 59), a Scout may make



a Notice roll at -2. If successful, he detects the hazard, creature, or situation at the earliest opportunity, likely giving his party time to avoid it or at least attack it on their own terms.

Scouts also gain +2 to Notice rolls made to avoid surprise in tactical situations. (Make this a cooperative roll if there are multiple Scouts.)

## SHIP'S CARPENTER

**Requirements:** Novice, Boating d6+, Knowledge (Carpentry) d6+, Repair d8+

The character may use his knowledge of carpentry to repair damage to a ship without taking it to a dry dock. The ship must still be careened, however (see page 37).

Repairing each wound requires a successful Repair roll, takes 1d4 days, and requires a half cargo space worth of timber per wound. With a failure the time and materials are ruined. With a raise, the time is halved. A number of crew equal to the ship's base Toughness are required. Time can be halved with double the crew, or time is doubled every time that number is halved.

Critical wounds require a successful Repair (-2) roll and take 1d6 days to fix.

## TREASURE HOUND

**Requirements:** Novice, Luck

Some scalawags are just luckier than others when it comes to finding treasure. If there's a single Treasure Hound in a party, the GM increases the value of Booty generated from the Booty Table by 25% (page 104). Even better, the chance of finding magical items is increased by 10% as well! Multiple Treasure Hounds in a party have no additional effect.

## WHALER

**Requirements:** Novice, Agility d8+, Boating d6+, Throwing d8+

Although the norwhale is the most well-known, there are other species of whale swimming beneath the seas of Caribdis. Their bone, flesh, and fat are tradeable commodities in most settlements—but first you have to catch them. Whalers earn their living hunting these behemoths, stripping their carcasses, and selling the components.

A whaler's main weapon is not his harpoon but his knowledge of whales. Any fool can throw a harpoon—the trick is knowing when to throw it and where to aim. A whaler gets +2 to Throwing rolls and inflicts +4 damage against aquatic creatures of Size +3 or greater.

See page 44 for details on the grisly practice of whaling.

## SOCIAL EDGES

### FRUGAL

**Requirements:** Novice, Smarts d8+

Your sailor knows that fools and their money are soon parted. The total price for carousing is halved (page 38). He also adds +2 to his Smarts rolls to avoid getting drunk.

### GOOD OR BAD REPUTATION

**Requirements:** Veteran

Whether the character is branded a hero or villain, he has earned a reputation across Caribdis. He may add his Charisma to Intimidation or Persuasion rolls. A negative score is treated as positive for this purpose (and the character has a bad reputation).

## WEIRD EDGES

### STORM CHASER

**Requirements:** Novice, Boating d8+

When the weather is at its worst the character is at his best, seeming to read the storm like he would a book. Such characters are respected for their skill but feared for their love of a good storm.

The character receives +2 to all Boating rolls made during a storm. In addition, the character may draw two cards each round during a storm and keep the best card. If the character has the Wind Sense Edge as well he draws three cards total.

### WIND SENSE

**Requirements:** Novice, Smarts d8+, Boating d8+

The character has an almost supernatural knowledge of air and wind. He can sense changes in the weather and wind direction long before they actually happen.

If the character is piloting a ship he gains +2 to Boating rolls during Contact, using his knowledge of the winds to outrun and catch prey.

In addition, the character may draw two cards each round during a storm and keeps the best. If the character has the Storm Chaser Edge as well he draws three cards.

## GEAR

The gear listed below is commonly available on Caribdis. Some of it is manufactured in the Thousand Isles, some has been transported aboard ships from Earth.

Every port with a population of at least 1000 has a general store, market, or street vendor with some of the items on the following lists.

### CURRENCY

The standard currency of Caribdis is silver and gold coins. Visitors from Earth equate these as pieces of eight and doubloons, and mix them freely. Eight silvers equal one gold coin.

For ease of use, \$ is used to denote pieces of eight in *50 Fathoms*.

The standard pay for a sailor on Caribdis is 50 pieces of eight a month. This is actually more coins than most of the sailors from Earth would have received, but has about the same relative value.

Native coins are stamped with the image of old Ograpog or Kiera, the only two nations to mint coins. Most coins from the visitors are Spanish, though a fair number of French and English coins are in circulation as well.

### SELLING GOODS

Adventurers often come into a fair amount of booty and cargo. Gems and jewelry are easy enough to sell or trade, but unloading more mundane items such as swords, muskets, and even ships can be a bit more tricky. One or two items can sometimes be sold at near full-price if the right buyer can be found, but no merchant pays full price for such items.

A Streetwise roll in any town allows a seller to unload all of his mundane booty or cargo for a quarter its normal value. A raise finds a buyer who will take it all for half the list price. This roll may only be attempted once per week.

### SELLING SHIPS

Finding a buyer for a captured ship requires a Streetwise roll. Success means a buyer is found who will pay 25% of the ship's list price. A raise finds a buyer who will pay 50%. This roll may be attempted once per week per port.

Subtract 25% of *that* total for each wound the ship has suffered that has not been repaired.

Crews are advised to keep a savvy trader aboard to sell the many goods they're likely to come across during their adventures.

## MUNDANE ITEMS

Item	Cost	Weight
Bedroll	25	4
Blanket	10	4
Candle (2" radius)	1	1
Compass	500	1
Flask (ceramic)	5	1
Flint and steel	3	1
Grapple gun	500	14
Grappling hook & line	10	2
Gunsmith's Tools	300	5
Hammer	10	1
Lantern (4" radius)	25	3
Lantern, bullseye	50	3
Lockpicks	200	1
Manacles	15	2
Medicine chest	1,200	10
Oil (for lantern; 1 pint)	2	1
Pick	10	6
Quiver	5	2
(holds 20 arrows or bolts)		
Rope (20 yards)	5	15
Leather satchel	10	2
Map of Caribdis	100	1
Sailcloth	5/yard	3
Shovel	5	5
Soap	1	1/5
Spyglass	100	2
Torch (1 hour, 4" radius)	1	1
Waterskin	1	1
Whistle	2	-
Whetstone	5	1
<b>Clothing</b>		
Normal clothing	20	—
Formal clothing	200	—
Winter gear (cloak)	200	3
Winter boots	100	1
<b>Food</b>		
Provisions	1	1
(ship's rations for 1 day)		
Cheap meal	5	1
Good meal (restaurant)	15+	—
Trail rations	10	5
(5 meals; keeps 1 week)		
<b>Drink</b>		
Cheap stuff, bottle (grog)	1	1
Good stuff, bottle (wine)	10	1
<b>Women (or Men)</b>		
Cheap Date	20	—
Upscale wench	50+	—



## GEAR NOTES

**Candle:** A candle provides clear light in a 2" radius for two hours. A candle blows out if the character holding it runs or is in strong wind.

**Grappling hook and line:** A grappling hook is attached to a light line of variable length but usually no more than 15 yards). The user throws the hook just as if he were attacking a target. It has a range of 3/6/12. If it "hits," the hook has set and can hold up to 200 pounds of weight.

**Grapple Gun:** Grapple guns are grenade launchers modified to fire a grappling hook and line. When used during chases a boarding maneuver may be attempted when the ship has advantage and a Jack or better—instead of a King or better. A Shooting roll is required in place of the usual Throwing roll, however.

**Gunsmith's Tools:** Repairing firearms or cannons with this toolkit provides a +2 bonus (see the Gunsmith Edge on page 24). It also includes bullet molds which allow the user to create 12 lead balls in an hour with a successful Repair roll. A raise halves the time. A gunsmith may purchase additional molds for \$50 each, and may work with up to four at one time. (Make one roll for the entire batch.) The metal costs \$1 per ball.

**Lantern:** A lantern provides light in a 4" radius for three hours per pint of oil. There is a 50% chance the lantern breaks if dropped, and a 1 in 6 chance it sets normal combustibles alight. (See the rules for fire in *Savage Worlds*.)

**Lantern, Bullseye:** A bullseye lantern acts as a regular lantern, but also has a shuttered reflective hood that can focus light through a small opening. When used in this way, it provides a cone of light equal to the Cone Template. There is a 50% chance the lantern breaks if dropped.

**Lockpicks:** A character who tries to pick a lock without these tools suffers a -2 penalty to his roll.

**Medicine Chest:** Diseases are commonplace on crowded ships. A medicine chest, a rare item on Caribdis, contains 10 doses of various powders and tonics for treating sickness (but not injuries). A surgeon using a chest has a +2 bonus to Healing rolls to treat diseases. Each use of the chest consumes 1d4 units of medicine.

Restocking the chest costs \$50 per unit of medicine. Use the Master Trading Table to determine the number of units available in a town.

**Oil (1 pint):** Besides providing light when used in lanterns, oil can also be used as a weapon. This is most commonly done by putting oil in a ceramic flask with a lit fuse. The flask is then thrown at the target where it breaks and the fuse sets the oil alight. Lighting a fuse requires 1d6 rounds with flint and steel (1 round with open flame), so it's best to light the fuse before a fight starts (a fuse stays alight for 10 minutes).

The flask's range is 3/6/12. Anything it hits is set alight on a d6 roll of 5-6, causing 1d10 damage per round. The fire has a chance of spreading as usual.

**Pick:** Picks are unbalanced as weapons and so inflict a -1 penalty on the user's Parry and Fighting scores. Their damage is Str+d6.

**Rope (20 yards):** The rope can safely handle 300 pounds without worry. For every 50 pounds over that, roll 1d6 every minute or whenever the rope suffers a sudden stress. On a 6, the rope breaks under the strain.

**Torch (1 hour):** A torch provides clear light in a 4" radius. Properly prepared torches last for one hour. Temporary torches can be made with some wood, rags, and 1 pint of oil for every 10 torches. These last half as long, however.



## ARMOR

Type	Armor	Weight*	Cost	Notes
<b>Personal</b>				
Kraken Bone Armor	+3	20	—	Covers torso, arms, head; see page 20
Leather	+1	15	50	Covers torso, arms, legs
Chain	+2	25	300	Covers torso, arms
Plate Corselet	+3	25	400	Covers torso
Pot Helm	+3	4	75	50% chance of protecting against head shot

### Shields

Small Shield (Buckler)	—	8	25	+1 Parry
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*\*This is effective weight when worn. Most armor weighs quite a bit more when carried rather than worn.*

## HAND WEAPONS

Type	Damage	Weight	Cost	Notes
<b>Axes and Mauls</b>				
Axe	Str+d6	2	50	
Battle Axe	Str+d8	10	100	
Grael Battleball	Str+d10	25	100	Parry -1; Reach 1
Great Axe	Str+d10	15	250	AP 1; Parry -1; requires 2 hands
Maul	Str+d8	20	250	AP 2 vs rigid armor; Parry -1; requires 2 hands
Warhammer	Str+d6	8	50	AP 1 vs rigid armor
<b>Blades</b>				
Dagger	Str+d4	1	25	
Great Sword	Str+d10	12	250	Parry -1; requires 2 hands
Hook	Str+d4	-	20	See notes
Marlinspike	Str+d4	1	10	AP 1
Rapier	Str+d4	3	150	Parry +1
Short Sword	Str+d6	4	50	Includes sabers and cutlasses
Long Sword	Str+d8	8	200	Includes scimitars
<b>Blunt Weapons</b>				
Club/Belaying Pin	Str+d4	1	5	
Brass Knuckles	Str+d4	1	20	
<b>Flails</b>				
Jumani Chain	Str+d8	15	20	Reach 1; requires 2 hands; See notes
<b>Pole Arms</b>				
Gaff	Str+d4	6	10	Reach 1; requires 2 hands; See notes
Halberd	Str+d8	15	300	Reach 1; requires 2 hands
Harpoon	Str+d6	10	100	Reach 1; requires 2 hands
Staff	Str+d4	8	5	Parry +1; Reach 1; requires 2 hands
Spear	Str+d6	5	25	Parry +1; Reach 1; requires 2 hands



## RANGED WEAPONS

Type	Range	Damage	RoF	Cost	Weight	Shots	Min Str.
Axe, throwing	3/6/12	Str+d6	1	50	2	—	
Bow	12/24/48	2d6	1	200	3	—	d6
Crossbow	15/30/60	2d6	1	300	10	—	d6
<i>AP 2; Requires 1 action to reload</i>							
English Long Bow	15/30/60	2d6	1	1000	5	—	d8
<i>Requires Shooting d8</i>							
Harpoon	3/6/12	Str+d10	1	100	10	—	d8
Knife/Dagger	3/6/12	Str+d4	1	25	1	—	
Sling	4/8/16	Str+d4	1	1	1	—	
Spear	3/6/12	Str+d6	1	25	5	—	d6

## BLACK POWDER WEAPONS\*

Type	Range	Damage	RoF	Cost	Weight	Shots	Min Str
Blunderbuss (8G)	10/20/40	1-3d6*	1	300	12	—	d6
<i>Damage is 1d6 at Long range, 2d6 at Medium range, and 3d6 at Close range</i>							
Flintlock Pistol (.60)	5/10/20	2d6+1	1	150	3	—	—
Grenade Launcher	10/20/40	2d6	1	600	14	—	d6
Musket (.75)	10/20/40	2d8	1	300	15	—	d6
Musketoön	5/10/20	2d8	1	200	8	—	d6
Pocket Pistol	10/20/40	2d6+1	1	250	2	—	—
Rifled Musket (.45)	15/30/60	2d8	1	300	8	—	d6
<i>AP 2; 3 actions to reload</i>							
Turn-Out Pistol	10/20/40	2d6+1	1	250	3	—	—
Two Barrelled Pistol	5/10/20	2d6+1	1/2	200	5	—	d6
Volley Gun	Cone	2d8	1	350	12	—	d10

\*All black powder weapons require two actions to reload unless noted otherwise

## SPECIAL WEAPONS

Type	Range	Damage	RoF	Cost	Min Str
Bowchaser	24" path	2d6	1	300	—
Cannon, 4 pdr.**	40/80/160	2d6+2	1	150	—
<i>AP 2; Heavy Weapon</i>					
Canister/Grape Shot	18" path	2d6-1	1	—	—
Chain Shot	25/50/100	2d6-1	1	—	—
Cannon, 8 pdr.**	50/100/200	3d6+1	1	200	—
<i>AP 4; Heavy Weapon</i>					
Canister/Grape Shot	24" path	2d6	1	—	—
Chain Shot	40/80/160	2d6	1	—	—
Cannon, 16 pdr.**	100/200/400	3d8+1	1	1,000	—
<i>AP 6; Heavy Weapon</i>					
Canister/Grape Shot	30" path	2d6+1	1	—	—
Chain Shot	60/120/240	2d6+1	1	—	—
Shrapnel Bomb	3/6/9	3d6	1	100	—

*Thrown; Medium Burst Template*

\*\*See Cannon Ammunition (p. 31)

## AMMUNITION

Ammo	Weight	Cost	Notes
Arrow***	1/5	1/2	
Cannonball	12	5	
Canister/Grape Shot	12	5	
Chain Shot	12	5	
Quarrel***	1/5	1/5	AP 2 (standard crossbow bolt)
Shot (w/powder)	1/10	2	For black powder weapons
Sling stone	1/10	1/20	Stones can also be found for free with a Notice roll in 1d10 minutes, depending on terrain

\*\*\*A fired shot may be reusable on a d6 roll of 4-6.

## ARMOR NOTES

Armor is particularly dangerous in a water world. In the *50 Fathoms* setting, an armor's bonus is subtracted from all Swimming rolls. This is in addition to any penalties from the armor's weight.

Ignore magical bonuses when figuring this penalty and use the typical Toughness bonus for its type.

Even leather armor is quite deadly as its weight doubles when soaking wet.

## DONNING & DISCARDING ARMOR

Ship marines sometimes leave their armor stowed, donning it only when battle looms.

Leather armor typically takes 1d6 minutes to properly fit. Chain takes 2d6 minutes. Plate mail requires 2d6 x 5 minutes to properly attach, or half that with assistance.

Discarding armor requires a number of rounds equal to twice the armor's normal, non-magical bonus. Discarding plate mail, for example, takes six full rounds.

## HAND WEAPONS

**Gaff:** A gaff works just like a hook (see below), but requires two hands and has a Reach of 1.

**Grael Battleball:** The grael battleball is the result of a grael trying to explain a jumani chain to a blacksmith who had never seen one. The result was a heavy chain with an oversized cannonball attached on one end.

**Hook:** Hooks are very useful aboard ships for hauling fish and cargo. Those who lose a hand in combat or to slipped rigging sometimes mount hooks as well. Naturally, many sailors have fallen to fighting with them. Hooks have several benefits in combat.

First, a character with a hook never counts as unarmed during close combat (he can parry with it).

Second, hooks are designed to stay in, so characters who hit with a raise can leave the hook "set" in their foe. Hooked foes suffer a -2 penalty to their Parry, Agility, and Agility-based skills while hooked. (Ignore one point of penalty per Size difference, however. A beast of Size +2 or greater ignores the penalty when hooked by an average-sized foe, for example.)

An opponent who wants to get off the hook must make an opposed Agility roll. Success allows him to rip free, but failure causes him to become Shaken.

**Jumani Chain:** A masaquani pirate named Jumani added links between the balls of a chain shot and turned it into a lethal flail. The weapon is quite difficult to master and impossible to use in close quarters such as below decks or in thick foliage.

Jumani chains ignore up to 2 points of a foe's Parry bonus as the heavy chain merely wraps around spears, rapiers, and the like.

Each ball is a separate attack, just as if the character had two weapons. Attacking with both, for example, incurs the -2 multi-action penalty to both Fighting rolls.

**Marlinespike:** Named after its function of separating marlines—double-stranded tarred ropes—the marlinespike has a rounded blade mounted in a wooden grip. The sturdy blade and rounded point allow it to penetrate thick ropes and armor.

It is a tool rather than a weapon but is popular with would-be mutineers, who can carry one openly without arousing suspicion. The wielder suffers a -1 to Fighting rolls when using a marlinespike in combat.

## FIREARMS

The firearms of Caribdis run the gamut of matchlocks to flintlocks, depending on the time they were manufactured. Most have been modified to the most modern design available, however (the flintlock), so for game purposes all firearms work the same way.

**Blunderbuss:** These heavy guns have trumpet-shaped barrels that scatter several shots at once in a deadly cone. A blunderbuss must be loaded with three shots at once to gain its full effect—otherwise its statistics are the same as a pistol. When fully loaded, the blunderbuss acts as a shotgun so the attacker may add +2 to his Shooting roll.

Blunderbusses cannot be overcharged—they rely more on the shrapnel effect of their shot for their damage than the actual blast.

**Grenade Launcher:** Grenade launchers were employed by the military as early as the 18th century. They resemble blunderbusses with an enlarged barrel and fire small powder bombs. Each bomb explodes in a Medium Burst Template. A failed Shooting roll causes the bomb to deviate.

**Musketoan:** The musketoan is a short-barreled musket. Less accurate than its full-length cousin, it was designed for close range



fighting, such as during boarding actions. The musketoon requires two hands to use, is fired like a musket, and cannot be used in close combat (except as a club).

**Pocket Pistols:** Pocket pistols are small, easily concealed firearms. The lock mechanism is located centrally to allow them to be drawn quickly but prevents accurate sighting along the barrel (and makes them more expensive to produce).

**Turn-Out Pistols:** Turn-out pistols are an early form of breech-loading firearms. Rather than shoving powder, wadding, and shot down the barrel, the firer unscrews the barrel and inserts the shot and powder directly into the firing chamber. This allows for the firer to dispense with wadding and a rammer. In addition, the barrel is rifled for accuracy without affecting loading time.

**Two-Barreled Pistol:** This weapon has two barrels and locks but only a single trigger. Pulling the trigger back halfway discharges the first barrel—further pressure fires the second. Although this weapon doubles the wielder's firepower it takes twice as long to reload compared with a single barreled pistol.

Both barrels may be discharged as a single action simply by squeezing the trigger hard. When double-fired both barrels must be aimed at the same target—roll two Shooting dice and one Wild Die if a hero.

**Volley Gun:** Volley guns are firearms with several barrels strapped together and rigged to fire all at once. Volley gun technology on Caribdis is in its infancy, but these weapons are still deadly.

Possessing six barrels set at different angles to help spread the shot and with a single trigger, this version of the volley gun is an all-or-nothing weapon.

The firer places a Cone Template and makes a single Shooting roll. Every aware opponent beneath the template must beat the Shooting total with an Agility test or suffer 2d8 damage.

Each barrel must be reloaded individually, for a total of 12 rounds to reload the weapon.

## MORE ON FIREARMS

**Moisture:** Water is the enemy of gunpowder. Any time powder gets wet, roll 1d6 per shot. On a roll of 4–6 for damp conditions (drizzling rain, wading through a deep stream), the shot

is ruined. If the powder was soaked (heavy rain, swimming), each shot is ruined on a d6 roll of 2–6.

**Overcharging:** Both muskets and pistols may be “overcharged,” meaning the user puts an extra charge of powder in the shot. Overcharging adds an entire die to the weapon's damage, but risks bursting the barrel. A roll of 1 on the character's attack die (regardless of the Wild Die for Wild Cards) means it has burst the barrel of the weapon and ruined it permanently.

In addition to ruining the weapon, the blast causes 3d6 damage to the user.

**Powder as Explosive:** Gunpowder can also be used as a low-powered explosive. A standard bomb requires 10 rounds of shot and powder.

To make a powder bomb, the user bundles the shot and powder into a leather sack, pot, or other container, then sets a small fuse into it. The fuse can be set to any delay with a Smarts roll. Failure means the bomb detonates 10–40% earlier or later than expected.

Every 10 shots of gunpowder causes 2d6 damage in a standard Medium Burst Template. A cask of gunpowder causes 5d6 damage in a Large Burst Template. If additional bombs are rigged to explode at the same time, roll their damage separately.

## SPECIAL WEAPONS

The standard ship's cannon is an 8-pounder—it fires balls weighing approximately 8 pounds. Historically, cannon went as high as 48-pdr, but these were carried only in small numbers on the largest Man-o-War. 12lb and smaller cannons require two crew to fire to full effect. Larger cannons require four crew. For every man a cannon is missing, it requires two additional rounds to reload.

**Number per Ship:** The number of cannon listed for each ship assumes a standard 8-pdr. When choosing cannon there is a trade-off between the numbers of guns the ship can carry against increased range and damage. Every two 4-pdrs mounted on a ship take up one gun slot while every 16-pdr uses two slots.

For example, a standard brigantine capable of mounting twelve 8-pdr guns could carry twenty-four 4-pdrs, six 16-pdrs, or some combination of all three types.

**Powder & Shot:** For simplicity assume a 4-pdr uses half the amount of gunpowder as a standard cannon and a 16-pdr twice as much.

As with the number of guns mounted there is a trade—in this case firepower versus powder usage.

**Shrapnel Bomb:** A “shrapnel bomb” is an early form of hand grenade comprising a charge of gunpowder encased in a metal shell designed to fragment on detonation. They cause damage to everything within a Medium Burst Template.

Shrapnel bombs can be made by anyone with the Gunsmith Edge, the cost is often prohibitive as they require \$50 worth of metal—a rare commodity in the Thousand Isles. Creation requires two pounds of metal, a hot fire, Gunsmith tools, 10 shots of black powder, and a Repair roll to make one per hour, or one every half hour with a raise.

## SHIP WEAPONS & AMMUNITION

### BOWCHASER

A bowchaser is a small cannon meant to be used against an enemy’s crew at close range, or turned on one’s own deck during a boarding

action. It acts as a canister round but uses the Small Burst Template (see Cannons and Canister in the *Savage Worlds* rules for details).

### CANNON AMMUNITION

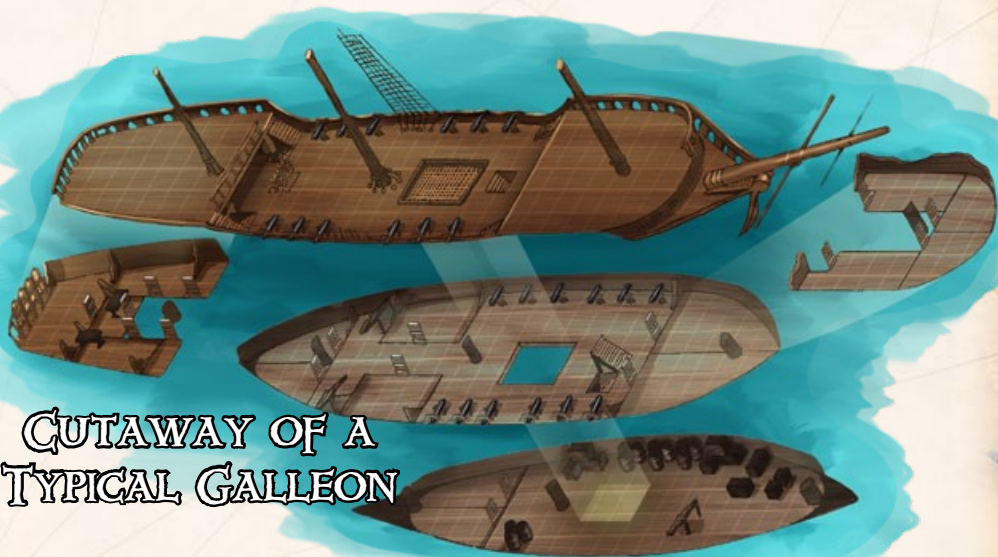
Besides round shot, cannons of Caribbus can also fire the ammunition listed below:

**Canister Shot** (or grape shot) is composed of dozens of small shot-size rounds. These cannon rounds are used to sweep the decks of exposed crew. See Cannons and Canister in *Savage Worlds* for rules. When using the Chase Rules, this type of ammunition can only be used at Short Range or closer. Instead of using the template, it affects up to 2d6 crew members who make an opposed Agility roll against the Shooting result to determine if they were missed, hit, or hit with a raise.

**Chain Shot** is used to disable a ship’s sails. If chain shot hits with a raise, it tears sails and rigging, automatically reducing the ship’s Top Speed by 1”.

**Fire Shot** are regular cannon balls heated until they glow and fired at a ship. They cause –4 damage as the metal is softer, but have a high chance of starting a fire (5–6 on a 1d6 per hit).

## CUTAWAY OF A TYPICAL GALLEON







## SHIPS

Below are a number of ships found throughout the Thousand Isles.

**Acc/TS:** This lists the vessel's Acceleration in inches per turn based on tactical table-top rates, and its **Top Speed**, which is the maximum number of inches a ship may move per turn on the table-top.

**Travel Speed:** This is the base number of squares the vessel moves in a day on the map of Caribdus.

**Handling:** Since *50 Fathoms* focuses so heavily on ships and ship-based combat, we've added a bit more detail to reflect the fact that some ships are more maneuverable than others. This might be due to their rigging, the ship's design, or the advanced knowledge of those who built it. Handling adds directly to the captain's Boating total, as well as the crew's if making a group Boating roll.

**Toughness:** The ship's total Toughness. The number in parentheses is the ship's Armor, which is already figured into the listed Toughness. Note that most ships have Heavy Armor. That isn't because they're particularly well-armored, it's to reflect the fact that musket shots and axes aren't likely to damage them.

**Crew:** The first score is the number of crew required to operate the ship's sails, rigging, and so on. Having less than this number subtracts 2 from the crew's Boating rolls, and having

less than half the required number subtracts 4. Sailors must have a minimum Boating skill of d6 to count as crew.

The required crew does not count gunners. Each gun fired or reloaded in a round requires two cannoneers. Note that most vessels can get by with manning only half the guns at any one time (since they're firing only on one side).

The number after the plus is the number of passengers the vessel can easily accommodate, including places to eat, sleep, and linger. Up to twice this number can travel for short distances (about a day or less).

**Cargo Space:** This is the number of cargo spaces the ship has. Cargoes are bought by "spaces" rather than having to keep track of every individual bunch of bananas or carton of grapes.

The exact dimensions of cargo spaces are deliberately vague to keep bookkeeping to a minimum. If it becomes important to know, each cargo space is roughly six feet square.

A cargo space may be converted to hold two guns instead (one on either side of the vessel).

**Guns:** The maximum number of cannon (if any) that may be mounted on this ship. These are divided evenly along either side.

**Cost:** The cost of a ship includes its guns. It does not include ammunition, bowchasers, extra lumber or sails, or any other necessities of shipboard life.

## BRIGANTINE

Brigs are slightly larger than sloops, and dedicate more room to firepower than cargo space.

**Acc/TS:** 3/10, **Toughness:** 18(4), **Crew:** 12+20,  
**Travel Speed:** 3, **Cargo Space:** 6, **Handling:** 0,  
**Guns:** 12, **Masts:** 2

**Cost:** \$30,000

**Notes:** Heavy Armor

## CRUMSTER

The crumster bridges the gap between the sloop and the brigantine. While less maneuverable than a sloop they carry more guns and cargo space. Most are used to escort merchant frigates or warships.

**Acc/TS:** 3/10, **Toughness:** 16(4), **Crew:** 8+12,  
**Travel Speed:** 3, **Cargo Space:** 6, **Handling:** -1, **Guns:** 8, **Masts:** 2

**Cost:** \$25,000

**Notes:** Heavy Armor

## DINGHY

These small rowboats are common throughout the Thousand Isles. Villagers use them for fishing, to travel to nearby islands, or to haul cargo from one end of an island to another. Ship crews use them as well to travel from their ship to land and back.

**Acc/TS:** 1/2, **Toughness:** 8(2), **Crew:** 1+3,  
**Travel Speed:** 1, **Cargo Space:** 1, **Handling:** 0,  
**Guns:** 0, **Masts:** 0

**Cost:** \$500

**Notes:** For 2x Cost, the craft is a longboat with  
**Acc/TS:** 2/4 and **Crew:** 9+4

## FRIGATE

Frigates are the lifeline of the survivors, carrying goods from one end of the Thousand Isles to the other. Because pirates and other terrors are so common, most frigates man a full compliment of marines.

**Acc/TS:** 2/10, **Toughness:** 15(2), **Crew:** 12+24,  
**Travel Speed:** 3, **Cargo Space:** 10, **Handling:** 0, **Guns:** 8, **Masts:** 2

**Cost:** \$30,000

**Notes:** Heavy Armor

## GALLEON

Galleons ruled the waves for nearly three centuries on Earth. They mount one or two banks of cannons and have large castles mounted fore and aft so that their defenders can fire on enemy crews.



TYPICAL FRIGATE



**Acc/TS:** 2/12, **Toughness:** 20(4), **Crew:** 30+40,  
**Travel Speed:** 3, **Cargo Space:** 8, **Handling:**  
-3, **Guns:** 16, **Masts:** 3  
**Cost:** \$125,000  
**Notes:** Heavy Armor

## GALLEY

Galleys are long, open ships used primarily in the Mediterranean of Earth, and among some less-developed natives of Caribdus.

Galleys have sails, but are propelled by oars when becalmed or when in combat. Most are also equipped with large rams.

**Acc/TS:** 2/8, **Toughness:** 19(4), **Crew:** 120+16,  
**Travel Speed:** 3, **Cargo Space:** 4, **Handling:**  
-2, **Guns:** 8, **Masts:** 1  
**Cost:** \$25,000

**Notes:** Acc/Top Speed is 1/3 with sail; Heavy Armor; Ram (AP 4 and halves damage sustained when ramming).

## HOY

The hoy is a sturdy seagoing vessel primarily used to carry cargo over short distances. They are excellent for hit-and-run raids but lack the endurance for prolonged chases or fights.

**Acc/TS:** 4/10, **Toughness:** 14(2), **Crew:** 8+6,  
**Travel Speed:** 1, **Cargo Space:** 4, **Handling:**  
+2, **Guns:** 4, **Masts:** 2  
**Cost:** \$20,000

**Notes:** Heavy Armor

## JUNK

Chinese junks are converted cargo ships outfitted for war. They can man a fair number of guns, but aren't as tough as vessels crafted from the start to survive enemy fire.

They sport a variety of sizes, masts, and riggings, but the most common on Caribdus are two-masters with square sails.

**Acc/TS:** 2/10, **Toughness:** 17(3), **Crew:** 12+36,  
**Travel Speed:** 3, **Cargo Space:** 8, **Handling:**  
-1, **Guns:** 8, **Masts:** 2  
**Cost:** \$35,000

**Notes:** Heavy Armor

## KIERAN CUTTER

The Kieran Empire's "blackships" are some of the most feared hunters of the seas. They patrol the coasts of Kiera looking for pirates or smugglers attempting to evade the empire's

harbor tithes. Their captains are known for their ruthlessness—pirates are sometimes punished for their crimes by being dragged behind the ship for the sharks.

Kieran cutters are useful for amphibious landings as well. Each ship carries a compliment of marines armed with long muskets and clad in black and gold mail, as well as two longboats to get them quickly ashore.

**Acc/TS:** 4/12, **Toughness:** 20(6), **Crew:** 12+20  
marines, **Travel Speed:** 2, **Cargo Space:** 2,  
**Handling:** +1, **Guns:** 16, **Masts:** 2  
**Cost:** \$80,000

**Notes:** Heavy Armor

## MAN OF WAR

There are very few of these 19th century warships on Caribdus. Only the dread pirate Blackbeard and the "Hero of the High Seas," British Admiral Nelson Duckworth, are known to have such powerhouses.

**Acc/TS:** 2/12, **Toughness:** 24(4), **Crew:** 120+40,  
**Travel Speed:** 3, **Cargo Space:** 6, **Handling:**  
-3, **Guns:** 32, **Masts:** 4  
**Cost:** \$500,000

**Notes:** Heavy Armor

## SCHOONER

The twin-masted schooner has a narrow hull and draws only five feet of water fully laden, making it ideal for sailing up rivers or hiding in shallow coves.

**Acc/TS:** 4/12, **Toughness:** 13 (2), **Crew:** 6+10,  
**Travel Speed:** 2, **Cargo Space:** 6, **Handling:**  
+1, **Guns:** 4, **Masts:** 2  
**Cost:** \$20,000

**Notes:** Heavy Armor; additional +1 Handling to avoid running aground

## SKIFF

These small vessels are used mostly by rich travellers or messengers. They cannot carry much cargo, but are quick and agile, making them ideal for evading pirates or officials. Smugglers and those transporting small but valuable cargoes often use skiffs.

**Acc/TS:** 4/8, **Toughness:** 13(2), **Crew:** 1+7,  
**Travel Speed:** 2, **Cargo Space:** 3, **Handling:**  
+1, **Guns:** 2, **Masts:** 1  
**Cost:** \$10,000

**Notes:** Heavy Armor

## SLOOP

Sloops are small two-masted vessels that offer a good compromise between speed and firepower. They are favored by smugglers as they can easily slip up rivers and channels where larger ships cannot pursue.

**Acc/TS:** 3/10, **Toughness:** 13 (2), **Crew:** 1+11,

**Travel Speed:** 2, **Cargo Space:** 4, **Handling:**

+1, **Guns:** 4, **Masts:** 2

**Cost:** \$20,000

**Notes:** Heavy Armor

## WAVE RIDER

A wave rider is a parasail, a man-sized board holding a single mast and sail. The rider steers by holding onto a yardarm stretched across the middle of the mast.

Wave riders can be easily folded to store aboard a ship, sometimes providing larger ships with "outriders."

Doreen invented these clever devices to better hunt fast-moving surface fish. Grael and scurillians cannot ride these thin craft due to their odd size.

**Acc/TS:** 6/8, **Toughness:** 8(2), **Crew:**

1, **Travel Speed:** 1, **Cargo Space:** 0,

**Handling:** +3, **Guns:** 0, **Masts:** 1

**Cost:** \$1,000

**Notes:** —



KIERAN CUTTER



# SETTING RULES

## ARMOR AND SWIMMING

It is particularly difficult to swim while wearing armor. Characters subtract any Encumbrance penalties as usual from the Swimming rolls, but also subtract the natural bonus of any armor worn as well. Ignore magical bonuses, considering only the bonus of a basic suit of that type.

A suit of leather, for example, adds +1 to the user's Toughness, and so subtracts -1 from his Swimming rolls. (Leather also weighs twice as much when wet, as noted in the Armor descriptions on page 29.)

## FIGHTING BELOW DECK

It's quite cramped below the decks of a ship where boxes, bottles, and kegs are stored in every nook and cranny and the ceiling forces a man to stoop.

Any weapon longer than a knife, hook, or similar device of less than six inches length suffers a -2 penalty to the user's Fighting rolls when using it below deck.

## HEROISM

The heroes and villains of Caribdus are reckless and daring. During character creation, your character may take one Seasoned Edge. He must meet all other requirements for the Edge as usual. This Edge isn't free—the usual Rank requirement is just waived.

## NAVIGATION

Traveling the treacherous seas of Caribdus is an adventure in itself. The following quick method helps you determine how quickly a vessel travels and whether or not it stays on course.

Each square on the map is equal to 5 leagues (15 miles). Vessels cross as many squares as their Travel Speed each day, modified by their crew.

The captain must make a Boating roll for each day of travel and add the modifiers listed below:

## MODIFIERS

Mod	Circumstance
+2	Vessel stays along coast
-2	The captain has no compass
-2	Most of the crew has no Boating skill
-1	Crew has an average Boating skill of d4
+1	Crew has an average Boating skill of d8
+2	Crew has an average Boating skill of d10
+3	Crew has an average Boating skill of d12

With a success, the vessel moves as expected. A raise adds +1 to the vessel's movement. Failure means the ship travels its expected movement in a random direction—roll a d8 to determine the direction of the square it moves to.

If the roll moves the vessel into a land mass on the map, it may run aground. The captain must make a Boating roll (the crew adds a group cooperative roll as well to account for lookouts in the crew's nest and so forth).

A raise means the ship avoids the shoals, sandbars, or reefs and suffers no ill effects. Success means the ship is beached. It takes 2d20 hours to pull it free, or 1d20 hours if another ship is available. Failure indicates the ship has run aground. The vessel is wrecked and everyone aboard must swim to land or drown.

## CAREENING

Wooden vessels must be "careened" on occasion. The ship is beached and turned on its side so that barnacles, sea worms, and other parasites can be scraped off. Failure to careen a ship every four months decreases its speed. Handling is reduced by one every month thereafter, to a maximum penalty of -4.

Any of the Great Ports offer careening for 100 pieces of eight times the vessel's base Toughness, and is done in a number of days equal to half its base Toughness.

A ship can also be careened on an island by its crew. This is a tiring and tedious process, taking a number of days equal to the craft's base Toughness (a base Toughness of 17 requires 17 days, for instance). This is an average number

based on the standard crew for a ship that size. A crew with twice the usual number of workers can careen the vessel in half the time, half the required crew takes twice the time, and so on.

## CREW UPKEEP

Sailing isn't all firing cannons and swinging from the yardarms. The crew must be fed, paid, and even entertained on occasion or their health and morale begin to suffer.

## PROVISIONS

The crews of ships must eat and drink, and ensuring each vessel is properly provisioned is a major concern of any captain.

To keep things simple, provisions are purchased as generic "points" rather than tracking every bit of food and water required. Each point represents one day's food, water, and other supplies for each man on board, and costs \$1 per head. This includes fruit capable of staving off scurvy.

Every 500 points of provisions takes up one cargo space.

Note that provisions are *not* the same as "Food" that can be bought and sold at ports. Provisions are biscuits, hardtack, and water. Food is fruit, bread, grain, wine, and other "luxuries." A cargo space worth of Food can be converted into 50 provisions in an emergency.





**Example:** *The Frigate Jolly Edward sets sail with twelve crew. The captain expects to be at sea for at least a month, so he needs 12 provisions for each of 30 days, or 360 provisions. He decides to play it safe and buys 500 provisions. The provisions cost 500 pieces of eight and take up one cargo space.*

*If the ship runs out of food, the captain could convert a cargo space worth of "Food" (a commodity) to 50 provisions. This would feed his 12-man crew for about 4 days.*

**Hunger:** Wild Cards suffer from starvation normally (one provision a day counts as adequate food). For the rest of the crew, make a group Vigor roll each day they have half rations (one provision for every two men). Subtract 2 if the men have less than this.

Should the crew collectively reach Incapacitated state, 10% of the men perish each day from starvation. Most crews mutiny long before this starts to happen.

## PAY

The standard fee for sailors is 50 pieces of eight per month. A crew of 12, for example, costs 600 pieces of eight each month in wages. The captain must also pay for their provisions (see above).

First mates, mages, navigators, surgeons, supers, and other specialized crew cost an additional 100 pieces of eight per month.

If the crew comes upon a prize of some kind, such as a floating hulk, buried treasure, or the Booty of some creature they manage to kill, it is divided up in shares.

**Shares:** Pirate ships and privateers don't pay their crews—they give them shares of any booty. Paid crews use shares as well when figuring how to split unexpected payouts.

The typical arrangement on Caribdis is two shares for the ship's "bank," (to be used for repairs, provisions, and so on), three shares for the captain, two shares for the first mate, navigator, mages, super, and surgeon. The rest of the crew get one share each.

## CABIN FEVER

One of the worst problems faced by a ship's crew isn't monsters or pirates but sheer boredom. Most of their time isn't spent in swashbuckling adventures—it's spent swabbing the decks, splicing ropes, or mending sails. Discipline is usually quite fierce on a boat as well. Most captains don't allow gambling or drunkenness (it tends to cause deadly fights). That's why sailors tend to spend so much of their hard-earned (or ill-gotten) booty in port taverns or brothels.

All characters are automatically Fatigued after every 30 days spent at sea. The crew never becomes Incapacitated due to Cabin Fever, but when that state would otherwise be met, the sailors might start whispering mutinous thoughts.

## CAROUSING

A night spent carousing "resets" the crew's clock. Start the 30-day countdown again.

Fatigue lost to Cabin Fever can only be relieved by rest and relaxation. This means carousing in a port with plenty of booze and women for most. Historically, sailors have often spent the equivalent of a year's pay in a single week.

Each week spent in port where the crew can relax (which usually means boozing and wenching) removes one level of fatigue due to Cabin Fever. Each night of carousing costs 1d6 x \$5 for player characters. Extras spend their own pay or shares and their expenses should not be tracked.



**Rushing:** Characters may unwind quicker by spending more money on good food, drink, and company. Spending  $2d6 \times \$5$  reduces the time to remove Fatigue to four days;  $3d6 \times \$5$  reduces the interval to three days, and so on, to a minimum of one day and  $5d6 \times \$5$ .

Player characters can also encourage their crews along. Each additional \$5 reduces the time to remove Fatigue by one day, to a minimum of one day and \$20 per head.

**Getting Drunk:** Carousing characters must make a Smarts roll each night to avoid getting drunk. A failure means they barely manage to make it back to their hammock that night, and suffer a grueling hangover the next morning (they are Fatigued until sometime after lunch).

Success means the party-goer is drunk, but can mostly handle himself. Agility, Smarts, and all related skill rolls suffer a -1 penalty, but Toughness is increased by 1.

## CONTACTS

Carousing has one additional effect. Every full week spent in a port drinking with the locals adds +1 to the character's Streetwise rolls, to a maximum of +2. This can be very helpful when tracking down leads or trying to buy or sell cargo.

## HIRING CREW

New crew may be hired in any of Caribdis' settlements. Use the "Units" column on the Master Trading Table (page 43) to find out how many able-bodied seamen are for hire or sign on for shares. Roll this once per week if the party stays in port for a while.

Experienced crewmen, such as surgeons or supers, are much more rare. One of them is found for every five sailors available.

## TYPICAL SAILOR

**Attributes:** Agility d6, Smarts d4, Spirit d6, Strength d6, Vigor d6

**Skills:** Boating d6, Climbing d6, Fighting d4, Notice d4, Shooting d4, Stealth d4, Swimming d6

**Face:** 6; **Parry:** 4; **Toughness:** 5

**Edges & Hindrances:** -

**Booty:** Loot for every 5 sailors.

**Gear:** Knife (Str+d4).

# SHIP COMBAT

The sections below illustrate how ship-to-ship battles work using the existing rules, and add a few new details as well.

## CONTACT

On a clear day, ships often spy each other at tremendous ranges. Catching a foe at such ranges and with relatively slow-moving craft can sometimes take days.

If one ship is attempting to catch another, the captains make opposed Boating rolls. The crew can help by making a cooperative group Boating roll. Each attempt takes about eight hours. If the pursuer wins with a raise, the ships are engaged. If the target wins with a raise, he has escaped. All other results mean the chase continues.

Once the ships are engaged, use the Chase system with the following special rules.

- If the attacker doesn't have a face card, he can fire one half of his cannons on one side.
- If the attacker has a face card and his opponent doesn't, he may fire all of his cannons on one side.

## REPAIRS

Damage suffered in combat may only be repaired at a dry-dock (unless a character on board has the Ship's Carpenter Edge, see page 24).

There are dry-docks in all of the Great Ports. Repairs there typically take 1d4 days per wound (and critical hit) to be fixed. The cost is 10 times the ship's base Toughness per wound or critical hit to be repaired.

## MANEUVERS

If the battle is taking place on the table-top, captains can use the following maneuvers:

**Broadside:** Broadside attacks are the most powerful attacks a ship can make but unless the attacking ship has "crossed the T" it allows the enemy to return their own broadside. This maneuver is usually reserved for daring captains or those with superior firepower.

A broadside may be fired whenever the captain succeeds in an opposed Boating roll. Unlike the "crossing the T" maneuver a broadside may be attempted at any range. All guns on one side of the vessel may be brought to bear on the target at once. The enemy vessel may likewise fire half its cannons back.



**Crossing the T:** The most favorable position in naval combat is perpendicular to your opponent at close range. This allows a ship to fire a complete broadside (all of its cannons on that side) and rake the target from stem to stern. This is called “crossing the T.”

A ship may cross the T whenever it succeeds in a Force maneuver and is within its weapon’s Short Range. The attacker may fire all the cannons on one side of the ship at once. The defender may not return fire back unless he has some sort of weapon mounted on the bow or stern.

**Hard About:** By dropping the anchor and having all the crew rush to one side of the ship the captain can attempt to turn his ship 180 degrees in a very narrow circle. This works like a Bootlegger Reverse (see **Maneuvers** in *Savage Worlds*), except the captain makes a Boating (-2) roll.

**Shearing:** Breaking off the extended oars of a galley with the hull of an adjacent ship is called “shearing.” The attacking ship must be on the same initiative card as the target to attempt this maneuver and make a successful Force maneuver with a -2 penalty.

With success the target ship suffers 3d6 damage applied against its base Toughness (no Armor). If the damage results in a wound the oars are sheared—the vessel suffers no actual wound. The target’s Top Speed is halved and it can only turn to the left or right.

## BOARDING

If one ship wants to board another, it must maneuver adjacent on the table-top or in Chases, must have a King or higher, or succeed at a Force attempt.

If successful, the boarders make an immediate group Throwing roll for the crew. Success means the target is grappled and drawn close enough to board. An opponent’s crew can attempt to sever the grapples with an opposed Fighting roll by at least an equal amount of crew.

The Game Master should modify such an opposed roll depending on such circumstances as larger crews on one side, rolling seas, and so on.

## CANNONS

Roll the lowest of the crew’s Shooting or Boating die for each cannon shot. This is *not* a group roll—only the gunner actually lines up the shot. The other crewmen simply reload. (Of course a player character may fire the cannon as usual.)

It’s difficult to bring all of a ship’s guns to bear at once in ship-to-ship combat. To simulate this, no more than one-quarter of a ship’s guns may be fired at a target each round.

A ship fighting three targets, for example, may fire one quarter of its guns at each.

Each shot that hits inflicts damage normally.



## CRITICAL HITS

Damage against ships works as usual but with a few additional details to any Critical Hits suffered.

**Engine:** A mast is hit and snapped. If the ship has four masts, Acceleration and Top Speed drop by one quarter. A ship with three masts drop by a third, and so on.

**Controls:** The rudder or steering column is hit. The ship may only turn to the left or right, and suffers -2 to its Handling.

**Chassis:** Count damage normally but roll 1d6 as well. If the result is a 6, a fire has been started. See the Fire section below for more details.

**Crew:** Crew Critical Hits inflict 2d6 casualties scattered randomly among all crewmen. Remove that many crew immediately. See **Aftermath** in *Savage Worlds* to recover crew members after the fight. If the 2d6 roll comes up doubles, a random player character or other named personality was hit as well. Subtract the Armor value of the ship from the damage if the victim was below decks.

**Weapon:** A single weapon (usually a cannon) is destroyed.

**Wrecked:** A "Wrecked" Critical Hit is bad news for the ship and its crew as well. Ships without cannons simply begin to sink. Vessels with cannons suffer a direct hit to their central magazine (where the powder is kept). This sets off a titanic explosion that destroys the ship and causes 4d6 damage to every named character on board. Assume all but 10% of the rest of the crew are killed or incapacitated and drown. Any ships that were grappled to the unfortunate vessel or within a dozen yards or so suffer 2d6 + the dead ship's base Toughness in damage. If a skiff explodes, for example, it causes 2d6+11 damage (its base Toughness without Armor is 11). A Man of War causes 2d6+20 points of damage to adjacent ships!

**Other Weapons:** Weapons without restricted firing arcs such as catapults, flamethrowers, and so on, are treated normally unless the weapon's description says otherwise.

**Out of Control:** When ships suffer damage and are forced out of control, treat a Roll Over or Flip result as a Dip instead. Roll 1d10. This many crewmen (pick randomly from any exposed decks) must make Agility rolls or be washed overboard and lost.

### FIRE

Fires are very dangerous on ships and kill far more men than cannon shots usually account for. When a ship suffers a Chassis hit, it's actually been hit in the hull somewhere. The shot itself can start a fire, or it might knock over necessary lanterns and candles.

Roll 1d6 at the beginning of each round for each fire to see what effect it has on the ship.

## FIRE TABLE

d6 Roll	Result
1	The fire burns out.
2-4	The fire continues to burn.
5	The fire causes a wound.
6	The fire spreads, making two fires.

**Fighting Fires:** Crews can put out fires, but this takes away from their other duties to do so.

A team equal to half the ship's base Toughness (ignore Armor and magical bonuses) is required. The team must assemble one round, and the next may make a group Boating roll at -2 for one fire. With a success, the team extinguishes the fire.



## SHIPPING

Shipping is the life blood of Caribbus. Three shipping companies have realized this and use it to control the Thousand Isles: the Spanish Guild in New Madrid, the British East India Company in Baltimus, and the Kieran Trading Guild in Kiera.

These three companies have signed the “Treaty of the Great Ports,” which states that vessels without the stamp of a Great Port (the homes of the three companies), or cargoes without the seal of an approved Harbor Master from the cargoes’ port of origin on their manifest, are to be considered pirates or smugglers.

### PRIVATEERS

Rogue ships may be seized by pirate hunters—privateers—who have purchased “letters of marque.” A letter of marque is granted to those who have proven themselves to the companies, such as the famous Admiral Duckworth of Baltimus, or to those who purchase them for \$15,000 pieces of eight.

The letter grants the privateer the right to stop and search any vessel upon the seas and inspect their manifests. If something is amiss, the privateer is authorized to bring the ship to the Great Port where his letter was issued. There the court double-checks the papers, and if the ship is found to be rogue, it is confiscated and its crew incarcerated.

Those caught smuggling or pirating are put to death if they’re known to have committed rape or murder. The rest are sentenced to hard labor aboard a company ship, or enslaved to the Coaker Mountain mines in the Kieran Empire.

Commissioned privateers receive a bounty equal to 25% of the ship and cargo’s value.

If a captain seizes a rogue ship without a letter of marque, he is issued a token bounty—usually 10% of the value of the prize, less the \$15,000 the captain “owes” the company for its letter of marque.

If the bounty is less than \$15,000, the captain may be given a letter but will “owe” the fee to the company from his next prize.

### SUPERS

The Great Harbor Treaty relies on a ship’s sealed manifest as well as bonded sailors called “supers.” A super is tattooed with a number that is printed on the manifest of every cargo

that receives the local Harbor Master’s seal. A cargo that originates in Tuck, for example, will bear the signature and seal of the Tuck Harbor Master, the license number of the ship’s super, the captain’s name, and the ship’s name.

A super tattoo costs 1,000 pieces of eight, and must be bought at one of the Great Ports. The individual must fill out some forms and wait 2d6 days. If approved, his tattoo is inked and witnessed, and acts as a license from then on.

### SMUGGLING

Getting a seal for each load of cargo is an expensive prospect (see below). That makes smuggling and piracy a very lucrative option, and many crews do just that. The risk is great however, as pirates face harsh sentences if they’re caught by privateers.

### TRADE

Most islands are far from self-sufficient, so what’s scarce in one area must be imported, and what’s plentiful must be exported. This means those with ships can make a fortune hauling goods from those who have to those who need.

A ship can hold as many “units” of cargo as it has cargo spaces. What’s available in a port each week, how much it sells for, and how many units are available is summed up on the Master Trading Table on the following page.

The cost of a Harbor Master’s stamp on a cargo’s manifest is 10% of the goods bought at that port (or 20% in the Kieran Empire). If a ship buys \$1500 worth of cargo in Tulago, for example, the fee is \$150. There is no fee to sell cargo, and merchants rarely check for official paperwork when purchasing goods.

**Pirate Ports:** Ports listed in italics are pirate ports. There is no Harbor Master there, so no fees must be made. Of course, goods bought there won’t have sealed manifests either, and will be considered contraband by privateers.

### COMMODITIES

The goods characters can buy and sell are grouped into one of five categories—food, goods, gunpowder, iron, and timber. There are others, of course, but these are the essentials every settlement requires. The typical price of commodities in each settlement is listed on the Master Trading Table as well (page 43).

**Food** is fresh fruits, cured meats, and other far more expensive delicacies than the usual biscuit

## MASTER TRADING TABLE

Location	Food*	Goods	Gunpowder**	Iron	Timber	Units	Vitals
<i>Azy Cay</i>	100	300	500	—	300	1d6-3	60, ☹
Baltimus	300	200	500	800	200	1d6+3	30,000, \$ ♥ ♣ ☹
Bluth's Crown	200	400	—	—	—	1d6-3	20
<i>Brigandy Bay</i>	200	300	500	700	400	1d6	2000, \$ ☹
Bristo	100	300	400	—	200	1d6-2	1000
Calib's Rock	100	300	500	—	100	1d6-2	600
Caresia	100	200	400	—	100	1d6-1	3000, \$ ♥ ♣ ☹
Cuna	100	300	500	—	100	1d6-2	150, \$ ☹
Deiking	200	300	500	700	100	1d6+2	14,000, \$ ♥ ♣ ☹
Dunich	100	300	300	—	100	1d6-2	300, \$ ♥
Jomba Town	100	300	400	—	100	1d6-1	1100, \$ ♥ ☹
Kaja	100	400	400	700	400	1d6+1	8000, \$ ♣ ☹
Kiera	500	200	100	300	400	1d6+3	48,000, \$ ♥ ♣ ☹
Lanos	100	300	300	—	200	1d6	4000, \$ ♥ ☹
Maroa							
Marsales	200	200	500	—	200	1d6+2	8000, \$ ♥ ♣ ☹
New Madrid	300	200	500	900	300	1d6+3	45,000, \$ ♥ ♣ ☹
Paltos	400	300	200	—	300	1d6-1	3000, \$ ♥ ☹
<i>Shark Bay</i>	300	300	500	—	300	1d6+1	6000, \$ ☹
Swindon	300	300	500	—	300	1d6	5000, \$ ♥ ♣ ☹
Timin	400	300	300	—	300	1d6-1	3000, \$ ♥ ☹
Tuck	100	100	—	—	100	1d6-2	800
Tulago	100	300	—	—	100	1d6-2	400, ☹
Wrasseton	100	200	300	—	100	1d6-1	1100, \$ ♥
Xaxa							

\*Food spoils quickly. After one week in the ship's hold, roll 1d6 per space of food. On a 6, that space spoils and is no longer saleable.

\*\*Anytime the ship suffers a wound, roll 1d6 per space of gunpowder. On a 6, the powder explodes, causing 5d6 damage, plus an additional d6 for every other unit of gunpowder in the hold.

and hardtack that make up provisions. A cargo space worth of Food cargo is *not* equivalent to 500 provisions (the amount of provisions a space usually holds). It can be converted to 50 edible portions in an emergency.

**Goods** are things like clocks, lanterns, tools, and other manufactured items.

**Gunpowder** is raw powder. Each space holds ten full casks. Each cask has enough powder to fire 20 8lb cannon shots or 100 musket shots.

**Iron** is raw "pig iron" from the Coaker Mountains. This is the only place it is currently found on Caribdis. Few settlements have the necessary craftsmen to buy it in quantity.

**Timber** represents 60 cut planks, 8' long, 2" thick, and 4" wide.

**Units:** At the end of each row is the number of units that can be bought or sold there,

determined by population—you can't sell a fleet's worth of gunpowder to a fishing village of 60 people.

Use this number when figuring out how many provisions (in hundreds) or casks of powder can be bought, as well as how many sailors might be recruited from a town.

**Vitals:** This gives a captain a quick glimpse of the size of the town and what it offers. The first number is population. The rest of the symbols have the following meanings:

\$=Stores: Mundane items are available from one or more stores here.

♥=City Watch: The town is patrolled by armed guards of some sort.

♣=Dry-dock: The town offers ship repairs.

☹=Carousing: The town has taverns suitable for carousing.



## WHALING

Piracy and trading aren't the only ways to make a living—hunting the massive norwhales of the Cold Sea can bring rich rewards for those of brave heart and strong stomach.

Whaling involves long periods of boredom punctuated with sporadic bursts of frenetic activity. Many crews spend weeks at sea without a single sighting. Once a whale is spotted, however, the crew rushes into action to secure their valuable prey before it escapes.

### THE HUNT

Hunting norwhales is difficult and risky—a single blast from its “freezing gland” can leave a ship stranded in the ice for over a week. To reduce the risk, and gain an element of surprise, whalers approach their quarry in dinghies.

The idea of being in close proximity to a fully-grown norwhale while in a small boat terrifies sensible sailors. Norwhales are considerably larger than a dinghy and are notoriously unpredictable when threatened—some dive for safety, whereas others immediately defend themselves with a freezing blast. Every character in the dinghy must make a Spirit roll or be Shaken just before the first attack is made against the beast.

Once the boat is in range it is up to the whaler to strike hard and fast with his harpoon while the rowers endeavor to avoid bringing the dinghy too close to the whale. The thick blubber of a norwhale requires the whaler to strike a vital area if he wishes to secure a quick kill—the head and blowhole are preferred targets. As the whale thrashes in pain, the crew row to a safe distance until the frenzy diminishes.

Assuming the crew survives the whale's counterattack the process of attack and retreat is repeated until the whale dies or escapes. A dying whale swims in decreasing circles known as the “flurry.” As death claims the beast it rolls onto its side and becomes still.

When the beast is dead it is secured to the dinghy by rope and towed back to the ship for processing.

### PROCESSING

Killing the whale may be dangerous work but processing the creature requires a strong stomach. The stench of boiling blubber hangs thick in the air and the decks become slippery

with blood and gore. There are other dangers associated with stripping the whale—the carcass attracts sharks and other predators and a man falling into the water is an easy meal for frenzied fish.

Dragging the complete whale onto the ship is impossible—there simply isn't enough room. Instead the whale is chained to the starboard side of the ship and a wooden platform erected over the carcass. Crews work around the clock in shifts to process the carcass as quickly as possible—until the job is complete the crew cannot hunt other whales.

The first task is to cut away the blubber and hack it into manageable pieces. These chunks are thrown into a large pot and cooked until the oil is extracted from the blubber. Once cooled, the oil is stored in caskets until the ship reaches land, at which point the oil is strained to remove any lumps of blubber. Whalebone and flesh, though of lesser value than oil, are also extracted and sold.

The complete extraction process takes one week with a work crew of about a dozen. When processed, an adult norwhale (Size +8) fills 8 cargo spaces. Each step of Size lower than this reduces the required space by one, but also impacts on profits.

### REWARDS

An adult norwhale's carcass can bring rewards of up to \$15,000. Given that not all specimens are of equal size or quality few crews actually make this much from a single specimen. Income generated by whaling is divided into shares as with any other treasure.

Processing a norwhale into its valuable components requires a group Common Knowledge roll (–2 if the crew has no one with the Whaler Edge). A success generates \$5000 worth of oil, bone, and meat with each raise (to a maximum of two), bringing an extra \$5000. With a failure, the whale provides only \$2500 worth of income. On a critical failure, the crew inadvertently ruptures the whale's “freezing gland,” causing 4d6 damage in a Large Burst Template and ruining the entire carcass.

The base value assumes an entire adult whale is processed. Reduce the value accordingly for a small specimen or if the ship holds less than 8 spaces of processed whale.

## PIRATE LINGO!

**Aft:** The rear (stern) of a ship.

**Amidships:** The ship's center.

**Ballast:** Weight placed in the lower middle of a ship to help keep it steady in water.

**Bilge:** The broadest part of the hold at the bottom of a ship. Pumps are often placed here to evacuate water from leaky vessels.

**Bow:** The front of a ship.

**Bowsprit:** The beam that extends out from the front of the ship.

**Buccaneer:** Originally a term for those who cooked with "barbecues" called "boucans," given to early European settlers of the Caribbean by Arawak Indians. Eventually, pirates of the Caribbean region became known as buccaneers.

**Bulwark:** The "rim" of the ship that runs around the top of the upper deck.

**Capstan:** A large wheel around which is wound the anchor chain.

**Cartagena:** A town in present-day Columbia that was a frequent target of pirate raids.

**Corsairs:** Privateers operating in the Mediterranean. Most were French or Turkish, though the Knights of Malta were also notorious for attacking Muslim ships (and vice versa), and thus became known as corsairs as well.

**Crow's Nest:** A lookout "basket" high atop the main mast.

**Fathom:** About six feet of depth.

**Forecastle:** The raised platform at the front of the ship designed to provide a high fighting platform during close quarters.

**Hold:** The large space in the center of the ship used for storing cargo.

**Keel:** The central bottom beam that forms the "spine" of a wooden ship.

**Knot:** A measurement of ship's speed. One knot is equal to one nautical mile an hour.

**Main (Yard):** The crossbeam from which a ship's main sail hangs.

**Mast:** One of the towering poles upon which the ship's sails hang. The large one in the central is the mainmast, the rear-most is the mizzen.

**Native:** A race unique to Caribdis. Any non-human. Even humans born on Caribdis are "visitors."

**Poop Deck:** The rear raised area of a ship designed to provide an elevated fighting platform during boarding actions or close combat. Also called the sterncastle.

**Port:** The left-hand side of a ship as it faces forward.

**Privateer:** Officially, privateers were captains given official (royal) "letters of marque" to attack nations currently at war with the home government. Many privateers exploited their commission and attacked whatever targets they could find, exploiting loopholes or outright lying to capture foreign prize ships.

**Prize Ship:** A captured ship. A ship loaded with treasure could provide booty for entire crews to retire for life—but amazingly most squandered their ill-gotten gains on wine and women in only a few short weeks.

**Rigging:** The various ropes used to operate and secure the various sails and masts.

**Spanish Main:** The "Spanish Main" refers to parts of Central and South America, from upper Mexico to lower Peru, conquered by the Conquistadors. Spanish ships of the Main were often rich prizes for pirates—loaded with gold stolen from the Aztecs and Mayans.

**Spritsail:** A small sail sometimes attached to the bowsprit.

**Starboard:** The right-hand side of a ship as it faces forward.

**Stem:** The thin forward area of the ship that parts the water before it.

**Sterncastle:** See Poop Deck.

**Visitor:** A human from Earth, regardless of where they were born.

**Whipstaff:** A long stick used to steer before the addition of captain's wheels.

**Yard:** A pole from which sails are hung.



# CARIBDUS GAZETEER

Below are the basics every traveler knows about the Thousand Isles and some of its most prominent characters. The list is presented alphabetically so that you might easily look them up during play.

**Arfk** is a cold, rocky island that is home to the grael as well as several species of polar animals that were able to move up the slopes as the water rose. The principle industry of this desolate place is hunting seals, blue bears, or norwhales.

**Azy Cay** is a small, relatively harmless settlement off the coast of Perck. It was founded by a beautiful pirate mistress, Azy Angsley, who ran aground here in a storm and just decided to stay. There are few residents here, but they engage in some illegal trade on occasion.

**Blackbeard** commands one of Caribdus' only two Men of War, the *Destroyer*. It is said the ship is crewed by the dead, and that the Pirate King himself is unkillable! Fortunately for most, Blackbeard rarely strikes ships or towns. His purpose is unknown, but some whisper he gained his immortality from the Sea Hags, and now patrols the seas in their name.

**Duckworth, Admiral Nelson Duckworth** is the Thousand Isles' most famous privateer—and a visitor from Earth. His flagship, the *HMS Justice*, is one of only two Men of War in the entire world (Blackbeard commands the other). Opinions of Duckworth vary. Merchants love him; pirates curse his name with every drink.

**The Flotsam Sea** is a slowly swirling mass of debris filled with hopelessly entangled ships. Scavenging is good, but the Sea Hags' foul minions are thick there as well.

**The Free Towns:** This motley assortment of villages and cities runs the gamut from plantations to rain-soaked fishing villages.

**Baltimus** is the most advanced city in the Free Towns with the only port deep enough to accommodate a Man of War right at the pier. It is home to the British East India Company and its two most colorful members, Bruno Baltimus and Edward Lazenby. These two throw grand galas every weekend, and young women and aspiring nobles compete violently for invitations.

**Bluth's Crown** is an odd ring of four standing stones that many claim was where the elemental spirits were bound, allowing some races of Caribdus to cast magical spells. A small group of mages and their companions live here now.

**Braven's** thick forest once served as the Emperor's private hunting reserve. After the flood, Jant needed lumber for ships and ordered the trees cut down. A small band of "rangers" still live there, trying their best to replant trees and return the forest to its former grandeur.

**Brigandy Bay** serves an important purpose in Caribdus, for it is the only large port that does not adhere to the Great Port Treaty. Cargoes are bought and sold here for no tithe, no questions asked.

The three trade guilds have threatened to invade Brigandy Bay and hang everyone on its "miserable shores," but so far have not attempted it.

Brigandy Bay also has a thriving black market where rare treasures are often offered up for sale.

**Bristo** is a prosperous fishing village run by American Thomas Crane.

**Calib's Rock** is little more than a quiet waystation along the so-called "Ghost Trail" that runs from Jomba Town south to Caresia.

**Caresia** is known for its neutrality and convenient location within the main shipping lanes of the Free Towns. Monthly meetings between agents of the three shipping companies occur here to hash out disputes and trade, giving rise to a growing street market.

**The Coaker Mountains** are not only the sole remaining source of iron in Caribdus, but also a prison for those who oppose Emperor Jant. Few of the enslaved miners survive to see their sentence served. A few interesting creatures live in the Coakers. Rocs nest in the high peaks and fire salamanders sometimes crawl forth from the supposedly-dormant volcanoes.

**Cuna's** people have been the target of several large pirate raids. Once a town of over 2,000, only a small number of determined fishers and farmers remain. They are very distrustful of strangers.

**Deiking**, or "Little China" is home to a large number of Orientals. The vast majority of the people here are honest and hardworking, but cruel warlords perpetuate the wrong stereotype by pushing opium upon Caribdus' wealthy.

**Dunich:** Quakers from Earth's New England set themselves up in this quiet fishing town far away from the rest of the Free Towns. They catch and sell particularly succulent greenback fish, but are otherwise left alone by most.

**Free Towns:** Baltimus, Bluth's Crown, Braven, Brigandy Bay, Bristo, and New Madrid make up the Free Towns.

**The Inquisition:** Tomas de Torquemada despises elemental mages, claiming they have made pacts with the Sea Hags for their infernal powers. Few believe the madman, for earthers from later times know full well the impact the High Inquisitor had on history.

Still, a small cadre of stalwart believers infiltrate Caribdun society and seek out mages. They follow them until an opportunity presents itself to capture them quietly, then whisk them

away to Torquemada's barge, the *Perdition*, for confession. Those who confess are granted "release" by being hung from the *Perdition's* masts. The inquisitors have a saying—"Everyone confesses."

**Jomba Town** was named for a former West Indies whaler who seems to have disappeared under mysterious circumstances. Some claim he was murdered, and that his ghost still haunts travelers along the trail from here to Caresia.

**Kaja** is the only permanent settlement on Arfk. It is home mostly to whalers and hunters, many of whom are former pirates hiding in the frigid north to escape the noose.

**Kehana Flumes:** Several thousand kehana live beneath the waves in the upper reaches of these volcanic chimneys. The vertical tunnels also provide easy access to the surface, allowing the kehana to ambush travelers looking for sulfur and other minerals in the rich pillars.

**The Kieran Empire** is governed by Emperor Jannis Jant—nicknamed "The Great Whale" because of his immense girth.

Kiera, capital of the empire, was already perched in the mountainous highlands, and so was in little danger of the Sea Hags' flood.





Emperor Jant realized this early on and closed the gates to the city to all who could not pay an exorbitant “entrance fee.” Thousands of the Emperor’s own people drowned cursing his name at the city walls. Their bones can still be seen along Kiera’s rocky shoals.

The Emperor still rules his Empire, though there have been numerous attempts to overthrow him. The Great Whale also benefits greatly from the Coaker Mountains, the only known source of iron remaining in the Thousand Isles.

**Kiera** is an ancient city with tall black spires gilded with gold. It is the seat of the Kieran Empire and the home of Emperor Jannis Jant. This is where ore mined from the Coakers is sold.

**Kuwayway** was once an ugak raider camp. The Ograpog Legion eventually chased the raiders away and erected a fort here to prevent their return. These days the plateau is a low island useful for careening ships. Travelers are advised to stay away from the crumbling ruins of the old fort however—it’s said the ghosts of the dead ugaks have returned to it.

**Lanos** is an agricultural village that exports rice and rice wine (saki). It is a comfortable and relatively safe place due to its lack of great riches and no-nonsense constable.

**Maroa:** The atani live in massive carroway trees off the coast of Cuwayo. The trees produce valuable fruit that the glider-folk sell for exorbitant prices.

About 2,000 others (non-atani and a few atani exiles) live in “Below Town,” a rotten collection of shanties and lean-tos.

Once per week, the atani descend from the trees and offer 2d6 bushels of carroway fruits. These sell for \$100 per basket of 10 fruits. Eating one instantly removes one level of Fatigue regardless of its source.

During these events, the atani also sell a single blood fruit, a rare red carroway that sells for \$200 each. When eaten, it immediately removes one wound.

**Marsales** is a solid shadow of New Madrid. It is widely popular with captains looking for the comforts of the larger cities but with a slightly less watchful City Watch.

**New Madrid** is the second largest city in the Free Towns. It was settled and named by the Spanish, and is home to the Spanish Guild. Crime is high there, and many say smugglers can find easy work. The only standing Catholic church can also be found in New Madrid. A group of missionaries are also present, and often send expeditions out to the rest of Caribdus in an attempt to convert the natives. This church has publicly distanced itself from Torquemada, but most natives see them as one and the same and therefore shun the entire religion.

**Ograpog** was the bright and shining jewel in Caribdus’ crown. It certainly wasn’t a perfect society, but it was at least equal to the Greek city-states of Earth at their peak. Ograpog rests under 50 fathoms of water these days, its surviving citizens having fled in whatever vessel would carry them.

**Paltos** is where Kieran prisoners are kept until they can be assigned a spot in the Coaker Mountains. The dread prison of Paltos is said to be inescapable.

**Shark Bay** is a haven for pirates, smugglers, and whores. There’s no finer place to spend a rich prize than Shark Bay, for though it is remote, it is well-supplied by merchants who quietly accept profit over conscience.





**Swindon** presents itself as an “honorable” port, but is more than likely just a front for the less-reputable ports on Perck.

**The Teeth:** This is the magical lair of the only known non-kraken archmage, Tressa the Red. The only entrance is through a deadly “river” called the Gullet. Visitors are not welcome.

**Terras:** It is said a great sea dragon roams the waters around this deserted island. The wreckage of ships that ventured too close are often seen drifting toward the Flotsam Sea.

**Timin** is the “overflow” settlement for those Kierans who could not buy their way into Kiera. It has thrived thanks to wise placement on fertile ground, and sends shiploads of precious food to Kiera weekly. The Senator who rules it and his rebellious but beautiful daughter are often talked about in Caribdus’ taverns.

**Torath-Ka:** Over a dozen years before the Flood, the Ograpog Legion mercilessly hunted down bands of ugak raiders. Those who escaped fled to the so-called “land of the ancients”—Torath-Ka, a dense jungle highland filled with all manner of savage beasts.

Legend has it the Red Men know devilish black magic, and can summon gargantuan creatures to fight on their behalf. It is likely these are tales told to keep explorers away from the rich diamond mines of the “Savage Land,” but a rare few veterans of the Ograpog Legion claim the tales are true.

**Tuck** is a small farming town plagued by monkapes, razor wings, and giant crabs.

**Tulago** is a prosperous town founded by former slaves from Earth. Guests are invited to

the nightly fests, and smaller crews are often allowed to share their food and drink—at least for a few days.

**Vittoria:** A daring English explorer named Angus McBryde was sent to establish a new colony on the far eastern tip of Torath-Ka for the British East India Company. Unfortunately, he has not been heard from since, and attempts to find his settlement have so far failed.

**The Whip Islands** are a desperate man’s last resort. Valuables drifting in and out of the Flotsam can be found washed up on its sandy beaches, and have made more than a few sailors fabulously wealthy. Finding a treasure is a matter of luck, however. Some row ashore and find a lost treasure worth a king’s ransom, while others search for years for less than they’d make sailing.

Giant crabs and tidal snakes are common, so beachcombers should be wary.

**Wrasseton** is a waystation for the farmers of Sprith. They cart their goods here and sell them to ships who carry them on to Caresia or elsewhere. Like the people of Cuna, the Wrassetons have been raided by pirates one too many times. Anyone even suspected of being a cutthroat might find himself facing an angry lynch mob in the middle of the night.

**Xaxa:** A small town settled by a former French noble. He runs a very quiet and restful “resort” and allows courteous guests to view several rare paintings he brought with him from Earth.





# MAGIC

The magic of Caribdus is elemental magic. Earth mages help grow crops, speak with and control land animals, mend ship's timbers, and even sunder the very land itself.

Fire mages are much feared for their destructive power. They launch balls of fire from their fingertips and are devastating to enemy ships.

Water wizards are wanted on every vessel, for they can heal wounds, make sea water drinkable, and control the many beasts of the ocean.

Elementalists who have mastered the winds of Caribdus are the most valued of all aboard ships. They can move vessels even when becalmed, settle storms, speak with avians to find land, and toss aside enemy missiles with their fantastic mastery of the gales.

When a character chooses Arcane Background (Magic), he must choose whether he has studied earth, fire, water, or air. A character *can* master more than one element as he grows in experience (see the new Elemental Mastery Edge on page 22). Those who learn all four elements are called "archmages." Only one of these is currently known to exist, though the kraken were said to have many archmages among their people before the disastrous battle with the Sea Hags and some may still survive.

Mages are trained by mentors, but then experiment and create new powers on their own.

## CASTING REQUIREMENTS

In the world of Caribdus, mages must make gestures with at least one free hand and speak aloud various magical words at least at a whisper. If either their hands are bound *or* they are prevented from speaking, they cannot cast their spells.

## SPELLS

The following new spells are known on Caribdus. A complete list of all available spells by element can be found on page 54.

The following powers are not available in 50 *Fathoms*: *boost/lower trait*, *detect/conceal arcana*, *fear*, *invisibility*, *puppet*, *quickness*, and *shape change*.

### BECALM

**Rank:** Novice

**Power Points:** Special

**Range:** Sight

**Duration:** 10 minutes (1/10 min)

**Trappings:** A gesture of arms

*Becalm* affects a single sailed-ship of any size, halving its Top Speed and Acceleration for the duration. A ship may be affected by multiple castings of this spell, though neither Top Speed nor Acceleration may ever be reduced below 1.

*Becalm* also adds +2 to a ship's Boating totals in a storm, whether magical or natural. The cost in Power Points is equal to one fifth of the vessel's base Toughness (ignore Armor). A ship with a base Toughness of 16, for example, costs 3 Power

Points to *becalm*. The spell can also be cast on an individual (1 point for Medium size or lower, 2 for Large, and 4 for Huge) who counts any water they are in as calm.

## MEND

**Rank:** Veteran

**Power Points:** Special

**Range:** Touch

**Duration:** Instant

**Trappings:** The caster must stand on the deck of the ship and concentrate as the wood knits together.

Earth mages with this spell can actually *mend* damage done to a vessel's hull within the last hour.

The roll suffers a penalty equal to the ship's Wounds. The cost in Power Points is equal to half the ship's base Toughness (ignore Armor and magical bonuses).

A success repairs one wound, a raise *mends* two. The spell has no effect on critical hits. Those must be repaired by the crew by normal methods.

## QUAKE

**Rank:** Veteran

**Power Points:** 5

**Range:** Smarts x 3

**Duration:** Instant

**Trappings:** The mage smacks the ground with both hands, opening a small rift in the earth.

*Quake* causes a tiny but powerful earthquake that can crush foes and level buildings. It works only upon natural earth or stone—not sand, water, wood, floors, or any other substances.

The area of effect is a Large Burst Template centered within the mage's Range. Victims within the template must make an Agility roll or fall into the hole where they are crushed by earth and stone for 2d10 damage. Those who make the roll cling to the sides and may climb out on their next action. Those who succeed with a raise jump free and may act normally on their next action.

Walls crumble and are breached with this spell, opening a hole as wide across as the earthquake. Pirates often employ earth mages with *quake* to sabotage fortresses and gun turrets.

The *quake* spell counts as a Heavy Weapon when used in this way.





## SETTLE STORM

**Rank:** Heroic

**Power Points:** 10

**Range:** 5 Leagues squared (1 square)

**Duration:** Instant

**Trappings:** A gesture of arms.

Air and water mages who have learned this advanced incantation become quite famous among the sailors of Caribdis, for they can quell even the world's most violent storms.

To cast the spell, the weather wizard must stand in or near the sea (the deck of a ship is acceptable) and make a Spellcasting roll at -4. If the mage concentrates, taking no other actions, he can reduce the -4 penalty by 1 point each additional round, for a maximum of 4 rounds. If the mage is Shaken or takes damage during this time, he must make a successful Smarts roll or he loses the spell.

If successful, the storm is quelled. On a raise, the cost to maintain *settle storm* is reduced to 5 per hour.

## STORM

**Rank:** Seasoned

**Power Points:** 8

**Range:** 5 Leagues squared (1 square)

**Duration:** 2d6 hours

**Trappings:** A gesture of arms and a gathering of clouds.

*Storm* summons up a small but powerful squall that can lose pursuing ships, and cause vessels to become lost or perhaps even sink.

The effects of the storm are listed under **Hazards** in the Game Master's section (p. 101). On a success, the mage draws one card, and with a raise another card for the storm's severity. The mage and any ship he's on treat the storm as one severity level less (minimum as for a Joker).

A *becalmed* ship in a *storm* adds +2 to its Boating totals.

## SUMMON ELEMENTAL

**Rank:** Veteran

**Power Points:** 5

**Range:** Smarts

**Duration:** 5 (1/round)

**Trappings:** The caster must possess a bit of the raw element—a hand full of earth, a flame, water, or a breath of air.

This powerful spell enables a mage to summon a living spirit of his chosen element—an "elemental." The creature is completely subject

to the whims of the caster. Communication is through a mental link but it is purely one-way—the creature cannot relay its thoughts or even basic information to its summoner. The thoughts of such beings are beyond the ken of even the archmages.

Statistics for elementals are found on page 186.

## WATER WALK

**Rank:** Novice

**Power Points:** 1

**Range:** Touch

**Duration:** 1 minute (1/minute)

**Trappings:** The caster touches the soles of his or his allies' feet or shoes.

Water wizards can walk upon the very surface of the water as if it were solid ground. Lakes, becalmed seas, and other calm waters may be traversed normally. Rough seas count as Difficult Ground as the target must run up and down waves. While under the effects of the spell, the target walks as if in a shallow puddle. He cannot go beneath the surface any more than he can go beneath the earth.

**Additional Targets:** The caster may affect up to five targets by spending a like amount of additional power points.

## ZEPHYR

**Rank:** Novice

**Power Points:** 5

**Range:** Smarts x 2

**Duration:** 1 round (0/round)

**Trappings:** The mage stands behind the sails, arms outraised and gently blowing a puff of air that becomes a strong and constant wind.

This is the spell wind mages are most commonly asked to perform. It gently pushes ships along even in a dead calm, and can also improve top speed in normal winds or during deadly combat.

Used for daily travel, the ship automatically increases its Travel Speed by one, or two with a raise. It can also be used to cancel the spell *becalm*.

In combat, *zephyr* improves a vessel's current Handling by +1 its Acceleration and Top Speed by 25%. That means a *becalmed* ship (whose Acceleration and Top Speed are halved), is effectively still down 25%. It may be cast multiple times, though base Acceleration and Top Speed may never be more than doubled.

Caribdu's mages have discovered another use for this spell as well. It is quite adept at dispersing swarms of razor wings and other small avians. A success Shakes the birds, while a raise disperses them (effectively causing a wound).

## TRAPPINGS

The following are trappings for existing spells.

**Armor:** The mage's skin becomes the color and texture of stone.

**Barrier:** A wall of the raw element. Barriers of flame do not block movement but cause 2d6 damage to anyone who tries to rush through them.

**Beast Friend:** In Caribdu, the *beast friend* power only affects animals within the mage's elemental focus:

- Air mages may master any bird, from the smallest sparrow to a massive roc.
- Earth mages may control those things which live almost exclusively within the earth.
- Fire mages control any creature that lairs within fire, including the salamanders of the Coaker Mountains.
- Water wizards are masters of all fish, including marine mammals such as whales and dolphins, but not reptiles or amphibians who do not spend their entire lives beneath the waves.

**Blast:** An exploding ball of fire.

**Bolt:** A small missile of the particular element—a streak of fire, a short stream of water, or a heavy stone. The screaming faces of elemental spirits can be seen at the front of the *bolt*. A mage may also add the attribute "Heavy Weapon" to a *bolt* by doubling the *bolt's* cost.

**Burrow:** The mage melds into the earth, reappearing then rising back out of the ground on a column of dirt or stone at his chosen exit point.

**Damage Field:** An aura of fire.

**Deflection:** A swirling current of air.

**Dispel:** A wave of the hand.

**Elemental Manipulation:** The mage may only affect his chosen elements.

**Elemental Protection:** The mage is only protected against the effects of his element, so a water elemental can breathe underwater while a fire mage might walk through fire. Earth mages cannot be crushed (but could suffocate), while air mages can breathe without air, in poison gas, etc.

**Entangle:** The mage conjures gripping vines. This may only be used in vegetated areas.

**Fly:** A constant gust of wind beneath the mage's body.

**Farsight:** The mage's eyes swell and tear up.

**Havoc:** Swirling columns of air and debris.

**Healing/Greater Healing:** A drink of water, followed by at least a gallon of water per wound poured upon the subject's body over the course of 10 minutes.

**Light/Obscure:** A glowing torchlight that produces no heat as *light*, or as *obscure*, a bank of thick fog (on water) or swirling dust (on land).

**Pummel:** Chunks of earth or rock. Must be in contact with raw earth or stone to cast.

**Smite:** This spell may only be cast on metal weapons or projectiles. They become red hot or even burst into flame upon casting.

**Speak Language:** Air changes the target's words to be understood by anyone who hears him (spoken language only).

**Speed:** The recipient is propelled forward with a great rush of wind.

**Stun:** The victim begins to sweat profusely and dehydrates.

**Succor:** The target receives a cooling mist and is rehydrated.

**Summon Ally:** This power is only available to Veteran mages. It allows them to summon an elemental of the summoner's chosen focus. Communication is through a mental link but it is purely one-way—the creature cannot relay its thoughts or even basic information to its summoner. The thoughts of such beings are beyond the ken of even the archmages.

**Telekinesis:** A gust of powerful air manipulates the affected object. No fine manipulation is allowed (triggers may not be pulled, weapons do not fight, etc).

**Wall Walker:** The earth mage can "stick" to any stone or earthen surface.



## ELEMENTAL SPELL LIST

If the mage has an "X" under his chosen elements, he may take the associated power. If the spell isn't listed here, it isn't available in Caribdus.

Spell	Earth	Fire	Water	Air
Armor	X	—	—	—
Beast Friend	X	X	X	X
Becalm	—	—	X	X
Barrier	X	X	—	—
Blast	—	X	—	—
Blind	X	X	X	—
Bolt	X	X	X	X
Burrow	X	—	—	—
Burst	X	X	X	X
Confusion	—	—	—	X
Damage Field	—	X	—	—
Deflection	—	—	—	X
Dispel	X	X	X	X
Elemental Manipulation*	X	X	X	X
Elemental Protection*	X	X	X	X
Entangle	X	—	—	—
Farsight	—	—	X	—
Fly	—	—	—	X
Greater Healing	—	—	X	—
Havoc	—	—	—	X
Healing	—	—	X	—
Light/Obscure	—	X	—	—
Mend	X	—	—	—
Obscure	—	—	—	X
Pummel	X	—	—	—
Quake	X	—	—	—
Settle Storm	—	—	—	X
Smite	—	X	—	—
Speak Language	—	—	—	X
Speed	—	—	—	X
Storm	—	—	X	X
Stun	—	—	X	—
Succor	—	—	X	—
Summon Elemental	X	X	X	X
Telekinesis	—	—	—	X
Wall Walker	X	—	—	—
Water Walk	—	—	X	—
Zephyr	—	—	—	X

\*These spells only affect a mage's chosen element. Refer to Trappings for more details.

# THE LEGEND OF KYLA KIDD!

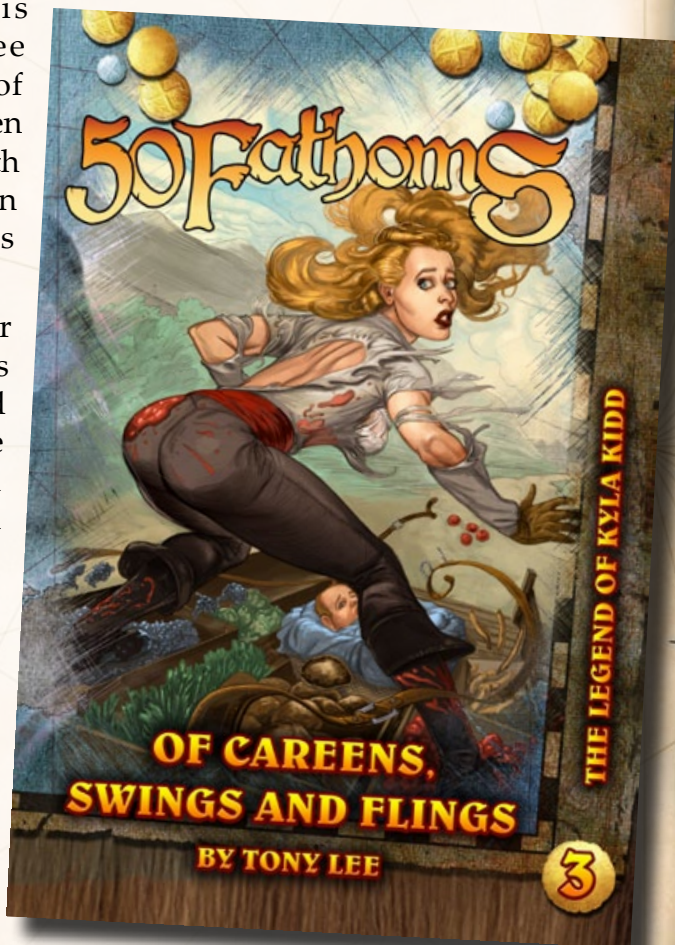
The world of Caribdus is drowning—cursed by three vengeful Sea Hags. Dozens of island nations have already been destroyed and the races beneath the Shimmering Seas have been ravaged by their drifting ruins and turbulent tides.

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Name \_\_\_\_\_

## Hindrances



## Background

## Booty

## Edges

## Charisma

Pace

Darry

## Toughness

*Wounds*

Seasoned

25

30

25

10

**Veteran**

45

50

55

10

heroic

65

70

75

### Legendary

90

130

162



2

1

## Weapons/Powers

Range

## Damage

## Notes



Ship Type \_\_\_\_\_ Cost \_\_\_\_\_  
 Acc/Top \_\_\_\_\_ Crew \_\_\_\_\_  
 Handling \_\_\_\_\_ Cargo \_\_\_\_\_  
 Notes

Ship Name: \_\_\_\_\_  
 Captain: \_\_\_\_\_  
 Port of Call: \_\_\_\_\_

### Upgrades

_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____



Guns	range	ROF	damage (AP)	burst?	Notes
_____	/ /				
_____	/ /				
_____	/ /				
_____	/ /				
_____	/ /				

### Crewmen, Troops, and Other Allies

Type ~Rank \_\_\_\_\_  
 Edges \_\_\_\_\_  
 Hindrances \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_ Pace \_\_\_\_\_ Parry \_\_\_\_\_ Toughness \_\_\_\_\_

Crew Description Rank

_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____



Days at Sea

Gear Range Damage Notes

_____	/ /		
_____	/ /		
_____	/ /		
_____	/ /		

Agility \_\_\_\_\_  
 Smarts \_\_\_\_\_  
 Spirit \_\_\_\_\_  
 Strength \_\_\_\_\_  
 Vigor \_\_\_\_\_

### Skills

d \_\_\_\_\_ Boating  
 d \_\_\_\_\_ Climb  
 d \_\_\_\_\_ Fighting  
 d \_\_\_\_\_ Notice  
 d \_\_\_\_\_ Repair  
 d \_\_\_\_\_ Shooting  
 d \_\_\_\_\_ Stealth  
 d \_\_\_\_\_ Throwing  
 d \_\_\_\_\_  
 d \_\_\_\_\_  
 d \_\_\_\_\_  
 d \_\_\_\_\_  
 d \_\_\_\_\_